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A Rocky Job of Reporting on

By Art Buchwald

The Don Corleone Commission has just handed in its report on organized crime to the President.

Don Corleone, the godfather of the report, told newspapermen, "We have done the most thorough and comprehensive job of any commission ever appointed by the President, and we have come to the unanimous conclusion that, while a few laws were broken by organized criminals, there were no massive violations.

"Organized crime in the United States may have done some things in contradiction to the statutes, but in comparison to the total Mafia effort they were minor."

Don Corleone was asked if his com-

mission had investigated the close ties between the Mafia and the CIA.

"We have heard some witnesses who have testified that the Mafia and the CIA worked closely together on several projects. But it is our opinion that this was on a lower level and none of the Mafia chiefs had ever approved of any activity involving the CIA. We would never condone our soldiers trafficking with spies and the counterintelligence people."

A newspaperman wanted to know if the Mafia was aware of any assassination attempts involving CIA personnel.

"On occasion there was talk of assassinations, but the Mafia bosses rejected it out of hand when they

found out it was illegal. There have been charges in the media that organized crime worked closely with the CIA. What the average person does not understand is that, in order to do its job and protect the country's interest, the Mafia has to work with many unsavory people.

"We work with politicians, the police, informers and, I'm sorry to say, even legal businessmen. But you will never have a strong organized crime force in this country unless you can use every weapon at your disposal."

The next question Don Corleone was asked by a reporter was, "Did the Mafia promise the CIA any-

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thing in exchange for its co-operation in the illegal acts that were discussed?"

"I can say unequivocally that where we enlisted the CIA in our activities nothing was promised in exchange. Our feeling has always been that the CIA offered its help out of patriotism for the country, and it would have been a mistake to reward them by letting them in on any of our rackets."

Don Corleone held up the report to the newspapermen and said, "I think you are going to be surprised and pleased by the comprehensive nature of the material that is in here. We left no stone unturned to find out if organized crime figures in this country went beyond their mandate.

We called 51 witnesses including the bosses of every major city in this country and, while a few of them admitted to minor traffic violations, we could not find one bit of evidence implicating any of them in gambling, drugs or white slavery."

"Will the information on the Mafia's connection with assassinations be made public?" the godfather was asked.

"It would be a mistake to release this information as it is confidential and not in the country's interest. If the President decides the people should know, he has it in his power to declassify the report. But great harm could be done to organized crime if its relation with the CIA was leaked at this time."

The final question asked was, "Don Corleone, do you think there is any conflict of interest in the fact that your commission was made up of people who have been involved with organized crime for years?"

"On the contrary, we're the only ones capable of understanding it. We leaned over backyard to get at the truth and when you read the report you will be amazed at what a great job we did. This is not to say we haven't recommended any reforms. For one thing we have strongly urged that, if the CIA contacts any of our people in the future, the godfathers must be informed of it immediately."