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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (92-6054)

DATE: 1/23/63

FROM: SAC, SAN FRANCISCO (92-593)

SUBJECT: CRIMINAL "COMMISSION"; et al
AR - CONSPIRACY

Re Bureau letter to New York, 1/8/63.

SF 2550-C-TE is an American born citizen of Sicilian extraction. He has been in the organization involved since 1955. His command of the Italian language is not complete since he has learned it in this country, speaking it among Sicilians although generally using the English language among his associates. His spelling and pronunciation of words is not always accurate by his own admission.

The following information concerning the organization to which he belongs has been given the informant by other members of the organization. The informant was interviewed for the information reported herein on January 18, 1963, by SAs ROY L. ERICKSON and HAROLD V. CATES. He cannot now recall the person who made statements or gave him information in the usual instance, nor can he now recall the time or place the information was given to him, but when recollection is available it is set out.

The informant may in the future recall further items of interest and these will then be reported.

- 2 - Bureau
- 2 - New York City (92-2300)
- 1 - Phoenix
- 10 - San Francisco (92-593)
 - (1 - 92-41 Criminal Intelligence Program)
 - (1 - 137-2571, SF 2550-C-TE)
 - (1 - 92-508, ALEX CAMARATA)
 - (1 - 92-211, PETER MISURACA)
 - (1 - 92-131, JOSEPH BONANO)
 - (1 - 92-507, EMANUEL FIGLIA)
 - (1 - 92-506, CHARLES CARBONE)
 - (1 - 92-124, JOSEPH CERRITO)
 - (1 - 92-180, ANGELO MARINO)

RLE/lr
(15)

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Following is the information he can presently give concerning the organization to which he belongs received through participation as well as statements made to him by other members.

ORIGIN

The organization SF 2550-C-TE belongs to 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

The informant states 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 Copo.

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 says is a "Group" headed by one man called a "Copo". This "Group" is frequently called a "Family," and may be the same as a "Circle."

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can deal with others outside even though they are not actual members. The informant was first advised of the existence of this organization after his work with ALEX CAMARATA and PETE MISURACA in connection with their attempted extortion of HAROLD SMITH, SR., Harold's Club, Reno, Nevada. ALEX CAMARATA had been a close friend of the informant for several years. The informant stood up for the son of ALEX CAMARATA at his christening, and the daughter of the informant was a school mate of the son of ALEX CAMARATA.

CAMARATA came to the informant around 1954 and said that they had a chance to make a little money. He said that his uncle, PETE MISURACA, had been selected to work with CAMARATA and the informant in connection with a "little job" that had to be done in Reno. He was told that he had been "checked out" and the organization felt he would listen to any proposition and would be a safe risk. He had never met PETE MISURACA. The first meeting involving this matter was held in the home of CAMARATA, at which time the informant was introduced to PETE MISURACA. The informant was told how HAROLD SMITH, SR. had "welched" on a deal and owed PETE MISURACA money. Several meetings were held in connection with this matter. It was decided that this "Group" would contact SMITH to secure \$100,000.00 because SMITH had made a contract and broke it. The informant was told this was necessary because the organization took care of its own problems and never went to the police.

During one of the early meetings he met JOHN MISURACA. He learned that this individual had been in Reno and talked to a FRANK SORCE. ART PRICE was also in attendance at some of the meetings in this matter.

During the activities involved with the attempt to secure the money from HAROLD SMITH, ALEX CAMARATA told the informant that if the problem was worked out, they would be asked into the "Organization." Details are vague to the informant, but he states he knows he was lead to believe this meant the "Mafia."

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On one occasion JOHN MISURACA told the informant he would be taken into the organization. The informant asked him if he was to understand that this was the "Mafia", and if he was to be "made". He advised that he used this word because he had read it in books. He was told by JOHN MISURACA that it was the "Mafia" and that he would be brought into the organization on the recommendation of JOHN MISURACA. MISURACA told him that he may have to be proved before getting "pinched". The informant was later told by PETE MISURACA and ALEX CAMARATA that JOHN MISURACA had talked to them about the informant who called him a cool customer based on his actions in Reno.

INITIATION AND OATH

The informant recalls 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 recalls 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.

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At the initiation, he was told that whoever "pinches" him would be his godfather. LEO 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 recalls the word baptised being used. He recalls 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.

He recalls 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 "Copo." 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 "Copo" first. He does 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 does not know the reason for this. He learned that a "Don" could not go back east unless he got the permission of BOMANO, 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."

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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 dropped two years ago. He himself was not required to give often because no one told him who to give his money to. 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 is a member is by introducing the person as a "friend of ours" or "amigo Nost(r)a"