



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**EIGHTEEN ARRESTED IN COORDINATED
LUCHESE ORGANIZED CRIME FAMILY TAKEDOWN**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, ANDREW CUOMO, the Attorney General of the State of New York, JANET DiFIORE, the Westchester County District Attorney, and RAYMOND W. KELLY, the Police Commissioner of the City of New York, announced the unsealing of an indictment charging nineteen individuals for their participation in a racketeering conspiracy involving the illegal gambling, sports betting, and loan sharking activities of the Luchese Organized Crime Family. Eighteen of the nineteen defendants were arrested earlier this morning and late last night and are expected to appear in Manhattan federal court later today. ANTHONY GARCIA remains at large.

This morning's arrests are the culmination of "Operation Crooked House" -- a two-year investigation conducted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, the New York State Organized Crime Task Force of the New York State Attorney General's Office, the Westchester County

District Attorney's Office, and the New York City Police Department ("NYPD") into the racketeering activities and other crimes of members, associates and co-conspirators of the Luchese Organized Crime Family.

As alleged in the Indictment unsealed today:

Twelve of the nineteen defendants -- ANDREW DISIMONE, DOMINICK CAPELLI, JOHN ALEVIS, PETER VELTRI, TOMISLAV DOBRILOVIC, SETH TRUSTMAN, STEVEN MAYER, CLEMENTE CASTRACUCCO, EDGAR CONCEPCION, PAUL CUZZO, ERNEST CUZZO, ANTHONY CUZZO -- are charged in the Indictment as members, associates, and co-conspirators of the Luchese Organized Crime Family of La Cosa Nostra. All of these defendants are charged with conspiring to conduct and participate in the racketeering activities of the Luchese Organized Crime Family. Eighteen of the defendants are charged with operating various illegal gambling and sports bookmaking businesses. Four of the defendants are additionally charged with conspiring to operate a loansharking business and conspiring to use extortionate means to collect loans from victims. (A chart of the charges contained in the Indictment and corresponding maximum potential penalties is attached to this press release.)

Income for the Luchese Organized Crime Family was generated, in part, through the operation of illegal gambling parlors, sports bookmaking, and loan sharking. Its members and associates used various techniques to avoid or obstruct law enforcement scrutiny, including the use of coded language to make arrangements for meetings and to refer to other members and associates of the enterprise, meeting in locations with loud background noise, and not specifying the names of those about whom they were speaking.

In furtherance of some of the racketeering activities, from approximately 2006 through August 2007, CAPELLI, MAYER, CASTRACUCCO, PAUL CUZZO, ANTHONY CUZZO, ERNEST CUZZO, CONCEPCION, VINCENT LAFACE, and PAUL AUST participated in a scheme to bribe a corrupt sergeant and detective with the NYPD to protect various illegal gambling parlors in the New York City metropolitan area. The sergeant and detective who accepted the bribes, however, were actually acting undercover as corrupt police officers.

ANDREW DISIMONE, 46, resides in Tuckahoe, New York. DOMINICK CAPELLI, 52, resides in the Bronx, New York. JOHN ALEVIS, 57, resides in Rockville Center, New York. PETER VELTRI, 47, resides in New Rochelle, New York. TOMISLAV DOBRILOVIC, 31, resides in West Nyack, New York. SETH TRUSTMAN, 27, resides in

New York, New York. STEVEN MAYER, 48, resides in New York, New York. CLEMENTE CASTRACUCCO, 48, resides in Tuckahoe, New York. EDGAR CONCEPCION, 31, resides in Queens, New York. PAUL CUZZO, 54, resides in Thornwood, New York. ERNEST CUZZO, 67, resides in Yonkers, New York. ANTHONY CUZZO, 40, resides in Yonkers, New York. VINCENT LAFACE, 30, resides in Pittston, Pennsylvania. THOMAS MANTEY, 61, resides in City Island, New York. PAUL AUST, 36, resides in Queens, New York. PHILIP MERCURIO, 48, resides in New Rochelle, New York. MICHAEL SILVERMAN, 31, resides in New York, New York. ANTHONY GARCIA, 39, resides in Queens, New York. OSAMA GHOUBRIAL, 46, resides in Queens, New York.

Mr. BHARARA praised the outstanding cooperative efforts of the New York State Attorney General's Office, New York State Organized Crime Task Force, the Westchester County District Attorney's Office, and the New York City Police Department in the investigation of this case.

"The defendants charged today allegedly committed crimes to finance the Luchese Organized Crime Family and attempted to conceal their criminal activity by corrupting officers of the law. Today's arrests mark another important step in our continued efforts to shut down La Cosa Nostra in New York City once and for all," said United States Attorney PREET BHARARA.

"These defendants not only allegedly operated a highly organized criminal enterprise, but actually attempted to infiltrate and corrupt the NYPD to protect themselves and their profits. This multi-agency investigation revealed a complex web of illegal gambling, sports betting and loan sharking, whose mob-connected principals are charged with bribing and cheating their way into business. My Office will continue to work with our fellow law enforcement officials to uncover this kind of corruption and conspiracy, and hold the alleged perpetrators accountable," said Attorney General ANDREW CUOMO.

"This cooperative multi-agency effort involving local, state and federal law enforcement was instrumental in taking down illegal gambling enterprises that featured wide ranging high stakes card games operating with seeming impunity in Westchester County and New York City. This same enterprise engaged in sports betting and loan sharking throughout Westchester County and the Metropolitan Area. What's most troubling about these rackets are the large amounts of money that were being funneled to finance organized crime activities and the paying of protection money to police to ignore the illegal activities," said Westchester County District Attorney JANET DiFIORE.

"Attempts by members of organized crime to bribe law enforcement into protecting their illegal gaming parlors turned out to be a bad bet made by bad people. Thanks to the coordinated efforts of federal, state and local law enforcement nineteen members of the Luchese organized crime family are now facing serious criminal charges. I want to acknowledge the NYPD's Vice Enforcement Division's Major Case Squad for their work in securing these important indictments," said NYPD Commissioner RAYMOND W. KELLY.

Assistant United States Attorney STEVE C. LEE and Special Assistant United States Attorneys PERI A. KADANOFF and LIVIA RODRIGUEZ are in charge of the prosecution. Ms. KADANOFF is First Assistant Deputy Attorney General in the Organized Crime Task Force of the State Attorney General's Office and Ms. RODRIGUEZ is an Assistant District Attorney in the Organized Crime and Criminal Enterprise Bureau of the Westchester County District Attorney's Office.

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

09-324

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United States v. Andrews DiSimone, et al.

Count	Charge	Defendants	Maximum Penalty
1	Racketeering Conspiracy	ANDREW DISIMONE, DOMINICK CAPELLI, JOHN ALEVIS, PETER VELTRI, TOMISLAV DOBRILOVIC, SETH TRUSTMAN, STEVEN MAYER, CLEMENTE CASTRACUCCO, EDGAR CONCEPCION, PAUL CUZZO, ERNEST CUZZO, ANTHONY CUZZO	20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense
2	Racketeering	DOMINICK CAPELLI, JOHN ALEVIS, PETER VELTRI, TOMISLAV DOBRILOVIC, SETH TRUSTMAN, STEVEN MAYER, CLEMENTE CASTRACUCCO, EDGAR CONCEPCION	20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense
3	Operating Illegal Gambling Businesses	DOMINICK CAPELLI, JOHN ALEVIS, STEVEN MAYER, CLEMENTE CASTRACUCCO, PAUL CUZZO, ERNEST CUZZO, ANTHONY CUZZO, VINCENT LAFACE, THOMAS MANTEY, PAUL AUST, SETH TRUSTMAN	5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense
4	Operating Illegal Gambling Businesses	DOMINICK CAPELLI, JOHN ALEVIS, PETER VELTRI TOMISLAV DOBRILOVIC, SETH TRUSTMAN	5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense
5	Operating Illegal Gambling Businesses	DOMINICK CAPELLI, JOHN ALEVIS, STEVEN MAYER, EDGAR CONCEPCION	5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense

Count	Charge	Defendants	Maximum Penalty
6	Operating Illegal Gambling Businesses	JOHN ALEVIS, SETH TRUSTMAN, MICHAEL SILVERMAN	5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense
7	Operating Illegal Gambling Businesses	STEVEN MAYER, ANTHONY GARCIA, OSAMA GHOUBRIAL	5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense
8	Operating Illegal Gambling Businesses	ANTHONY CUZZO, ERNEST CUZZO, PAUL CUZZO, THOMAS MANTEY	5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense
9	Operating Illegal Gambling Businesses	DOMINICK CAPELLI, PHILIP MERCURIO	5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense
10	Using Facility in Interstate Commerce in Aid of Racketeering Enterprise	DOMINICK CAPELLI, STEVEN MAYER, CLEMENTE CASTRACUCCO, PAUL CUZZO, ANTHONY CUZZO, ERNEST CUZZO, EDGAR CONCEPCION, VINCENT LAFACE, PAUL AUST	5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense
11	Conspiracy to Make Extortionate Extensions of Credit	DOMINICK CAPELLI, JOHN ALEVIS, PETER VELTRI, TOMISLAV DOBRILOVIC	20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense
12	Conspiracy to Use Extortionate Means to Collect Extensions of Credit	DOMINICK CAPELLI, JOHN ALEVIS, PETER VELTRI, TOMISLAV DOBRILOVIC	20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense