

FBI Field Report

SA Paul Stafford

FBI, NY Field Office

Case Subject

THE DARK ALLIANCE

For years the ancient town of Corleone in Sicily has been known to produce some of the most sophisticated and infamous gangsters and has garnered a reputation second only to the nearby city of Palermo for La Cosa Nostra activity. Among the various clans that call Corleone home none are more powerful than the Castiglione's. According to folklore the clan is thought to have hailed from Greece (See "[Folklore](#)"). Eventually the clan was exiled by the Imperial Byzantine government and sought refuge in Sicily slowly interbreeding with the populace and becoming what we know as the Castiglione Clan today. Throughout the early 1800's the many traditions and customs we see with La Cosa Nostra in both North America and Sicily were established by elder chieftains of the Castiglione Clan. Folklore states that the Castiglione along with the Palermitani and Castellammarese clans protected seafaring merchants from Barbary Pirates and also sold weapons to privateers along with the usual extortion of Sicilian lemon farmers. The stranglehold of the lemon industry soon grew to encompass all of Sicilian and Calabrian agriculture and it wouldn't take long for an aspiring journalist, Roberto Falco to release an expose in his Neopolitan Newspaper revealing the clan's exploit over the farmers of Italy. Falco's mistake was underestimating the reach of the Sicilian Mob and soon Assassins believed to have been sent by Gaspare Scripari, the chieftain of the Castiglione Clan ambushed Roberto Falco in his villa and stabbed him to death later sending his severed head to his office in Naples. The brutal slaying of Roberto made shockwaves across the fledgling nation of Italy however the country was already dealing with threats externally and politically and had no time to focus on the entrenched Sicilian menace. For many more years the clans were allowed to grow and prosper down south while the government in Rome turned a blind eye to the rampant corruption taking place until in 1915 a series of events would begin to undo the fabric of La Cosa Nostra and bring it to its knees. The Castiglione Clan, contrary to popular belief, is actually made up of several families or "houses" who all get together to elect a chieftain. These families are, "Catalano" "Greco" "Castiglione" and "LaBarbera". Typically the position of chieftain of the clan was crowned through an election of the heads of these families and usually coincided with a peaceful transition of power however greed and a lust for power would corrupt many of the family elders. In the early 1900's morphine was beginning to grip the United State as a result of its brewing addiction first stoked as a result of the American Civil War in which morphine was used as a pain reliever. Soon this drug would be refined to make the narcotic known as "Heroin" and the Sicilian Mafia, particularly the Castiglione clan would become major proprietors of this drug first by wholesaling it to Italian Mafiosos in New

Orleans. The four houses within the clan all received fair cuts of the Heroin profits however the LaBarbera Clan lead by Licio Siderno wanted a larger take of the profits and devised a plan to murder the heads of the other families. That August kicked off a violent year in which the LaBarbera clan made several attempts to kill the chairman of the clan, Calogero Balsami using dynamite to blow up his car and even by using crooked policemen to gun him down. All attempts at whacking out the godfather failed and soon an all out war broke out resulting in 32 murders, 52 wounded and maimed, and 12 arrested (See ["The Great Mafia Scourge"](#)). Not only did this severely cripple the manpower of the overarching clan but this would catch the attention of national press and the authorities who would make limited arrests but the heat was on. The fledgling fascist party would also take interest in this and began using fiery rhetoric to attack the mafia and promise a new future for Sicily free from the grip of Cosa Nostra. At the end of the Great Mafia Scourge several members of the LaBarbera clan fled to the United States and set up shop in New York and New Jersey and within a decade the Fascist party skyrocketed in power and came to control the halls of government. Soon the vice began to tighten around Sicily and even though the Great Scourge was already long over Mussolini sent his "Praetorian", Alfonso Graziani to put Sicily under martial law and illegally jail and execute suspected mafiosos. The writing on the wall was clear and soon waves of inducted members flooded the United States with clear directives from the elders, Finish off any LaBarbera survivors and establish operations in the new world. Soon infamous wiseguys who would lay the foundation for the Lucchese family immigrate over, guys like Gaetano "Tino" Reina who would later found the New Jersey Faction of the family as well as early Black Hand members Paolo Sindone, Niccolo Marino and Domenico Castiglione. Those who stayed behind in the old country faced a much tougher time however and many were forced to stay underground in order to avoid the tyranny of the black shirts. Years of persecution ensued and to give credit to the fascists they did manage to jail a number of elder chieftains responsible for running many of the Castiglione and Palminteri Clans however they underestimated just how deep the mafia was entrenched and were unable to root them out of the island. At the end of the war the mafia emerged from hiding hungrier than ever. The devastated Italian government and its people were no match for the entity that La Cosa Nostra had become and the unstable government allowed them to regain nearly all control it had lost, if not more. The Castigliones in particular resurfaced in the early 50's with a whole new structure and having cleansed itself of disloyal members it was now more stable than ever before. Now engaged in Construction, Extortion, Garbage Hauling and Port Racketeering the Clan invested heavily in the war torn Sicily and made millions securing contracts from the corrupt local government. One of the biggest jobs the Clan managed to pull off was securing the contract to dismantle and scrap many of the pre war Italian naval ships which were to be destroyed due to disarmament treaties put in place by the allies. This scheme netted them millions and by the seventies the Castigliones were the premier crime syndicate in the Mediterranean. Soon in the mid seventies a new opportunity would arise through their connections with the nearby Albanian Mafia who connected them with the Cali Cartel which allowed them to trade Sicilian Heroin for Cocaine which was then smuggled into the U.S for enormous profit. This new opportunity would strengthen their ties with their old American partners who were now recognized as "The Lucchese Family". Members of the Lucchese Family like Paolo DeSena acted as brokers between the two branches and would traffick massive

quantities of Cocaine from coast to coast. The Sicillians would have competition though and soon rumors began to spread of a beast growing and spreading in the north or Italy. Said to consist of Sicillian outcasts "The Siderno Group" as it was called was a crime syndicate that wasn't bound by any code or honor. They killed for profit and would murder entire bloodlines that stood in their way. The group had long abandoned the traditions of Cosa Nostra and functioned merely as a vicious cartel like organization that was purely motivated by expanding and making money. The Siderno Group was said to be backed by a group of Shadowy investors consisting of members of the Italian Government, [P2 Freemasons](#) and [Neo-Fascist Paramilitary Groups](#). Soon the two groups would come into conflict over the border region of Calabria as the Siderno menace grew larger every year unchecked. War seemed inevitable but how do you fight an enemy that most don't even know exist? The Sidernos struck first by having both [Ciro Balsamo](#) and his uncle [Antonino Santapola](#) gunned down in a market outside [Castelvetrano](#). With their head cut off the Sicillians began scrambling to defend themselves but this would simply result in more death as The Sidernos killed the families of hiding gangsters. The Castiglione along with other Sicillian clans would soon rally behind [Pasquale Zannino](#) who was promptly shot to death in a hail of gunfire while stepping out of his bulletproof SUV. His son [Salvatore Zannino](#) would publicly vow revenge and he too was shot whilst leaving a meeting inside an auto garage. however he would survive and conduct the war from a safehouse in [Tripoli](#). The Sicillians struck back by using an unconventional tactic, bombs. They started by detonating a bomb planted in the elevator of an apartment building which was frequented by a Siderno lieutenant named [Vincenzo Gioa](#). the bomb failed to kill him however he was left with severe burns and was permanently disfigured. The Castigliones bribed EMS officials in [Genoa](#) to transfer him to a hospital in [Palermo](#) and soon forced information out of him via torture. Gioa gave up the whole picture and it was revealed that the Siderno Group was headed by a man named [Rozado Borghese](#), a former Fascist and President of "Banco Primo" who also had ties to the vatican. The Sidernos attempted to strike back with a bomb of their own by blowing up a tavern in [Corleone](#) however they packed in too much explosives and ended up leveling the tavern along with the adjacent parking structure killing several citizens. [Rozado Borghese's](#) brother was later shot by gunmen riding a motorcycle while buying food with his son. [Ettore Caponi](#), a Castiglione loyalist from [Palermo](#) was poisoned while in an airport by Siderno Assassins. Later heavily armed Sicillian hitmen stormed a safehouse belonging to Siderno goons and massacred thirteen people inside leaving no survivors. The Castigliones decided to not even allow the Sidernos to strike back and soon they received a tip that [Rozado Borghese](#) would be visiting one of his banks in [Napoli](#) that was half under construction. The Castigliones planted nearly 400 pounds of explosives in the elevator shaft of the building however when detonated the charges were so powerful it collapsed several floors of the building killing 48 people. [Borghese](#) as it turns out was not in attendance that day as he had received an emergency call from disgruntled investors who were beginning to see flaws in his master plan for control of the Italian underworld. They had called for him to meet them at an airfield in [Monaco](#) to discuss cutting back funding to his group. Realizing he would have to take matters into his own hands [Rozado](#) decided to ambush this "Council" of investors and before they could even get off their plane at the airfield he had his gunmen murder all of them on the airfield. During this time [Borghese's](#) right hand man [Aurelio Messaro](#) was shot in the back of the head and dissolved in acid after his

men turned on him. The stress was beginning to get to Rozado Borghese and to make matters worse one member of his board of investors, Anette Cavarello the head of the Italian Secret Service. Medical documents later showed that Borghese was suffering from stomach cancer and did not have much time to live. In the meantime however he succeeded in tracking Anette Cavarello to her vacation home in Barcelona and she subsequently was shot by a silenced handgun and put in her trunk. With most of the state now against him Rozado Borghese was arrested after his villa in Rome was raided by the Carabinieri and he was placed in custody however not long after a proffer session with the authorities in which he offered to give up the names of crooked politicians, he hung himself in his jail cell. Not long after the remnants of The Siderno Group either faded away or were killed or reintegrated back into Cosa Nostra. By 1988 after nearly a decade of war the Sicillians once again emerged as strong but also weary overlords. Ambitious prosecutors like Saverio Natale and Lorenzo Evola used the momentum from the various bombings to go after and convict many of the heads of the Sicillian Clans including Salvatore Zannino who is still believed to call the shots from his jail cell using his acting boss Rosario Saracino to facilitate orders. All seemed quiet on the island of Sicily until 1989 when something strange happened. In October of that year Italian Intelligence Agents captured photos of foreign individuals meeting with senior Castiglione Clan members at the "Villa Igiea" hotel in Palermo. Among the gangsters who attended were Rosario Saraceno, Paolo Badalamenti and Giovanni Milazzo representing the Sicilians. Also in attendance that day were Richie Avellino, Salvatore LoDuca and Paolo DeSena thought to be representing the fractured remnants of the once powerful Lucchese Family. It's unknown exactly what was discussed at this grand meeting however just days after this convention of wiseguys a wiretap in a mafia owned restaurant in Palermo recorded a mobster expressing his fears over a "Alleanza empia" or "Unholy Alliance". Not long after immigration officials in the U.S along with our FBI field office in New Jersey began to report an influx of suspected Sicillian Immigrants frequenting mob owned social clubs like the "Rossano Pizzeria" in Cherry Hill, New Jersey or the "Nosebleeds Sports Bar" in Yonkers. Many of these haunts are said to be owned by former wiseguys and it can only be inferred that they plan to bolster their numbers with imported Sicillian "Zips" directly sent to represent the interests of the Castiglione Clan. Along with henchmen the Castiglione Clan also has reportedly restarted the once prosperous Heroin and Cocaine pipeline back to the east coast which was discovered after a DEA task force seized a cargo container in the port of Boston carrying several tons of raw Heroin intended to be trucked to the Tri-State Area. It is clear that The Castiglione Clan has been sent to fill the void left by the defunct Lucchese organization and in actuality this new Sicilian-American hybrid resembles something more of a Cartel. This Dark Alliance is not just a partnership but a total Sicillian invasion of the American underworld brought about and facilitated by their connections to a few remaining Lucchese wiseguys eager to relive their glory days.

GALLERY



Courtroom sketch of boss Salvatore Zannino in Palermo.



Carabinieri surveillance of U.S Cosa Nostra members meeting with Sicillian big wigs.

[Attempted hit caught on camera - YouTube](#) (NSFW)
Footage of the attempted murder of Salvatore Zannino



The aftermath of the “Banco Napoli Bombing”