

Oct. 27, 1963

RAMIFICATIONS OF THE COSA NOSTRA BONA

Senator McClellan and his U.S. Senate Anti-Rackets Committee has been trying to show a widespread net of Cosa Nostra groups all over the United States. The only names one hears are Italian. It is my contention that if the Senate Anti-Rackets Committee would investigate the "Cosa Nostra Bona" groups in the country, it would find so many 100% American names that the percentage of Italian names involved in rackets would diminish in proportion to the number of Italo-Americans in relation to the whole U.S. population. If the Committee investigates big cities which have large Italo-American populations, of course it will find a great number of Italian names.

This has created in the minds of many Americans that the big Eastern cities are just full of Italian gangsters and that these are the only kind there are. Senator Barry Goldwater goes around making speeches that the Kennedy Administration is hooked up with crooked political machines in the big cities and the intimation is that since so many Italian names are in the big city rackets, that the Kennedy Administration is dependent on these mobsters in some way.

Senator Barry Goldwater is right next door to Imperial County. He knows all about the rackets going on here country style, but he makes no speeches about them. The racketeers in Imperial County gross 66 times more per capita than the mobsters in Detroit, yet Senator Goldwater stays silent. Is it because these big farm corporations and their owners are 95% Republican and are his supporters?

It must be pointed out that the evidence presented at the Anti-Racket hearings involve gambling, narcotics, prostitution etc. It must be realized that if the general American population did not gamble, did not take narcotics, did not go to bordellos, etc., that the racketeers would not have any income. But in Imperial Valley, it is different. The people are not doing these things, yet they are being deprived of their right to make a living as little farmers, have extortion in taxes, and are swindled in their electricity bills.

Secretary of the Interior Udall is from Arizona. He knows all about the rackets here and particularly the 160 acres limitation matter. He knows that in 1933, the Republicans made a "political partisan decision" so that big California farm corporations can evade the 160 acres limitation in Imperial Valley. This "quickie decision" just 8 days before the Roosevelt Administration came into office in 1933, was made for the Republicans that owned these big ranches.

Secretary Udall has the reputation for being a liberal. He visits Africa and sees the new nations that have just broken the bonds of colonialism. He knows that 70% of the land in Imperial Valley is owned by absentee landlords which is just the same kind of colonialism. The only thing Secretary Udall has to do, is to issue an order saying that the Imperial Irrigation District must distribute the water according to the 160 acres limitation thereby reversing the previous "political partisan decision". Then if the big ranches do not like it, let them sue in Court. As the matter stands now, it is a difficult thing for the little people to get the money to hire experienced lawyers to run a lawsuit which will take many years. Where is the liberalism of

of Secretary Udall when he permits the 75,000 people of Imperial County to be oppressed by these big farm corporations WHEN ALL THE OTHER FARMING AREAS RECEIVING WATER FROM THE COLORADO RIVER, HAVE ENFORCEMENT OF THE 160 ACRES LIMITATION.

Your attention is also drawn to the fact that Congressman Udall, the brother of Secretary Udall voted for extension of Public Law #78 which results in domestic farmworkers not being able to get work. He also is supposed to be a liberal. Senator McClellan is a conservative so you would not expect him to get overwrought if the domestic farmworkers of his home county of Ouachita lost their jobs to the Mexican braceros. Congressman Gathings of the House Agriculture Subcommittee of course does not worry about this. The Congressional Record of May 29, 1963 shows that Oklahoma and Mississippi, both of which adjoin Arkansas and grow a lot of cotton also, did not oppress their farmworkers by importing Mexican braceros. So you can see how the Cosa Nostra Bona groups located in Arkansas cooperate with the groups in California. Congressman Talcott of Salinas Valley is a spokesman for the Cosa Nostra Bona in California. Every Republican Congressman from California plus quite a few Democrats voted for the extension of Public Law #78. Not one of these Congressmen had an Italian name and they vote for the racketeers benefit.

Have you ever heard the non-Italian name of S. Charles Thomas? He is the President of the Irvine Co. which escapes paying \$120,000.00 yearly in property taxes on its farmland in Imperial County. He was Secretary of the Navy in the Eisenhower Administration. After that he was President of TWA. He hobnobs with the Cosa Nostra Bona.

On Dec. 5, 1958, I filed a lawsuit (Docket # 32023) in the Superior Court of Imperial County against F. Britton McConnell (non-Italian name), the Commissioner of Insurance of the State of California. The complaint said, "plaintiff has made repeated complaints to the defendant about the Continental Casualty Co. of Chicago, Illinois, swindling in wholesale fashion imported Mexican laborers out of insurance benefits". Further on the complaint read, "they cannot speak English and are uneducated so that these workers are unable to defend themselves against the cunning schemes used by the Continental Casualty Co." In that lawsuit I sued Mr. McConnell for malfeasance in office.

The Continental Casualty Co. made very big profits in the insurance deal on the Mexican braceros. All its stock increased tenfold in value since 1953. All the other insurance companies became jealous and many of them paid Ex-Mayor O'Dwyer of New York retainers as high as \$15,000 to help them write insurance for the Mexican braceros. At that time Mr. O'Dwyer had stopped being Ambassador to Mexico and was a consultant in Mexico city. There are no Italian names amongst the bigshots in the Continental Casualty Co.

In the Spring of 1958, Mexican braceros came and told me that a bracero, aged 23 years, had been sick in camp and had not been sent to the hospital. He died in camp. His friends, the other braceros, felt that he should have been sent to the hospital. I sent a letter to the Imperial County Grand Jury asking for an investigation. As several days passed, my informants began coming in to tell me that they were being transferred out of the camp. In about 2 weeks, all were transferred out. About 6 weeks later a letter arrived from Herb Lee, the foreman of the Grand Jury telling me he had been gone on a trip so that he could not answer my letter promptly. I was invited to appear before the Grand Jury. It was too late. All the witnesses had been transferred to unknown locations.

Herb Lee is the manager of the Brock Ranches, chiefly owned by Warren Brock. At present Herb Lee is President of the Imperial Valley Farmers Association which imports the Mexican braceros. The Brock Ranches now farm about 8,000 acres on which about \$80,000 in property taxes are not paid yearly. Herb Lee and Warren Brock are not Italian names. Warren Brock is on the Agriculture Committee of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. In the Nov. 1962 election, Proposition #4 was defeated. This would have legalized the big ranches evasion of the correct property taxes. Herb Lee's address was in the ads of the "Committee for Proposition #4. LET US HAVE COSA NOSTRA BONA ON TELEVISION...