



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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GENOVESE FAMILY ASSOCIATE FOUND GUILTY
OF \$50,000 EXTORTION

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that ANGELO NICOSIA, an associate of the Genovese Organized Crime Family of La Cosa Nostra, was found guilty today of extortion and extortion conspiracy after a one-week jury trial before the Honorable SHIRA A. SCHEINDLIN. According to the Indictment and the evidence at trial:

NICOSIA was an associate in the crew of Genovese Family captain, or "capo," ANGELO PRISCO. In 1997, a Manhattan-based contractor hired NICOSIA as a sub-contractor on a construction job in New Jersey. At the conclusion of that job, NICOSIA claimed that the contractor owed him tens of thousands of dollars for work that NICOSIA had not actually completed. When the contractor resisted making payment, PETER RIZZO, a Genovese Family associate in PRISCO'S crew, went to the contractor's construction site and attacked the contractor's business partner. During the attack, RIZZO broke a coffee pot over the business partner's head, causing serious head and facial injuries.

In 2004, NICOSIA again approached the contractor, claiming that the contractor still owed tens of thousands of dollars from the 1997 construction job. NICOSIA, accompanied by Genovese Family associates JOHN MELICHAREK, a/k/a "Rocky," and MICHAEL IUNI, then went to the contractor's workplace unannounced and threatened the contractor and the contractor's family with violence if the contractor did not pay. Because of these threats, the contractor paid NICOSIA and his co-conspirators a total of \$50,000. After receiving the money, NICOSIA and his co-conspirators divided the money among themselves, including by paying \$10,000 to Prisco as "tribute."

NICOSIA was one of eight defendants who were indicted in this case. Seven have now been convicted, and the eighth is at large. MELICHAREK pleaded guilty to robbery conspiracy, a firearms offense, and the extortion of the contractor. IUNI pleaded guilty to the extortion of the contractor. DOMINICK MEMOLI, a/k/a "Shakes," pleaded guilty to robbery and firearms offenses. LOUIS PIPOLO pleaded guilty to a robbery charge. DARDIAN CELAJ, a/k/a "Danny," pleaded guilty to robbery and firearms charges. ENED GJELAJ, a/k/a "Neddy," pleaded guilty to a robbery offense. GJELOSH KRASNIQI, a/k/a "Jimmy," has not been arrested, and remains at large. The charges against KRASNIQI are merely accusations, and he is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

NICOSIA, 46, of East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania faces a maximum sentence of 40 years in prison. Sentencing is scheduled for October 30, 2008 at 4:30 p.m. before Judge SHIRA A. SCHEINDLIN.

Mr. GARCIA praised the efforts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Newark Field Office. Mr. GARCIA also thanked the Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office; the Orange County, New York District Attorney's Office; the Westchester County, New York District Attorney's Office; the New York State Police; the Morris County, New Jersey Prosecutor's Office; the Rockaway Township, New Jersey Police Department; and the New Jersey State Commission of Investigation.

Assistant United States Attorneys ELIE HONIG and LISA ZORNBERG are in charge of the prosecution.

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