



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 17, 2008**

**CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
YUSILL SCRIBNER
REBEKAH CARMICHAEL
JANICE OH
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600**

**GENOVESE FAMILY ASSOCIATE SENTENCED TO 147 MONTHS IN
PRISON FOR ROBBERY, EXTORTION, AND FIREARMS CHARGES**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that JOHN MELICHAREK, a/k/a "Rocky," an associate of the Genovese Organized Crime Family of La Cosa Nostra, was sentenced earlier today by the United States District Judge SHIRA A. SCHEINDLIN to 147 months in prison. MELICHAREK pleaded guilty on June 20, 2008 to robbery, extortion, and firearms charges.

According to the Superseding Indictment to which MELICHAREK pleaded guilty and other documents filed in the case:

From at least 2003 to 2005, MELICHAREK was an associate in the crew of Genovese Family captain, or "capo," Angelo Prisco. In September 2003, MELICHAREK and several other Genovese Family members and associates committed the robbery of a business owner inside his home in Morris County, New Jersey. MELICHAREK helped plan the robbery, including by recruiting several others to break into the home and commit the robbery. In the early morning hours of September 28, 2003, the break-in team that was assembled by MELICHAREK broke into the victim's home; tied up the victim, the victim's wife, and the victim's housekeeper; assaulted and pistol-whipped the victim; and stole several hundred thousand dollars worth of cash, collectible coins, jewelry, and guns from the victim's home. After the robbery, MELICHAREK kept a portion of the proceeds, and paid another portion of the proceeds as "tribute" to Prisco.

In October 2003, MELICHAREK orchestrated another home invasion, this time in Orange County, New York. MELICHAREK and his co-conspirators targeted the cash proceeds of the business owned by one of the home's occupants. MELICHAREK helped plan the robbery, recruited a break-in team, and procured guns for use during the robbery. MELICHAREK then drove the break-in team to

the victim's home. The members of the break-in team entered the home, tied up and assaulted a victim who was inside the home, and searched the home for cash and other valuables. During the robbery, while he waited outside for the break-in team, MELICHAREK was pulled over by the police for a traffic violation. MELICHAREK then abandoned the break-in team at the scene of the robbery.

From 2004 up to early 2005, MELICHAREK extorted \$50,000 from a small business owner based in Manhattan. MELICHAREK and others collected this money from the victim by using their organized crime status, and by making other threats of violence against the victim and his family.

At the sentencing earlier today, Judge SCHEINDLIN ruled that MELICHAREK was a leader and organizer of the robbery conspiracy. Judge SCHEINDLIN stated that "the conduct was intolerable and must be severely punished. It's the worst thing imaginable, not to feel safe in your own home." Judge SCHEINDLIN further stated, "This is a dangerous person; the public cannot be at risk."

Mr. GARCIA praised the work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Newark and New York Field Offices; the Orange County, New York, District Attorney's Office; the Westchester County, New York, District Attorney's Office; the New York State Police; the Morris County, New Jersey, Prosecutor's Office; the Rockaway Township, New Jersey, Police Department; and the New Jersey State Commission of Investigation.

Assistant United States Attorneys ELIE HONIG and LISA ZORNBERG are in charge of the prosecution.

08-231

###