

Agency Information

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SEBASTIAN JOHN LARocca

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PITTSBURGH

AT PITTSBURGH, PA. (ALLEGHENY COUNTY)

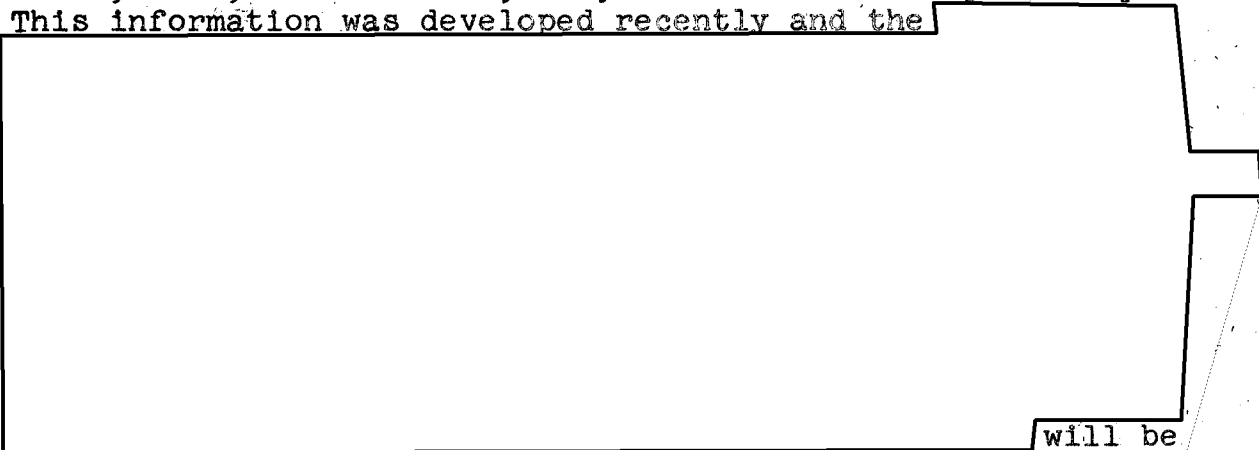
Will follow and report activities of SEBASTIAN JOHN LA ROCCA and his associates in accordance with Bureau instructions.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Information contained in this report concerning possible anti-trust violations has been previously submitted by closing report dated 4/26/61, entitled, "WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CEMENT BLOCK ASSOCIATION, Pittsburgh, Pa.," Pittsburgh file 60-474.

Information contained in this report of possible value to the Internal Revenue Service has been furnished to the Intelligence Unit of the Internal Revenue Service at Pittsburgh, Pa.

Information concerning Western Pennsylvania National Bank records and records of the United States National Bank in Johnstown, Pa., as well as information regarding Keystone Sales, Inc., of Johnstown, Pa., has not been fully developed. This information was developed recently and the



will be made available to this Bureau and Bureau Agents will examine pertinent bank records upon completion of examination being conducted

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REVIEWED BY ~~W~~ JFK TASK FORCE -- B -

JFK Law 11(a)

ON 7-14-98 Jcd COVER PAGE

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Information from records of the Western Pennsylvania National Bank, Washington Trust Office, was furnished to SAA FRANK E. ALLISON on 5/1/61 by CHARLES METCALF, Vice President, Western Pennsylvania National Bank. Information was also furnished to SA ROBERT A. VOEGE on 3/4/58 by LOUIS J. REIZENSTIEN, Executive Vice President, Washington Trust Office, Western Pennsylvania National Bank.

Information from the records of the United States National Bank in Johnstown was furnished by E. L. EDWARDS, Vice President, to SA J. EDWARD KERN on 4/27/61.

Records of the Brookline Savings and Trust Company were made available to SAA FRANK E. ALLISON on 4/17/61 by J. E. GERLACH, Assistant Vice President.

Records of the South Pittsburgh Savings and Loan Association were made available to SAA FRANK E. ALLISON on 4/17/61 by J. DOUGLAS DOLE, Executive Vice President and Secretary.

INFORMANTS

PG T-1 is Dr. COSTANTINO FONTANA, Central Bureau, Italian Criminal Police, Rome, Italy, who furnished information to the Legat at Rome, Italy, on 4/18/58.

PG T-2 is a potential criminal informant of the Pittsburgh Office, who was contacted by JFK Act 6 (4) SA ROBERT A. VOEGE on 2/27/58.

PG T-3 is PG 612-C, who was contacted by SA THOMAS G. FORSYTH, III on 10/14/60.

PG T-4 is PG 615-C, who was contacted by SA THOMAS G. FORSYTH, III on 10/14/60.

PG T-5 is PG 585-C, who was contacted by SA ROBERT A. VOEGE on 2/19/58, 3/7/58, and 3/11/58.

PG T-6 is CHESTER STUPAK, a former potential criminal informant of the Pittsburgh Office, who was contacted by

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SA JOHN S. PORTELLA on 12/13/54 and 10/21/55.

PG T-7 is PG 561-C, who was contacted by SA CARL L. SHERWOOD on 9/11/57.

PG T-8 is DAN FERRARI, a source of information, who requested that his identity be concealed and who was contacted by SA CARL L. SHERWOOD on 1/13/58.

PG T-9 is T. P. DERDOCK, Security Officer, Westinghouse Electric Corporation, East Pittsburgh, Pa., who requested that his identity be concealed when he was contacted by SA THOMAS G. FORSYTH, III on 1/14/58.

PG T-10 is ROBERT F. MEHRLING, an employee of the Internal Revenue Service at Pittsburgh, Pa., who requested that his identity be concealed when he was contacted by SA GENE H. STUDEBAKER on 12/10/57.

PG T-11 is the confidential report of Dun and Bradstreet, Inc., dated 4/19/59, and furnished by the Pittsburgh Office of that organization on 3/14/61.

PG T-12 is HAROLD W. LAUVER, Supervisory Investigator, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Pittsburgh, Pa., who requested that his identity be concealed when he was contacted by SA WILLIAM R. WALL on 12/12, 12/13, 12/16, and 12/19/57.

PG T-13 is JAMES CUNNINGHAM, Representative, Dun and Bradstreet, Inc., Johnstown, Pa., who requested that his identity be concealed when he was contacted by SA J. EDWARD KERN on 4/27/61.

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ON 9/29/97 d.c.

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DETAILS:

A. PERSONAL HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

I. Birth Data

SEBASTIAN LA ROCCA, the son of IGNAZIO and ROSARIA SCANCARELLO, was born in Villa Rosa, Italy, on December 19, 1901, and departed from Villa Rosa prior to 1927, the year in which the registration of the inhabitants of that community was begun.

WITNESS:

PG T-1

LA ROCCA arrived at New York City, New York, on September 2, 1910, aboard the "SS Principe di Piemonte" using the name SEBASTIANO LA ROCCA and was eight years of age at that time. He was a citizen of Italy, having been born at Villarosa, Sicily, and his prior permanent address was the same as his birth. He was accompanied by his mother, ROSARIA, age 32, and sisters, ROSA, age 13, and ILLUMINATA, age 11. He was destined to visit IGNAZIO LA ROCCA at Box 111, Reed, Pa., and his passage was paid by his father. The afore-mentioned DNY legal entry was verified.

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ON 9/29/72

WITNESS:

WILLIAM D. BIGGS
Officer in Charge
Immigration and Naturalization Service
707 New Federal Building
Pittsburgh, Pa., who can produce "Certificate of Naturalization of Alien" from INS file A-5-537-570 relating to LA ROCCA (INS file I-404A), and whose records must be subpoenaed.

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II. Education

It was not possible to ascertain whether or not LA ROCCA received any formal schooling during the time he was in Italy.

WITNESS:

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WITNESS:

CASIMIR J. PELLEGRINI
Owner, Casimir J. Pellegrini Associates
201 South Craig Street
Pittsburgh, Pa.,
the designer and the director of construction of
the residence at 900 West Ingomar Road, Ingomar,
Pa.

IV. Marital Status

LESTER LA ROCCA, born in Italy, married MARY SMELIK, born
in Jessup, Pa., on 9/30/28, at Pittston, Pa.

WITNESS:

ALFRED X. PASCO
Assistant Clerk of the Orphans Court
Luzerne County Courthouse
Wilkes-Barre, Pa.,
who can produce a certified copy of Marriage
Certificate #19690. This record must be
subpoenaed.

MARY CMELIK was born on April 2, 1910, and was baptised on
April 3, 1910. Her parents were JOHN CMELIK and MAGDALINE
GABRIS.

WITNESS:

Reverend ANDRES E. DLUGOS
Pastor, St. Michael's Roman Catholic Slovak Church
First Avenue, Jessup, Pa.,
who can produce official church records reflecting
birth and baptismal entries. These records must be
subpoenaed.

V. Information Relating to Adopted Son of La Rocca

LA ROCCA and his wife have no natural children but on February
25, 1944, they adopted HOWARD LESLIE HOFFMAN, whose name at
the time of adoption was changed to JOHN LA ROCCA, JR.

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This adopted son was born on October 1, 1943, at Greensburg, Pa.

WITNESSES:

WILLIAM D. BIGGS
Officer in Charge
Immigration and Naturalization Service
707 New Federal Building
Pittsburgh, Pa.,
who can testify to biographical data contained in
INS file A-5-537-570 relating to LA ROCCA

MILES C. MC WHARTER
Clerk of Orphans Court
Westmoreland County
Greensburg, Pa.,
who can introduce records pertaining to the birth
and adoption of the adopted son of LA ROCCA and
whose records must be subpoenaed.

JOHN LA ROCCA is presently attending Valley Forge Military Academy where tuition, room and board amounts to approximately \$2,225 each school year. Cadets are not required to account for money furnished to them by their parents or guardians and this would also apply to the money these cadets spend at the post exchange or while away from the academy. They are not required to furnish memoranda and their mode of travel from the school to their homes during their vacation periods. LA ROCCA is presently scheduled to graduate from Valley Forge Military Academy in June, 1961.

WITNESS:

Lt. Colonel GILBERT PHILIPPS
Admissions Officer
Valley Forge Military Academy
Wayne, Pa.

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VI. Origin of the Interest of La Rocca in Racketeering and Steps Leading to Current Position and Activities in Racketeering Matters

[redacted] who has been engaged in numbers writing activity since about 1928, was once depended upon by Pittsburgh racketeers for protection purposes because he knew local and state police figures. LA ROCCA was one of the individuals who utilized [redacted] in this regard. He became acquainted with LA ROCCA in about 1941 or 1942 when LA ROCCA was handling all the numbers activity in the East Liberty section of Pittsburgh and had set himself up as a "little god." When LA ROCCA became dissatisfied with his financial gains, he left Pittsburgh on a trip to Chicago to see friends about paste reel machines with which he felt he could make more money. A paste reel was similar to a "one-armed bandit" with the exception that a small paper-wrapped mint was dispensed as the coin was placed in the slot and the play was registered.

JFK Act 6 (4)

While LA ROCCA was in Chicago [redacted] moved into the East Liberty section and took over the entire numbers operation. When LA ROCCA returned to Pittsburgh he became angry with [redacted] and had someone drive a car over him one night as he was crossing a street. Because he thought he would make money in the East Liberty section, [redacted] stayed in the business of writing numbers and actually forced LA ROCCA out of this business.

In about 1943 [redacted] and LA ROCCA became friendly and LA ROCCA invited [redacted] to share equally with him in the ownership of the Coin Machine Distributing Company which later set up offices at 5746 Baum Boulevard in Pittsburgh. LA ROCCA managed to raise enough money to put up his share for the business and [redacted] personally traveled to Chicago to arrange for the purchase of machines to be distributed by this company. These machines were placed throughout the East Liberty, Homewood, and Garfield sections of Pittsburgh and were heavily taxed by both the Government and the City of Pittsburgh. Other owners of the afore-mentioned company, in addition to [redacted] and LA ROCCA, were FRANK AMATO, BARNEY MC GINLEY, SAMUEL MANNARINO, and F. W. ZOGG.

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(6)

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The afore-mentioned company was doing well financially before Allegheny County, Pa., authorities raided establishments where the machines had been placed and forced the company out of business. Although each of the afore-mentioned individuals owned an equal share in the company, SAMUEL MANNARINO and LA ROCCA obviously usurped the most authority and held meetings at which important subjects were discussed in Italian, which [redacted] did not understand. LA ROCCA used [redacted] only for proven protection methods and [redacted] did not mind as long as he got his cut of the profits. MIKE GENOVESE, who was turned over to [redacted] by LA ROCCA "to keep him clean" because LA ROCCA had him in mind for future plans, FRANK VALENTI, and ANTONIO RIPEPI visited the offices of the Coin Machine Distributing Company regularly and took orders from MANNARINO and LA ROCCA.

WITNESS:

JFK Act 6 (4)

[redacted]
124 Elysian Street
Pittsburgh, Pa.

During the late 1930's and early 1940's, the Italian element at Pittsburgh, Pa., had a great fear and respect of individuals known as "blackhanders" and later LA ROCCA, who was, to all intents and purposes, a leader in this type of operation. SEBASTIAN JOHN LA ROCCA came into the area from the Jamestown, New York, vicinity where he had been engaged in moonshining operations bringing him into Pittsburgh on a scheduled run. He remained in Pittsburgh because his criminal activities in New York State were becoming too involved and he continued his moonshining and later, numbers operation in Pittsburgh.

WITNESS:

PG T-2

B. ASSOCIATES

Among the more prominent currently close associates of LA ROCCA are the following individuals:

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social acquaintance of LA ROCCA for many years. On May 26, 1960, during an interview, VALENTI claimed he was "in hiding" to avoid being arrested for vote fraud in Rochester, New York.

WITNESSES:

PG T-2
who was acquainted with the relationship between LA ROCCA and VALENTI.

SA ROBERT A. VOEGE
presently assigned to the Pittsburgh Office of the FBI who can testify to an interview with VALENTI on May 26, 1960, at Pittsburgh, Pa.

ANTONIO RIFEPI, aka

This individual presently resides at 4720 Brownsville Road, Pittsburgh, Pa., and operates the Keystone Music Company in Pittsburgh.

JFK Law 11(a)

WITNESS:

JOHN H. BINGLER
District Director, Internal Revenue Service
New Federal Building
Pittsburgh, Pa., who can produce and identify records

GUISEPPE ROSA, aka

ROSA presently resides at 1849 Funston Street, Pittsburgh, Pa. He is a business and social associate of LA ROCCA who was once ordered deported following an arrest by the Immigration and Naturalization Service at Pittsburgh, Pa., as an enemy alien but received a pardon from Governor JOHN S. FINE of the State of Pennsylvania on January 15, 1954, and the deportation warrant was withdrawn.

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WITNESSES:

PG T-9
who is acquainted with the relationship between
AMATO and LA ROCCA.

[REDACTED]

JFK Act 6 (4)

124 Elysian STREET
Pittsburgh, Pa.,
who can testify to the business relationship
between AMATO, LA ROCCA, and himself in the
Coin Machine Distributing Company at Pittsburgh.

JOHN J. CONTI

This individual presently resides at 9576 Perry Highway,
Pittsburgh, Pa., and is actively engaged in the operation
of the North Star Cement Block Company, 12 McCandless Avenue,
Pittsburgh, Pa., which is owned by LA ROCCA. LA ROCCA
refers to CONTI as his nephew. During past interviews with
an FBI Agent he has been completely uncooperative.

WITNESS:

SA ROBERT A. VOEGE
presently assigned to the Pittsburgh Office of
the FBI, who can testify to an interview on
April 30, 1959, with SEBASTIAN JOHN LA ROCCA at
which time LA ROCCA advised that although the
operation of the North Star Cement Block Company
was not a family affair, he had JOHN CONTI, his
nephew, working for him.

ROY VEY

This individual presently resides at 1153 Cornell Street,
Pittsburgh, Pa., and is an employee of the North Star
Cement Block Company, 12 McCandless Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa.
His annual income exceeds \$5,000 a year.

[REDACTED]

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(12)

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WITNESSES:

JOHN H. BINGLER
District Director
Internal Revenue Service
New Federal Building, Pittsburgh, Pa.,
who can produce and identify records [redacted]

BRUNO A. CENGIA
14 Parkview Drive
Carnegie, Pa., who, as accountant for North Star
Cement Block Company, can produce and identify records
concerning the employment and annual salary of ROY VEY.

ALDO and ALMO PRUNER

These individuals reside at 653 Bower Hill Road, Bridgeville,
Pa., and are employed at the North Star Cement Block Co. [redacted]

JFK Law 11(a)

WITNESS:

JOHN H. BINGLER
District Director
Internal Revenue Service
New Federal Building, Pittsburgh, Pa.,
who can produce and identify records [redacted]

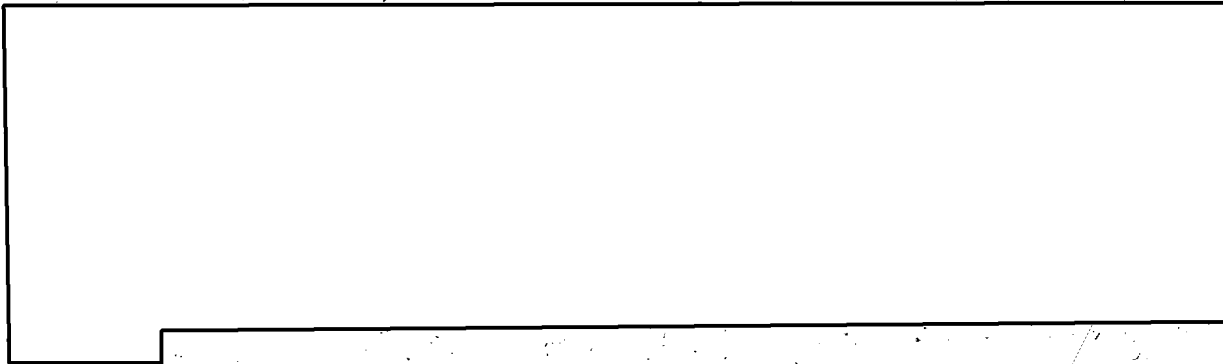
SALVATORE MARINO, aka

This individual resides at 755 Willow Glen Way, San Jose, Cali-
fornia, and is a partner in the California Cheese Co., with his son,
ANGELO. The company is located at 295 West San Carlos St., San
Jose. A social associate of LA ROCCA, MARINO was visited by
LA ROCCA during 1954 and traveled to Los Angeles, California, with
him. Both were taken in for questioning by the Los Angeles
Police Department while in the company of one **FRANK DE SIMONE,**
an acquaintance.

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1910 and listed his birthplace as Johnstown, Pa., when he served in the U. S. Army between 1943-1944 and when he was received at the Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary.



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WITNESSES:

JOHN H. BINGLER
District Director
Internal Revenue Service
New Federal Building
Pittsburgh, Pa., who can produce and identify records

WILLIAM D. BIGGS
Officer in Charge
Immigration and Naturalization Service
707 New Federal Building
Pittsburgh, Pa., who can testify to records which may be obtained by subpoena concerning the citizenship status and investigation of REGINO by the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

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ON *9/29/72*
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OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION RELATING TO ASSOCIATES OF LA ROCCA

On March 14, 1956, ANTHONY R. PINELLI, SR., was visited by SEBASTIAN JOHN LA ROCCA of 900 West Ingomar Street, Pittsburgh, Pa. PINELLI was strongly suspected by the Los Angeles Calif. Police Department Intelligence Division of being involved as a leading figure in the traffic of narcotics, and was an associate of TONY ACCARDO and SAM GIANCANA of Chicago, Illinois. He was believed by Police of Los Angeles to be highly placed in nationwide criminal activities. LA ROCCA was accompanied by SALVATORE MARINO, owner of the California

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C. LEGITIMATE ENTERPRISES

1. North Star Cement Block Company
12 McCandless Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa.

On May 28, 1951, NICHOLAS DI PASQUALE, 175 Georgetown St., West View, Pa., filed a fictitious name certificate in the Office of the Prothonotary of Allegheny County, Pa., for the North Star Cement Block Company, indicating the type of business of this company as manufacture and sale of cement block and purchase and repair of building material, equipment, machinery and supplies. The owners of the company were listed as NICHOLAS DI PASQUALE; THEODORE P. RIPEPI, 217 Andrew Street, Pittsburgh; URSULA RIPEPI, 4720 Brownsville Road, Pittsburgh; and JOHN S. LA ROCCA. R.F.D. 7, Pittsburgh 29, Pa.

On February 10, 1952, a Certificate of Withdrawal of NICHOLAS DI PASQUALE, dated November 30, 1951, was filed in the Prothonotary's Office.

Witness:

DAVID B. ROBERTS,
Prothonotary, Allegheny County,
City-County Building
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Mr. ROBERTS or his designated representative can produce Certificate #38421 as recorded in Volume 120 on page 139, as well as the Withdrawal Certificate of NICHOLAS DI PASQUALE dated November 30, 1951.

On December 10, 1957,

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Witness:

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Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service at Pittsburgh, Pa., were examined on December 16, 1957, and disclosed that at a hearing on August 3, 1954, JOHN LA ROCCA testified that he owned a 47½ per cent interest in the North Star Cement Block Company, that 47½ per cent of the company was owned by TONY RIPEPI and that the remaining 5 per cent was owned by THEODORE RIPEPI, a nephew of TONY.

Witness:

WILLIAM D. BIGGS,
Officer in Charge
Immigration and Naturalization Service
New Federal Building
Pittsburgh, Pa.

BIGGS can produce records recording testimony of LA ROCCA at a hearing held on August 3, 1954.

On income tax returns filed for the years 1952 through 1960,
JOHN LA ROCCA

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