

Officers Again Hit Hippie Car Ring In Desert

TRONA (AP) — Thirteen law officers carried out the second successful raid Sunday against what authorities called a hippie car theft ring operating from a fortified position in a rugged Death Valley area.

Sheriff's deputies said six men and five women were arrested in a rocky canyon in Death Canyon 20 miles northeast of Trona and booked for investigation of car theft.

A raid in the same area Friday netted three men, ten women and two girls, all booked for investigation of car theft. Officers said two babies also were found and were being treated at a hospital.

Deputies said the arrested persons lived in two old mining cabins, and that military field telephones and citizens band radios linked observation posts that had been carved into mountains.

Two deputies, five highway patrolmen and six park rangers carried out the raid Sunday, and reported they arrested the leader of the group, identified as Charles M. Manson, 34.

Four-Wheel Drive

Deputy Jerry Hildreth said the group specialized in four-wheel-drive vehicles, the only type that can make it into the remote area. He said five stolen vehicles have been recovered.

"We think we have the majority of the group," said Hildreth. "But we will make another search to see if we have everybody."

He described the area as a "fortification, in that they had lookout points and communications."

Those arrested were held at the Inyo County Jail in Independence, 175 miles southeast.