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THE G-MAN AND THE HIT MAN

Gregory Scarpa, Sr., was a mafioso with a penchant for brutality, extortion, and murder. So what was he doing on the F.B.I.'s payroll?

BY FREDRIC DANNEN

IN 1991, the Colombo crime family in Brooklyn went to war with itself: a rebel faction tried to seize control of the family from its boss, Carmine Persico, who was serving life in jail. Gregory Scarpa, Sr., a sixty-three-year-old mobster, immediately took command of the armed faction loyal to Persico. Scarpa was seriously ill: as the result of a blood transfusion, he was H.I.V.-positive. His body had shrivelled from a muscular two hundred and twenty-five pounds to a gaunt one-fifty, his stomach had been removed during surgery, and he digested his food with pancreatic-enzyme pills. Yet Scarpa, a multiple murderer, hadn't slowed down. During the seven months that the shooting war lasted, he could be seen driving with his troops along Avenue U, in Brooklyn, scouting out the social clubs and bars where members of the enemy faction were likely to be found. Sometimes he drove past the rebels' houses, and one night he surprised a rebel who stood on a ladder, with his back turned, hanging Christmas lights on his house. Scarpa rolled down his car window, stuck out his rifle, and picked the man off with three shots. Then he paged his consigliere with the satanic code 666, to signify a fresh kill.

By the time the war ended, in June, 1992, ten people had died, including an innocent man of eighteen who was shot accidentally at a Brooklyn bagel shop. Ten more people had been wounded, among them a fifteen-year-old bystander, who was shot in the head. By far the most violent participant in the war was Scarpa: he murdered four people and wounded two.

At the Manhattan office of the F.B.I., squads had been in place since the eighties to investigate all five New York Mafia families. The supervisor of the squad for the Colombo and Bonanno families was R. Lindley DeVecchio, a dapper, curly-haired man of average height, with a mustache, whom friends and colleagues called Lin. He was a well-liked veteran who had been with the Bureau since the J. Edgar Hoover era, and he had come up through the New York office as an older colleague of Louis Freeh, the current F.B.I. director. The Colombo war presented a unique challenge to DeVecchio. The F.B.I. had a duty to try to prevent violence of every type, even among criminals. If it could learn, perhaps from an informant, when and where a hit team was to be mobilized, the shooters could be intercepted in the act. DeVecchio did, in fact, have an informant inside the Persico faction of the Colombo family. That informant, however, was hardly likely to divulge the activities of the faction's hit team, for the simple reason that he was its leader—Gregory Scarpa himself.

Scarpa had had a secret relationship with the F.B.I. since the early nineteen-sixties, though for two extended periods he had been "closed," which is to say that he and the Bureau had had a falling out, and no agent was authorized to make contact with him. In 1980, DeVecchio had taken the initiative to seek out Scarpa, win back his good graces, and reopen him for the first time in five years. It had been a spectacular career move. Scarpa was no ordinary informant; he was classified as a T.E., for "top echelon," source. DeVecchio was promoted to squad supervisor in 1983. Largely because of his work with Scarpa—and with a second, unidentified mobster, it was said—DeVecchio became one of the Bureau's most admired experts on dealing with informants, and was accorded the honor of being asked to teach informant development to recruits at the F.B.I.'s training academy, in Quantico, Virginia.

DeVecchio told his students that when it came to building a rapport with an informant, training alone was no substitute for having the right personality. He was a natural himself, even if his upbringing—he is a native of Fresno, California, and the son of a decorated Army colonel buried at Arlington National Cemetery—could not account for it. DeVecchio had become a flashy dresser: at work, he wore a gold bracelet, silk pocket squares, and shirts with monograms. He was also an avid gun collector. He had learned the moves and the jargon of mafiosi on the streets of New York, and he was proud of it. "I've spent virtually twenty-nine years of my life talking to wise guys," he said recently. "You either know how to talk to them or you don't. Many a competent agent doesn't have the street sense." DeVecchio, who has a coarse sense of humor, recalled that his standard opening remark to the students was "I have two college degrees, and my vocabulary has degenerated to four-letter words, and if that bothers you—*fuck you!*"

Even agents with the keenest street sense might have found it intimidating to deal with Scarpa, an imposing man with a deep voice, who once said of himself, "The sign of my birth is Taurus, which is a bull," and who, in a wiretapped conversation during the eighties, convincingly made pronouncements such as "I don't have my money by Thursday, I'll put him right in the fucking hospital." Whatever chemistry existed between him and Lin DeVecchio, it was strong. Informants are supposed to be handled by two agents at a time, and the Bureau discouraged anyone of supervisory rank from operating an informant. Those guidelines were waived for DeVecchio because, he insisted, that was how Scarpa wanted it—there was no other agent he trusted. For more than a decade, DeVecchio was almost always unaccompanied when he met with Scarpa—at an apartment rented by the F.B.I. or in a hotel room, or at some other prearranged location. Sometimes DeVecchio delivered cash to Scarpa. The two men left each other phone messages as "Mr. Dello," their shared code name, and spoke frequently via a special telephone at the F.B.I. building called the hello line, which could not be traced. F.B.I. reports show that during the seven months of the

Colombo war they met or spoke, on the average, at least every ten days.

During the war, DeVecchio maintained that Scarpa was not an active participant, but some younger agents were hearing repeated reports to the contrary. They were alarmed. In 1980, the Department of Justice had issued detailed guidelines: if an informant was suspected of involvement in any "serious act of violence," the supervisor in charge was required to consider closing him and targeting him for arrest. While it was understandable that DeVecchio might be reluctant to close a top-echelon informant—particularly someone who had helped make his career—that seeming reluctance put him at odds with some of his own agents. Eventually, four of them reported to the Bureau that, in an apparent effort to protect Scarpa not merely from arrest but from his enemies in the Mob, DeVecchio had leaked sensitive, confidential information to him. One agent has alleged that DeVecchio became compromised to the point of helping Scarpa locate people that Scarpa wanted to kill.

In early 1994, DeVecchio was placed under investigation, but in the meantime he was neither discharged nor put on administrative leave. Instead, he was moved off his squad to another supervisory position—as the F.B.I.'s drug-enforcement coördinator for the entire Northeastern United States, with unrestricted access to classified documents. He continued to hold that job after he informed the Bureau in a sworn statement that he was not amenable to a voluntary polygraph examination, and, incredibly, even after invoking his Fifth Amendment privilege and refusing to testify about his conduct as an F.B.I. supervisor at a hearing last May. No F.B.I. official—not even Louis Freeh or the New York chief, James Kallstrom—would comment on why a man being investigated for leaking information was kept in a post requiring top-security clearance. Douglas Grover, DeVecchio's lawyer, says it is because the Bureau had always understood what DeVecchio was doing to protect a valuable informant, and had approved of his actions. "Whatever Lin did, he did it as an agent of the institution, both literally and figuratively, acting on behalf of the F.B.I.," Grover says.

The confidential informant has been a staple of the F.B.I. for decades; J. Edgar Hoover exhorted agents to develop at least four such informants a year. Unlike coöperating witnesses—criminals who have been caught and have agreed to testify in exchange for leniency—confidential informants are not expected to take the witness stand. They function as undercover agents. From informants, the Bureau learns what phones to tap and what meetings to subject to surveillance. The top-echelon informant is that rare source high enough in a criminal enterprise to provide what the Bureau calls "singular" information, such as a detailed organization chart of the enterprise. Documents made public as a result of the investigation of DeVecchio show that Scarpa periodically supplied information of this kind. On one occasion, for in-

MICHAEL CRAWFORD

There were rumors in the Mafia that Scarpa was a snitch, but everyone in the family knew that the government didn't ally itself with killers, and, as one associate pointed out, "He was crazy. He killed a lot. He was nuts."

"I hope when I grow up I'll have an amicable divorce."

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stance, he gave up the names of three people proposed for membership in the Colombo family—including one who had been sponsored by Scarpa himself.

Criminal informants are often essential for making cases, and courts have long upheld the legality of their use. However, because they are practicing criminals they must be handled with extreme care, so that, in the words of the Justice Department guidelines, "the government itself does not become a violator of the law." The F.B.I. has repeatedly been accused of overprotecting its criminal sources. In 1985, federal prosecutors, unaware that the Teamsters boss Jackie Presser was a top-echelon F.B.I. informant, sought an indictment against him for putting two ghost employees on the payroll. The following year, three Cleveland F.B.I. agents were investigated for having blocked the indictment, allegedly by inventing an alibi for Presser. During an internal inquiry, one of those agents, Robert Friedrick, admitted to his role in creating the phony alibi. His statement was ruled inadmissible, however, and obstruction charges against him were dismissed; the other agents were never charged.

The F.B.I. had helped keep Presser on the street, but Presser, unlike Greg Scarpa, had never shown a penchant for violence. Scarpa had other qualities that made him a dangerous choice for informant: he was shrewd, and he had a proven ability to bend people to his will. "Greg was a true Machiavelli," Louis Diamond, a former attorney of his, says. "He was the puppeteer. He lived to manipulate people against people." Diamond adds that Scarpa was "one of the better gin-rummy players," and that the game showed off his "brilliance" and "ability to focus and plan." For thirty years, he adds, "Greg was able to keep the government on the schneider"—a cardplayer's term for preventing your opponent from scoring a point.

Scarpa was first officially opened by the F.B.I. on March 20, 1962, reputedly after agents seized him outside New York State for an armed robbery. It is not hard to see how his long relationship with the Bureau worked to his benefit. According to an associate, he "hated doing time," and, unlike most Mob figures, he seemed never to go to jail. During his three decades as an informant, his only incarceration, at Rikers Island for bribing two policemen, was thirty days in 1978—one of the years in which he was closed by the F.B.I. He had previously been arrested for bookmaking, assault with a lead pipe (twice), hijacking a tractor-trailer loaded with J. & B. Scotch, possession of stolen mail, and interstate transportation of stolen bonds. In each instance, the charges were dismissed.

Scarpa's ability to stay out of jail did not go unnoticed by his Mob associates, and periodically there were rumors that he was a snitch. But everyone in the family knew that the government did not ally itself with killers, and, as one associate pointed out about Scarpa, "He was crazy. He killed a lot. He was nuts." Lou Diamond adds, "Greg was an absolutely fearless man who enjoyed killing, and enjoyed vengeance. And enjoyed the subtlety. He would smile at a guy, take him out to dinner, and blow his brains out." After Scarpa became sick, he proposed that someone get him a wheelchair and roll him into a roomful of enemies with a machine gun hidden under his blanket. His associates gave him nicknames: the Mad Hatter, the Grim Reaper, General Schwarzkopf.

By the start of the Colombo war, Scarpa had murdered no fewer than eight people, and probably many more. One of his victims, according to a government document, was a Manhattan doctor named Eli Sckolnick. In the late seventies, Sckolnick lost his license to practice medicine and transferred title to a lucrative abortion clinic to a nurse who was on intimate terms with Scarpa. In the early eighties, Scarpa put a stop to Sckolnick's demands for money from the clinic by obtaining his address in Forest Hills and killing him. In 1984, it is alleged, Mary Bari, a young woman who was thought to know the whereabouts of a Colombo fugitive, was lured to a bar on the pretext of a job offer, was shot by Scarpa, and was tossed, dead, into the trunk of a car.

Scarpa was born in Brooklyn on May 28, 1928. He appears to have been drawn into the Colombo family—then called the Profaci family—by his older brother, Salvatore, who died in a shooting in 1987. In the early fifties, Scarpa married Connie Forrest; they had one daughter and three sons, including Gregory, Jr., who followed his father into the Mafia. By the time Scarpa separated from his wife, around

1973, he had had another son with a longtime girlfriend, Linda Schiro. Meanwhile, though he continued to live with Schiro, and had never divorced Forrest, he married Lili Dajani, a Palestinian-Israeli beauty queen, in 1975, in Las Vegas. Around 1978, Schiro began seeing a delivery boy named Larry Mazza; Scarpa permitted their love affair to continue, and, in the meantime, he inducted Mazza into his crew.

A number of crewmen answered to Scarpa's authority, but DeVecchio says that Scarpa never assumed the formal title of captain. He was what mafiosi call "a good earner." His income came from loan-sharking, bookmaking, the sale of marijuana and cocaine, securities and credit-card fraud, operating an auto-theft ring, and other forms of larceny. Simultaneously, he received money from the government: two hundred and fifty-three dollars a month in Social Security, and a total of at least a hundred and fifty thousand dollars in untaxed income—informant fees—from the F.B.I.

His early use by the Bureau went far beyond informant, and may have persuaded him that his violence—at least, when it was directed toward other bad guys—had the government's tacit approval. In the sixties, J. Edgar Hoover was criticized for the Bureau's failure to protect the civil rights of blacks in the Deep South. Consequently, the F.B.I. resorted to extreme measures in its war on the Ku Klux Klan. On January 10, 1966, the day after Vernon Dahmer, a black farmer and merchant in Forrest County, Mississippi, agreed to make his grocery store available as a place for blacks to pay poll tax, Klansmen set his house on fire, fatally searing his lungs and badly burning his ten-year-old daughter. Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach promised to commit "the full resources of the Justice Department" to catching the perpetrators. On January 21st, the Jackson, Mississippi, office of the F.B.I. called the New York office and, as recorded in an internal memo, requested the use of informant NY-3461—Gregory Scarpa—for a special assignment.

One of the immediate suspects in the Dahmer homicide was Lawrence Byrd, the owner of Byrd's Radio & TV Service in Laurel, Mississippi, who held the post of senator in the Klan. One evening in late January, at around nine o'clock, as Byrd was about to close his shop, Scarpa and an F.B.I. agent agreed to buy a television from Byrd and asked him to help carry it to a car parked outside. Byrd was pistol-whipped, shoved into the back seat, forced to lie down, and driven, he believed, to Camp Shelby, a military base built on rural Mississippi swampland. There Scarpa beat a confession out of him. "Lawrence was a tough guy—a big, raw-boned country boy—but he was beat up so bad he was never the same after that," says W. O. (Chet) Dillard, the local district attorney, who visited Byrd in the hospital immediately after the kidnapping. Byrd implored Dillard not to investigate the matter, and in early March he signed a twenty-two-page confession prepared by the F.B.I., in which he inculpated himself and seven other Klansmen. He got ten years for arson, and died early last year, having never learned that his brutal interrogator was a New York mafioso.

LIN DEVECCHIO plainly has a fascination with mobsters, and during two interviews conducted for this account he made no attempt to hide it. He did not simply describe the wise guys he has known but mimicked them, down to their Brooklyn accents. He recalled a time when a fellow-agent introduced himself to an organized-crime figure stiffly, with a flash of his badge, "and the guy says to him, 'So whaddya want me to do—shit in my pants?' " DeVecchio laughed. His bad-guy imitations sometimes had an edge; at one point, he said he hoped that he would like this article, so that "I don't have to come looking for you some dark night."

DeVecchio spoke enthusiastically about how Mob figures had educated him to their way of looking at things. "It's a foreign culture to most of us," he said. "And you have to— 'Respect' is not the word, but you have to at least admire a guy who lives in an environment where every day he's looking over his shoulder. Scarpa used to tell me, 'I'd be called to meetings, and I'd leave my watch and valuables at home—I didn't know if I was coming back.' To survive in that milieu takes a special kind of person." After a pause, he added, "That doesn't mean Lin DeVecchio condones that way of life."

One thing that seemed to interest DeVecchio about organized-crime figures was their ability to kill in cold blood, and he went on, "I've asked a couple of wise guys about that, and they say the first couple of times it's hard but after that it's no big deal." He personally found that unfathomable, he said, but the mobsters taught him how "to talk, to act, as a true killer does"—a facility he used in undercover work. He created an alternative identity for himself—a hit man named Tony DeAngelo—and used it to good effect on a number of occasions. In 1983, a former C.I.A. agent, Edwin Wilson, in prison awaiting trial for illegally shipping

"And, while there's no reason yet to panic, I think it only prudent that we make preparations to panic."

weapons to Libya, was scouting for someone he could hire to murder two federal prosecutors and several potential witnesses. A fellow-inmate tipped off the authorities and then agreed to present DeVecchio to Wilson, in a visitors' room, as DeAngelo, the hit man. Days later, Wilson arranged for his son Erik to pay DeVecchio—unwittingly, it appeared—close to ten thousand dollars in a hotel men's room. Wilson was convicted of attempted murder.

DeVecchio, who is in his mid-fifties, is a husband and parent; he asked that no other details of his home life be disclosed. He spoke freely, however, about his late father, the Army colonel, who, as a finance officer, aided the Italian government in that country's postwar reconstruction. By the time DeVecchio was eighteen, he had lived in Italy, Japan, and Bermuda and in several American cities. He got an undergraduate degree in political science at George Washington University, and, in 1963, was about to accept a full commission in the military when the F.B.I. offered him a job as a clerk—an entrée into becoming an agent.

In March, 1966, having completed his agent training and passed an obligatory personal inspection by Hoover, DeVecchio was posted to upstate New York. He worked on routine crimes, such as bank robbery and car theft. In April, 1967, he was transferred to the New York City office, which was then on East Sixty-ninth Street; from that time forward, he specialized in organized crime. In less than a year, DeVecchio says, "I had my first informant under my belt." He also set about earning a master's degree in criminal justice from Long Island University.

DeVecchio found a kindred spirit and mentor on the organized-crime squad in Manhattan—an agent thirteen years his senior named Anthony Villano. "Tony had a very good way with wise guys," DeVecchio says. "I learned a lot of things by watching Tony." Villano, who died of heart failure in 1988, was an unorthodox agent—a tough Brooklynite, who once narrowly avoided arrest in a barroom brawl. He operated a number of informants, and one of them was Greg Scarpa. (DeVecchio says he learned this only after Villano quit the Bureau, in 1973.)

Villano left behind a blunt memoir of his F.B.I. career, written in 1977 with the author Gerald Astor and entitled "Brick Agent." (In Hoover's time, a street agent for the F.B.I. was said to be "on the bricks.") Astor says that two pseudonymous people in the book are actually Scarpa. The book recounts that Scarpa had had his first rift with the Bureau before Villano ever met him: he believed that the F.B.I. had welshed on a fifteen-hundred-dollar payment owed him for his work in the Deep South. Villano wrote that after finding Scarpa's name in the closed-informant file he got him the money but was unable to win his coöperation until he impressed the mobster, who was built like "an ox," by arm-wrestling him to a standoff.

Villano, who referred to developing a criminal informant as "getting married," came to regard Scarpa as "a friend," and repeatedly bent, or even broke, the law on his behalf. Often when Scarpa's information led to the recovery of stolen merchandise, Villano collected sizable reward money for him from insurance companies; and once, to make an illegal sports bet, Villano used Scarpa as his bookie. A more significant episode occurred when a criminal who could implicate Scarpa in acts of larceny offered to coöperate with the Bureau: Villano silenced the man by inventing the fiction that the Colombo family planned to kidnap his daughter if he talked. The man died in prison.

Although Scarpa tipped off the Bureau to a number of major heists, Villano wrote that all the time he himself worked with Scarpa "I had to reassure myself that our relationship was not the ultimate perversion of the whole law-enforcement idea. In my mind, what we did was justified on the grounds of the greatest good." Not everyone in the Bureau agreed. "I had a discussion with Tony that made me think that Scarpa thought he had a license to kill," one agent, now retired, recalls. "Around 1970, an informant for the Drug Enforcement Administration got blown away, and the D.E.A. heard that Scarpa was the triggerman. They wanted to interrogate Scarpa, and Tony did a tap dance to obstruct their investigation. Scarpa was not arrested or charged with that murder."

SCARPA was closed in 1975, two years after Villano left the Bureau. DeVecchio came across Scarpa's name in the closed-informant file, just as his ex-colleague had done, and in 1980 he got permission to try to reopen him. He says that he first called Villano for advice but can't now remember what he was told. One day that year, DeVecchio dressed casually, drove to Scarpa's residence, on Avenue J, in Brooklyn, and waited until Scarpa left the house alone. "I got out of the car and introduced myself," he recalls. "I said, 'I know you by reputation—you have a good reputation on the street.' I flattered him. I told him I worked the Colombo family, and I said, 'I'm not looking for anything now, but one of these days I could use your help.'" Scarpa provided a phone number. A few days later, the two men went for a drive, and Scarpa explained why he'd been closed: he had had a shouting match with the assistant director of the F.B.I.'s New York office over what he termed a broken promise. "Scarpa said the guy was not a gentleman," DeVecchio recalls. "I just played dumb."

DeVecchio continued to meet with Scarpa for the next eleven and a half years. He acknowledges that he found Scarpa "very personable," and that he accepted a few small gifts from him—a bottle of wine, a pan of lasagna, and, in the early eighties, a Cabbage Patch doll for a friend's niece. "We got along," he says. He does not characterize Scarpa as having been a friend, however, nor does he distinguish him from the other top-echelon informants he worked with in the course of his career—five in all.

Although his squad had oversight of both the Colombo and the Bonanno families from the late eighties on, DeVecchio says he had no knowledge until 1992, after the Colombo war had ended, that Scarpa was a multiple murderer. But he does say, "The information we had for years and years on Scarpa was that he was a tough opponent on the street. He was a vicious, tough man. But, you know, when you talk to any organized-crime member you can almost take it to the bank that he's killed somebody."

DeVecchio says he never knew why Scarpa chose to coöperate with the F.B.I. "I think part of his motivation was he thought there was a quid pro quo—that I could be of some help to him sometime, one hand washing the other." He adds, "I think that's illusory." Earlier, he said, "A smart wise guy will talk to law enforcement in hopes—*in hopes*, not because it's gonna happen—that he'll derive some benefit from it. What does that mean? Does that mean a pass? He may think that. I'll tell you right now, I told Scarpa, as I did all my other T.E. informants, 'If you screw up, I'm not gonna help you out.'" The most he could ever do for an informant who'd been arrested, he says, was make his infor-

mant status known to the prosecution and the judge.

In practical terms, however, this could amount to a pass. In 1985, the Secret Service, unaware that Scarpa was anything other than a mobster suspected of dealing in counterfeit credit cards, sent an undercover agent to his principal hangout, the Wimpy Boys Athletic Club, in Brooklyn, where the agent sold Scarpa three hundred blank MasterCard and Visa cards. Scarpa was indicted the following year by the Brooklyn Organized Crime Strike Force, and he agreed to plead guilty. In July, 1986, the strike force sent the judge a lengthy letter detailing Scarpa's criminal history and penchant for violence, and urged that he be jailed and fined substantially. Then, with the permission of F.B.I. officials in Washington, DeVecchio conferred with members of the strike force, and he and Scarpa met with the judge. Scarpa drew a ten-thousand-dollar fine and five years' probation.

IN August, 1986, while Scarpa was awaiting the outcome of the credit-card case, he developed bleeding ulcers and was admitted to Victory Memorial Hospital, in Brooklyn. When medication failed to stop the bleeding, he was told he would need transfusions. Scarpa did not want any of the hospital's blood in his veins—in the words of one of his attorneys, "Greg could never be accused of being racially liberal"—and he asked Linda Schiro to round up as many friends and relatives as she could. By the next day, almost thirty people had come to the hospital, and blood from some of them was administered to Scarpa without having been screened for H.I.V. One of the donors—Paul Mele, a weight lifter who served on Scarpa's crew—had contracted the virus, apparently from a steroid needle; six months after donating his blood, he was dead.

After the transfusions, Scarpa was taken to the operating room at Victory Memorial for emergency ulcer surgery. He seemed fine for a day or two, but then came down with a high fever, and began drifting in and out of consciousness. Linda Schiro claimed that the resident surgeon who had performed the operation, a Filipino named Angelito Sebollena, insisted that everything was all right, but she was unnerved one day when she caught him shaving Scarpa's face, in order to, as the doctor put it, "make him look nice." She had Scarpa transferred to Mt. Sinai Hospital, in Manhattan. There his stomach, which was hemorrhaging beyond repair, was removed. Scarpa finally went home in October, with the aid of a walker.

Scarpa blamed Sebollena for making a faulty incision, and Victory Memorial for exposing him to AIDS. He filed suit. Before long, Sebollena was in further trouble. In 1991, he injected two male patients with the drug Versed, a central-nervous-system depressant that leaves a person conscious but immobile, and performed oral sex on them. Gary Pillersdorf, the lawyer who represented Scarpa at the medical-malpractice trial, in August, 1992, recalls that on the morning of the opening statements the judge motioned him to the bench and said, "Let me get this straight. You're representing a hit man with AIDS against a doctor who sodomizes his patients. Am I on the right page?"

Scarpa made a superb witness in his own behalf. Choking back tears, he testified that he was afraid now to kiss his grandchildren, and he said that living with AIDS was like being "a person that's condemned to death and, each time he walks the corridor to the execution, he gets a reprieve." A black woman on the jury—an elementary-school principal, whose husband worked for the Brooklyn D.A.'s office—began to cry; she later described Scarpa as "a noble man." Several jurors later said they had been prepared to award Scarpa millions of dollars, but by August 28th he was too exhausted to continue with the trial, and agreed to a settlement of three hundred thousand dollars. He wanted the money in twenty-four hours, however, and in cash. The next morning, he sent a bodyguard, in a nylon jogging suit and heavy jewelry, to a Manhattan Citibank branch to collect it. Pillersdorf says that bank employees were nonplussed when the man tossed the cash into a duffelbag without counting it, and were "wide-eyed" when he told them, "I know who you guys are, if there's a problem."

"Nothing for me, thanks."

WHILE Scarpa was recuperating at home after his surgery, the family consigliere, Carmine Sessa, dropped in on him several times. Once or twice, Sessa handed Scarpa the phone and told him the caller was somebody named Mr. Dello, and he remembered hearing Scarpa once tell Dello, "But I already brought you up to date on that." Sessa, who later turned coöperator, said he had always figured that Scarpa had a friend in law enforcement—someone who protected him. Sessa also believed that Scarpa had an information source in the government. During the Colombo war, some of Scarpa's crewmen heard him refer to a source he called The Girlfriend, who was under-

stood to be a man—not a lover, certainly, but someone Scarpa trusted deeply. Whenever The Girlfriend paged Scarpa, even if Scarpa was in a car on the highway, he got to a phone as quickly as possible. Scarpa seemed to have inside information about the enemy faction during the war, including rebels' addresses, and he told his crewmen that The Girlfriend was a mole in the enemy camp. At least one of those crewmen, Joey Ambrosino, didn't believe it; he later told the authorities that there was no way any rebel would trust someone as "vicious" as Greg Scarpa.

A number of Scarpa's associates had concluded that he had a law-enforcement source as early as 1987, because that year he had inside information about a drug case. Around that time, he had joined his son Greg, Jr., and nine of Greg, Jr.,'s crewmen in a violent narcotics-and-extortion enterprise. Dealers who sold marijuana and other drugs in areas that Scarpa, Sr., considered to be his turf, which included, for example, the campus of the College of Staten Island, were required to make payoffs of as much as a thousand dollars a day or have their bones broken. With the help of a dealer who had been beaten with baseball bats, the Drug Enforcement Administration soon began to build a case against Greg, Jr., and his crew. The D.E.A. was unaware that Scarpa, Sr., was involved in the enterprise, but he knew all about the D.E.A. investigation. One day that summer, Greg, Jr., showed some of his crewmen a piece of paper that he had got from his father, which listed ten people, including Greg, Jr., who had been targeted for arrest. He said the list had been supplied by "a friend" of his father's, whom he also described as "an agent."

Scarpa, Sr., ordered that no one but Greg, Jr., attempt to flee—it is believed that he wanted to learn how strong a case the government had against his son—and the nine crewmen were arrested on November 12, 1987. Greg, Jr., could not be found. Valerie Caproni, the Brooklyn federal prosecutor handling the case, was angry. "This was going to be a big, expensive case to try, and our top defendant was in the wind," she recalls. He was not caught until August, 1988, after being featured on the television program "America's Most Wanted," by which time Caproni had convicted the nine crewmen. Though she subsequently convicted Greg, Jr., and he got twenty years, she complains that it was "not a lot of fun" to have to mount a second trial.

"I think older women with younger men threatens all the right people."

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Caproni, a Southerner with a reputation for toughness, has since risen to chief of the criminal division of the Brooklyn United States Attorney's Office. In early 1994, she learned from two of the convicted crewmen, who had become coöperating witnesses, that in 1987 Greg, Jr., had obtained a list of all her defendants. She plainly suspects Lindley DeVecchio; in a court document she states that there is "some reason to believe" he leaked the list. DeVecchio vehemently denies doing so, but Caproni recalls that in the summer of 1987, while the D.E.A. case was being developed, she invited an F.B.I. agent named Michael Tabman to a planning meeting, and that Tabman took notes. Tabman later recalled, in a sworn statement, that sometime after the meeting he'd told DeVecchio about the D.E.A. case, and found him "very interested in this matter."

Caproni also finds some reason to believe that DeVecchio leaked another piece of confidential information to Scarpa in 1987—information that nearly got a man killed. She recalls saying at the summer meeting in Tabman's presence that one of the crewmen she planned to indict, Cosmo Catanzano, was "a weak link," who might coöperate if he was arrested. Tabman says he doesn't remember this. That same summer, Greg, Jr., informed one of his crewmen (who later coöperated with federal authorities) that his father's "agent source" had warned that Catanzano was "going to rat." Sometime after that, Scarpa, Sr., ordered that Catanzano be murdered and buried—and quickly, because the D.E.A. arrests were imminent. Two crewmen dug a grave for Catanzano in a secluded spot off the Arthur Kill Road, in Staten Island, but Catanzano's execution was foiled by his arrest. He never did coöperate. DeVecchio denies ever mentioning Catanzano to Scarpa.

CAPRONI would not say anything about DeVecchio in an interview, but she lavishly praised an agent named Christopher Favo, who had worked under him, and who became DeVecchio's most vocal accuser. Favo, an attorney and

"Sipsies?"

a graduate of Notre Dame, joined the Bureau in 1983. "I think Chris Favo is an excellent agent," Caproni said. "He's an extremely hard worker. He's very bright. I have used him as a witness in a couple of cases, and find him to be easy to prepare. He has a good memory." During the Colombo war, Favo was, among other things, an information liaison between the F.B.I. and New York City police officers, who found him rather straitlaced—"like a young seminarian," one recalls. But that was all right: the cops had been given the job of trying to suppress the war by arresting people for carrying guns, and they believed that Favo could be trusted. The standard criticism of Favo was that he worked too hard—he seemed never to go home—and that he wanted to do everything himself and would not delegate responsibility.

DeVecchio doesn't share Caproni's high opinion of Favo. "Suffice it to say, he's not a favorite of mine," he says. "Everything's black-and-white for Chris Favo. If you were crossing the street and missed the crosswalk by a foot, he'd give you a ticket for jaywalking. And he's an egomaniac of the worst kind."

It was Favo who eventually reported DeVecchio to the Bureau. Though Favo was joined by three other agents when he voiced his suspicions, DeVecchio says those agents were "duped" by Favo. They all misinterpreted his actions, he says, because they all lacked street experience, and had "no clue" to what it took to operate a top-echelon source. "Favo used to say, 'I've got a lot of experience with coöperating witnesses,'" DeVecchio says. "So what? Anybody can make a deal with some guy who doesn't want to go to jail for the rest of his life. He never worked in the street covertly and developed an informant."

Favo's thoughts and actions during the Colombo war have been preserved in testimony, affidavits, memorandums, and a daily diary. He was the senior field agent investigating the war, and was one of the first agents on the scene on November 18, 1991, when its opening shots were fired—at Greg Scarpa.

Scarpa had been predicting a shooting war for some time—ever since it became apparent that the family's acting boss, Victor Orena, Sr., was trying to depose the jailed Carmine Persico and take over the family. From Scarpa, and from Scarpa's girlfriend's daughter, who was also named Linda, Favo learned what had happened. Scarpa was pulling out of his driveway in his car, and Linda, with her infant son, was pulling out in another car, when a van and a panel truck blocked their way. A group of men in ski masks jumped out of the van and opened fire with automatic weapons, leaving a row of bullet holes in the fender of Linda's car. Scarpa escaped by driving up onto the sidewalk, past the panel truck. (He later groused that for the gunmen to have even risked hitting Linda and her son showed that discipline was falling apart in the Mafia.) Favo took down the plate number of the truck, which had been left behind, and traced it to a rental office in Queens. He says he provided that information to DeVecchio, whom he had not yet begun to suspect of leaking information to Scarpa. He says he didn't learn until after the war, from a coöperator, that someone had told Scarpa where the truck had been rented.

Scarpa believed that the gunmen had been sent by William (Wild Bill) Cutolo, then reputedly the acting underboss. Scarpa made plans to disguise himself as a Hasidic Jew and mow down Wild Bill as he left his girlfriend's house on Thanksgiving Day, 1991, but that morning an article in the *Post* mentioned the snitch rumor about Scarpa, and he was forced to call off the hit so that he could assuage his confederates. Between December 3rd and January 7th, Scarpa did kill two other rebels, wounded a third, and accidentally shot and killed a Genovese family associate, who was blamed for his own death, because he was at a Colombo hangout at the time. There was no more talk of Scarpa being a snitch.

In a 1995 sworn statement DeVecchio denied ever deliberately leaking intelligence to Scarpa, but he said it was possible that Scarpa had inferred information from his questions, adding, "You cannot debrief a top-echelon source in a vacuum." Though the entire record is not available, it appears that much of the information that Scarpa was giving back during the war was worse than useless. F.B.I. documents show that he repeatedly pinned his wartime violence on other people; they also show that DeVecchio conferred with Scarpa on the very day Scarpa committed one of his murders.

As the war escalated, DeVecchio found it difficult to reach Scarpa by phone, and one time he dropped by Scarpa's house. Whenever DeVecchio met with an informant at home, he brought

along one or two other agents, to make the visit look like an intrusion. He did not let his subordinates participate in the debriefing with Scarpa, however; he sat them down in Scarpa's living room, with the television turned on, while he spoke privately with his informant in the kitchen for about an hour.

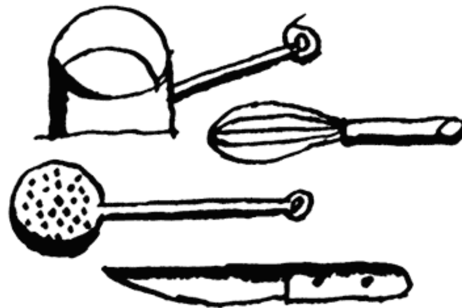
Some of Scarpa's men later told federal authorities that during the war Scarpa was paged frequently by The Girlfriend. He was warned to be careful, and to watch out in particular for a rebel nicknamed Joe Waverly. In January, 1992, Scarpa and Waverly had a gunfight from adjacent cars, two feet apart, near Avenue U. Waverly shot out Scarpa's window, and Scarpa, whose Tec-9 had misfired, sped off with glass fragments in his hair. On February 26th, out on Avenue U, Scarpa shot Waverly in the stomach.

The following day, Favo appears to have formed his first suspicions about DeVecchio. That morning, a loan shark named Carmine Imbriale was arrested by the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office, and he told the authorities that he'd been at a dinner the evening before at which Scarpa had proposed a toast and bragged about shooting Waverly. The D.A.'s office alerted Favo, and he conveyed the news to DeVecchio. Favo says that DeVecchio then got a phone call from Scarpa, and told Scarpa that the Brooklyn D.A.'s office had Imbriale in temporary custody, adding, "I don't know what he's saying about you." Favo was concerned that DeVecchio had just endangered Imbriale's life. And, in fact, that evening, according to a coöperator, Scarpa said, "It would be a good idea to kill Imbriale." Favo claims that he persuaded DeVecchio to call Scarpa the next day and warn him that if any harm came to Imbriale he would be held suspect. DeVecchio says that neither phone conversation with Scarpa about Imbriale took place, and that he has "no idea" why Favo would invent such a story.

A report that Scarpa had boasted about shooting someone was not sufficient evidence to arrest him, but it should have been cause, according to the Department of Justice guidelines on F.B.I. informants, to consider closing him. DeVecchio did not seem inclined to do so. Around the same time, however, DeVecchio's immediate supervisor, Donald North, to whom all the Mafia squads reported, became uneasy about Scarpa. North had been told by an agent not on DeVecchio's squad that Scarpa was conspiring to murder someone. (The intended victim's identity has not been revealed.) North has testified that he asked DeVecchio if he had reason to believe that Scarpa was committing crimes of violence. "He was adamant," North recalled. "He was convinced that Mr. Scarpa was not engaged in any violent activity." Nevertheless, North checked on the information about the murder conspiracy and found it credible, so, as of March 3, 1992, Scarpa was ordered closed, and DeVecchio was told to have no further contact with him. A month later, F.B.I. headquarters permitted DeVecchio to reopen Scarpa, after he attributed the murder-conspiracy charge against Scarpa to the "paranoia" among Colombo-family members which had been engendered by the war.

On May 22nd, Scarpa killed again. At about three-thirty in the morning, as the rebel soldier Larry Lampesi was locking the gate of his apartment building, Scarpa shot him with a rifle extended from his car window, then got out of the car with two of his crewmen and pumped some extra rounds into his body. The same morning, another Colombo rebel was wounded in a second incident.

A few hours later, Favo says he stopped by DeVecchio's office to report the two shootings. Twice in court, in the past two years, Favo has given a dramatic account of how he says DeVecchio reacted to the news. Favo said he and his fellow-agents believed that "every time there was a shooting or a murder it was a defeat for us"; but DeVecchio "laughed" and "got excited" at the report, and, with his open palm, slapped his desk and said, "We're going to win this thing!" Favo said DeVecchio "seemed to be a cheerleader for the Persico faction," and also testified, "A line had been blurred. . . . He was compromised. He had lost track of who he was." DeVecchio has acknowledged making "some statement to that effect," but thinks it was in front of "probably half a dozen agents," and that he obviously meant the F.B.I. was going to win in its efforts to fight organized crime. He adds, "If I'm siding with an organized-crime family, why would I tell that to my agents? What person in their right mind would do that?"



By late spring, the war was winding down. A number of the rebels had been arrested, including the faction leader, Victor Orena. In June, agents on DeVecchio's squad placed a microphone in a car belonging to Scarpa's crewman Joey Ambrosino, a Persico-faction member. DeVecchio says he approved of the electronic surveillance—bolstering his contention that he was not playing sides in the war—though there is an odd passage in his sworn statement concerning its use. He wrote that "Scarpa, Sr., was astounded to learn that Ambrosino's car had been 'bugged' and that I had not told him of this situation." One is left to wonder why Scarpa would ever have expected to be told.

The bug was a productive one, and DeVecchio's agents began making arrests, starting with Ambrosino, who immediately elected to coöperate, and who connected Scarpa to at least one killing. Still, DeVecchio made no move to close Scarpa. "I saw this to be a dilemma," one of DeVecchio's agents later said, in a sworn statement. "I know if this was my source, I would have gone to the U.S. Attorney's to obtain a warrant for his arrest." Chris Favo had a plan to do exactly that: he asked a Brooklyn prosecutor if he could write up a murder-conspiracy complaint against Scarpa as soon as Favo gave the signal. He kept his plan a secret from DeVecchio. He has testified that by then "I believed that he was liable to say anything to Gregory Scarpa."

Meanwhile, the squad continued to make other arrests—so rapidly, in some cases, that DeVecchio was not notified in advance. In late June, agents arrested four Colombo suspects at an apartment in Point Pleasant, New Jersey. When the agents next saw DeVecchio, he was visibly agitated. One of them, Howard Leadbetter, a former Army officer who had worked in Special Operations, said in a sworn statement that he heard DeVecchio, "in a very forceful tone of voice," tell Favo, " 'I've had it! You will not arrest another single individual without my specific approval!' " Leadbetter testified in court that he could not understand DeVecchio's agitation until sometime later, when he learned that Scarpa had been at the New

Jersey apartment earlier that day and had narrowly avoided being arrested himself.

On the morning of August 31st, Favo dropped by DeVecchio's office, and told him that Scarpa was about to turn himself in to New York City police detectives on a gun charge. During the month that Scarpa had been closed by the F.B.I., he'd been seen tossing a loaded automatic from the window of his car. DeVecchio knew all about the gun arrest and, according to Favo, seemed unconcerned: it had been agreed beforehand that Scarpa would be arraigned and released. Only three days earlier, Scarpa had settled his medical-malpractice case, and had told a *Newsday* reporter that he was planning to celebrate with a vacation in Florida. Favo then sprang his surprise: he informed DeVecchio that immediately after the gun arraignment Scarpa was going to be arrested by two of DeVecchio's own agents and booked on federal murder-conspiracy charges. "DeVecchio was visibly upset" by that news, Favo says, and tried to alert Scarpa via the confidential hello line, but it was too late.

EVEN then, DeVecchio did not abandon his top-echelon source. He got in touch with prosecutors at the Brooklyn United States Attorney's Office to ask them to request bail for Scarpa. One prosecutor, Andrew Weissmann, later said he was "incredulous" that any agent would want Scarpa on the street, and, at a September bail hearing, before the federal magistrate John L. Caden, Weissmann argued vigorously for detention. Caden was not aware that Scarpa was an informant, and the attorney representing Scarpa at the hearing, Joseph Benfante, says he wasn't aware of it, either. "That would be tantamount to me thinking that Mother Teresa is assisting Saddam Hussein, because no F.B.I. informant goes out and engages in a Colombo war—it's insanity," Benfante says.

Benfante's motion for bail was made strictly on the ground of Scarpa's medical condition. By now, Scarpa had full-blown AIDS, with a T-cell count of zero (two thousand is normal), and at his malpractice trial in August his doctor had testified that he had between two and six months to live. Benfante says that Scarpa had also begun to show signs of AIDS dementia. During visits he paid to Scarpa in prison, he recalls, "He told me to make a list—he wants to give all the guards attaché cases, special cases of wine, and filet-mignon steaks. I told him, 'Greg, you can't have a steak in prison.' 'What do you mean!' He'd throw the chair. The next day, he'd be fine."

Judge Caden agreed to house arrest, with the stipulation that Scarpa wear an electronic anklet that would alert police if he left the house. All went well until December 29, 1992, when Scarpa's son by Linda Schiro, Joseph, got into a dispute over a drug transaction, and was said to have told his father that he had been spoken to disrespectfully. Scarpa rushed out of the house armed, went around the block, and got into a gun battle with two Bay Ridge drug dealers, one of whom he is believed to have killed. In the altercation, Scarpa's left eye was shot out. He is said to have walked back home, pressed a towel to his bleeding eye socket, drunk a glass of Scotch, and—because Schiro was hysterical—driven himself to Mt. Sinai Hospital. Joseph has since been killed in what was apparently a drug-related shooting.

Scarpa's house arrest was revoked. It was agreed that he would be sent to Rikers Island, a prison known for its superior AIDS facility, to serve a year on his gun charge. It seemed inconceivable that a man with a zero-T-cell count and no stomach, who had just had an eye shot out, would live anywhere near that long. The following spring, however, Scarpa was still alive, and on May 6, 1993, he appeared before federal Judge Jack B. Weinstein to plead guilty to three murders and conspiracy to murder several others.

Then, in October, at a meeting with prosecutors at the Brooklyn United States Attorney's Office, Scarpa offered, unsuccessfully, to become a coöperating witness for the government. He had asked his

NUTCRACKER SWING

Children audition for "The Harlem Nutcracker," the choreographer Donald Byrd's uptown remake of the Christmas ballet, based on Duke Ellington's arrangement of the Tchaikovsky score. In Byrd's version, the Sugar Plum Fairy's Kingdom of Sweets becomes Club Sweets, where swanky couples dance to big-band music. The production swings into the Brooklyn Academy of Music this week (December 11th through December 15th).

Photograph by Ulrike Schamoni

new attorney, a former prosecutor named Steven Kartagener, to make sure that DeVecchio attended. Kartagener recalls that at one point "Greg says, 'I've always been helpful to the government in the past—isn't that right, Mr. DeVecchio?' " and goes on to recount, "I assumed DeVecchio would say, 'What are you talking about? Stop being an asshole.' Instead, he says, 'Yes, that's true.' My jaw did a bounce off the tabletop." Two prosecutors recall hearing DeVecchio tell Favo at an earlier meeting that if there were "an O.P.R."—an Office of Professional Responsibility inquiry—into DeVecchio's handling of Scarpa "I'll have your ass."

Scarpa's sentencing for murder and murder conspiracy took place on December 15, 1993. Judge Weinstein asked Scarpa if he had anything to say, and was told no, "other than I expect to go home."

"You're not going to go home," Weinstein said. "You're going to go to prison."

"I tried to help, Your Honor," Scarpa said. "But it just didn't work out."

During Scarpa's final days in prison, his AIDS dementia took hold, and he was given to rambling. Occasionally, he spoke of the dirty work he claimed to have done for the government. He told one visitor how, after kidnapping a Mississippi man for the F.B.I., "he placed a gun in the guy's mouth, and started cutting his dick off with a razor" and demanded that the man tell him the location of "three kids that were missing"—lending credence to a report, first published in the *Daily News*, that Scarpa had led the F.B.I. to the buried bodies of the civil-rights workers Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James Chaney, slain in Philadelphia, Mississippi, in 1964. He also spoke about a secret assignment in Costa Rica for the United States government in the sixties that involved murder. On June 8, 1994, Scarpa died, of complications from AIDS, at the Federal Medical Center in Rochester, Minnesota.

"Really, thanks a lot. It's the best party we've been to all night."

For a year and half after the Colombo war ended, Chris Favo kept quiet about DeVecchio. He says he was worried that if he accused a well-respected veteran like DeVecchio of leaking confidential information the F.B.I. brass "would take it about as well as I would take it if somebody came up to me and said my wife was unfaithful." By January, 1994, however, Favo and three agents on his squad felt compelled to come forward. Several of Scarpa's crewmen had begun to coöperate, and their accounts of Scarpa and his alleged law-enforcement source were disturbing. Most disturbing, Favo says, was that during the Colombo war he had given DeVecchio a partial address for the hideout of the rebel leader, Victor Orena, and a physical description—a white, two-family house, with aluminum siding—and an incorrect address for one of Orena's men. Now it appeared from statements made by a coöperator that Scarpa's crew had tried unsuccessfully to locate and kill those two rebels after Scarpa supplied them with the identical information.

Favo's diary records what happened when he and the three other agents—Raymond Andjich, Howard Leadbetter, and Jeffrey Tomlinson—came forward that month to voice their concerns to officials at the New York office. At first they were commended for taking action, and assured of confidentiality, but only two weeks later, Favo wrote in his diary, an F.B.I. official carelessly exposed him and Leadbetter as whistle-blowers; when he complained, he says, the official told him that he personally believed in DeVecchio's innocence, and that "we will have to live with the problems." A few days after that, Favo wrote, DeVecchio called a squad meeting, at which he angrily denied the charges and added that "anyone that did not believe him could go f— themselves." Before long, Favo had concluded that blowing the whistle on DeVecchio "was a mistake that would follow us for our careers."

By March, 1994, an internal O.P.R. investigation of DeVecchio was under way. He was eventually moved out of organized crime and into drug enforcement, and, in the meantime, his investigation was transferred from the Bureau to the Public Integrity Section of the Department of Justice. The investigation proceeded slowly, and was kept quiet, even as alleged par-

ticipants in the Colombo war continued to go to trial for murder and assault.

It was not until the summer of 1994 that, largely through the efforts of the New York attorney Alan Futerfas and his associate, Ellen Resnick, the investigation came to light. Futerfas and Resnick had been retained by a number of defendants accused of participation in the Colombo war. They immediately recognized the DeVecchio controversy as a gold mine for the defense, and they used it to formulate what might be called the "comrades in arms" theory of the war. According to this theory, the F.B.I. had deliberately fed Scarpa information, to help foment the war, and to make certain that he would emerge victorious. Futerfas argues that when DeVecchio allegedly declared, "We're going to win this thing," he was expressing the hope that Scarpa would end up as a boss when it was all over, with a seat on the Mafia's ruling commission.

The comrades-in-arms theory, whatever its merits, has been an unqualified success with juries. There have been nine trials stemming from the Colombo war, and at two of them the judges have permitted evidence of DeVecchio's relationship with Scarpa to be introduced. At both trials, every defendant—fourteen in all, including Wild Bill Cutolo—was acquitted of all charges. At the conclusion of one trial, a juror told the *Daily News*, "If the F.B.I.'s like this, society is really in trouble." Some people who were convicted before the DeVecchio controversy became known have made motions for new trials. It was at a hearing on one such motion last May that DeVecchio took the Fifth.

Despite its interest in winning convictions, the Brooklyn United States Attorney's Office has done nothing to make DeVecchio look good; the government has even conceded that DeVecchio "may have" disclosed confidential information to Scarpa, including, as Favo had charged, the whereabouts of people Scarpa was looking for. Douglas Grover, the lawyer for DeVecchio, blames the "rape" of his client by the Brooklyn United States Attorney's Office on Valerie Caproni, the head of the criminal division. He says that she continues to bear a grudge against DeVecchio in the mistaken belief that he leaked word of her 1987 drug indictment, causing Greg Scarpa, Jr., to flee. "A government prosecutor should be defending the government's actions, but Valerie wanted to get Lin," Grover says. Caproni disputes this. "I don't know what Mr. Grover would have had us do, given that evidence," she says.

Grover nevertheless had been predicting since earlier this year that DeVecchio would be cleared. And on September 4, 1996, after two and a half years, the O.P.R. investigation ended abruptly with a two-sentence letter stating that prosecution of DeVecchio was "not warranted."

DeVecchio has continued to invoke his Fifth Amendment privilege, however, and the controversy may not be over. Scarpa's relationship with the F.B.I. may be an issue at the upcoming trial of Gregory Scarpa, Jr., who is still serving time on his drug case, and who was indicted last year for acts of racketeering, including murder. He disputes DeVecchio's claim that DeVecchio never leaked information. Greg, Jr.,'s defense is expected to be that his alleged crimes actually were committed by his late father, and that the government is trying to pin them on Greg, Jr., to cover up its corrupt relationship with Scarpa, Sr. Through his attorney, Larry Silverman, Greg, Jr., claims to have known firsthand that DeVecchio was his father's law-enforcement source and that he was the person known as The Girlfriend. He may even attempt to sell these allegations directly to the jury by taking the stand. Silverman has told the court that he would like to call DeVecchio.

The Bureau continues to maintain its silence, and many questions about the DeVecchio matter remain unanswered. Though the F.B.I.'s long relationship with Scarpa appears to have shocked jurors, who found it sordid, it came as less of a surprise to people in other branches of law enforcement. They have long viewed the F.B.I. as an institution with its own agenda, obsessed with making successful cases even at the expense of upholding the law. There is nothing in the record to dispute DeVecchio's claim, echoed by his attorney, that "I didn't operate in a vacuum," and that key decisions concerning Scarpa, including the decision to reopen him during the war, were made with "the full knowledge of any number of people well above me in rank."

In October, Lin DeVecchio retired from the F.B.I., after thirty-three years of service. His retirement party was held at a seafood restaurant in lower Manhattan. About fifty well-wishers turned out. It was a crowd made up largely of F.B.I. retirees—"an old-timers' night," in the words of one guest—and, when speeches were made, the crowd got boisterous. The subject of DeVecchio's O.P.R. was far from taboo, and as one retirement gift was handed to him somebody yelled, "Lin—it's a subpoena!" There was never any question, however, that the crowd was in DeVecchio's corner, and near the end of the evening the last speaker, a retired agent, broke down in sobs, and declared, "Lin DeVecchio is not corrupt! Lin DeVecchio did what he believed was right!"

How the crowd felt about Christopher Favo was no secret, either. One speaker presented DeVecchio with an infectious-agent clothing kit, in case he should ever come in contact again with "the viral, infectious agent who started all this." James Kossler, a retired supervisor to whom DeVecchio had once reported, expressed his views about DeVecchio's accuser before the party: "The trouble with Chris Favo is that Chris Favo has a very high opinion of himself. He works sixteen hours a day, seven days a week, and you lose all objectivity when that happens. You see things you can't relate to or understand. This whole thing was a travesty, and Lin's reputation has been destroyed. Why wasn't Favo stopped? If I'd been there, I would have cut his nuts off."

Favo remains an F.B.I. agent, but recently he was transferred from New York to a regional office in the Midwest. The three other agents who reported DeVecchio to the Bureau continue to work in New York; one of them recently testified that Favo had "taken the brunt of a lot of this." Valerie Caproni says of Favo, "The fact that he's no longer working organized-crime cases in New York is to me just a horrible fallout of this whole thing," and adds, "It's been a very difficult situation, as it always is for a whistle-blower." Reached by phone recently, Favo said he'd be happy to comment on how he ended up in the Midwest, or answer any other question, pending permission from the F.B.I., which, as he guessed correctly, was denied. ♦