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Crime Boss Was Walters' Silent Partner, Indictment Claims

The indictment Aug. 24 by a federal grand jury of former sports agents Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom was the result of a 17-month investigation that has already had far-reaching effects on college athletics. This is the first in a series of articles about those indictments.

By Chris Mortensen Staff Writer

CHICAGO - Michael Franze the reputed organized crime figure linked to indicted sports agents Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom, is one of the nation's top mob bosses and also the youngest, according to federal prosecutors.

Franzese, 36, was identified in an 85-page federal grand jury indictment Wednesday in Chicago as a silent partner in the "conspiracy" of Walters' and Bloom's operation. The two agents were indicted on charges of racketeering, extortio mail fraud and wire fraud.

The indictment alleges that Walters and Bloom, "would and did use their association with Michael Franzese and his reputation as a member of an organized crime family to convey directly and indirectly

... in exchange for using Michael Franzese and his reputation as a member of a New York City organized crime family that used extortionate means . . . defendant Norby Walters would and did pay Michael Franzese.'

- Federal Indictment against Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom

the New York organized crime family.

"Thereafter, on two other occasions, defendant Norby Walters and NFL. It became an unprofitable an associate of Michael Franzese threatened the group's manager in order to induce him to include lorby Walters Associates as part of the Jackson Five tour."

Walters was not involved in the Jackson Five's reunion tour, and he

would be no tour. At that time, the was questioned by the Justice Degroup's manager believed that Mi- partment about his attempt to be inchael Franzese was a member of volved, sources said. The booking the government on numerous occaagents for the Jackson tour became the Sullivan family, which owned the New England Patriots of the venture for the Sullivans.

> Franzese ventured into the entertainment field this decade, forming his own movie production company, Miami Gold. The company produced four movies, two of them and eight others were indicted on

in 1984. When filming one such movie that year, Miami Mayor Malcolm Fromberg, no longer in office, presented Franzese with the key to the city.

Franzese in 1986 was listed by Fortune magazine as one of the top 50 mob bosses. The magazine specifically ranked him 18th and he was the only one who was under the age of 40.

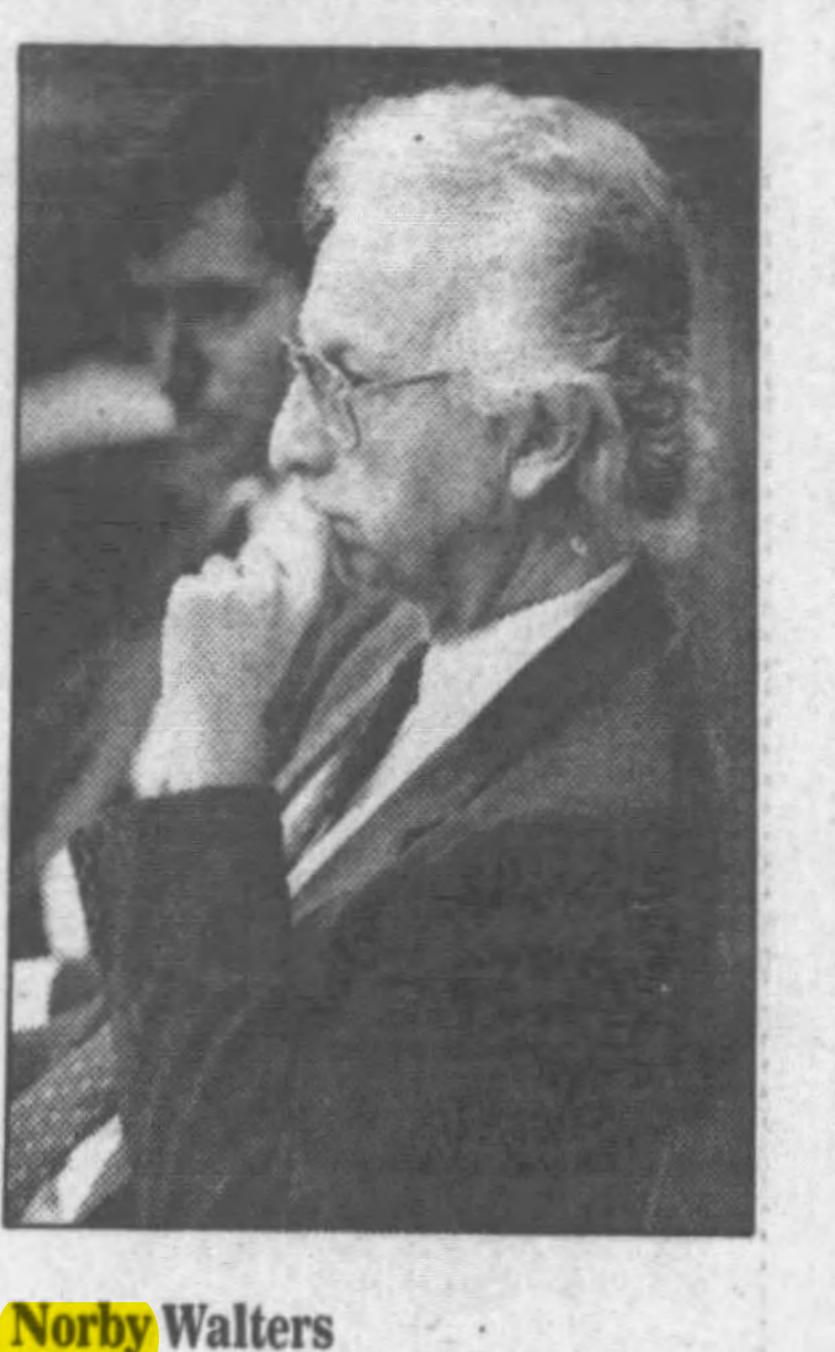
Franzese has been pursued by sions. From 1973 to 1984, he was indicted five times on various charges, but not convicted. The allegations included a charge he obtained \$580,000 from auto dealerships by defrauding a number of firms, including General Motors Corp.

But on Dec. 19, 1985, Franzese featuring the "break-dancing" fad racketeering charges in which they

allegedly penetrated legitimate businesses and "reaped millions of dollars in illegal profits." Some defendants were charged with defrauding the state of New Jersey of more than \$3 million in gasoline taxes.

Franzese pleaded guilty to the charges in 1986 and was sentenced to 10 years in prison. He also agreed to sell nearly \$5 million worth of property and profits from his movies to fund part of \$15 million in fines and restitution.

New York attorney Ron Bernstein, a former federal prosecutor, told Fortune magazine in 1986 that Franzese was "familiar" with the leverage of violence used by the mob. Bernstein told Fortune that an associate of Franzese once caved in the head of a competitor with a hammer.



....

threats of economic and physical harm to actual and potential clients of Norby Walters Associates and World Sports & Entertainment."

The indictment further alleges, "It was further part of the conspiracy that in exchange for using Michael Franzese and his reputation as a member of a New York City organized crime family that used extortionate means in the conduct of its business activities, defendant Norby Walters would and did pay Michael Franzese."

The indictment alleges that "in or about late 1984 and early 1985" Walters discussed expansion of his entertainment business into the sports field. "Defendant N ters asked Franzese for \$50,000 to help fund that expansion, which money Franzese provided to defendant Norby Walters in cash."

The indictment alleges that Walters and Bloom used their association with Franzese to "obtain and retain" music and sports clients. The grand jury also charges that Franzese's reputation as a mobster was used to threaten athletes who were trying to break contractual agreements with Walters and Bloom.

Franzese, a reputed high-ranking member of the Colombo crime family in New York, was an unindicted co-conspirator, raising questions whether he cooperated with federal prosecutors who investigated Walters and Bloom for 17 P195/75R14





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prosecutors, Franzese said, "I'll have to talk to Norby first." The Journal-Constitution later received notice by mail that Fran- zese decided he did not want to be interviewed. It is unknown if he spoke with Walters. Walters has strenuously denied	P205/75R14 37.04 P205/75R15 38.95 P215/75R15 40.85 P225/75R15 42.75 P235/75R15 43.70	P155/80R1334.83P165/80R1336.79P175/80R1337.57P185/80R1339.34P175/75R1438.78P185/75R1440.65P195/75R1441.91P205/75R1443.13P215/75R1444.29P225/75R1545.49P215/75R1547.00P225/75R1550.69P235/75R1553.13	Airport locations. (Me'll beat the tota price is for the sa	ervice is available at the Downtown and Call for details. Ational Tire Wholesale al drive-out price on any tire provided that ame brand and style and is available now able price at another Atlanta dealer.	195/70SR14 54.50 195/70SR14 59.88 205/70SR14 62.23 225/70SR14 63.92 225/70SR15 66.60 235/70SR15 71.35 255/70SR15 76.79 Blackwall 185/70SR14 195/70SR14 52.24 195/70SR14 53.04	NTW limited warranty. Whitewall. P185/80R13 50.69 P185/75R14 54.80 P195/75R14 56.05 P205/75R15 61.07 P215/75R15 63.89 P225/75R15 66.65 P235/75R15 69.49
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zese as associates and specifically charge they worked together in try- ing to get Walters involved as the booking agent of the Jackson Five's reunion tour earlier this decade. The indictment alleges that Walters continually contacted the group's manager, who went un- named, in an effort to become the booking agent. Turned away, the in- dictment alleges, "After defendant Norby Walters told the group's man- ager to expect a call from 'an asso- ciate' of Walters, the group's manager received a telephone call from Michael Franzese. Franzese told the group's manager he was an 'as- sociate' of Walters and that it was important that they meet as soon as possible. The group's manager agreed to the meeting. "At a meeting at the group man- ager's office in Los Angeles, Mi- chael Franzese told him he was an associate of Norby Walters and that Norby Walters Associates was going to be involved in the Jackson Five	Diffeodition STEEL RADIAL T/A You'll get superior performance from this tire that incorporates B. F. Goodrich's track proven design innovations. Raised white letters. P175/70SR13 55.04 P185/70SR13 57.05 P195/70SR13 58.82 P205/70SR13 62.01 P185/70SR14 61.66 P195/70SR14 63.56 P205/70SR14 67.93 P215/70SR14 71.22 P225/70SR14 74.19 P235/70SR15 72.17 P235/70SR15 72.17 P235/70SR15 72.17 P235/70SR15 79.50 P235/70SR15 79.50 P235/70SR15 79.50 P235/70SR15 79.50 P235/70SR15 87.30		POWER CAT CONCEPT ROAD POWER CAT CONCEPT ROAD The Power Cat all terrain steel radial features aggressive tread and responsive handling. Outline white teters. P235/75R15 62.67 7-8.5R14 64.11 30X9.5R15 79.11 31X10.5R15 83.22 32X11.5R15 87.69 33X12.5R15 93.00 Add \$0.13.\$2.53 F.E.T. on some sizes.	<section-header><section-header><text><text><text><text></text></text></text></text></section-header></section-header>	Airport. 996-8550 4855 Riverdale Rd. Conyers. 929-1700 929 Iris Drive Corp. Square. 329-9307 1670 N.E. Expressway	<section-header><section-header></section-header></section-header>