

## ORGANIZED CRIME

### DONS and other major figures

#### **I. CARLOS MARCELLO**

##### **A. general**

1. New Orleans Don, but territory extended throughout Louisiana & Texas
2. New Orleans Mafia was the first Mafia family in America (dating back to 1880s)
  - a. FBI information indicates that Marcello could conduct syndicate operations w/o having to seek the approval of the national commission
3. Marcello extremely prudent
  - a. FBI was never able to wiretap him, although tried twice
  - b. Marcello's prudence is the main reason to believe he did not do it (and certainly did not make public threats about it) despite his motives
4. Testified before the HSCA in executive session

##### **B. motive**

###### **1. relations w/RFK**

- a. one of main targets of DOJ's organized crime web
- b. deported 1961 to Guatemala
  - i. had Guatemalan passport; obtained illegally
  - ii. went to INS for quarterly "alien" meeting and was immediately put on a plane and flown to Guatemala w/o luggage or money at RFK's direction

###### **2. Churchill Farms threat against Kennedys**

- a. Edward Becker allegedly heard Marcello shout an old Sicilian threat "Take the stone out of my shoe!"
  - i. talked of setting up a "nut" to take the blame
- b. FBI mishandled the tip
  - i. failed to follow up on the informant's story
  - ii. FBI handled informant by trying to discredit him w/o totally checking out his story

##### **C. means**

###### **1. relations w/Oswald**

- a. Oswald's uncle, "Dutz" Murret, had associations w/Marcello family members
- b. Marguerite was acquainted w/several men who were associated w/Marcello lieutenants
  - i. one was a personal driver for Marcello and an acquaintance of Murret
- c. after Oswald's summer 1963 arrest, someone connected with Murret associated w/two of Marcello's deputies, arranged for Oswald's bail
- d. Ferrie (see below) worked at least for Marcello's lawyer, if not for Marcello himself and also knew Oswald (although he claims not to) through service in CAP.

###### **2. relations w/Ruby**

- a. Ruby personally acquainted w/Joseph Civello, who headed organized crime in Dallas and who was associated with Marcello
- b. Ruby knew Harold Tannenbaum, a New Orleans nightclub figure (and Ruby considered going into partnership with him in summer 1963), who

also knew Marcello

**D. Marcello family & employees**

1. Nofio Pecora
  - a. received a phone call from Ruby on 10/30/63
2. David W. Ferrie
  - a. may have been a pilot for Marcello before and during 1963
  - b. Marcello admitted that Ferrie worked for Marcello's lawyer, G. Wray Gill, on his case, but denied that he had a close relationship or an employment relationship with Ferrie
  - c. died mysteriously after being named in the Garrison investigation

**II. SANTOS TRAFFICANTE, Jr.**

**A. general**

1. undisputed mob boss in Cuba (Havana Casinos) and in Florida
2. background
  - a. born Florida 1914
  - b. father a mob boss for > 20 years in Tampa
  - c. took over "family business" in 1954 when father died (drug trafficking, gambling)
3. Cuba (late 53-60)
  - a. casino boss
  - b. detained in Cuba on 6/6/59 (or 6/21) along with other gambling dons by Castro. Detained at Trescornia, a minimum security camp. Released 8/18/59.

**B. motive**

**1. relations w/RFK**

- a. on RFK's top 10 list of syndicate leaders targeted for investigation
  - I. see Vol. V, p. 372 of Trafficante's testimony:  
Chairman Stokes: Now, Mr. Trafficante, were you acquainted with the Justice Department's program during the 1960s of physical surveillance against particular individuals?  
Mr. Trafficante: I was so acquainted with it that they lived with me for about 15 years.

**b. threat**

- i. Jose Aleman (prominent Cuban exile) says that in 9/62, Trafficante told him in no uncertain terms that he knew that JFK was "going to be hit"
- ii. Trafficante denies ever having made such a statement to Aleman
  - A. may be true that ST never would have discussed something so big with a non-member associate or really anyone except one other trusted person.

**2. Cuban financial interests**

- a. undisputed mob boss in Havana
- b. had interests in several casinos & wanted admin. to support overthrow of Castro
  - i. Sans Souci
    - A. Rosselli worked there briefly as manager
    - B. Joseph Stassi a partner of Trafficante

- ii. Tropicana (at HSCA, Trafficante claimed he had no interest in the Tropicana)
  - A. Lewis McWillie (later friend of Ruby) managed
- iii. Deauville
- iv. Commodore

**C. means**

**1. Cuban link**

- a. was the chief liaison b/t mob and criminal figures w/in Cuban exile community
- b. had no problem with political assassination, as evidenced by his involvement in the CIA plot to kill Castro and his apparent belief in the plot

**2. connection w/Ruby**

- a. Ruby & McWillie were friends
- b. Ruby probably met Trafficante in Cuba in 1959 during his visit to McWillie
- c. Ruby may have visited Trafficante in Cuban prison, according to State Dept. cable from London re: the testimony of John Wilson-Hudson (see below)
- d. Ruby was connected with other Trafficante associates, including R.D. Matthews, Jack Todd and James Dolan, all of Dallas

**D. did Trafficante double-cross the CIA?**

- 1. there is speculation that Trafficante's men were not successful in killing Castro because Trafficante was in cahoots w/Castro. Washington Post articles from the mid-70s indicate that John Rosselli and other mob informants believed that Trafficante was telling Castro all about the CIA plots against him and that Castro, in turn, wanted to kill JFK, using the same people JFK used to try to kill him.

**III. SAM GIANCANA (real name: Momo Salvatore Guingano)**

**A. summary**

- 1. Chicago
- 2. Involved in CIA plots to kill Castro
- 3. Sleeping w/Exner during JFK affair
- 4. Supported JFK in 1960 election, possibly through Sinatra & Joseph P. Kennedy
- 5. died 1975

**B. background**

- 1. born Chicago 1908; in much trouble as young man
- 2. started in mob as chauffeur for Paul ("the waiter") Ricca in 1943, who was head of Chicago Syndicate. Continued as chauffeur for Anthony Accardo, when he took over in 1944 when Ricca went to jail.
- 3. progressively becomes more important (attends Appalachian conf., etc...)
- 4. 1960 - takes over Chicago syndicate when Accardo indicted

**C. Judith Exner (a.k.a. Judy Campbell)**

- 1. 2/7/60 Exner is dating Sinatra. Sinatra introduces her to JFK in Las Vegas at Sands Hotel.
- 2. 3/60 Exner first meets JFK at Plaza Hotel. Affair continues from then on.
- 3. 4-5/60 Sinatra introduces Exner and Giancana. Exner and Giancana become involved.
- 4. 60-62 Exner claims she carried at least 10 envelopes b/t JFK &

Giancana. Never opened. Says JFK told her Giancana “works for us”.

5. 3/22/62 JFK meets w/Hoover, who presumably tells JFK all about Exner. JFK calls Exner one more time and then not again. JFK also breaks off friendship w/Sinatra @ this point.

**D. CIA plot against Castro**

1. **Robert Maheu:** Giancana’s CIA contact
2. **John Rosselli**
3. 5/7/62 CIA General Counsel Lawrence Houston tells JFK that the CIA is working with Rosselli and Giancana in the plot to kill Castro. JFK mad; tells Houston to talk to the AG before making deals w/mobsters again.

**E. injunction against FBI**

1. 6/63 Giancana goes to court to get an injunction against the FBI. RFK issues the order not to cross examine him. (Presumably, RFK concerned that Giancana could reveal JFK affair w/Exner and CIA plot to kill Castro.)

**IV. JIMMY HOFFA**

**A. general**

1. Teamsters Union President
2. Background
  - a. born 2/14/13 in Indiana
  - b. 1932 - working for Kroger and started a work stoppage. Founded a union affiliated w/the AFL. 1936, merged into Teamsters Union. Remained in Teamsters Union for 40 years.

**OTHER PLAYERS (by city, in alphabetical order)**

**I. Buffalo**

- A. Anthony deStefano
  1. worked for Magaddino
- B. *Magaddino*
  1. Mob Boss in In Buffalo
  2. Commission member

**II. Chicago**

- A. Gus Alex
  1. Giancana associate
- B. Robert “Barney” Baker
  1. (maybe Detroit) lieutenant of Hoffa’s and associate of other organized crime hitmen
  2. Ruby contacted within a month before the assassination
- C. John D’Arco
  1. Giancana associate
- D. Charles “Chuck” English
  1. Giancana associate
- E. Frank Ferraro
  1. Giancana associate
- F. Hy Godfrey
  1. Giancana associate
- G. Buddy Jacobsen
  1. Giancana associate

- H. Pat Marcy
  - 1. Giancana associate
- I. Murray "Dusty" Miller
  - 1. Teamster deputy of Hoffa & associated w/underworld figures
  - 2. Ruby contacted within a month before the assassination
- J. Lenny Patrick
  - 1. hitman in Chicago; connected w/Giancana
- K. Ralph Pierce
  - 1. Giancana associate
- L. Edward Vogel
  - 1. Giancana associate
- M. Irwin Weiner
  - 1. Ruby contacted within a month before the assassination
  - 2. Bondsman; also frontman for organized crime and Teamster's Union
- N. David Yaras
  - 1. hitman in Chicago; connected w/Giancana
  - 2. wiretapped 1962 - talking about contract murders he had done and would do

### III. Dallas

1947 - Chicago mob attempts to move into Dallas. Tries to bribe the Dallas Sheriff's office, including Sheriff Steve Guthrie. Guthrie turns them down, but tapes a number of the conversations. Guthrie claims mob members mentioned Ruby's name ("He would run a great front restaurant for gambling operations"), but when HSCA listened to tapes (2 missing by this point), no mention of Ruby.

- A. *Joseph Civello*
  - 1. head of organized crime in Dallas
  - 2. friend of Ruby
- B. James Dolan
  - 1. associate of Trafficante
  - 2. knew Ruby
- C. Lewis McWillie
  - 1. friend of Ruby
  - 2. moved to Cuba 1958-1960 to work in the Tropicana casino; ties w/Trafficante and Lansky
  - 3. Ruby visited McWillie in Cuba in 1959
- D. R.D. Matthews
  - 1. associate of Trafficante
  - 2. knew Ruby
- E. Jack Todd
  - 1. associate of Trafficante
  - 2. knew Ruby

### IV. Las Vegas

- A. John Rosselli
  - 1. Key player in CIA plots against Castro
  - 2. brutally murdered, hacked up and stuffed into a steel drum

### V. Miami/Tampa

- A. Johnny "Dee" Palmisano
- B. Meyer Panitz
  - 1. gambling associate of McWillie's; McWillie called him in 1959 from Cuba to tell him Ruby was coming from Cuba to meet with him
  - 2. Ruby met with him twice in Miami

## **VI. New Orleans**

Organized crime starts in the U.S. in New Orleans in 1880s. New Orleans crime bosses, as leaders of “the first family” are able to conduct operations w/o getting commission approval. One of the only parts of La Cosa Nostra that allows this. Marcello the undisputed boss for years.

- A. David Ferrie
  - 1. may have been a pilot for Marcello before and during 1963
  - 2. private investigator
  - 3. Civil Air Patrol
    - a. probably met Oswald when Oswald was a teenager w/the Civil Air Patrol; Ferrie was an instructor
    - b. FBI interviewed him after assassination & he denied any association w/Oswald
  - 4. admitted to FBI that he had personal contact w/Marcello in the fall of 1963
  - 5. Marcello admitted that Ferrie worked for Marcello’s lawyer, but denied having a close relationship w/Ferrie
  - 6. Died 1967 of a ruptured blood vessel at the base of the brain, shortly after Garrison named him in the assassination case.
  - 7. 544 Camp Street: Ferrie worked in this building for a short time in 1963.
- B. Charles “Dutz” Murret
  - 1. Oswald’s uncle, a minor underworld gambling uncle
  - 2. died 1964
  - 3. from 40s, had associations w/organized crime figures in the Marcello organization
- C. Nofio J. Pecora
  - 1. Marcello lieutenant
  - 2. Ruby talked to within a month before assassination (10/30/63)
- D. Harold Tannenbaum
  - 1. French Quarter nightclub mgr who lived in trailer park owned by Pecora
  - 2. Ruby talked to within a month before assassination

## **VII. New York (counselor of one NY family = Charles Locicero)**

- A. *Bonanno*
- B. *Colombo*
- C. *Gambino*
- D. *Vito Genovese*
  - 1. Joe “Beck” DiPalermo
  - 2. Valachi!
    - a. Only talked after Genovese marked him for death, thinking he was an informer.
    - b. One of the most protected prisoners in history. Died of natural causes in a prison in El Paso, Texas in 1971.
- E. *Lucchese*

## **VIII. Philadelphia**

- A. *Angelo Bruno*
  - 1. Mob boss in Philadelphia
- B. Weisberg
  - 1. Bruno associate

## **OTHER SUBJECTS**

### **I. CUBA**

#### **A. CHRONOLOGY**

1. 1933 Meyer Lansky (financial wizard of the mob) gets gambling concessions in Cuba; starts operating casinos under Batista regime
2. WWII halts plans b/c not enough planes & boats available.
3. 1944 Cuban economy bad. Batista makes concessions to some communists (among other folks)
4. 1944 ONI asks Lansky to pressure Batista to step down
5. 1944 Batista steps down; moves to Florida
6. 10/10/52 Batista returns & takes over (bloodless military coup). Mob supposedly paid off current leader. Casinos then get going.
7. 1/1/59 Castro enters Havana and claims new Cuban revolution. Batista & Lansky flee.
8. 6/6/9 Trafficante and other gambling dons detained in Cuba at Trescornia, a minimum security camp. Trafficante released 8/18/59.
9. By 1960 Castro had cleaned up Havana; deported mobsters and closed all drug labs, brothels and casinos.

**B. Cuban Prison**

1. Lewis McWillie (see Dallas)
2. John Wilson-Hudson
  - a. an Englishman imprisoned in Havana before Castro deported him. According to a State Dept. Cablegram from London dated 11/28/63 (declassified in FOIA suit 1976.) Says he met “Santos” in prison in Cuba. Santos wanted to live a life of relative luxury in a Cuban prison rather than return to the U.S.
  - b. says “Ruby”, an American gangster-type, frequently visited Santos in prison

**II. BLAKEY**

- A. HSCA Chief Counsel
  1. took over after Sprague left. Lots of criticism for screwing up investigation. May have diverted attention away from CIA involvement.
  2. wrote book w/Richard Billings (HSCA staffer). CIA preapproved book.
- B. law professor and Director of the Notre Dame Institute on Organized Crime

**III. HSCA INVESTIGATION: REPORT**

- A. Warren Commission
  1. found no evidence that Ruby & Oswald knew each other
    - a. even though both lived in Oak Cliff section of Dallas and both had P.O. boxes at the same place
    - b. tenuous third party links
      - I. Earlene Roberts: Oswald’s landlady. Her sister went to visit Ruby on 11/18 at the Carousel Club.
      - II. John Carter: also boarded at Roberts’ rooming house. Was close to Wanda Killam, a friend of Ruby’s
- B. HSCA Determinations
  1. Ruby & Organized Crime
    - a. HSCA determined Ruby not a member of organized crime, but had a number of associations
    - b. 30s & 40s - associated with David Yaras & Lenny Patrick (hitmen) in

Chicago. As of 1964, neither of them had seen Ruby for 10-15 years.

- I. Yaras & Patrick hitmen probably for Giancana
  - II. wiretaps from 1962 reveal Yaras discussing murder contracts he had carried out
  - III. Ruby may have talked to Patrick by phone in summer 1963 (according to Eva Grant, Ruby's sister, who said Ruby talked about speaking to Patrick during this time).
- c. may have moved to Dallas in 1946 to assist the mob in establishing itself in Dallas (see below).
- d. Lewis McWillie was a close personal friend of Ruby
- e. Ruby contacted the following org. crime individuals within a month before the assassination, allegedly for assistance in labor dispute with entertainer's union, but...
- I. Irwin Weiner
  - II. Robert "Barney" Baker
  - III. Nofio J. Pecora
  - IV. Harold Tannenbaum
  - V. Lewis McWillie
  - VI. Murray "Dusty" Miller