



*United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York*

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**GENOVESE FAMILY ASSOCIATES AND OTHERS ARRESTED  
ON EXTORTION AND ROBBERY CHARGES**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, MARK MERSHON, Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), and WEYSAN DUN, the Special-Agent-in-Charge of the Newark Office of the FBI announced today the arrests of seven individuals charged with participating in a series of extortions and violent home invasions.

According to an Indictment unsealed today in Manhattan federal court: The defendants, JOHN MELICHAREK, a/k/a "Rocky," MICHAEL IUNI, and ANGELO NICOSIA -- associates of the Genovese Organized Crime Family -- and DOMINICK MEMOLI, a/k/a "Shakes," LOUIS PIPOLO, DARDIAN CELAJ, a/k/a "Danny," and ENED GJELAJ, a/k/a "Neddy," took part in a string of extortions and robberies targeted at business owners based in New York and New Jersey. MELICHAREK, IUNI, and NICOSIA used their status as Genovese Organized Crime Family associates to extort a Manhattan-based business owner. MELICHAREK, MEMOLI, PIPOLO, CELAJ, and GJELAJ also planned and executed home invasions, including a September 2003 robbery of a Morris County, New Jersey business owner, and an October 2003 robbery attempt of an Orange County, New York business owner, using firearms in connection with the crimes. MELICHAREK also faces a stolen property charge.

If convicted, MELICHAREK, MEMOLI, PIPOLO, CELAJ, and GJELAJ face maximum sentences of life imprisonment. IUNI and NICOSIA face maximum sentences of 40 years' imprisonment.

MELICHAREK, IUNI, NICOSIA, PIPOLO, and CELAJ were arrested today by FBI agents. MEMOLI and GJELAJ are each currently serving a sentence from a prior criminal conviction and accordingly, will be brought by the United States Marshals Service to the Southern District of New York to face the charges.

Mr. GARCIA praised the efforts of the FBI, the Orange County, New York District Attorney's Office, 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 BENJAMIN GRUENSTEIN are in charge of the prosecution.

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