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# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

REPORTING OFFICE <b>SAN FRANCISCO</b>	OFFICE OF ORIGIN <b>NEW YORK</b>	DATE <b>5/31/63</b>	INVESTIGATIVE PERIOD <b>12/17/62 to 5/24/63</b>
TITLE OF CASE <b>LA CAUSA NOSTRA SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION</b>		REPORT MADE BY <b>BRYON C. WHEELER</b>	TYPED BY <b>es</b>
		CHARACTER OF CASE <b>AR - CONSPIRACY</b>	

REFERENCE: Report of SA BRYON C. WHEELER at San Francisco dated 12/17/62.  
 Report of SA JAMES P. FLYNN at New York dated 1/31/63.  
 San Francisco letters to New York 1/23/63 and 2/4/63.

- P -

ENCLOSURES: TO THE BUREAU: Two copies of the letterhead memorandum setting forth characterization of informants.

TO NEW YORK: Two copies of the letterhead memorandum setting forth characterization of informants.

APPROVED <i>[Signature]</i> SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN SPACES BELOW
COPIES MADE: 3-Bureau (92-6054) (Encl.-2) 2-New York (92-2300) (Encl.-2) 7-San Francisco 2 - 92-593 1 - 92-123 1 - 92-124 1 - 137-2571 1 - 137-1336 1 - 92-41	92-6054-275 REC-72 JUN 5 1963
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BCW:es

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

*Calif.*

Informants have advised that members of La Causa Nostra in San Jose and the San Francisco Bay area have been instructed by ~~JOSEPH GERRITO~~, "Don" of the San Jose group, to contact one another as little as possible owing to the current investigations by the FBI, IRS and INS of the members.

INFORMANTS:

*Joe Gerrito*

<u>Identity of Informant</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>By Whom</u>	<u>File Where Located</u>
SF T-1 is SF 2550-C-TE	11/5/62	SA HAROLD V. CATES	92-593-147
	1/7/63	SA ROY L. ERICKSON	92-593-109
	10/26/62	SA HAROLD V. CATES	92-593-147
	12/28/62	SA ROY L. ERICKSON	92-593-97
SF T-2 is SF 2354-C-TE	11/19/62	SA CHARLES J. PRELSNIK	92-41B-257
	3/28 and 4/22/63	SA CHARLES J. PRELSNIK	92-41B-268
SF T-4 is SF 2405-C*	11/9/62		92-41B-256
	11/19/62		92-41B-257
	3/6/63		92-41B-266
SF T-8 is JAMES E. PRISIN-ZANO, PCI and cousin of JAMES LANZA	10/25/62	SA HERBERT K. MUDD, JR.	92-593-147
SF T-9 is SF 2345-C-TE (two T symbols used to cover the informant better)	2/4/63	SA CHARLES J. PRELSNIK	92-593-131

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SF T-1 furnished the following information on January 7, 1963, and on previous contacts, concerning the Italian-Sicilian organization (La Causa Nostra) of which he allegedly is a member at San Jose, California, and has been for several years:

#### Origin

The organization to which SF T-1 belongs was explained to him as being an old organization started by people of Sicily to protect themselves from land barons and others of autocratic rule. When these people came to this country, they naturally remained closely knit and continued their specific organization in this country to make money.

#### Structure

SF T-1 stated that the group to which he belongs is nationally organized. He has received no information indicating that it is controlled by or affiliated with any similar organization in Sicily. He has asked JOHN MISURACA, during the time he was being indoctrinated, whether this organization was the "Mafia", and MISURACA told him it was. He was told that they do not use this term now but use the term "Cosa Nost(r)a", which means "Our Thing". The informant does not seem to pronounce the letter "R" in Nost(r)a and indicates that the use of the letter "R" in pronunciation is used more among main-land Italians than Sicilians. He stated he has not heard this organization called La Causa Nost(r)a.

The informant advised that the smallest organized unit to his understanding is a "Circle." When the informant entered, he was initiated with two others, ALEX CAMARATA and PETE MISURACA. The informant and ALEX CAMARATA were assigned to a "Circle" having ANGELO MARINO as the head, while PETE MISURACA was assigned to a "Circle" having MANNY FIGLIA as the head, or Capo.

The informant advised that the basic group in the lower organization next to a "Circle" is called the Nost(r)a Brigada, which the informant said is a "Group" headed by one man called a "capo". This "Group" is frequently called a "Family," and may be the same as a "Circle."

The Nost(r)a Brigada may be comprised of several

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### Initiation and Oath

SF T-1 recalled that when he was about to enter "the organization", JOHN MISURACA called him to see him at the home of ALEX CAMARATA. At that time, MISURACA explained to him how he entered the organization. He told him that someone would take a needle and draw blood from a finger. He stated that anything could happen and that someone might create an incident to see how he would react. He recalled someone saying that they might even throw a gun to him to see what he would do. The informant talked over these matters subsequently with ALEX CAMARATA and PETE MISURACA who were also entering the organization and who seemed to know more of what was going on than the informant.

When they were actually taken into the organization, they went to the cheese factory in San Jose. There were several members from the San Jose area as well as from the Modesto area. The informant, ALEX CAMARATA and PETE MISURACA remained outside and were taken in one at a time for their initiation. This was in 1956.

The initiation consisted of words delivered to the informant by two different people, to his recollection. He stated these people were MANNY FIGLIA and CHARLIE CARBONE. They were hard to understand. They did not explain the organization at that time but the details came out from these two as well as several others a little at a time over the succeeding years.

At the initiation, he was told that whoever "pinches" him would be his godfather. JOE CUSENZA turned out to be the godfather of the informant. The informant had never met this individual before.

During the proceedings, a picture of a saint was burned. Those giving the statements to him would read or utter a sentence and require him to repeat it. He recalled the word baptised being used. He recalled that the words included statements to the effect that they were never to contact law enforcement officials personally or otherwise, that they were to have nothing to do with such a man, regardless of consequence, that they would uphold the organization over everything else and would do all in their power for the organization.

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He recalled them also saying that the organization would do all possible for the "Family," and that no member could take action against another member without the okay of the "Council."

The proceeding was similar to the reading in a wedding ceremony in that a sentence would be stated and the person initiated repeated the sentence given. The climax of the ceremony was the pricking of a finger by the godfather using a needle or a knife.

#### Discipline

Immediately after entry into the organization, the informant learned that the person they should go to at all times was the "Capo." They were told never to go above him without his approval. This directive has since been changed and they now can go to higher authority without seeing their "Capo" first. He did not recall any suggestions or orders to use other than their true names. He himself used the name AL COSTA on a trip to Reno but did not know the reason for this. He learned that a "Don" could not go back east unless he got the permission of BONANNO, which makes him believe that the headquarters of this organization would be in the east. Since the original orders of never cooperating with the law enforcement officials, a change has been instituted allowing them to talk to law enforcement agents where practical. They have been told that even though this can be done, they still "make their own law."

When the informant was taken in, it was explained that he may be called upon to commit crime. It was further explained that he would be told why a crime must be committed and assured of the complete backing of the organization. The initiation itself is an oath, and the final thing stated is words to the effect that the person initiated can never leave the organization except through death. He has been told that although the organization may order them to commit crime, they cannot commit crime on their own without the approval of the organization. Each member is often called a "Soldato", meaning "Soldier", within the organization.

#### Dues

When he first came in, he learned that they were expected to give \$5 per month to the organization. This was

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dropped two years ago. He himself was not required to give often because no one told him to whom to give his money. He has been told that contributions originally depended upon the ability to pay, and ROSE CAMARATA recently told him that her "father-in-law" had to put \$100,000.00 into the Apalachian meeting. When he was told that he could even be called upon to commit a crime but could never commit a crime without the okay of the organization, he was also told that they should try to do good work and that if any crimes were committed, they were expected to pay 10 per cent of any "take" to the organization.

#### Records

The informant advised that he has never heard or seen any indication that records for this organization are maintained. He has never seen any written instructions and has heard that they should never keep notes or things such as phone numbers or addresses on their person since these could be picked up and used against them.

He has never seen any such thing as an insignia for the organization. The only introduction he has heard that would specifically mean that the person being introduced as a member is by introducing the person as a "friend of ours" or "amigo Nost(r)a."

#### Attitude Toward United States Government

SF T-1 advised he has never heard any member say anything about service in the armed forces, holding one country above another, or any organization above the organization in this country located elsewhere. The only thing that he feels could refer to any such thing of this nature is the statement that they would pledge themselves to uphold this organization over everything.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

On October 26, 1962, SF T-1 advised that the Mayor of Palermo, Italy, had recently been a house guest at the home of SALVATORE MARINO, former "capo" of La Causa Nostra in San Jose, California. According to SF T-1, ANGELO MARINO is reported to have made the statement to other members of "the organization" in San Jose, California, that the Mayor of