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MAFIA IN FLORIDA AND CUBA: FBI SURVEILLANCE OF MEYER LANSKY AND SANTO TRAFFICANTE, JR



This collection comprises materials on Santo Trafficante, Jr., Meyer Lansky, and Lucky Luciano, including FBI surveillance and informant reports and correspondence from a variety of offices including, Miami, Tampa, Jacksonville, New York City, New Orleans, Atlanta, New Haven, New York City, Philadelphia, and Chicago; Justice Department memoranda, correspondence, and analyses; Newsclippings and articles; Domestic Intelligence Section reports; Transcriptions of wiretaps, typewriter tapes, and coded messages; Memoranda of conversations.

Date Range: 1946-1977

Content: 11,290 images

Source Library: James Forman Library, Department of Special Collections and Archives, Queens College, City University of New York

Detailed Description:

The fabric of the Florida's, and particularly Tampa's, history is richly woven with stories of ruthless gangsters who first grabbed control of illegal gambling and liquor distribution during Prohibition, executed rivals with point-blank shotgun blasts, bribed public officials, controlled the narcotics trade and eventually broadened their influence across the Sunshine State and pre-Castro Cuba.

Santo Trafficante, Jr.

A Godfather-like legend surrounds Tampa-born crime boss Santo Trafficante Jr., who took over the Sicilian Mafia in Florida from his father in 1954 and built a criminal empire that was the envy of mob families across the country. Joseph Pistone, the former FBI agent whose six years undercover with the mob were chronicled in the 1997 Johnny Depp movie *Donnie Brasco*, quoted in testimony that "...Trafficante was the boss of Florida. Miami was an open city, like Las Vegas. But if you operated in Tampa or other parts of the state, you had to go through Trafficante."

Meyer Lansky

During the immediate post war period and the 1950s, Hoover's G-men kept a close watch on the activities of Meyer Lansky in Miami and Havana. Lansky and Lucky Luciano had begun building a gambling empire in Cuba and Florida as early as the 1930s, but it was the 1950s that saw the greatest FBI effort.

Charles "Lucky" Luciano

This FBI file references the Parole and Deportation of Luciano in 1946 and includes materials related to the Havana Conference, the first full-scale meeting of American underworld leaders since the Chicago meeting in 1932. Entertainment at the conference was provided by, among others, Frank Sinatra who flew down to Cuba with the Fischetti brothers.

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