

106 Arrested in Gambling Probe

By Christopher M. Cook

One hundred and six persons were arrested yesterday in what Brooklyn District Attorney Eugene Gold called the biggest betting operation ever broken in the metropolitan area. He said the ring did business of over \$1 billion a year.

Gold said that the 15-month investigation of the ring which culminated in the arrests was started by Suffolk County detectives, who obtained court approval for a wiretap on a gambling establishment in Oakdale. By the time the information from the tape had been traced, he said, a chart of the betting network resembled a telephone wiring diagram.

One hundred and six of the 117 persons indicted by a Brooklyn grand jury were arrested Tuesday night and yesterday morning in eighth New York counties, including Nassau and Suffolk. The 11 others are being sought. The arrests were announced in a press conference in Gold's downtown Brooklyn office, only a few blocks from what Gold said was the gambling headquarters for the mob in the New York area, the Nestar Social Club on Fifth Avenue in Brooklyn. Feeding into the ring's 132-telephone network, Gold said, were bookmaking operations of the Colombo, Luchese, Genovese, Sciacca and Gambino crime families. He said 90 per cent of the bets were on sports events.

Because of the operation's size, he said, and limits on his office's manpower, taps were made on only 63 "wire rooms," places where bets are taken. But according to Gold, more than just a list of bets came from the taps. He said that for the first time, the mob's gambling operations had been clearly linked to narcotics traffic. Although law enforcement officials have long said that gambling finances narcotics, Gold said this was the first established evidence of the connection.

That connection was established last spring, he said, when a conversation in a wire room operated by Joseph Juliano of Brooklyn was recorded and turned over to federal narcotics officials.

That conversation led to the arrest of 23 persons for smuggling 7.5 pounds of cocaine from Bogota, Colombia, into the U.S. Among those convicted were Juliano, said to be a soldier in the Joseph Colombo crime family, Juliano's brother Frank, and Fernando Pardo, the son of a Colombian senator. The drug ring was estimated to have imported \$5,000,000 worth of cocaine a year before it was broken up.

The Oakdale wiretap that started it all led to one in Centerport and another in Fort Salonga, according to Assistant Suffolk District Attorney David Clayton. A phone in one of the gambling establishments was used for calls to the Nestar Club. Sources close to the investigation said that the tap that led to the club was on the Fort Salonga gambling establishment

phone of Louis T. (Babe) Caputo, of Melville, a convicted gambler.

"For five years they [the Brooklyn district attorney's office] had been trying to get a tie-in on the Nestar Club," a law enforcement source said. "Then the Suffolk people got this line on it."

The more prominent mob figures arrested included:

- Anthony (Kid Chocolate) Ricciardi, formerly of Woodmere, now of Brooklyn. A Colombo crime family captain active in the policy racket, Ricciardi has arranged gambling junkets through a former connection with Air Ship 'N Shore Travel Agency in Cedarhurst. He has three arrests for assault and robbery, one conviction, and two arrests for vagrancy.

- Arthur (Sunshine) Sonnenschien of Brooklyn, an associate of jailed Long Island mobster John (Sonny) Franzese. He was arrested with Franzese and pleaded guilty to bookmaking in 1971.

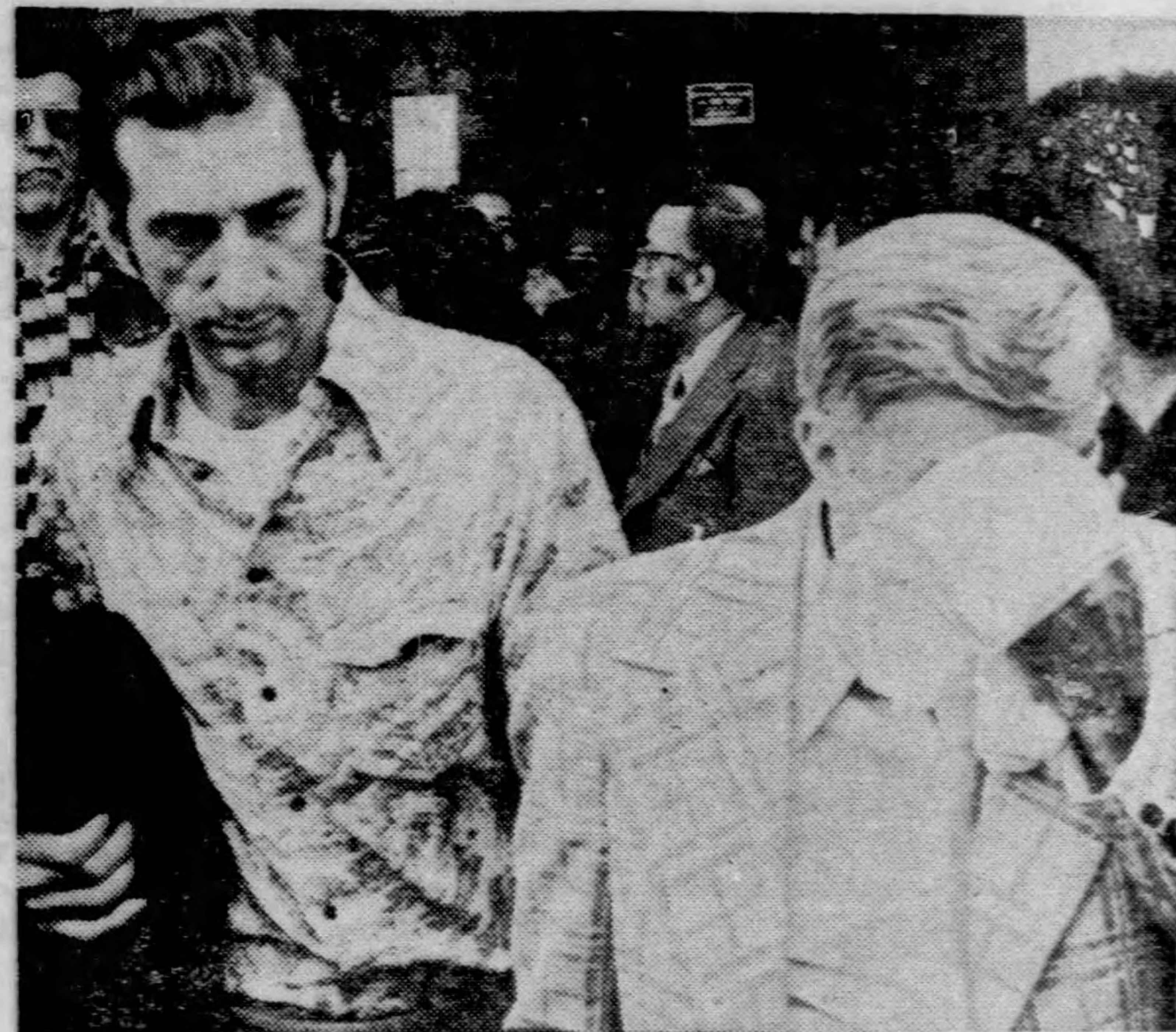
- Alex Nichas of Staten Island, described as one of the six top gambling figures on Long Island. He is reputed to be an associate of the Colombo family who handles more than \$75,000,000 a year in bets. Nichas started with the Gallo crime family in Brooklyn, and moved his operations to Nassau County in 1971. He has nine gambling arrests, and five convictions.

- Frank (Frankie Spats) Spatafora, 279 Nassau Rd., Huntington, allegedly a Luchese family associate. He runs the photography concession at the Huntington Town House and has at least two gambling arrests.

- Elia (Ally) Lizza, 9 Violet Rd., Bayville. A known gambler, he was sentenced to five years probation and fined \$1,500 in a case last month that arose from the wiretap on Louis Caputo.

Other Long Islanders arrested and charged or being sought for gambling law violations were: Victor Masotto, 1023 Fenwood Dr., Valley Stream; Donald F. Whitenack, Ganet Dr., Commack; Anthony Tramuta, 45 Wildwood Lane, Wantagh; Phil Tassoni, 9 Campsite Lane, East Setauket; Brian Mirkin, Sheep Pasture Road, Setauket; Allie Malangone, 26 Beverly Road, Lake Ronkonkoma; Thomas Granito Jr., 209 W. Pulaski Rd., Huntington; Robert Gioia, 725 Wellwood Ave., Lindenhurst; Mike DeVito, 110 N. Montgomery St. Valley Stream; Michael Dacken, 183 Stuyvesant Dr., Port Jefferson, and Thomas Iannone, 53 Scarcliff Dr., Malverne. All were said to have connections with organized crime bookmaking.

All 106 men and women arrested were arraigned last night in State Supreme Court in Brooklyn. Bail was set in varying amounts for those with prior records; the rest were released in their own recognizance. They were to return May 21 for a hearing.



Newsday Photo by William Sempf

Victor Masotto, left, and another suspect leave court

Daily News Threatens To Use Computers

Combined News Services

New York (UPI)—The Daily News threatened yesterday to begin using its computerized typesetting equipment if there was no "substantial progress" in contract negotiations with printers by Monday.

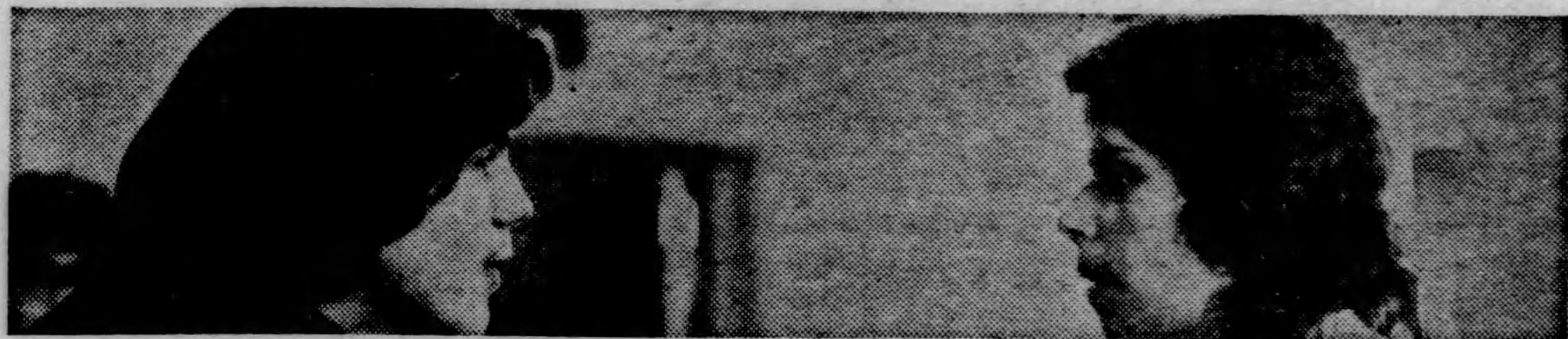
But Typographical Union No. 6 and publishers of the city's three major daily newspapers appeared no closer to agreement last night after a three-and-a-half hour meeting with labor mediator Theodore Kheel.

In a memorandum signed by News president and publisher W. H. James, the paper's more than 5,000 employees were told the printers' slowdown called 14 days ago by union President Bertram A. Powers "is having the same serious affect on our operations as a strike. "Therefore, if the slow strike continues and we conclude that there still has been no substantial progress in negotiations by next Monday . . . the News will begin using substitute processes to assist in producing type . . ."

A pledge of solidarity was issued by the publisher of the New York Times, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, who said that when the News begins to use its automated equipment, "the Times will aid the News in every way possible and any consequences that befall the News will befall the Times."

Powers declined comment on the News' memo. Powers has said that use of the automated equipment would be construed as a "lockout" and such a move might result in a complete work stoppage by the printers, who have been without a contract since March, 1973.

PEOPLE



You are growing sleepy, ve-e-ery sleepy

Great Neck—"We're doing something nobody ever did before," Brian Lauro said as he looked deeply into Jody Groberg's eyes. "Brian," Jody said, returning his gaze, "do you feel as if you're getting to know me better?"

There they sat, looking at each other, talking, occasionally munching on raw vegetables, but mostly looking, and looking, and looking. Yesterday, exactly five hours and 16 minutes after they started looking, they stopped—and hoped they had done what they had set out to do: set a world's record for staring. The 1974 Guinness Book of World Records

lists no champion starers, so Jody, at right above, a 17-year-old senior, and Brian, a 15-year-old sophomore at John L. Miller Great Neck North Senior High School, are claiming the title until it is challenged.

Record or not, five hours and 16 minutes of staring proved to be no mean feat. Jody especially suffered moments of doubt, and often clung to her partner's gaze only with a cheering section's encouragement. When the stare was finally broken at 7:36 PM, both were a little bleary-eyed. But Brian observed that "if more people stared at each other, there'd be no wars." —Kevin Doyle

Back on the job

One of the two jurors who were going to lose their jobs after serving on the Mitchell-Stans trial has been reinstated. Theresa Cavanna, 60, a risk clerk with the Maryland Casualty Co. for 13 years, said that when she returned to work Monday, she was given 30 days' notice and told her job was being eliminated as part of a general cutback in staff. "She's back on the payroll," company vice president Virgil W. Zanone said yesterday. "Putting it another way, a request that she take early retirement has been rescinded." Mrs. Cavanna was one of the 12 jurors who were sequestered from their homes and jobs for eight weeks.

Out of the mouths of . . .

The Rev. Billy Graham said yesterday in Phoenix that if the truth were known, President Nixon is not the only president in recent history to use "salty language." Graham, in the city for a crusade, was referring to Nixon's use of profanity that was deleted in the edited transcripts of presidential tapes made public a day earlier. "I have known five presidents, and I suspect if we had the transcripts of their conversations, they, too, would contain salty language," Graham said.

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