

# *The Marseilles Mafia*

The Truth Behind the World of  
Drug Trafficking

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*and*

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the gates were opened by Bertolone. The Renault, headlights alight, set off down the road. Pierre R was at the wheel. He stopped to wait for his companion. Two policemen came into view in the beam of light, raising their arms and shouting 'Stop! Police!' R drove off, jostling them and dragging them with him for a few metres - they were clinging to the doors - and disappeared into the darkness. He passed a surveillance vehicle parked in darkness a little way further on and went off in the direction of the village. He was immediately followed.

The chase continued along the road to Toulon: The Renault forked off suddenly in the direction of Aubagne to join the motorway. The police car gradually gained ground. R braked suddenly. His car went into the hard shoulder; he jumped into the ditch and ran off, disappearing up the hillside into the night.

But the police were not left empty-handed. They held Toudayan, two of his accomplices and enough equipment to convince the judges. R meanwhile was taken in hand by the Marseilles underworld and given safe asylum. Instructions had reached him from Joseph Cesari in Les Baumettes prison. He was to lie low until judgement had been passed in the Clos St Antoine affair. Cesari had worked out a defence: he claimed to have been a beginner whose friends had done him a favour; friends whose good faith he had abused and whom he did not want to expose. Cross-examination of R might easily have compromised this fragile edifice.

When his boss had been sentenced, R was to give himself up to the police, on 29 June 1965. He was to claim complete ignorance of the production of heroin. He was one of the *bona fide* friends of whom Cesari had spoken, who had put the Pastore farm at his disposal and transported equipment whose purposes he had not known. He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment on 26 February 1966.

### *A Hundred Kilos of Junk Disappear*

By midnight on 30 November 1964, a freezing drizzle that had been falling over Paris since early afternoon had stopped. The surface of Boulevard Suchet was still glistening wet.

A Citroën cabriolet, registration 459 PX75, coming from the Porte Maillot, slowed up as it approached number 45, drove onto the pavement and parked under the trees a few metres from the main doorway.

The driver turned off the headlights, switched off the engine, locked all the doors and started off towards his apartment. He then changed his mind, went back to the car, pulled off the sparking-plug leads, removed the distributor cap and slipped it into his pocket. He flipped the bonnet down again and disappeared into the building.

His name was Jacques Bousquet. He came from Lozère and was about fifty years old, solidly built, his hair slightly receding though only flecked with grey. He was smartly dressed and seemed quite at ease in this wealthy district. 'A very respectable gentleman,' his concierge was to say in evidence four years later, 'always pleasant and smiling.' He lived on the third floor in an expensive seven-roomed flat. All that his neighbours knew about him was that he was a dealer of some sort, married and father of three: a girl of eighteen and two younger boys. He was often away on business.

Very soon, the lights went out in the apartment. Bousquet was going to have to get up very early in the morning to collect his friend Eugène Malibert from the Gare d'Austerlitz. On 3 December Malibert was leaving for New York on board the *France*, with a Citroën. He was now coming back from Bergerac where his

employers in the firm of civil service supplies had sent him on a course.

Before leaving, Malibert had signed all the relevant papers for taking over a car whose licence still bore the name of one of their friends and associates, Guirche. Bousquet had spent the previous week sorting out these various problems. Two days earlier, a telephone call from Marseilles had informed him that the goods would be delivered on the thirtieth. He had driven into the forest of St Germain in his Buick at the agreed time. A Citroën van with a Bouches-du-Rhône number plate had slipped in behind him near the Loges; then, one behind the other, the two vehicles had parked at a bend in a side-road. Glancing in his driving mirror, Bousquet had recognised Jean N, a Corsican from Paris and a leading figure in the underworld, who was replacing the usual carrier, a taciturn expressionless man from Marseilles.

Within a few seconds, four big cases had been transferred from the van to the boot of the Buick. Then the driver, who had left his engine running, drove off with a brief parting gesture. The Buick was back on the main road again a few minutes later, driving slowly towards Paris.

Victor M, an associate of Bousquet's, had rented a lock-up garage in Boulogne where he could load the goods into the hiding places that had been arranged in the Citroën DS in privacy. Previously the operation had been carried out on M's property at Croissy-sur-Seine, where the car would remain until the day it was put onto the boat, at Le Havre. But M had left unexpectedly for the south of France and had not even gone to meet his associate as arranged.

For this trip, as it happened, the suppliers had agreed to deliver a hundred kilos of heroin: two hundred transparent plastic packets containing a fine white powder. This load represented an investment of a million francs, and the American client would be paying about a million dollars for it. Precautions had not been taken for nothing.

It had taken Bousquet several hours, behind the doors of the garage, to stow these packets into the various hiding places

created by an inventive coach-builder: inside the front and back wings, in the seat-backs and under the front seat, and also in a recess under the petrol tank, which now held about ten litres.

Jacques Bousquet left the building on Boulevard Suchet the following morning at eight, fresh-complexioned, wearing a suit of Prince of Wales check and a blue cashmere coat. He greeted the concierge with a beaming smile and stepped out onto the pavement.

Suddenly he stood rooted to the spot. A Peugeot 404 was parked just where he had left the Citroën the previous evening. He looked around him, went over in his mind his actions of the previous night and felt in his pocket for the distributor cap. No doubt about it: the car and its cargo had been stolen. It represented a loss of half a milliard old francs (just over \$500,000). How the thieves had managed to select a car lacking the distributor cap, when there were hundreds of cars lined up along the boulevard which they could have started with a simple pair of pliers, was more than he could fathom.

The moment he stepped off the Bordeaux train at the Gare d'Austerlitz Eugene Malibert knew that a disaster had occurred. Seeing his friend's drained face, his first thought was of the police and he felt himself break out in a cold sweat.

'They've pinched the car,' Bousquet murmured flatly. 'With all the stuff. From in front of my place, last night. And I'd removed the distributor cap.'

He produced an ebonite cylinder from his pocket. 'I haven't told anyone. I wanted to see you first. We're going to have to cancel your trip, warn the guys in New York and try to calm down the fellows in Marseilles.'

'If they suspect you of double-crossing them, that might be the end of you.'

'And of you too, if they think we're in it together.'  
They left the station and took a taxi to Malibert's, in the sixteenth *arrondissement*. This trip was to have netted the young courier Fr. 15,000. He was counting on this sum to pay some

urgent debts. He was shattered. Clearly, if the police arrested the thieves and got back the car, they would discover the hiding places; and the documents had been in his name for several days.

'It was bound to happen,' sighed Bousquet. 'Everything had gone too well so far. Anyhow, it's still less serious than being caught by the American customs.'

He thought back to the many trips he had already made to the United States over the last three years, of luxurious crossings on the *France* or the *Queen Elizabeth*, of times spent in smart hotels in New York or Montreal, money extravagantly squandered. The first person to inform, he thought, was his associate Victor M who had organised the network with him and who had left him to run it on his own several months earlier, only supervising it himself from a distance.

The taxi drove through the streets of Auteuil between the wealthy stone houses. 'Only Jean N can get us out of this one,' remarked Bousquet. 'Provided I can convince him I'm not lying.'

When they arrived at their destination, he left Malibert and went to collect the Buick from Boulogne, from the lock-up garage where he had left it. Then he went to Passy, found a public phone-box in a *brasserie* and phoned Jean N at his home in rue des Belles-Feuilles; and guardedly brought him up to date with recent events. A few minutes later the Corsican joined him and listened darkly to an account of the theft down to the last detail.

'Well,' he concluded, 'let's suppose you're telling the truth. You wouldn't be so stupid as to play such a trick on us. If you've lied, I wouldn't give much to be in your shoes. I'm going to telephone Achille in Marseilles. But don't count on getting out of this scot free. Mark my words, those guys aren't fairy godmothers.'

He was unable to get through to Achille Cecchini, his immediate supplier and co-owner of the consignment, until 7 December at his home on rue Saint-Mathieu in Marseilles. Half an hour later they were talking on another, safer line. The conversation was long and stormy. Jean N needed all his powers of persuasion to

convince Cecchini that the matter should be discussed 'between gentlemen' and without recourse to violence . . . for the moment.

During this time, Bousquet had gone to see Victor M in his Loiret property. He wasn't satisfied either. It was he who had specially asked the suppliers to raise this load to a hundred kilos.

'If they decide you've double-crossed them, they'll be convinced that I'm in it too. And if they impose any kind of penalty, they'll insist that I pay half and that I'm answerable for the rest.'

Back in Paris, Bousquet learned of developments from Jean N.

'I get the impression that their feelings for you aren't quite as warm as before,' he remarked. 'They're going to ask Big Charles to come up here and look into it. The decision will depend on him. In any case they'll ask to be reimbursed for the goods mislaid.'

'I'd be delighted to reimburse them, if they give me the means to pick up enough money. In all my bank accounts together, I haven't got a tenth of it.'

'Don't you think your exaggerating a bit? Well, we can always try. We'll just have to let things die down a bit and wait till Big Charles arrives.'

Big Charles, whose real name was Louis Jacques Douheret, who preferred to be called Lefranc but was known in Marseilles as 'Jacques l'Americain', and later as 'Big Charles' because he was supposed to resemble de Gaulle, arrived in the capital a week later.

The disappearance of Jacques Bousquet's car was the first serious stumbling block his suppliers had encountered. The chairman of this prosperous enterprise was Joseph Orsini. At sixty, he belonged to the generation of quiet men but his ideas were more modern. He realised that an age was drawing to an end and that only those who could adapt to the rapid growth in trafficking would survive. He had come back to Marseilles in 1958 after a few years in an American penitentiary. He resumed his privileged position in the local underworld without difficulty. As early as 1930 his police

record referred to him as one of the first generation of traffickers who gathered under the banner of Venture Carbone.

After the Liberation - like his friend Spirito - he was prosecuted for hold-ups, attempted murder and, of course, collaboration with the enemy. Putting the Atlantic Ocean between himself and the French Government, he arrived in the United States on board the cargo vessel *Athos II*, with papers in the name of Joseph Casabianca. He settled in an apartment on West 85th Street in New York. He was forty-three years old; a stocky man, with heavy features, an imposing nose and watchful brown eyes.

He formed friendships with various members of the Mafia, and kept up his contacts with the men from Marselles and Corsica who were reconstituting the networks broken up by the war. He was the close associate of two *mafiosi*, Schilitani and Giannini, who were to be shot in 1952 on orders from *Cosa Nostra*.

Arrested in 1951 by the US Immigration Department for possession of false papers, Orsini was interned on Ellis Island and charged with drug trafficking. Sentenced to ten years, imprisonment, he was sent to Leavenworth Penitentiary where he stayed until his deportation in 1958.

In Marselles he was reunited with his brother Fernand, two years his junior; the same burly build, the same thick features, but in his case including a pair of surprising blue eyes. Officially he was running his café, *le Bistrot Marsellais*, in the *Place de Rome* just near the Prefecture. In reality, behind this façade he was closely connected with several veterans such as Marius Ansaldi known as 'le Marclot'; Dominique Reissant known as 'Nique-des-Carnes'; and Spirito.

Now that he was approaching sixty, Joseph seemed to be aiming at retirement in his luxury villa in the *Parc Borely*. He lived a comfortable life and avoided excess of all kinds, even in dress. However, he did have a studio near the *Piscine Vallier* where he could lie low if things were to go badly. In fact, he had resumed the running of the team led by his brother Fernand.

He included Fernand in all his plans. Together they were looking for someone able and discreet to help them in their under-

taking: to organise networks, find couriers and transporters, deal with suppliers and clients; in short, supervise the whole operational sector of the business. Their choice fell on Jean N.

His reputation in the underworld was that of a man you could count on; he had been born in 1913 in Sartène, in Corsica, of an irreproachable family. He had come to Paris where his obliging nature coupled with his circumspection very soon earned him the respect of the toughs of Montmartre. In 1950 he became manager of a bar in rue Notre Dame de Lorette, the *Château d'If*, where he was assisted by his devoted wife Suzy, a Jewess of Polish origin.

Seven years later, and still enjoying the esteem of the denizens of his chosen world, he was officially behind the bar of *la Citrouille* in rue de Douai. In the meantime, he had done a number of good turns, successfully handled several delicate affairs and proved that he was thoroughly trustworthy. 'When Jeannot gave his word,' people said, 'it was as if he'd signed a contract.' On 28 May 1957, his bar was severely shot up, causing some damage to the frontage and the clientele. Questioned by the police, he feigned astonishment. He had been crouching behind his bar and had seen nothing. That evening, at *la Citrouille*, there had been no regulars and he had not been able to describe anyone. This reaction was much appreciated, except by the police.

Dispatched by Orsini, he began to travel around Europe, particularly to Milan, Rome, Genoa and Sartène. The *mafiosi* called him 'the man with the gold-rimmed spectacles'. He was often accompanied by his assistant, Jacques Douheret, alias 'Jacques l'Américain', alias Big Charles, who had been released from prison for good conduct two years earlier. He had been sentenced to fifteen years' detention in 1950 after the burglary of the station post-office in Montparnasse.

Jean N was in charge of the 'smuggling' section. 'Jacques l'Américain' was sent to New York by Orsini to make contact with one of his former prison mates, Beni Indiviglio. Indiviglio became his client, as did the brothers Romano, Arnold and Frederick; they actually worked for a boss, the famous *mafioso* Sario Trafficante.

Gradually, Douheret extended his stays on the other side of the Atlantic. Heroin reached him in small quantities: from six to twelve kilos at a time. It was often brought to him by sailors or couriers engaged by N.

These deliveries were always made by boat, in American ports. Orsini was not interested in the networks set up by the pioneer drug traffickers Ansan Bistoni or Jean-Baptiste Croce in the Caribbean and Mexico, or in collaboration with top Canadian *mafiosi* Giuseppe Corroni's Canadian network. Nor did he wish to associate with competitors who used aeroplanes.

The Orsinis were also unwilling to set up laboratories in which they themselves would produce the heroin they exported. Their golden rule was always to keep clear of actually handling the white powder and to keep no written records. Joseph's own head was his calculator and computer.

They merely passed on orders to the various clandestine laboratories or to those who financed them. It was in this way - because they had a good reputation on the market - that they became the clients of the best chemist in the world in this field, until his arrest: Joseph Cesari.

The success of this cautious and efficient organisation encouraged them to take on competent partners. From 1961 onwards their choice fell upon an experienced technician, Achille Cecchini.

In Marseilles, it was said that Achille Cecchini had started off in life as a policeman. He might perhaps have made a successful career in the police force had an unfortunate matter of theft not resulted in his being sent to prison in 1943. He appeared as a docker, then, at the time of the Liberation, as a mason. Very soon he was driving around in sumptuous cars, Mercedes or Alfa Romeos.

Discreet surveillance allowed the 'stups' inspectors to get an idea of the range of his contacts. He mixed with notorious traffickers, meeting a Lebanese trafficker in Genoa, driving on to la Croisette at Cannes to dine with the chief supplier of raw morphine in the Middle East. But he always managed to avoid the traps that were laid for him.

He was a young-looking forty, brown-haired, thin-lipped, with a nutcracker chin in a plump but forceful face. He liked pretty girls and had a degree of success with them; he was open, hearty and generous. He was also married, and his wife kept a bar, the Carmen, on the Vieux Port. 'I do good business,' he would say to those who expressed surprise at his life style. 'Do have a pastis. It's on me.'

Cecchini had permanently entered the ranks of those whose prosperity was the reward of their conscientiousness and assiduity. Some devoted a part of their fortune to a passion or an ideal. Stockbreeding was Cesari's obsession. Others, like Croce, preferred gambling. Jacques Douheret - who had now settled in Spain - was a firm supporter of Algérie française. He gave financial assistance to former OAS groups in exile. At his trial, two professional killers from the organisation came from Madrid to testify in his favour. 'I carried out over twenty-four executions,' Michel Feischoz admitted. 'I couldn't say exactly how many enemies of Algérie française I shot,' added Georges Calle. And they both agreed that Douheret had been engaged in drug-trafficking on unofficial missions to fill the coffers of the OAS.

The majority of those successful criminals concentrated on enjoying life in the most ostentatious way possible. They set much store by the outward and visible signs of wealth. They killed themselves out at the new male courtyards, St Laurent, Cardin, Lapidus, frequented luxury hotels and showered their less fortunate friends with gifts. An impressive number of jars of caviar and bottles of champagne were later found by the police in Sartène.

For all these people, Bousquet's mishap made a juicy talking point. The loss of a hundred kilos of heroin was not the most serious problem. The circumstances of its disappearance aroused suspicion. It was unlikely that it had been a matter of sheer chance, that young, small-time thieves would have picked on a car without a distributor cap. It might therefore have been underworld irregulars who were acquainted with the functioning of the network and could thus have guaranteed themselves a good start - with no initial outlay - in an expanding business. The idea of

police provocation could not be dismissed either. By causing the junk to disappear, the 'stups' might hope to unleash rivalries among the various criminal factions. All they would have to do then would be to collect up the survivors in one vast haul.

Having become Jo Orsini's right-hand man, N began to aspire to a life style that suited his ascent of the social ladder. From 1960 caviar, champagne and foie gras no longer seemed adequate symbols of having made it. He discovered another interest which enabled him to join the elite: a passion for hunting. Four years before the mysterious vanishing trick on Boulevard Suchet, he was already dedicating himself to it with a plethora of special dress and equipment which enabled him to cut a dash in the most exclusive clubs.

He felt at ease with the fringe aristocracy and spent most of his weekends accompanied by the faithful Suzy, on the estate of one of his friends who owned several hundred hectares in the Sologne. It was called 'Le Petit Colmine' and was near Sully-sur-Loire.

His host was called Charles Martel; however, the only dynasty to which he could claim to belong was that of the brothel-owners, in which hierarchy he occupied an important place. At the beginning of the last war he had been the owner of the famous 'Sphinx'. After having subjected a flock of meek and well-schooled women to the bizarre desires of prelates, politicians, diplomats and industrialists during the roaring twenties, after the collapse of France in 1940 he devoted himself to the relaxation and delectation of German soldiers of all ranks. Adolf Hitler having decided to make Paris the knockings-shop of Europe, his undertaking could not fail.

Martel and N had known each other for a long time. Martel had been deported by some ungrateful clients shortly before the Liberation for having afforded some slight help to the Resistance and hidden arms on his Sologne property.

When the war ended, he none the less preferred to court oblivion and went to Canada to join his wife Blanche, who he had married in 1930, and the two children he had adopted and not seen since

1940. Shortly after the First World War, already owner of several hospitable brothels, Blanche had married a *sociétaire* in the touring Comédie française - a former partner of Sarah Bernhardt, Gustave Scheler. For the love of Blanche, he had given up a life on the boards and become converted to procuring. By his death, at the end of the twenties, the family estate had grown considerably.

In the absence of Charles Martel the chain of brothels and night-clubs - which had formed his fiancée's dowry fifteen years earlier - had enjoyed a new prosperity.

In 1947 Blanche's daughter, the heir apparent of this hedonistic empire, married a young French officer with a brilliant service record, a holder of the Légion d'honneur, the Croix de Guerre, the médaille de la Résistance and médaille des Evadés. He was twenty-seven; his name was Michel Victor M.

Memories of the Occupation having faded, Martel came back to France to settle at Vieilain and work the property at Le Petit Colmine. Victor M and his wife also went to live there and joined in the running of the estate. At weekends, various local worries were entertained at the shooting lodge, as well as American officers stationed at Châteauroux and various former contacts of the one-time owner of the 'Sphinx' - such as Jean N - who had acquired enough polish to pass as businessmen or rich dealers.

Victor M had charm; he was energetic and courageous and had led an eventful life. He came from Lorraine, had been recruited by the Germans and in March 1943 was currently a driver for the Wehrmacht officers in Sète. He deserted, applied to enter the police under the name of Maurice Valentin, was recaptured by the Germans, escaped again and after the Normandy landings found himself at the head of a *maquis* in the Limoges region, where he was known as Major Baptiste. It was said that he killed several dozen collaborators and Gestapo agents for Guingouin, the famous FTP leader of the region. Caught up with yet again by the Germans, he escaped this time by seizing the revolver and shooting the officer who was questioning him.

In 1946 he was in the Black Forest with the rank of captain.

He was commanding a company whose business was the protection and administration of the regional headquarters of the French counter-espionage. He was bored with his duties and applied to join the SDECE, the French equivalent of the CIA. He retained his rank in the army and seems to have been entrusted with several missions for the French Secret Service - though they refuse to confirm this - in Turkey, Germany, Morocco and ... Canada.

In 1955, eight years after his marriage, he was once again in contact with Colonel Foucaud, who had commanded the headquarters in the Black Forest. The French army fighting in Algeria had commissioned Foucaud to supply them with engines and spare parts for armoured cars and trucks, from the American market. He asked M - a former officer in the Ordnance Corps - to help him solve the problems of distribution and adaptation of this equipment. In 1958, M put him in touch with a firm specialising in engine overhauling, called Leca-Tintignac.

Victor M was charmed by the cordiality and the elegance of the effusive Jean N at Le Petit Colombine. His wife had reservations: 'N's origins and his rapid rise to success are quite evident in his behaviour,' she observed. 'He thinks he can get away with anything.' It was true that the trafficker was all the more self-assured because Mariel was thinking of going back into business and taking part in the expanding clandestine trade. 'During 1960,' N revealed later, 'he talked to me about the opportunities he might have of transporting drugs through his son-in-law, who had "official" means. And indeed a first transport was effected through Victor M.'

Between visits to the Sologne, Jean N was working on the organisation of the network with his Marseilles associates. Of course, Victor's 'official means' of which Mariel talked, consisted of his collaboration with Colonel Foucaud, who had retired two years previously but continued to keep an eye on the American motor market. That year he sent M to Ohio, to make a selection of some 'Hercules' engines which had been offered him.

In Marseilles, the idea of using Victor M gained ground. The

suggestion of using a saloon car to conceal the load of heroin had been accepted by Jo Orsini. Achille Cecchini, assisted by Jean N, was to oversee the operation. For the first trip, it was decided that only a limited quantity of heroin, sixteen kilos, should be sent, by way of dress rehearsal.

Everything was ready by the beginning of 1961. On 1 March Victor purchased the saloon car, registration number 3419 FL75. It seems unlikely that any special alterations were carried out, since by the time it was already on board the *Liberty*. It went through the customs without difficulty and Jacques Douhet took it over in New York. 'The first "carrier" I met was Victor M,' Big Charles later admitted. 'That dates back to March 1961.' The goods safely delivered to the American buyers and payment effected, M returned to France.

It was then that a rather remarkable episode occurred. Like many unattached agents, M was invited to resume activities by the Services Spéciaux (Special Services undercover operations). Algeria was in chaos. The OAS was at its most active and was compromising government policy. All the faithful who had proved themselves during the war were called in to help.

At the beginning of April, our hero was a paratrooper in Algiers. His job was to infiltrate the OAS. Back in mainland France in June, he was arrested for distributing OAS propaganda leaflets in the Paris streets, and interned. The flimsiness of the pretext seems to indicate that it was a manoeuvre on the part of the Special Services.

It succeeded. During his detention, Victor M learned from another prisoner, Armand Belvisi, that an attempt was soon to be made on the life of General de Gaulle on the way to Colombes-les-deux-églises. The plotters wanted to set off a gas container full of explosives as his car went by.

The attempt did indeed take place and the head of state escaped without a scratch. Official version: the charge did not explode properly. Generally accepted version: the 'Services Spéciaux' had infiltrated the terrorist group. They allowed the attack to take place, but defused the home-made bomb to strengthen the



impression that the General led a charmed life and to reduce the sympathy the OAS inspired, at least among a portion of the public. As for M, in October he was taken discreetly to Orly and put on board a plane for Canada. Whether this was to keep him clear of possible OAS revenge or whether it was deportation pure and simple, is unclear. In any case we know that by 24 November, he was back in Cherbourg where he and Bousquet embarked on the *Queen Elizabeth* for New York.

This first voyage together was mainly to observe the formalities of the port and customs authorities, and to make contact with Jacques Douheret, who was to take delivery of the merchandise for the American client.

Two months later, on 12 January 1962, Bousquet set off again on the same liner, but this time with a consignment of sixty or so kilos which he handed over to 'Big Charles'.

Before leaving Cherbourg, Victor M had introduced Bousquet to Jean N.

'Welcome to the club,' he had said with a broad smile which concealed any appraising glance. 'Victor is a good judge of character. I'm sure we'll work well together.'

A regular series of trips was to be made during the next three years.

Although Joseph Orsini and his friends had not been unconciliatory, the reimbursement they demanded for the lost heroin did pose a difficult problem for M and Bousquet. In the end it was Charles Martel - now in bad health - who helped them solve it. On two occasions he gave his son-in-law a parcel of shares in the Laboratoires Bellon so that he could negotiate them and pay off his debt. An old offender, he knew that these were obligations one could not escape in the underworld. He also felt partly responsible.

Some days later, Victor handed Jean N a bundle of forty thousand dollars. He would pay the second instalment on the date agreed. Bousquet was to settle the balance during the summer.

To make up for this drain on their resources, there was only

one solution: make another delivery. Bousquet had new heroin suppliers in France. During his numerous trips to the US, through Douheret, M had met the agents of the American buyers - the Orsini group. There was nothing to prevent him from dealing directly - and discreetly - with them. There was no more talk about the hundred missing kilos.

it out of the water. When they opened it, they found the body of a young man. After lengthy investigations, the police discovered, to their amazement, that this was undoubtedly Andre' Condemine, alias Mario Deniz. His wife Gilberie recognised several accompanying objects unhesitatingly. 'That gold chain with the medallion. It's identical to the one I gave him. The cuff-links are identical to the pair my husband wore. He told me he'd had them made in Buenos Aires. I recognise the fastening system.'

The biggest trafficker between the old and new worlds was thus well and truly dead, presumably the victim of his accomplices. His friends in the underworld, whether out of jealousy, or because they knew he was done for, had felt the need to silence him once and for all. Suddenly suspicious and seized with panic as a result of the severe blows the police had already dealt them, the underworld purged itself of its own accord.

This did not necessarily mean the death of the 'Marseilles network'. It had certainly been hard hit, and the Marseilles underworld has not yet managed to find any alternative activity which would be equally profitable.

If the Marseilles heroin problem was to recur it would not be likely to recur in the form of another 'French connection'. In the past, Marseilles enjoyed a virtual monopoly of the drug. Today, if production were resumed in Marseilles, the Chinese traffickers from Hong Kong would not give up their privileged positions without a fight. Amsterdam is their bridgehead in Europe.

Furthermore, Turkish nationals, arrested in West Germany, have been found to be carriers of perfectly refined white heroin. This seems to indicate that the Turks are no longer mere suppliers of opium or raw morphine, but also have their own laboratories. Despite Ankara's assurances that the poppy harvest would be rigorously controlled, the American authorities have sounded the alarm and are now more vigilant than ever.

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