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Via AIRTEL AIR MAIL
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TO: DIRECTOR, FBI
FROM: SAC, SAN FRANCISCO (92-1661)
SUBJECT: LA COSA NOSTRA - NEW YORK
AR
OO: New York

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Re San Francisco airtel to the Bureau dated 1/13/69, captioned "CARMINE JOSEPH TAGLIATELLA, aka, ...AR. 00:SF." San Francisco teletype to Bureau, 1/20/69.

On 1/17/69, SF 3208-PC, was recontacted and advised that he spent three years in Comstock Prison in New York with CHARLES "LUCKY" LUCIANO from 1942 until 1945. During this time, the Source indicated that he initiated a race riot. He explained that the prisoners were involved in repairing camouflage nets for the armed forces. On this assignment, Negroes were placed side-by-side with Caucasian inmates, much to the resentment of many of the latter. On one occasion, the Source became incensed about having to work next to them and started a free-for-all. LUCIANO, who was present and emerged unharmed, felt renewed respect for the Source as a result of his performance in this riot.

The Source related that approximately eight years ago, he travelled to Italy to visit LUCIANO, who at that time was residing in Naples. LUCIANO greeted him with enthusiasm and conducted a tour of the Italian peninsula with him. While in Naples, LUCIANO drove the Source to the ferry which carries passengers to Sicily. This was done while both were under surveillance by the Italian Police. The Source boarded the

- 5 - Bureau (REGISTERED)
 - (1 - 92-CARMINE TAGLIATELLA)
 - (1 - 137-SF 3208-PC)
- 3 - New York (REGISTERED)
 - (1 - 92-5360)
- 3 - San Francisco
 - (1 - 137-5207)

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Special Agent in Charge

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ferry alone and sailed to Sicily, where he was greeted by the Italian police who demanded his passport. When the source produced it, the police demanded that he leave the island and advised him that they were aware of who sent him, namely CHARLES "LUCKY" LUCIANO. Whereupon, the source returned on the next ferry and never did get the opportunity to tour Sicily.

SF 3208-PC described LUCIANO as "Il capo de tutti capi" while he was in the United States, meaning that LUCIANO was the boss of bosses. He stated that since LUCIANO's departure, no one else has held that position. He credited LUCIANO with being the prime mover in organizing "la commissione" which was designed to prevent further slaughter between the various factions.

The source digressed briefly to explain the conditions under which the Cosa Nostra developed in the United States, as they were explained to him by his parents and older associates. In the Nineteenth Century in Sicily, there existed only two classes of people: the rich and the poor. The laws were designed to protect the rich at the expense of the poor and conditions on the island were poverty-ridden. At the latter end of that century, a movement in defense of the poor arose and steps were taken against the rich to protect the rights of the poor, which steps included assassination. When a member of the rich class was killed, a sign of the black hand, or as the source called it, "il mane nere," was left on or near the victim. Before long, this sign caused terror to strike in the hearts of the upper class and the poor recognized it as an effective tool with which to combat their foes.

The source continued that as more organization developed, what is now called the mafia sprang up, with leaders and discipline. During this fruitien, many Italian-Sicilians emigrated to the United States and brought this tradition with them, settling mainly in the New York area and the Eastern Seaboard. Factions of the Black Hand and the Mafia sprang up and friction between them ensued until under the leadership of the more powerful bosses, what is now called "La Cosa Nostra" was organized.

The source advised that TOMMY RYAN has made himself very popular in New York and many members of the GENEVESE family find themselves preferring RYAN to the "treachery" of VITO GENEVESE. The source said he expects GENEVESE to be released

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from prison this year and expects him to be killed immediately. He said if GENEVESE is not killed, then he will have TOMMY RYAN killed in order to insure the loyalty of the other members of his family.

The source was questioned as to which family in New York he felt closest and he replied that without question he was closest to the old "Three-Fingers Brown" family which is now bossed by CARMINE TRAMUNTI, whom the source said he knows very well. The source said he knows TRAMUNTI as CARMINE GRIBBS and has known him since 1934, before TRAMUNTI was a "member" of the LCN. He said his brother-in-law was a partner of TRAMUNTI in the early thirties until his brother-in-law was shot and killed in a dispute over a pregnant girl.

SF 3208-PC continued that his closest friends are "members" of GRIBBS' family, including PAUL VARIO, who was the one who asked the source to become a "member." The source hedged when asked if he became a "member," but did not deny it. He referred to VARIO as "my capo." He stated that VARIO is in charge of Brooklyn for the GRIBBS family and said "BIG SAM" CAVALIERI is very influential now and may be a new capo decina. He added that if GRIBBS' status becomes permanent, "BIG SAM" may be named "underboss," inasmuch as there is no one GRIBBS trusts more than "BIG SAM."

SF 3208-PC advised that there has been a feeling of restrained animosity between him and BENNY DE MARTINO of the GENEVESE family, whom he has previously described as a large shylock. This feeling arose when the source obtained a loan of \$5000 from a "factor" of DE MARTINO's and then could not pay off the loan on time. A near war resulted and was only averted when PAUL VARIO; BABE VARIO, PAUL's brother; PETE (LNU), PAUL's "compare;" JOEY DE MARCO, a "member" of the GENEVESE family and close friend of the source's; JOEY PAGANO, another "member" of the GENEVESE family and friend of the source's; and VINNIE "BEANS" FASINERO (phonetic), a "member" of the GENEVESE family and friend of the source's all sat down with BENNY DE MARTINO and the source and arbitrated the dispute. The source added that VARIO was acting as his spokesman. The decision arrived at was that the source need not pay off the loan until he had the resources and the interest was stopped. DE MARTINO was displeased with the decision, but since it was an "official" settlement he had to abide by it.

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This difference occurred in either 1957 or 1958. Since that time, the source paid off all but \$1500 to DE MARTINO.

The source continued that about a year ago, he borrowed an additional \$1000 from JOE "BREAD," who is aligned with BENNY DE MARTINO, to use in the construction of a new restaurant, The Four Corners, New York City, New York. When DE MARTINO learned of this loan, he became angry again, inasmuch as the original loan had not been completely repaid. The source said he has not seen DE MARTINO since then.

SF 3208-PC advised that BENNY DE MARTINO is related to the owner of Vince's bar, where he hangs out, possibly as a nephew. Whenever anyone wants to get in touch with DE MARTINO telephonically, they call the bar and ask if "the uncle" is there. This is done under the supposition that if the line is "tapped," anyone hearing would believe the call was for the owner instead of BENNY. However, the "uncle" referred to is a code name for BENNY. Arrangements will be made with the caller at this point to get him in contact with "the uncle." The source added that if anyone calls and asks for BENNY by name, the person answering the telephone will play it dumb and deny knowing BENNY or, at least, deny that BENNY is in the bar, whether he is actually there or not. The source said BENNY's nick name is "BENNY the Bum," although few people dare call him that to his face. However, on occasion, BENNY will instruct one of his men to carry a message to another person, and will tell his man to say the message is from "Benny the Bum."

The source was queried about the leadership in the New York area of the LCN. He replied that the present "bosses" are CARLO GAMBINO, TOMMY RYAN, CARMINE GRIBBS, and (FNU) COLOMBO. The source said JOE BONANNO used to be a "boss," but he has been deposed and the source did not know who took his place. The source denied specific knowledge of either the BONANNO or the COLOMBO "families." He added that he has good contacts in the other three families.

SF 3208-PC stated that the most feared family in New York is TOMMY RYAN's, because almost one hundred per cent of the members had to commit murders to get admitted. He added that the next most feared family is GRIBBS'. He said that the GAMBINO family is perhaps the least feared and remarked that it is full of "degenerates."

The source said that ALBERT ANASTASIA headed up the GAMBINO family until his death in the 1950's. Then one JOHNNY ROBERTS took over, until he was killed on Grand Avenue in Brooklyn. GAMBINO subsequently took over and has been the "boss" since. (FNU) SCALISE was either a cape or underboss

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to ANASTASIA and was killed by members of his own family for selling membership, with the going price being about \$50,000. TONY the Geep took over from SCALISE and is presently a capo and possibly the underboss to GAMBINO. He is in charge of the Bronx for the GAMBINO family. TONY the Wep is in charge of East Harlem for GAMBINO.

SF 3208-PC identified one AL ROSS, an Italian whose real name temporarily eluded the source, as a "member" of the TOMMY RYAN family of LCN. He is in BENNY SQUINT's regime (FILLIPO LOMBARDI) and makes his headquarters at a club located two doors down from a paint store on 2nd Avenue between 118th and 117th Streets in New York City. ROSS can be found at this club generally between 11:30 AM and 5:00 PM. The source said ROSS is one of the largest shylocks in Manhattan and a very vicious individual who would not hesitate to kill. The source identified one of ROSS' runners and collectors as an Italian known as "Willie Ga Ga."

The source said ROSS killed a Negro in 1953-54 for failing to pay off a \$500 loan and for getting "out of line" on the telephone when he was talking to ROSS. The source said this Negro got abusive on the phone and ROSS asked him to come to the club where they could settle this difference as gentlemen. When the Negro arrived, ROSS talked him into a hallway next to the club and there killed him with a revolver. With the assistance of one LOUIE DONE (phonetic), a possible relative of ROSS, the body was loaded into a car and driven to a section in the Bronx where it was dumped among trash cans. LOUIE was "made" a member for his assistance in this killing, with ROSS acting as his sponsor.

SF 3208-PC advised that ROSS was "made" in 1950-51 at BENNY SQUINT's headquarters at 116th Street and 1st Avenue. He was made under the sponsorship of MIKE CAPOLLO.

The source advised that CAPOLLO "made" the ERRA brothers in 1949, after they carried out an assignment for him by shooting LOUIE CERILLO (phonetic) in the Cosme, a movie house located on 116th Street between 3rd Avenue and Lexington, New York City. The source said LOUIE did not die from his wounds. LOUIE had robbed one of CAPOLLO's gambling houses, knowing it to belong to CAPOLLO. The source said the failure of LOUIE to die from his wounds had no effect on the ERRA brothers being made members.

The source advised that in 1957-58, he accepted a contract from a union on behalf of the LCN to enforce a strike called against the Reeves Instrument Company in Westbury, Long

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Island, New York. His assignment was to keep the strike going and prevent anyone from crossing the picket lines. The source said representatives from the union came to him at his headquarters in a pool room located at 117th Street and Pleasant Avenue, which pool room has since been destroyed. The initial fee was \$1500 a week, which the source collected. However, because of difficulties in enforcing the strike, the source had to obtain the assistance of other LCN members, namely PAUL and BABE VARIO and one PETE(LNU), whom the source described as PAUL's "cumpari," which is Sicilian for very close companion. When the added LCN members were included in the contract, the fee rose to \$3000 a week.

The source recalled one incident in connection with this strike, when members of the teamsters union decided to cross the picket lines. In order to avert a battle, PAUL VARIO, who had taken over control of the enforcement of the strike, went to TOMMY RYAN, who in turn went to (FNU) O'ROURKE, an official of the Teamsters Union. Accompanying RYAN was JOEY PAGANA. O'ROURKE agreed to instruct the teamsters to obey the picket lines and a major battle was averted. The source said, however, that several trucks were broken up before O'ROURKE finally acted. The source could not remember the name of the union for which the LCN was acting at this time, but he recalled one of its officials was an Italian named SAM DESIMONE, who the source described as a very close friend of PAUL VARIO and a person who had a very bad case of claustrophobia.

The source concluded by stating that PAUL VARIO is one of the most powerful men in GRIBBS' family at the present time. He was "made" in the late 1940's or early 1950's and used a flower shop, The Fountainbleau, as his headquarters. Next door to the flower shop was a union office for the bricklayers helpers which is headed by one of VARIO's brothers. This brother is also an LCN member.