
Agency Information

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JOSEPH RAYMOND MEROLA
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MM 87-14090

With respect to this theft having been fingered by JOSEPH PATRICK VALENZA to CHARLES J. "CHAMP" GAGLIANO, the following is set forth:

CHARLES J. GAGLIANO is a top jewel thief of the Miami Office, Bureau file 87-53596. GAGLIANO's activities have been under investigation by the Miami Office since March 28, 1960. He is known to be a house and motel prowler and to engage in store burglaries, particularly where safes are involved. Mrs. RUTH HUNT, 3341 Northwest 103rd Street, whose name appears in the details of this report, as advising that GAGLIANO was at his residence on the evening of March 20, and the morning of March 21, 1961, is a neighborhood source who is contacted frequently and who is aware of GAGLIANO's activities as a burglar.

OTHER 4

[redacted] a former PCI of the Miami Office, was in contact with GAGLIANO prior to this theft and following the theft, and advised that GAGLIANO gave no indication that he was involved. [redacted] believes that should GAGLIANO have been involved in any manner in a theft as large as instant case, he would have known about same.

- INFORMANTS -

The following information is set forth which relates to the contact of informants concerning this case.

PCI HENRY SCHECHTMAN advised SA WILLIAM L. EDDY on March 21, 1961, that he had no information concerning this theft or the subjects involved. He advised it was common knowledge among thieves that the victim had very good jewelry and that she wore this jewelry, being quite obvious with it. SCHECHTMAN advised that he has not seen EDWARD PURDY in the Miami area, either prior to or after this theft and does not believe that PURDY is in this locality.

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MM 644-C is presently incarcerated at Raiford State Prison, Raiford, Florida, and is not available for interview. Prior to his being incarcerated, MM 644-C mentioned that EDWARD PURDY had discussed with the informant the fact that the owners of the Hofbrau Haus would be a good "score".

Miami sources who have in the past been aware of PURDY's presence in the area, were contacted and none have known PURDY to be in this vicinity during the month of March, 1961.

On the afternoon of March 21, 1961, MM 722-C telephonically contacted SA H. WAYNE SWINNEY from Jacksonville, Florida, advising he had just read a newspaper account of the robbery of the owners of the Hofbrau Haus Restaurant, Hallandale. Informant volunteered his opinion this score might well have been pulled by JOSEPH MEROLA of Miami Beach, inasmuch as MM 722-C in the past had heard MEROLA comment concerning the expensive jewelry in possession of these victims. Informant advised the conversation referred to had taken place several years ago and MM 722-C had heard MEROLA had been attending the horse races at Gulfstream Park (located near the Hofbrau Haus Restaurant), and might have stopped into the Hofbrau Haus Restaurant, all of which possibly reminded MEROLA of this score.

Informant further advised he had learned in the past that EDWARD PURDY, formerly of Miami but for the past year or longer has lived in Chicago, had also been interested in this score and MM 722-C had heard PURDY discuss same several years ago.

MM 722-C stated that jewelry owned by these victims was beautiful and expensive jewelry; that he himself had observed this jewelry several times, and that most all the jewel thieves known to MM 722-C knew of the jewelry in victim's possession.

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On the late evening of March 23, 1961, MM 722-C telephonically contacted SA PRUE C. CLINKSCALES from New York City, making reference to information furnished in his previous telephone call. MM 722-C advised he had just been in contact with an acquaintance in New York City, who asked MM 722-C if he would be interested in handling a jewelry theft or "heist" in New York, involving an elderly woman. MM 722-C reported he told this acquaintance that because of other personal business in which MM 722-C was engaged at that time, he declined to handle the score for this acquaintance, but indicated some interest and willingness to handle the sale of the loot (a large diamond ring). MM 722-C advised this acquaintance indicated, without specifically so stating, that the score was all lined up; that the acquaintance was in need of immediate cash; that the acquaintance had been trying to get in touch with JOSEPH MEROLA's two boys, names stated only as PAT and MIKE, but these two individuals had been busy working for MEROLA and the acquaintance had been unable to get in touch with them. MM 722-C advised his acquaintance indicated he knew these two individuals, had possibly used them previously on scores, had confidence in their ability to pull scores, and that the two individuals had been busy handling jobs for MEROLA.

MM 722-C again mentioned, as was previously reported by him, that he had met two individuals described by MM 722-C as "heavies" at the Harbor Lounge, Miami Beach, on January 1, 1961, when a group of friends, including MEROLA, were at that night club. MEROLA had not introduced the two individuals for some reason not known to MM 722-C, but later that evening, Doc ROBBINS, acquaintance and close associate of MEROLA, who was also present, introduced the two individuals to MM 722-C as friends of MEROLA, who were from Chicago. MM 722-C continued that from information learned in New

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York City, these individuals are from Chicago, but apparently have worked and are known to jewel thieves in the New York area. Although he could not be certain, MM 722-C stated his opinion that JOSEPH MEROLA could very possibly have been "the man behind the robbery of the owners of Hofbrau Haus".

On April 3, 1961, MM 722-C advised that he had just learned that during the past two or three weeks, MEROLA reportedly sold to the two men working for him, known to MM 722-C only as PAT and MIKE, a 1959 Chris Craft speed boat, about 20 feet long, for which MEROLA had previously told MM 722-C he had paid \$6,300.00. Informant did not learn the name or any identification number for this boat, and stated that due to circumstances at the time, he had been unable to make any further inquiry along this line.

In preparation for interview of MEROLA concerning this theft, SA H. WAYNE SWINNEY telephonically contacted MM 722-C on the night of April 3, 1961, for any additional information. Informant advised SA SWINNEY that he was reluctant to make the following a matter of record, as he felt certain only he (MM 722-C) knew this information. He continued that he had learned from MEL ADLER, a mutual acquaintance of MM 722-C and JOSEPH MEROLA, that MEROLA had come into possession of some expensive jewelry immediately following the robbery of the owners of the Hofbrau Haus Restaurant. Informant advised ADLER told him MEROLA had sold two pieces of this jewelry locally in order to obtain \$5,000.00 to give to his "two boys" for them to use in getting out of town until things "cooled down". MM 722-C advised both he and ADLER surmised that was part of the Hofbrau Haus jewelry, but could not be certain. Informant continued, cautioning that this information should be treated most confidential, that in conversation with CHARLES DELMONICO, son of CHARLIE "THE BLADE" TOURINE, Miami top hoodlum, DELMONICO

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told him he recently purchased two pieces of jewelry from MEROLA for \$7,500.00. DELMONICO further told MM 722-C that MEROLA's "boys" had left town until things cooled off. Also, MEROLA allegedly offered a large piece of the jewelry to SAM KAY, a Miami Beach racketeer and millionaire.

MM 722-C advised that JOSEPH MEROLA also had some weapons with silencers attached to them, which weapons allegedly belonged to an anti-CASTRO Cuban group in Miami.

Miami has not conducted any interviews or opened investigation relating to the alleged purchase of \$7,500.00 worth of jewelry by CHARLES DELMONICO or in connection with the alleged offer of a large piece of jewelry by JOSEPH MEROLA to SAM KAY, inasmuch as these individuals are known racketeers and inquiry at this time in this regard would only jeopardize MM 722-C.

In addition to the above information furnished by MM 722-C, this informant has previously advised that he believes MEROLA's two boys "PAT" and "MIKE" were the individuals responsible for a number of kidnapings of well to do individuals which have occurred on Miami Beach. These kidnapings consisted of the forcible taking of individuals and shaking them down for a sum of money. One such incident was reported to the Bureau by Miami teletype of January 11, 1961, captioned, UNSUBS (2); HENRY HARVEY HERMAN - VICTIM, KIDNAPING. This individual was abducted at a stop light, was not transported interstate and was released unharmed with the promise that he would later pay his abductors the money demanded. No Federal violation was involved since no interstate transportation occurred.

Information has been received regarding similar kidnapings handled in the same manner, but victims

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that "PAT" and "MIKE" were in the Miami area on the evening of March 24, 1961, and left Miami on the early morning of March 26, 1961. It is also noted that DIMARE was killed with a .25 caliber weapon, and that this is the caliber of the weapon stolen from the DORIGOs in the robbery.

On April 12, 1961, MM 722-C advised he had been talking to JOSEPH MEROLA, at which time MEROLA was concerned over the FBI involving him in this case. He stated MEROLA stated there were only two or three individuals who could have reported to the FBI about this matter, and was, according to the informant, insinuating that he, informant, might possibly be furnishing such information.

The informant further stated it was his opinion that SAM KAY had not actually bought any of the jewelry MEROLA had had for sale. The informant stated that he believed "the outfit in Indianapolis" got it. He was questioned as to whom he had reference, and advised he was referring to GENE SAN SOUCIE, who was presently a partner of MEROLA and who was a wheel in the Pension Fund of the Teamsters Union. He stated he knows personally that SAN SOUCIE has bought expensive good pieces of jewelry in the past.

With reference to the "two boys", the informant knows MEROLA had working in this area and who the informant believes pulled the Hofbrau Haus score, he stated there was an individual from New York in Miami looking for these "two boys" to pull a score in New York. He stated he thought this individual had returned to New York, but determined he was still in Miami. He was questioned as to the identity of this individual, and advised he was RED POLLACK. He stated POLLACK has a woman in New York who has a twenty carat diamond ring and an expensive diamond bracelet that he, POLLACK, wants heisted.

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