



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
SOUTHERN DISTRICT *of* NEW YORK

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, January 12, 2018

**Acting Boss Of Bonanno Organized Crime Family And 9
Other Members Of La Cosa Nostra Charged In Manhattan
Federal Court With Racketeering And Related Offenses**

Geoffrey S. Berman, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Angel M. Melendez, Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Field Office of the Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations ("HSI"), Michael C. Mikulka, the Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Regional Office of the United States Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, ("DOL-OIG"), Charles Brandeis, Special Agent-in-Charge of the U.S. Department of State's Diplomatic Security Service, New York Field Office ("DSS"), and James P. O'Neill, the Commissioner of the New York City Police Department ("NYPD"), announced the unsealing of an Indictment charging 10 individuals with racketeering and other offenses in connection with the activities of the organized crime families of La Cosa Nostra. The Indictment charges eight members of the Bonanno Family – Acting Boss JOSEPH CAMMARANO, JR., Consigliere JOHN ZANCOCCIO, JOSEPH SABELLA, GEORGE TROPIANO, ALBERT ARMETTA, DOMENICK MINIERO, JOSEPH SANTAPAOLO, and SIMONE ESPOSITO – with racketeering conspiracy involving a wide range of crimes, including extortion, loansharking, wire and mail fraud, narcotics distribution, and conspiracy to commit murder. Genovese Family member ERNEST MONTEVECCHI is charged with participating in that conspiracy as well. Several of the defendants and Luchese Family member EUGENE CASTELLE are charged with conspiracy to commit extortion. ARMETTA is additionally charged with assault resulting in serious bodily injury in aid of racketeering, and aiding and abetting the same.

Of the 10 defendants charged in the Indictment, nine were taken into federal custody this morning. SANTAPAOLO was presented this morning before a United States Magistrate Judge in the Middle District of Pennsylvania. The rest of the defendants will be presented before United States Magistrate Judge Barbara Moses later today. The case has been assigned to United States District Judge Alvin K. Hellerstein.

As alleged in the Indictment unsealed today in Manhattan federal court ^[1]:

La Cosa Nostra (“LCN”), also known as the “Mob” or the “Mafia,” operates through entities known as “Families.” In the New York City area, there are five LCN Families, namely, the Bonanno Family, the Genovese Family, the Luchese Family, the Colombo Family, and the Gambino Family. Members and associates of one La Cosa Nostra family at times work together with other La Cosa Nostra families in jointly undertaken criminal ventures.

The Bonanno Family, like other LCN Families, operates through a group of individuals known as “crews,” each of which are led by a “capo” or “captain.” The crews are composed of “made” members, called “soldiers,” and trusted non-members called “associates.” Above the Capos are the highest-ranking members – the Boss or Acting Boss, the Underboss, and the Consigliere, or counselor – who oversee the Family.

At times relevant to the Indictment, the defendants held the following positions with their respective LCN Families: CAMMARANO was a captain and the Acting Boss of the Bonanno Family; ZANCOCCHIO was a captain and the Consigliere of the Bonanno Family; SABELLA was a captain of the Bonanno Family; TROPIANO was a soldier and an acting captain of the Bonanno Family; ESPOSITO was the Consigliere of the Bonanno Family; MINIERO, SANTAPAOLO, and ARMETTA were soldiers in the Bonanno Family; MONTEVECCHI was a soldier in the Genovese Family; and CASTELLE was a soldier in the Luchese Family.

Count One of the Indictment charges CAMMARANO, ZANCOCCHIO, SABELLA, TROPIANO, ARMETTA, MINIERO, SANTAPAOLO, ESPOSITO, and MONTEVECCHI with participating in a racketeering conspiracy. Count Two charges ARMETTA with assault resulting in serious bodily injury in aid of racketeering, and aiding and abetting the same. Count Three charges CAMMARANO, ZANCOCCHIO, SABELLA, TROPIANO, MINIERO, and CASTELLE with extortion conspiracy.

* * *

Set forth below is a chart containing the names, ages, residences, charges, and maximum penalties for the defendants. The maximum potential sentences are prescribed by Congress and are provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendants will be determined by the judge.

Mr. Berman praised the outstanding investigative work of HSI, DOL-OIG, DSS, NYPD, and the Special Agents of the United States Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York. Mr. Berman also thanked the New York City Business Integrity Commission and the Nassau County District Attorney’s Office for their assistance in the investigation.

The case is being prosecuted by the Office’s Violent and Organized Crime Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jason M. Swergold and Jessica Greenwood are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

United States v. Joseph Cammarano, Jr., et al., 18 Cr. 15 (AKH)

<u>DEFENDANT</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>CHARGES</u>	<u>MAXIMUM PENALTY</u>
JOSEPH CAMMARANO, JR., a/k/a "Joe C"	58	RICO Conspiracy; Extortion Conspiracy	20 years in prison for each count
JOHN ZANCOCCHIO, a/k/a "Porky"	60	RICO Conspiracy; Extortion Conspiracy	20 years in prison for each count
JOSEPH SABELLA, a/k/a "Joe Valet"	52	RICO Conspiracy; Extortion Conspiracy	20 years in prison for each count
GEORGE TROPIANO, a/k/a "Grumpy"	68	RICO Conspiracy; Extortion Conspiracy	20 years in prison for each count
ALBERT ARMETTA, a/k/a "Al Muscles"	48	RICO Conspiracy; Assault in Aid of Racketeering	20 years in prison for each count
DOMINECK MINIERO	85	RICO Conspiracy; Extortion Conspiracy	20 years in prison for each count
JOSEPH SANTAPAOLO, a/k/a "Joey Blue Eyes"	66	RICO Conspiracy	20 years in prison
SIMONE ESPOSITO	47	RICO Conspiracy	20 years in prison
ERNEST MONTEVECCHI, a/k/a "Butch"	72	RICO Conspiracy	20 years in prison
EUGENE CASTELLE, a/k/a "Boobsie"	57	Extortion Conspiracy	20 years in prison

[1] As the introductory phrase signifies, the entirety of the text of the Indictment, and the description of the Indictment set forth herein, constitute only allegations, and every fact described should be treated as an allegation.

Attachment(s):

[Download U.S. v. Cammarano et al Indictment](#)

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

[USAO - New York, Southern](#)

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