Lucky Luciano Essay, Research Paper

LUCIANO S ORGANIZED CRIME

He s often called the greatest mobster ever to live. Although Lucky Luciano didn t go about it in a legal way he had his mind set on wealth and that s what he went for. Lucky was able to climb the ladder to become the boss of bosses in the mafia world and he took a whole new look at the way he wanted things to be ran. With the help of his childhood friend he would bring the mafia world together and halt the fighting between the main mafia families in America. Through his brilliant mind and his ways of violence he would begin to organize crime in new and radical ways, which would lead to the way organized crime was thought of and seen forever.

Charles Lucky Luciano started with an honest job when he was seventeen, he was delivering ladies hats for man named Max Goodman. This all changed though when he met George Scanlon, a popular drug dealer that worked Lucky s part of town. Lucky was interested in Scanlon s life style and asked if he could work for him. Scanlon decided to give him a chance and Lucky started to deliver heroin in the bands of the hats he was delivering for Goodman. It was making him some easy money, but it wasn t long before it caught up with him. A friend of Lucky s who was jealous of his money tipped off the cops and he was arrested outside of a poolroom, a popular hangout for addicts and pushers, and sentenced to a year in Hampton Farms Penitentiary. He was paroled six months later and that was his last arrest for twenty years and his start in the big time (Gosch & Hammer Pgs.14-16).

Bootlegging was very popular during prohibition in 1920, and it made many gangsters a lot of money. Lucky was able to make his way near the top of the bootlegging industry through acquiring many infamous connections like: Guisseppe Doto Joe Adonis , Waxey Gordon, and Arnold Rothstein, the man who fixed the 1918 World Series. With connections like these Luciano and his partners were able to run an empire of bootlegging. This consisted of plants, distilleries, trucks, and warehouses all for the sale of illegal alcohol (murderINC.com). While others in the industry had to use small speedboats to offload the mother ships, Luciano and Lansky s contacts enabled them to dock their ships in New York harbor for easy transport of the alcohol to the speakeasies, illegal bars where people could go and have a drink (Buchanan-Part 1). Luciano was quoted as saying:

I ll bet in the days when me and my guys got our whiskey business together, we had a bigger company than Henry Ford. We had exporters and importers, all kinds of help that any corporation needs; only we had more. And we had lawyers by the carload, and they was on call twenty-four hours a day. Guys always told me later that I should ve put my brains to runnin a legit business and I d have been a tremendous success, but I wouldn t have enjoyed it like what I was doin (Gosch & Hammer Pg. 44).

Throughout prohibition there were ways for getting around the law. Law enforcement groups were easily bribed with money to keep out of the bootlegging industries way. Among these were the police, government officials, and coast guards to let the shipment from sea come to the docks. The bootleggers had a very thought out system of bribery, and earned the officials trust by keeping their mouths shut when they were actually arrested (Chandler Pg. 130). In the countries two largest cities, New York and Chicago, police and politicians were far more concerned with being paid off than they were by the rising numbers of dead gangsters in the streets. Corruption spread to every government department, hundreds of agents were accused of corruption, many were arrested and most of them were convicted and sent to prison (Woodiwiss Pgs. 14-15).

Throughout prohibition Lucky had his mind set on being the top boss in the mafia world and this would soon happen. Luciano was working for one of the top old Dons of New York, Giuseppe Joe The Boss Masseria, but he was getting tired of Masseria s way of handling business. Lucky saw many opportunities, that could have made the organizations profits increase greatly, slip away. Lucky Luciano felt that in order for Masseria to get in on the increasing profits he needed to diversify and expand his business. Unfortunately this would not occur because Masseria didn t believe in doing business with non-Italians (Nichols Pg 5). This was enough for Luciano and he was going to find a way to get rid of him.

Luciano and his gang of men were going to secretly join the other top Don, Salvatore Maranzano. This they hoped would turn the two on each other and start a major war that would lead to the killing of both of them. It didn t happen like they thought, but it did happen. Maranzano agreed to have a conference with Luciano. At the conference Maranzano told Lucky that he wanted him to come in with him, but under one condition. That Luciano had to personally murder Masseria. This was a trap and Luciano realized this right away, it was the tradition-laden Sicilian underworld, one cannot kill the leader personally and then succeed to his throne; the killer can only expect a secondary role in the new hierarchy (Gosch & Hammer Pg. 117). Luciano told him he s crazy and was then knocked out by a blow to the head. He woke up in a warehouse and was being beaten severely and was told if he didn t go through with it he would die. He was then dropped off on the side of the road to die.

Lucky came to and when he recovered formulated his plans. Lucky met Masseria for dinner at an Italian restaurant about five months later and toward the end of dinner Lucky went to the bathroom. While there four gunman came into the restaurant and shot Masseria to death, this execution made Maranzano the boss of bosses, and made Luciano next in line (Nichols Pg.7).

Soon after the death of Masseria, Maranzano had plans to get rid of Luciano, who he feared would be a threat. Luciano caught word of this and beat him to the job. Maranzano was murdered in his office by government agent impersonators sent by Luciano (Buchanan part 2). Lucky had reached his goal, he was the Boss of Bosses .