

INQUIRY ON CRIME TOLD OF BOMBINGS

3 Policemen Link Suspects to A.&P. Detergent Case

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The Congressional testimony of three New York City police department detectives today linked men suspected of having fire bombed A. & P. food stores with a crime family that had business dealings with the North American Chemical Corporation.

Earlier testimony before the Senate Commerce Committee had disclosed that the chemical corporation had tried unsuccessfully for several years to sell a detergent it makes to

the A. & P. during a period in which A. & P. stores were fire-bombed and two of its employees murdered. The committee is conducting hearings into the infiltration of the underworld into legitimate business.

Another witness today, a New Jersey banker, testified that Dr. Saul Sobol, chairman of the Chemical Corporation's Board of Directors, had arranged a loan to the Englewood (N.J.) Country Club from a bank of which he also was a director. The New York detectives testified that the country club was frequented by mobsters, including those having business dealings with the chemical corporation.

Another witness was allowed to testify in secret, while two others failed to answer subpoenas to testify. The police who testified, all from the department's Organized Crime Intelligence Division, were Deputy Inspector Michael Willis, Detective James Bateman and Detective William Ralph.

Detective Bateman said that John Mossner of Elmford, N.Y., and A.&P. store manager who was slain in 1963, had identified Joseph Albert Maselli, described by the police as a known arsonist, as one of the men who had tried to set fire to his store. In 1966 Maselli was convicted of the murder of a New York woman and sentenced to 30 years to life.

Maselli, according to testimony and police records, was also an intimate of Nicholas Rattenni of Yonkers, Inspector Willis named Mr. Rattenni as "a soldier in the Catena family."

Testimony at previous committee hearings identified the late Eugene Catena, who died of cancer in 1967, as having received \$2,186.25 a month from North American Chemical. The payments were said to have started in 1963 and were to continue for 13 years. They are now being paid into his estate.

according to the testimony. Recordings of telephone conversations said to have been made by the Federal Bureau of Investigation were read into the record today. In them a voice said to have been Catena's described himself as having been an officer in the Mafia. According to Inspector Willis, Catena's brother, Jerry, or Gerardo, "now is the boss of the old Vito Genovese family," one of five Mafia groups in New York City.

Nathan N. Sobol, president of North American Chemical, which has offices in Paterson, N. J., has testified that Eugene Catena was given stock options in the company, office space and the use of a credit card. The banker who appeared today was Douglas Riddle, an officer of the Short Hills, N. J., branch of the American National Bank and Trust Company. Nathan Sobol's brother, Dr. Saul Sobol, was chairman of the board of directors of the Short Hills bank, which

has been merged into the American National bank.

Mr. Riddle testified that the bank records show that in July, 1963, the bank loaned \$40,000 to the Englewood Country Club. The club, according to Inspector Willis, was "frequented by many, many known members of the crime families." The names he included were Tommy Eholi, Eugene Catena, Jerry Catena, Ruggiero Boitro, Tony Boitro, Angelo de Carlo, and Frank Erickson.

Loan Delay Sought

Mr. Riddle said the country club had sought to delay repayment of the loan, but that the bank had balked at extending the note after hearing that the ownership of the club had changed.

Meanwhile, Mr. Riddle said, the International Longshoremen's Association Medical Service Fund opened at the bank accounts that had been solicited by Dr. Sobol.