

the bleeding portions of his body with an acetylene torch. "Action" Jackson died from shock rather than from the wounds themselves.

How do these juice activities affect small business?

The National Crime Commission assessed the economic impact of gambling at \$7 billion annually. Ranked next were narcotics and loan sharking at an annual economic impact of \$350 million each.

Juice gangsters also squeeze the financial community. Small businesses are denied their rightful share of this economy. Banks, savings and loan companies, finance companies, acceptance companies, factors lose their normal share of the legal loan business to organized crime juice racketeers.

Licensed financial institutions and otherwise legally constituted lending and credit companies, many of them within the framework of Small Business, are squeezed out of their lawful rates of interest when individuals and small business, in need of financial assistance, go to the juice gangster.

Small business engaged in the sale of consumer goods and services are denied income juice victims must pay in the form of high rates of interest.

The Illinois Crime Commission continues its investigation of the juice racket, started in 1965.

In 1966 we solved two armed robberies and successfully prosecuted several defendants. They needed the money to pay off their juice debts. We also arrested and convicted top juice gangster operators Willie Messino, George Bravos and their cohorts Joseph Lombardi and Sam Mercurio on charges of aggravated kidnaping, battery and conspiracy committed before the criminal usury law was enacted.

Consequently we proceeded on the substantive charges themselves.

With me today will be Mr. Robert J. Walker, our chief investigator, who will testify in more detail concerning this specific case of Willie Messino, which I believe can best be described as a horrible anatomy of a juice mob.¹

From January 14 through 16, 1966, we held some public hearings in Chicago. This was the first time in Illinois that the juice racket was exposed, the first time that the nature and scope of this venal organized criminal activity was presented to the public.

Twelve juice victims testified in detail as did two of our own undercover agents. Thirteen suspected juice gangsters were subpoenaed but took the fifth amendment to a total of 1,026 questions.

We questioned these hostile witnesses concerning 16 gangland murders, crimes of arson, armed robbery, assault and battery, intimidation, kidnaping, torture, B-girls, vice, gambling, hijacking, counterfeit stock schemes, narcotics, embezzlement, income tax evasion and fraud, and a host of other organized criminal activities.

We discovered that many of the juice gangsters were engaged in a wide range of legitimate businesses, including, but not limited to restaurants, restaurant supplies and services, trucking, juke box, vending machines, furniture distribution, household appliances, and others.

Some of the gangsters operated sales acceptance and factoring companies as covers for their juice operations.

¹ See p. 114, *infra*.