

No Doubt About It, Good Guys Giving Bad Guys Their Lumps In War Against Crime

EDITOR'S NOTE: The disclosure that a convicted gangland executioner is "singling" on his former associates has focused new attention on the Justice Department's Criminal Division, which is directing the war against the underworld. In the following dispatch, the head of the division discusses its progress.)

By LOUIS CASSELS

WASHINGTON (UPI)—At long last, the good guys are giving the bad guys their lumps in the war against organized crime.

"There's no doubt about it," said Asst. Atty. Gen. Herbert J. Miller Jr. "the mobs are hurting."

As head of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, 38-year-old Jack Miller is the federal government's field general in the fight to smash the power of nationwide crime syndicates. He knows better than others that the fight is very far from won, and he is not indulging in premature victory celebrations. But he also knows that the feds are going after big-time criminals these days with unprecedented vigor and determination. And he says it's paying off.

"We've got them on the run," Miller said in an interview with United Press International. "If we can keep the pressure on for another five or six years, we may break the back of this mobster."

Takes Over Division

Miller is an amiable, quiet-spoken Republican lawyer from Minneapolis. He was in private law practice with a distinguished Washington firm when Atty. Gen. Robert F. Kennedy asked him in early 1961 to take charge of the criminal division.

At that time, Miller knew no more about organized crime than the average citizen. He'd read fantastic stories about its multi-billion dollar annual take from gambling, narcotics and other rackets, and about the mysterious "Mafia" which was supposed to coordinate the whole enterprise. But he was inclined, as many citizens still are, to treat it as a myth.

"But it's not a myth," he said with the dogged emphasis of a man who is telling the truth but expects to be disbelieved.

"The lurid stories in the press don't exaggerate — if anything they underestimate—the scope of the underworld operation, the degree to which it seeks to bribe and corrupt law enforcement officers and public officials, the ruthlessness with which it employs murder and other forms of violence to protect its vast sources of income and silence witnesses."

Says Mafia Exists

Even the "myth" about the Mafia has turned out to be true, he said. The revelations of Joseph Valachi, imprisoned gangland executioner who decided to talk, have given federal officials a wealth of inside information about the sinister organization whose very existence was previously questioned by some investigators. Valachi not only confirmed its existence: He told just how it operates, and named more than 100 of its top figures.

Valachi's long song was a "terrific break" for the criminal division's new intelligence unit, Miller said. The intelligence unit was organized two years ago to bring together in one place all of the information about crime and criminals available to the 25 different federal agencies which have law enforcement responsibilities.

The government had never before had such a "CIA for crime," and Miller has found it "extremely helpful". The unit now has dossiers on the activities of about 1,200 major racketeering figures, he said.

Also of major importance in the stepped-up fight against crime, Miller said, is the new legislation enacted by Congress in 1961 which makes it a federal crime to send gambling information or paraphernalia across state lines, or to travel in interstate commerce in support of racketeering.

These laws have given the Federal Bureau of Investigation a legal license to go after big-time gambling, which long has been the number one source of income for the crime syndicates.

"The FBI is now going after organized crime the way it went after the Communist party," said Miller.

The result has been a sharp drop in gambling activity, he said. In many areas, would-be bettors are having "real trouble finding a bookie."

NOW YOU KNOW

By United Press International

In whisky making, the term "mash" refers to a mixture of grain, molasses or sugar, with water and yeast, which is fermented and distilled to produce ethyl alcohol, according to the Licensed Beverage Industries, Inc.

Thur., Aug. 15, 1963—The News-Review, Roseburg, Ore. 5

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