

Hit man turns informer, testifies against old 'family'

NEW YORK — An admitted mob hit man and one-time organized crime boss in Los Angeles testified Tuesday there are 20 cities in the United States with "family" links to the secret organization known as La Cosa Nostra.

James "Jimmy the Weasel" Fratianno testified as a key prosecution witness at the U.S. District Court trial of Frank "Funzi" Tieri of Brooklyn, the reputed boss of the late Vito Genovese crime family.

Fratianno told a hushed audience about joining La Cosa Nostra, about the ritual crucifix and gun on the table, the drawing of blood and the kiss on the cheek of the family members.

"You have to be Italian," he said. "I was told when I joined, 'You come in alive and go out dead. There's no other way.'"

Tieri, 76, frail and seriously ill, sat listening to an old friend turned government informer whose information led to his indictment.

Tieri is the first person ever to be tried on charges specifying he headed an organized crime family.

Fratianno spoke casually about his part in nine West Coast murders. Apparently indifferent, he told about the inside operations of the syndicate and listed the cities with Cosa Nostra families.

Man shot wife in self defense

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Eddie King loved his wife although she beat him and stabbed him, and the state says it will not prosecute him for killing her because he was a battered husband.

Assistant State Attorney Kurt Simpson dropped second-degree murder charges against King, 47, after an investigation revealed the beatings he took during the four years he spent with his wife, Betty.

"What we have in essence is a battered husband," said Simpson.

King, he said, killed to save his own life but never stepped loving his wife.

The assistant public defender said he learned: — On Aug. 17, 1978, Mrs. King threw potash into her husband's face.

— On Oct. 23, 1978, she was arrested for

twice stabbing her husband in the back during an argument in a bar. King refused to press charges.

— On Aug. 4, 1979, King was admitted to Jacksonville's University Hospital with stab wounds in the back, arm and face. "She had taken a carpet tile knife and come down across his face," said Simpson.

"Once she left him lying in a parking lot with a knife in his back," said McGuinness. "She had shot at him on a number of prior occasions."

Much of the information was provided by Mrs. King's mother, who told Simpson her daughter's death was "inevitable."

The 15-page investigation report showed Mrs. King habitually carried a weapon. King had been carrying a gun for self defense.

The day Mrs. King was shot to death, King and his wife argued on the porch of a friend's house while others were inside. Mrs. King had been drinking, the investigation showed. No one saw the shooting but those inside the house heard the shot.

"He stated she reached into her purse and he feared she was going for her gun so he shot her one time," said Simpson.

King was arrested on a charge of aggravated battery. When his wife died at a hospital 11 days later, the charge was changed to second-degree murder.

Announcing dismissal of the charges, Simpson said, "I think our job as prosecutors is not only to try to convict those who are guilty, but to also investigate and determine those who are not."

Musicians approve contract

NEW YORK — Orchestra musicians ratified a new contract with the Metropolitan Opera, and negotiations began with other unions that must settle before the Met can begin its 1980-81 season.

Members of Local 802 of the American Federation of Musicians ratified the four-year contract Monday by a vote of 78 to 11, with one abstention and six absent.

The Met continued its negotiations with 16 other unions, which traditionally have followed the lead of the orchestra.

The musicians' dispute with the Met over working conditions had caused the opera company to cancel its season last month.

Met officials met Monday with representatives of the American Guild of Musical Artists, which represents 400 singers, dancers and chorus members in the New York company.

A Met spokesman said, "We're asking season subscribers to hold onto their tickets until they can be notified as to arrangements." The key provision in the dispute between musicians and management was scheduling, with the musicians demanding a reduction in their work week from five performances a week to four, plus rehearsals.

Under the proposed contract, the musicians will get the four-performance week, but will be paid less for their regular rehearsals. The schedule would mean no additional expenditure for the opera company.

The four-year agreement provides 9 percent increases in each of the first two years, and 8 1/2 percent in each of the last two. The musicians are now paid \$525 per performance week and also are paid for rehearsals.

A union spokesman said the union hoped it could return to work by Nov. 3 and the season opening could come as early as Nov. 17.

Ian Smith: all voting invites chaos

TORONTO — Ian Smith, who led the rebel Rhodesian white minority regime for 14 years, says the right to vote should be restricted, at least to people who have "the ability to fill in the ballot form."

The former prime minister, who now leads the minority Rhodesian Front in black majority-ruled Zimbabwe, called universal suffrage a "clear invitation to chaos" and said although it would be difficult to take voting rights away from people, new countries should restrict the franchise.

At one point in his speech Monday to 600 people at a \$75-a-plate lunch in Toronto sponsored by Universal Speakers, a private organization, Smith equated universal suffrage with "sheer madness."

Smith said he opposed the "one-man, one-vote" system because it put voting power in the hands of people who were least able to appreciate the process and who "don't deserve such a privilege."

Smith, who never referred to his homeland as Zimbabwe in the speech calling it instead "our country," said he preferred a system of "meritocracy" in which voting was restricted to intelligent, industrious and law-abiding adults.

"Any system which believes and practices that your most inefficient citizen, your most undesirable, unprincipled and corrupt citizen should have as much say in the government of your country as your most efficient and your most principled citizen is a clear invitation to chaos," he said.

Asked how to judge the qualifications of citizens, he said there were many tests and one of the simplest restrictions was voters must "have the ability to fill in a (ballot) form."

He said when whites arrived in Rhodesia more than 100 years ago, the land was undeveloped and almost uninhabited and "was one of the few parts of the world in which the wheel had not even evolved."

Blacks, he said, prospered and multiplied under white rule and many visitors still say "they see in our country the happiest black faces they have seen anywhere in this world."

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