

# Parr Stalled Contracts While Crime Figures Plotted Move on Track

*This is the second in a series of articles about organized crime's efforts to take over the proposed Suffolk Meadows quarter-horse track. The reports are based on a two-month investigation by Robert W. Greene, Newsday Suffolk editor; Tom Renner, organized crime specialist; and reporters Carole Agus and John McDonald.*

Copyright, 1974, Newsday Inc.

On Jan. 17, 1973, Ronald Parr, chairman of the Suffolk Meadows Raceway, drove to the Chain-Link Fence Co. on Jericho Turnpike in Commack. The reason for the trip: to meet John Del Mastro. The meeting, Parr said, was set up by Nicholas Grande, executive vice president of the raceway.

As Parr entered, he found the building swarming with cops investigating a burglary that had occurred the night before. Del Mastro emerged from a small office, and closed the door behind him, greeted Parr and introduced him to Jack Italiano, owner of Talon Supply Inc. of Huntington and several other sheet-rock, painting and plastering firms.

Parr recalled that Del Mastro "highly recommended" Italiano for the track's sheet-rock contract. (Actually, Parr had met Italiano previously; the contractor had worked on some Parr condominiums, Parr said.) When the meeting ended, without any decision on the sheet-rock contract, Parr turned to leave, but Del Mastro led him back to the closed office and opened the door. Behind a desk sat a balding, heavy-set man wearing glasses. "I want you to meet a very good friend of mine, Tommy Noto," Parr quoted Del Mastro as saying.

Noto looked up, extended his hand and shook Parr's hand without standing up. (Parr later told law enforcement agents that he had felt like an employe meeting a boss who was too busy to show courtesy.) After chatting for a moment about inconsequential matters, Parr said he left and never saw Noto again. But nearly a year later, FBI agents, then investigating reports of mob infiltration of the racetrack, showed him a picture. "That's Tommy Noto," Parr said he told the FBI. Parr said the FBI identified Noto as Andimo Pappadio, the acting boss of the Carmine Tramunti (formerly Thomas Luchese) crime family, one of six such organizations operating in the New York area.

It is Pappadio who for the past two years has been making a concerted effort to penetrate the operations of the multimillion-dollar Suffolk Meadows quarter-horse track now under construction in Yaphank.

As for the meeting that day at the Chain-link Fence Co., Suffolk police intelligence and, later, the FBI were to learn in the succeeding months that the activity there that day was nothing unusual. They discovered Del Mastro's company to be a place where bookmakers, cigaret smugglers, loansharks and Cosa Nostra figures often visited. Concurrently, contractors, businessmen and labor figures also came and went. Another easily identifiable visitor was the short, 300-pound official of Suffolk Meadows, Nick Grande.

Grande has admitted to Newsday that he had visited the Chain-Link Fence Co. at least eight times to see Del Mastro. On at least six of those occasions, Pappadio was present, he said. Grande also admitted that Del Mastro had come to his office at Suffolk Meadows several times. On Oct. 3, 1973, Del Mastro spent an hour and a half with Grande and then returned to Chain-Link Fence to meet with Pappadio, whose car was parked in the adjacent King Kullen shopping center parking lot.

Pappadio's first known appearance at the Del Mastro firm took place at the January, 1973, meeting with Parr. Over the next 20 months, police observed him and Del Mastro together either at Chain-Link Fence, Orlando's Restaurant on New Street in Huntington, or Roosevelt Raceway's Cloud Casino at least 25 times. They also spent a weekend last September at Gurney's Inn, Montauk.

And there were others:

On June, 1973, Michael Casale, now-deceased captain of the former Paul Sciacca (now Carmine Galente) crime family, was seen entering Del Mastro's offices. Casale was a loan shark and bookmaker who police say had interests in garbage compacting.

On July 23, 1973, Pappadio met with Del Mastro and Italiano. They all went to Orlando's, where they were observed meeting with Aniello (Neil) Migliore, a convicted Pappadio family "soldier" who police say heads one of the crime family's largest gambling rings and controls a major cigaret smuggling ring. Three months later Migliore began serving a one-year sentence in the Suffolk County Jail following an 11-count conviction for felony policy (numbers) rackets. He was indicted recently in New York City by special prosecutor Maurice Nadjari and charged with bribing undercover city police officers.

On Aug. 1, 1973, Sam DeSimone of Lake Ronkonkoma was observed at Chain-Link Fence. DeSimone was identified in Brooklyn District Attorney Eugene Gold's bug on Paul Vario Sr.'s trailer as having talked to Vario about garbage contracts at the racetrack. Vario is a Pappadio family captain. In 1968, Pappadio was questioned by a Nassau grand jury about meeting with Vario at a mob gathering in the Palm Restaurant in Manhattan.

On Sept. 27, 1973, Pappadio's car was parked at Chain-Link Fence. So was the car of Vincent (Vinnie Beans) Foceri of Hurtin Boulevard, Smithtown. Foceri has been described by federal authorities as Pappadio's consigliere, Foceri has a long record of convictions for bookmaking and also was convicted in 1943 for the sale of narcotics. He has been described by police as a major policy (numbers) operator in the Harlem area.

On Oct. 3, 1973, the wife of Aniello Migliore appeared briefly at Del Mastro's. Later the same day, Del Mastro met with Grande at Suffolk Meadows, and returned to Chain-Link where he met with Pappadio. In the parking lot police identified the car of Sophie Foceri, wife of Vincent Foceri.

On Oct. 22, 1973, Pappadio, Del Mastro and Italiano met at Orlando's Restaurant.

On Oct. 26, 1973, Del Mastro was visited by Lenny Montana, who played the role of "Luca Brazzi" in "The Godfather." Montana had pleaded guilty two years earlier to conspiracy charges in Nassau County in connection with an attempt to extort money from a businessman by Joseph Colombo crime family captain Carmine (the Snake) Persico. Montana was formerly a fence salesman.

On Oct. 31, 1973, Pappadio remained at Chain-Link Fence until after 5 PM with Del Mastro. They met again on Nov. 9 at both Chain-Link and Orlando's Restaurant.

On Nov. 9, 1973, Pappadio arrived at Del Mastro's early. Then they drove to Bay Shore where they remained at a Cadillac-dealer's office for an hour and 20 minutes. Later, both were at Orlando's for dinner.

Two months later, on Feb. 4, 1974, Felice (Philly) Vizzari, a convicted loanshark and soldier in the Colombo crime family appeared at Chain-Link Fence but Del Mastro was not there. Vizzari was an underling of jailed Colombo captian John (Sonny) Franzese.

Between February and October, 1974, Pappadio and Del Mastro were seen together on numerous occasions, but on Oct. 5, the car of Simone (Michael) Coscia, 44, of Flushing, appeared at Chain-Link Fence. Coscia was described by New York City police as a member of a cigaret smuggling ring financed and controlled by Migliore.

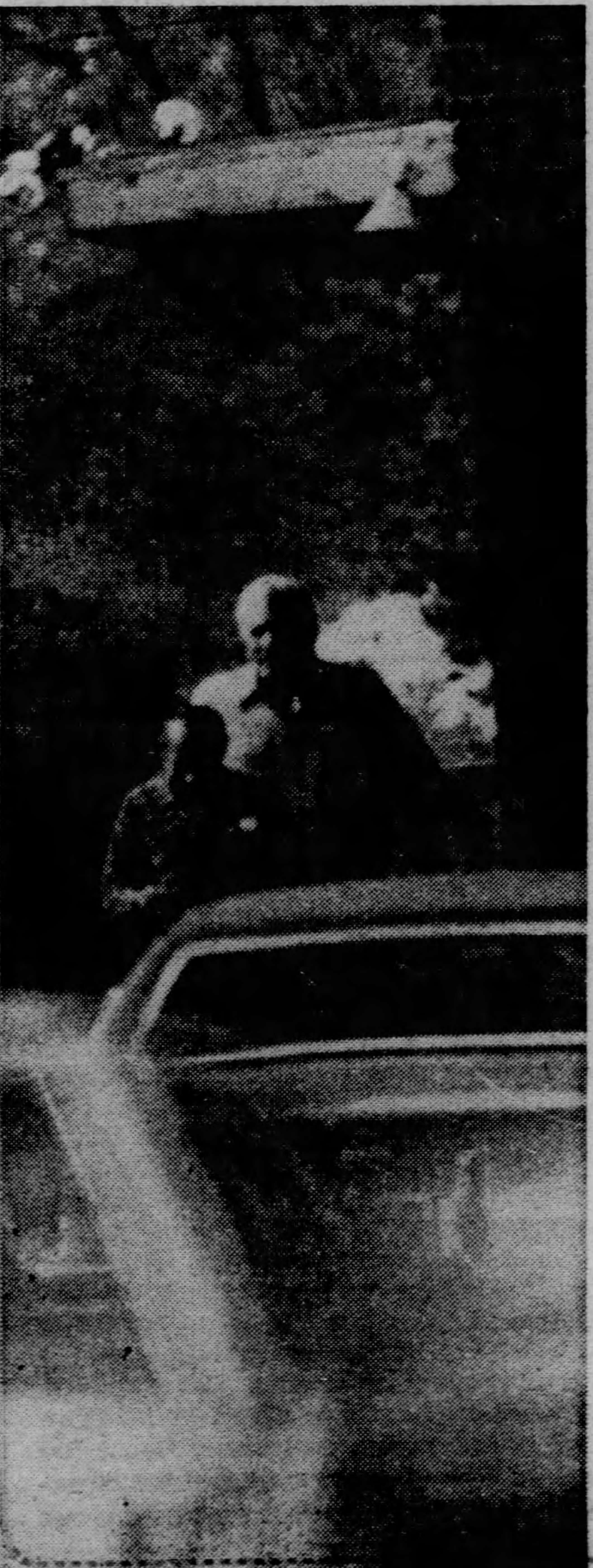
On Oct. 22, 1974, while police watched, Del Mastro, in a parking lot next to Orlando's, embraced Joseph (Joe Ship) Shipani, a Colombo family crime captain who police believe may have moved over to the Vito Genovese family. Shipani, once the city representative of racketeer Joe Adonis, maintains a summer home in Atlantic Beach. He had convictions and has served jail terms for tax evasion, assault and narcotics charges and is currently under indictment in Brooklyn for perjury in an investigation of mob control of the garbage industry. The day after their meeting, Shipani was credited by police with successfully mediating a dispute between rival elements of the warring Gallo gang.

Throughout this period, Pappadio and Del Mastro recommended to Grande the awarding of contracts at the racetrack. In addition to the Janu-

—Continued on Page 12



Joseph Shipani embraces John Del Mastro, wearing glasses, outside Orlando's Restaurant in Huntington last Oct. 22. Below, Lenny Montana shows up at Del Mastro's Chain-Link Fence Co. on Oct. 26, 1973, accompanied by a smaller, unidentified man. Montana appeared in the movie "The Godfather."





Crime boss Andimo Pappadio, with cigar at left, and Huntington businessman John Italiano on New Street in Huntington on July 23, 1973. Above, John Del Mastro, standing, left, Pappadio, center, and Italiano, right, the same day on New Street. Orlando's Restaurant, nearby, was a frequent site for meetings of the mob-associated figures involved in the attempted takeover of Suffolk Meadows.

## Track Chief Stalled as Mob Plotted

—Continued from Page 3

ary, 1973, meeting, Del Mastro again asked Parr to hire Italiano at an affair at the Colonie Hill in Hauppauge in 1974. Police reported more than a dozen meetings between Del Mastro and Italiano or among Del Mastro, Italiano and Pappadio together, and the FBI learned that Italiano had been on at least one occasion at Pappadio's home in Lido Beach with Del Mastro.

Parr, however, warned by the FBI about Grande's contacts, refused to award any contract. Grande denied that Del Mastro had asked him to support Italiano's bid. "He [Italiano] worked for Parr on the condominiums," Grande said.

Grande did admit to supporting Del Mastro as the contractor for fencing at the track. On one occasion, Del Mastro was able to take the track's only site plan from Grande's Suffolk Meadows office for his own use.

Grande at first told reporters that Del Mastro had failed to qualify for the track's fencing contract because "John was not set up to do it. He was going to farm it out, which wasn't satisfactory." Pressed on whether he ever asked Parr to give the track fencing contract to Del Mastro, Grande said, "Yes, I definitely did."

Del Mastro's friendship and meetings with mob figures over the past two years was not new. In the past he has admitted to knowing or being friends of several members of organized crime's hierarchy.

Born in the Bronx in 1907, Del Mastro has said he grew up with some of the mob figures he admits knowing. Working as a plasterer most of his life,

it was not until he came to Long Island and founded the Chain-Link Fence Co. that his stature grew, and with it his influence with labor and management in the Long Island construction industry.

Del Mastro was identified in 1964 by the Nassau district attorney's office as the man who formed the Harbor Lights Club, a powerful Long Island business group comprising 10 leading contractors including such notables as Frank Hendrickson, John Peterson and Leo Imperial. To the business get-togethers, Del Mastro brought some of his friends, including labor fixer Joseph Pizzo, and his boss, Genovese crime family captain John Biello, and Dominic Petito, waterfront racketeer and Gambino soldier. Pizzo later became a labor relations adviser to some prominent contractors.

In 1965, Norman Levy, then chief of the Nassau district attorney's rackets squad, told a Suffolk grand jury investigating charges of underworld ties to the Suffolk Republican Party: "On the basis of our investigation and on the basis of the intelligence information at the disposal of our office, we feel that John Del Mastro, in conjunction with Joseph Pizzo, is the labor front man for the Cosa Nostra in both Nassau and Suffolk Counties."

As Del Mastro's influence and power grew in union and construction fields, so did his influence in Suffolk politics. One of Del Mastro's major interests has been the Suffolk Rehabilitation Center, which serves cerebral palsied children. Over the years the center has done remarkable work in helping palsied children in out-patient

programs. To raise money, the center holds annual dinners and sells advertisements to businessmen, labor unions and others. Each year prominent Long Islanders are honored; one year it was Del Mastro.

Among the political notables with whom Del Mastro became friendly were judges, and county and town GOP leaders. Several years ago he came close to getting Kenneth Rohl the Republican nomination for district attorney. The nomination went instead to George Aspland. At the same time, Del Mastro has rubbed shoulders with political leaders like Joseph Carlino, Perry Duryea, Arthur Cromarty and others while raising funds for the rehabilitation center or acting as grand marshal at Columbus Day parades.

Del Mastro also became an incorporator for the Suffolk County Columbus Day Parade Committee Inc., along with State Supreme Court Justice Frank De Luca, Family Court Judge Jack J. Cannavo, Police Capt. Vincent Stona, Police Sgt. Anthony Abbazia and others. In 1973, the committee named Del Mastro as grand marshal for the parade. It was this same committee that barred Huntington Supervisor (now Rep.-elect) Jerome Ambro, a Democrat, from marching in a Columbus Day parade. Ambro had offended some people by refusing the use of town property for a statue of Columbus donated by Sam Albicocco, a major Long Island oil dealer.

While Del Mastro was building his power base on Long Island, Pappadio was building his empire in the job. Born in 1914, he began his mob operations in the policy rackets and at-

tracted the attention of his boss, Thomas Luchese. In 1937, he was convicted in a narcotics conspiracy, but later he received a presidential pardon from Harry Truman. It was during this period, between 1937 and 1950, that he became a business partner of Luchese in the garment industry, where the mob used "sweetheart" labor contracts and extortion to take over garment and trucking firms.

By 1957, Pappadio was the personal chauffeur for Luchese when he attended the ill-fated Aplachin crime conference. In 1958, Pappadio, along with such notables as Vito Genovese, John Ormento and Carmine (Lillo) Galente, were charged with operating an international heroin smuggling ring. Ten days after his arrest, a key witness who was to testify against the ring was gunned down in Brooklyn. The charges against Pappadio were dismissed but Galente, Ormento and Genovese were convicted and jailed.

Between 1957 and 1967, the Luchese family continued to be one of the Cosa Nostra's most stable crime families. It was the mob's entree to the political world, where it wielded considerable influence in New York City and at state and federal levels. It was the key family for major international narcotics smuggling and its members wielded enormous influence in labor unions (through such racketeers as John Dioguardi) and the construction and garment industries. But in 1967, Luchese died and the family hierarchy began jockeying for the position of boss. Pappadio, police believe, deliberately faded into the background but remained the power behind the throne when Tramunti was seated as the boss.

For several years the family remained stable and unnoticed until 1972 when Tramunti and Paul Vario Sr. drew the heat of publicity because of a bug in Vario's trailer. Vario was convicted of multiple charges and then Tramunti was jailed on perjury and contempt charges. Pappadio was forced, police say, to step out front and formally take over control of the family he actually had been running behind the scenes. Now federal authorities and police believe it is Pappadio's plan to move the family fortunes east to Long Island from its New York power base. Long Island is considered an inviting target with its burgeoning population and industry.

## Foreclosure Move on Track Stalled

Riverhead—The lawyer for Ronald Parr has obtained a show-cause order postponing for at least a week attempts by two companies that have done major construction work at the financially troubled Suffolk Meadows racetrack to foreclose on liens totaling \$650,967.

Benjamin Greshin, attorney for Parr and his Parr Co. of Suffolk Inc. sought the show-cause order to have lienholders, the Umbaugh Builders Inc. and Motor City Electric Corp., argue why the two separate foreclosure actions

should not be tried at the same time as one case.

"It's a sensible thing," Greshin said yesterday. "We have two pending foreclosures. Both would involve the same witnesses, the same experts. It makes more sense to try them together rather than one at a time." State Supreme Court Justice Thomas M. Stark had ordered both sides to be ready for a nonjury trial yesterday on Umbaugh's lien of \$252,863 against Parr and the racetrack corporation. But State Supreme Court Justice Leon D. Lazer

signed the show-cause order Thursday. It is scheduled to be argued on Dec. 16. The order contains a stay delaying any trial of either foreclosure action against Parr.

Bernard Burton, the attorney for both lienholders, has claimed his clients repeatedly have been promised payment for the work they have performed but, so far, have not been paid.

Greshin said they were actively engaged in negotiations to see if the two liens could be settled without having to go to trial.