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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI

DATE: 9/21/63

FROM: SAC, CLEVELAND (92-748)(137-1130)

SUBJECT: LA COSA NOSTRA
TOP ECHELON
CRIMINAL INFORMANT PROGRAM

ReCVlet to Director, 9/7/63, re captioned matter.

On September 4 and 6, 1963, CV 553-PC was interviewed and information obtained during this interview is somewhat repetitious to that furnished in ReCVlet, however it clarifies certain points and is therefore being set forth in the following manner:

CV 553-PC stated he came to Cleveland, Ohio, from Italy in 1919 or 1920 to stay with his sister. At the time he arrived in Cleveland, he was 15 years of age. He said he worked at different jobs in the Cleveland area, including that of driving a cab. In 1923 or 1924, he indicated he was "active" in Cleveland, and was harassed by members of the Cleveland Police Department. He said on one occasion he received a 30 day jail sentence being accused of putting a razor in someone's car. He said that shortly thereafter, he received a 60 day jail sentence on another minor charge.

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- 2-Bureau
- 1-Cincinnati (Info)
- 1-Detroit (Info)
- 1-Las Vegas (Info)
- 1-New York (Info)
- 15-Cleveland

- (1 - 92-167)
- (1 - 92-168)
- (1 - 92-176)
- (1 - 92-179)
- (1 - 92-397)
- (1 - 92-400)
- (1 - 92-477)
- (1 - 92-50)
- (1 - 92-718)
- (1 - 92-810)
- (1 - 92-846)
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He said he was beat up physically by Cleveland Police on several occasions and so in 1924 went to Detroit. He indicated he held several miscellaneous jobs in Detroit until he became closely acquainted with YONNIE LICAVOLI. He said he became very active in running whiskey in the Detroit area, and considered himself a member of the Purple Gang. He mentioned that he became acquainted with ANGELO MELI during this period, however, he did not elaborate on the extent of this relationship.

In 1928, he was convicted on a narcotics charge in Detroit and was sent to the U.S. Penitentiary (USP), Leavenworth, for a two-year period. While at Leavenworth, he became acquainted with JAMES LICAVOLI, aka Jack White. (It is to be noted that JAMES LICAVOLI, according to his parole file at USP, Leavenworth, served there from June, 1929 to June, 1930.) Informant was paroled at Leavenworth to his sister at Cleveland, Ohio. He said although he was not permitted to leave the Cleveland area, he did become involved in making trips to Detroit and at one time was accused of being involved in the murder of two Detroit policemen in about 1930-1932. He said he hid out in Canada for a while and later went to Brooklyn, New York.

In Brooklyn, he looked up "LITTLE AUGIE" PISANO whom he had previously met through AL POLIZZI of Cleveland, at a funeral or wedding. He said through PISANO, he met VITO GENOVESE and also ALBERT ANASTASIA. He said he was not closely associated with these individuals, but did know them while he was in Brooklyn. He claims to have been convicted in an armed robbery in which he was not involved, and was sentenced 15 to 40 years. He served time for this sentence at Dannemora Prison in New York on this robbery charge from 1932 until 1945. While at Dannemora, he served three years in solitary confinement for beating a guard. He was released on life parole but this was terminated in 1960 because of a change in the New York laws. He stated he has been living in Cleveland, Ohio since his release on parole in 1945.

Informant, during the interview, remarked that he had read the recent article in the "Saturday Evening Post" about La Cosa Nostra. He said "everything that appeared in that article is true." He was questioned as to whether or

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not he had ever heard of the organization La Cosa Nostra before this article. He said he had not, but indicated he was aware that a nation-wide organization of this type was in existence. He was questioned as to what in his opinion was the present set-up of the organization in the Cleveland area. He said that ~~JOHN T. SCALISH~~ is the top man in Cleveland at the present time, then follows ~~JOHN DE MARCO~~ and then ~~FRANK BRANCATO~~. He said that back in the 1930s, ~~FRANK MILANO~~ was head man and that ~~AL POLIZZI~~ followed. He said "AL POLIZZI put the shoes on ~~JOHN SCALISH~~." He said that ~~TOMMY SCALISH~~, brother of JOHN, was "tough and sharp," but that, at no time in his opinion did ~~TOMMY SCALISH~~ rank as the top man. Informant said that in his opinion JOHN SCALISH is not tough, but is brainy.

Informant was questioned as to where ~~JAMES LICAVOLI~~ fits into the Cleveland picture, and he remarked that ~~LICAVOLI~~ has special powers and is not directly under JOHN SCALISH. He said that ~~LICAVOLI~~ operates on his own, but that he is believed to be under the jurisdiction of the Detroit outfit. He said that ~~TONY DELSANTER~~ is the racket boss in the Warren, Ohio area and he operates under ~~JAMES LICAVOLI~~. The informant said that ~~JAMES LICAVOLI~~ is better known under the nickname JACK WHITE. He explained that ~~LICAVOLI~~ is so dark complexioned so rather than referring to him as Blackie or Black, he has been referred to as White.

The informant mentioned that ~~TONY MILANO~~ operates the Italian-American Brotherhood (IAB) on Mayfield Road in Cleveland. He said TONY is a brother of ~~FRANK MILANO~~ a former boss in Cleveland, and that although TONY is not considered the active boss, he said that JOHN SCALISH does have contact with TONY MILANO and the informant believed that TONY makes major decisions. He said years ago, TONY MILANO loaned him \$2,000 and that he collected interest on this money. He said he has had some contact with TONY MILANO. The informant has indicated to TONY that he wants to obtain a liquor license. He said that one Sunday (during the past year or two), TONY MILANO called him and asked him to come to the IAB. At the IAB there was an Italian who owned a bar on Woodland Avenue in Cleveland, which was going to be torn down because of the new Freeway. MILANO asked the owner of the bar how much he wanted for his liquor license and the owner replied he wanted \$15,000. MILANO asked the informant if he would take the license at that price

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and the informant said he did not have any money. MILANO told the bar owner he would give him \$8,000 down and the balance in regular payments. When the owner refused to accept this agreement, MILANO cursed him and chased him out of the club.

Informant was asked as to whether or not CHARLES POLIZZI was ever considered the top man at Cleveland. He said that CHARLES POLIZZI is considered the brother of "BIG AL" POLIZZI, however, CHARLES is actually Jewish, since he was adopted by the POLIZZI family. He said he "tried to put on the shoes of the top boss" in the 1930's, however they refused to go along with this and POLIZZI is still living in Cleveland today, but is not considered a power.

Informant said that he believes that PETE DE GRAVIO is in the group. PETE has been active in gambling in prior years, but at the present time he is active in shylocking. With regard to control in the Detroit area, informant said JOE ZIRELLI is the top man now. He indicated that ANGELO MELI was one of the higher ups but is now an old man and not as active as he was at one time. He said PETE LICAVOLI is very powerful and also that YONNIE LICAVILI even though he has been in prison for 25 years, still holds much power and is contacted for decisions.

Informant was questioned as to who the active men in the organization were in other Ohio cities. He said JIMMY LA FATCH is the top man in Akron, and that he does not know anything regarding the present set-up in Toledo, Canton, or the other areas.

The informant said that everyone is aware that JOHN SCALISH and JOHN DE MARCO from Cleveland went to the Apalachian meeting, November, 1957, but that actually there were two men who went with JOHN SCALISH and DE MARCO. He declined to reveal the identity of the other two individuals but later admitted he heard "through the grapevine", that FRANK BRANCATO went to the Apalachian meeting and escaped without being caught and he believed the fourth individual was FRANK EMBRASCIA (EMBRASCIA is in partnership with JOHN SCALISH and MILTON ROCKMAN in the Buckeye Cigarette Service in Cleveland.) Informant was reluctant to discuss information of this nature and the matter was dropped.

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Information was set out in relet that the informant in May, 1963, went to the Ohio State Penitentiary (OSP) to see YONNIE LICAVOLI about borrowing some money. It was also previously reported that the informant said he went to the residence of MIKE DE ANGELO, the "top man" in Columbus, Ohio, where he saw PETE LICAVOLI and LEO MOCERI. During the current interview informant elaborated on this incident and said that present at the meeting at DE ANGELO's residence in May, 1963, were PETE LICAVOLI of Detroit, LEO MOCERI of Akron-Cleveland, an individual named "NUNZIO" from Akron, TONY DELSANTER, Warren, Ohio and JAMES LICAVOLI, aka Jack White from Cleveland. (NUNZIO is possibly identical with NUNCIE DESTRO of Akron, Ohio, who was convicted during the Summer of 1963, for armed robbery in Columbus, Ohio. It is not known if he is in the penitentiary at the present time or is out on appeal. He has a brother, TONY DESTRO, who is on the Akron PD). At the DE ANGELO home, informant overheard conversation between these individuals and they were discussing the obtaining of funds for operating gambling houses in the Bahamas. The informant remarked that DE ANGELO's home is a gathering point for many groups and that different problems are discussed there. He said that anyone going to the DE ANGELO home calls first to see if the coast is clear before going there.

OHIO
NEVADA

Informant said that about three years ago, he heard from a good friend of his, whom he refused to identify, that MORRIS KLEINMAN brought \$1,000,000 to Cleveland in a suitcase from Las Vegas. He was alone and took the money to the residence of a woman who is an aunt or cousin of LOU ROTHKOPF, aka Lou Rhody, now deceased. He said the woman was supposed to distribute or deliver this money, but she refused.

For the information of the Bureau, close contact will be maintained with this informant in an effort to obtain more detailed information concerning his knowledge of criminal intelligence matters and La Cosa Nostra. Any pertinent information developed will be furnished to the Bureau and interested offices.