



# Exploding The Phone

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Bibliographic Cover Sheet

**Title**           **FBI File 92-HQ-3051 Serial #53 and #54: Benjamin Lassoff aka, AR**

**Date**            1960-09-09

**Abstract**       Serials #53 and #54 of 92-HQ-3051. Serial #53 numbered page 14 discusses use of telephone company credit cards to cover the extent of their telephone operations. Serial #54 page C says "(redacted) Intelligence Division, United States Treasury Department, New Orleans, advised on August 18 1960 that he has recently received information that the (redacted) has discovered some type of instrument or device through which gamblers are able to make long distance telephone calls but circumvent the recording of these calls by the telephone company equipment. He advised that he received this information from an Internal Revenue Agent in Miami, Florida, and was under the impression that the Miami Office was familiar with the operation of this device and might have additional information regarding its operation. He advised that he is particularly interested in determining if such a device is in existence as he has been supervising an investigation of large scale gambling operations of such operators as Benjamin Lassoff and numerous others throughout the country and he had recently noticed that there has been a surprising decrease in their long distance telephone activity. He also advised that he has received information from a New Orleans gambler that the gambling circles have again been able to circumvent the telephone toll charges. (redacted) pointed out that approximately three years ago the telephone company was able to stop a number of employees from making a toll card without recording it."

**Keywords**      gambling; blue box; black box; Benjamin Lassoff

**Source**         FBI via FOIA

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# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Reporting Office <b>CINCINNATI</b>	Office of Origin <b>CINCINNATI</b>	Date <b>9/9/60</b>	Investigative Period <b>8/29;9/6/60</b>
TITLE OF CASE <b>BENJAMIN LASSOFF, aka Ben Lassoff, Bernard Lassoff, "Big Porky", "Porky"</b>		Report made by <b>SA</b> [redacted]	Typed By: <b>MEH</b>
		CHARACTER OF CASE <b>ANTI-RACKETEERING</b>	

Synopsis:

### REFERENCES

Bureau airtel to Albany dated 8/25/60.

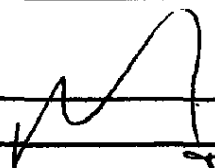
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### INFORMANTS

[redacted] is [redacted] who is known to the Bureau.  
 [redacted] is [redacted] who is known to the Bureau.  
 [redacted] is [redacted]  
 [redacted]  
 [redacted]

C. J. [redacted]

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Approved 	Special Agent in Charge	Do not write in spaces below	
Copies made:  3 - Bureau (92-3051) 2 - Cincinnati (92-103)		92-3051-53	REC-78
		15 SEP 14 1960	

1 cc & draft by RS 9/16/60  
1 cc 4710

SECRET

This report is loaned to you by the FBI, and neither it nor its contents are to be distributed outside the agency to which loaned.

87 SEP 20 1960

CI 92-103

[redacted] is [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] is [redacted] whose identity is known to the Bureau.

[redacted] is [redacted] whose identity is known to the Bureau.

[redacted] is [redacted] whose identity is known to the Bureau.

[redacted] is [redacted]

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ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

SA [redacted] Internal Revenue Service, Covington, Kentucky advised that it had been determined that as of April 1956, the following telephones were being utilized at the Elmo Building, 1045 Monmouth Street, Newport, Kentucky and that the owners of this property as of 1956 were BENJAMIN and ROBERT LASSOFF.

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Axtel 1-5061, issued to B. LASSOFF Real Estate.

Axtel 1-6121, issued to United Roofing and Siding Company.

Axtel 1-5062, issued to B. LASSOFF.

Axtel 1-6122, issued to the Kentucky Sales and Salvage Company.

Axtel 1-1233, issued to the Bevabar Sales.

Juniper 1-6922, issued to the United Roofing and Siding Company.

Axtel 1-2234, issued to the Bevabar Sales.

[redacted] advised that Agents of the Internal Revenue Service, from their investigation, had been able to



CI 92-103

occasions with requests to obtain additional telephone service for LASSOFF's operations over the Stables Cafe, Newport, Kentucky. [redacted] said that he had experienced some difficulty and had not obtained the telephone inasmuch as previous contact of [redacted] who was with the telephone company, namely one [redacted] (phonetic) had retired after the first of the year. [redacted] subsequently made application for telephone service at the [redacted]

[redacted] on January 8, 1960 and applied for telephone service in [redacted] name at [redacted]. [redacted] said that both the subject and [redacted] were interested in obtaining telephone service since BOBBIE LASSOFF was allegedly supposed to move operations from 10th and Boone Streets on January 11, 1960.

Concerning operations of LASSOFF's liquor store, [redacted] said an old man by the name of [redacted] lives at [redacted] and works several hours each evening in LASSOFF's liquor store and sells very little whiskey.

Concerning the installation of telephones for LASSOFF, [redacted] said that on January 11, 1960, LASSOFF [redacted]

[redacted] said that an individual by the name of [redacted] who apparently had some position of ability in the Citizens Telephone Company, Northern Kentucky, had some animosity toward LASSOFF. At the present time LASSOFF has only two telephones and an adding machine in his office at this time.

On [redacted] informant advised that the preceding [redacted] an individual by the name of [redacted] (phonetic) [redacted]

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CI 92-103

[redacted] subsequently advised that [redacted]

On February 14, 1960, [redacted] advised that LASSOFF was still anxious to get additional phones at 1041 Monmouth Street and further stated that he had learned that date that LASSOFF had recently purchased another liquor store or saloon called Moses Place at 15th and Central Avenue in Newport, Kentucky, near the Car Barn.

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On [redacted] the informant advised that

On [redacted] he informant furnished the

The current Cincinnati Directory reflects that [redacted] residing at [redacted] and [redacted] is employed as a [redacted] at Storrs-Schaefer, Inc.

On the same date, [redacted] said he had contacted [redacted] and told him his business and that he wanted two telephones installed at 1041 Monmouth Street, that it meant a lot to the individuals who will be using the phones, and they would certainly appreciate whatever influence [redacted] may exert. [redacted] stated that he knew a number of the directors of the telephone company, including

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

Copy to:

Report of: SA [REDACTED]

Office: **CINCINNATI**b6  
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Date: 9/9/60

Field Office File No.: **CI 92-103**Bureau File No.: **92-3051**

Title:

**BENJAMIN LASSOFF**

Character:

**ANTI-RACKETEERING**

Synopsis:

**BENJAMIN LASSOFF, FBI #754012C, was born 5/8/08, Cincinnati, Ohio. LASSOFF resides with his [REDACTED] and 2 adopted sons at 2730 Section Road, Amberley Village, Ohio. He estimated the approximate value of his residence at \$200,000. LASSOFF began taking bets on horse races in about 1925. In 1956 indictments were returned against BENJAMIN LASSOFF, his brother ROBERT LASSOFF, his brother-in-law MYRON DECKELBAUM and SIMON KLAYMAN in violation T. 18, S. 371; Title 26, S. 7201, 4401, 4411, 7262, USC. LASSOFF was arrested 3/11/60 by Cincinnati PD for receiving stolen goods; however, Grand Jury at Cincinnati ignored this case. LASSOFF associates with numerous gamblers in the Newport, Kentucky area and is presently engaged in layoff bets and gambling in Newport. [REDACTED] advised on [REDACTED] that LASSOFF continues his successful gambling operations at the Belmont (formerly Snax Bar) in Newport. [REDACTED] advised LASSOFF as well as his brother and other associates, are still the "biggest" layoff handbook operators in the Cincinnati area. [REDACTED] indicated LASSOFF is greedy and land hungry and has acquired extensive real estate holdings. Description of LASSOFF set forth.**

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GI 92-103

DETAILS

PERSONAL HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

BENJAMIN LASSOFF was born May 8, 1908 at Cincinnati, Ohio as BERNARD LASSOFF. His father was MOVITZ LASSOFF; mother, CLARA FRAZIER; nativity of parents, Russia; address at date of birth 825 Clark Street, Cincinnati, Ohio.

BENJAMIN LASSOFF attended Woodward High School, Cincinnati, Ohio, for two years, dropped out of high school at end of sophomore year in about 1925 due to the death of his father. At that time his father owned a tire store at Ninth and Freeman Streets, Cincinnati, Ohio. While at this location, BENJAMIN LASSOFF started taking 25¢ bets on horse races. During his spare time he studied bookkeeping and finance, continued operating the tire store and taking bets on horses in very small amounts. Subsequently, he established "books" for taking bets on horse races in several bars in Cincinnati, Ohio, and in Northern Kentucky, and also opened an office in Northern Kentucky, where he accepted "layoff" bets from other bookmakers; Eventually, having a clearing house for this business, accepting bets, from bookmakers throughout various parts of the country. It was through this venture that he amassed considerable wealth.

After the death of his brother, JACOB LASSOFF, he no longer kept any interest in the tire business, but has been closely associated in all other business enterprises with his younger brother, ROBERT LASSOFF, age 36.

LASSOFF has been married once and his present [redacted] and their two adopted sons, [redacted] age [redacted] in 1953, and [redacted] age [redacted] in 1953, currently reside at 2730 Section Road, Amberley Village, Ohio, a palatial suburb of Cincinnati. LASSOFF has a modernistic palatial home complete with swimming pool, surrounded by a rustic rail fence. LASSOFF upon interview advised that his home has been valued at approximately \$200,000 and that the Internal Revenue Service allowed him

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CI 92-103

assessment valuation of \$150,000 as to the value of this residence property.

In May of 1959, LASSOFF suffered a heart attack and was confined in the Jewish Hospital, Cincinnati, Ohio. Since this heart attack, LASSOFF has greatly improved his condition whereby he is able to work on a daily basis in connection with his bookmaking activities in Newport, Kentucky.

CRIMINAL RECORD

The following information was received from the FBI Identification Division for BENJAMIN LASSOFF under FBI #754012G on December 16, 1957:

<u>Contributor of Fingerprints</u>	<u>Name and Number</u>	<u>Arrested or Received</u>	<u>Charge</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
Army	Benjamin Lassoff #35677365	12-12-42 Cincinnati Ohio		
SO Las Vegas Nev	Ben Lassoff #40-1001	applicant FP 1-7-55		
Nevada Tax Comm Gambling Div Carson City Nev	Benjamin Lassoff #3314	applicant prt rec 1-28-55		
SO Las Vegas Nev	Benjamin Lassoff #50-19453	applicant FP 6-8-55		

CI 92-103

<u>Contributor of Fingerprints</u>	<u>Name and Number</u>	<u>Arrested or Received</u>	<u>Charge</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
USM Lexington Ky	Benjamin Lassoff #330-M	6-5-56	wilful evasion of Fed Tax	dismissed U.S. Dist Court Covington Ky 1-18-57

It is to be noted that the FBI Identification Record did not contain a disposition for the entry by U. S. Marshal, Lexington, Kentucky, dated June 5, 1956. It is to be noted that this disposition is "dismissed U. S. District Court, Northern District of Kentucky, Covington, Kentucky, January 18, 1957".

Concerning the action of Internal Revenue Service against LASSOFF, particularly attachments made to his personal and business property, the Louisville Division has advised that the records of the U. S. District Court, Western District of Kentucky, Louisville, Kentucky, as made available to SA [redacted]

[redacted] on June 4, 1959, by [redacted] reflect the following information, under Docket #3626, entitled BENJAMIN LASSOFF and IRENE LASSOFF vs. WILLIAM M. GRAY As District Director, Internal Revenue Service, Louisville, Kentucky and RUSSELL A. WELCH, as District Director, Internal Revenue Service, Cincinnati, Ohio District.

The Docket reflects that a complaint was filed on June 17, 1958 on the basis of action and the basis of action was "temporary injunction from seizing, confiscating or selling any property of plaintiff, to adjudge assessment and liens void to expiring and release from record of each county where liens have been filed."

The Docket reflects that the plaintiff is represented by [redacted], of Davies and Hirshfield, 331 York Street, Newport, Kentucky.

CI 92-103

On August 14, 1958, a motion to dismiss complaint was filed by the U. S. Attorney.

On October 1, 1958, an order of Judge ROY M. SHELBORNE was filed against the defendant's motion to dismiss the complaint and dismissing complaint.

On October 6, 1958, a motion of appeal to the U. S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit, was filed by the plaintiff.

The record of the appeal was mailed to the Clerk, U. S. District Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit, Cincinnati, Ohio, by the Clerk of the U. S. District Court, Louisville.

A notice of receipt of the appeal was received by the Clerk, U. S. District Court on November 25, 1958, reflecting that the appeal had been assigned Docket #13,758.

[redacted] advised that the action is still pending before the Court of Appeals in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Records of the Clerk, U. S. District Court, Western District of Kentucky, Louisville, Kentucky, were made available to SA [redacted] on January 6, 1960, by [redacted] and they reflect the following information under Docket Number 3626, entitled "Benjamin Lassoff and [redacted] versus William M. Grey, District Director, Internal Revenue Service, Louisville, Kentucky, District and Russell A. Welch, District Director, Internal Revenue Service, Cincinnati, Ohio, District."

Mandate from the United States Court of Appeals of the Sixth Circuit, issued under date of June 9, 1959, received from the Clerk of said court, filed on June 10, 1959. Said Mandate reading in part as follows:

"On consideration whereof, it is now here ordered and adjudged by this Court that the order of the said District Court dismissing the complaint is reversed, and the cause remanded to the District Court for further proceedings consistent

CI 92-103

with the opinion herein."

On June 11, 1959, Judge ROY M. SHELBOURNE signed an order reinstating this action on the Docket for further proceedings consistent with the opinion and Mandate of the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

On June 19, 1959, "Interrogatories to Defendant" were found by the Plaintiff. On August 28, 1959, answers to the Interrogatories were filed by the United States Attorney.

On September 15, 1959, Judge SHELBOURNE signed an Order setting pretrial conference for September 30, 1959.

On October 1, 1959, the combined cases were set for trial on December 21, 1959, and on December 15, 1959, Judge SHELBOURNE removed the case from the trial calendar and continued it.

On December 29, 1959, Judge SHELBOURNE signed an Order to the effect that the Defendant's motion to set aside default and for lead to file response to Plaintiff's motion to strike Defendant's motion would be heard in Court Chambers in Louisville on January 8, 1960.

On March 11, 1960, [redacted] Crime Bureau, Cincinnati Police Department, and [redacted] both advised that they, along with [redacted] arrested BENJAMIN LASSOFF at his residence, 2730 Section Road, Amberley Village, at approximately 9:00 AM that date. LASSOFF was arrested for receiving stolen goods valued at \$265.00. This case concerning the stolen property came to light when LASSOFF traded in a vibrating machine for a more deluxe model and a check of the serial numbers on the trade-in revealed that it was identical with a machine stolen from the automobile of [redacted]

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CI 92-103

Cincinnati. This machine was stolen on January 27, 1960 from the salesman's automobile who represents the Niagra Company of Cincinnati. The aforementioned officers stated that LASSOFF claimed a friend, name unrecalled, had left the machine at his home.

On April 23, 1960, [redacted] advised that the Hamilton County Grand Jury sitting at Cincinnati, Ohio on April 22, 1960, ignored the case wherein LASSOFF was charged with having received stolen goods.

The Identification record under FBI #754012C dated March 16, 1960, as received from the Bureau contains as the last entry - Contributor of Fingerprints - Police Department, Cincinnati, Ohio, for BENJAMIN LASSOFF under Police #76832, showing that he was arrested March 11, 1960 and charged with receiving stolen goods (over \$60.00) which is a felony in the State of Ohio.

On February 3, 1960, U. S. District Court Judge ROY M. SHELBOURNE ordered that the attorneys for the parties, in the above listed cases, appear in court chambers at Louisville, Kentucky on February 25, 1960, for pretrial conference to consider the simplification of the issue, the possibility of obtaining admission of facts and documents to avoid unnecessary proof and such other matters as may aid in the disposition of these actions, in conformity with Rule 16 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

CI 92-103

Records of the Clerk, U. S. District Court, Western District of Kentucky, Louisville, Kentucky, pertaining to Civil Actions #3626, 3635 and 3636 were reviewed on May 20, 1960 by SA [REDACTED]

The records reflect that the pretrial conference originally scheduled for February 25, 1960, which was not held, has not as yet been rescheduled.

[REDACTED] United States District Court Clerk's Office, Covington, Kentucky, furnished to SA [REDACTED] the record under criminal docket number 10042. It was noted that this file in addition to the pleading etc. consisted of something over two hundred pages of testimony taken in the matter. This file was reviewed by SA [REDACTED] on April 22 and 23, 1958.

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The record reflected that on June 11, 1956, an indictment was returned against ROBERT LASSOFF, MYRON DECKELBAUM, BENJAMIN LASSOFF and SIMON KLAYMAN, charging these individuals with violation of Title 18, Section 371, Title 26, Section 8201, 4401, 4411 and 7262, U. S. Code annotated, in that they conspired willfully to attempt to evade the Federal Tax; that they did willfully attempt to evade Federal Tax; that they had done acts making them liable for Federal Tax, without having paid same, this indictment being in five counts. It was alleged that prior to March 1, 1956, and until and including April 19, 1956, at Newport, Kentucky they had accepted wagers in the sum of \$1,485,270. It was said that this business conducted by these men was:

- 1.) Behind closed doors which had thereon a fictitious name.
- 2.) Contained telephones listed under fictitious or misleading names.
- 3.) Contained records containing entries listed under code numbers.
- 4.) Defendants received and accepted wagers on horse races and other sporting events.
- 5.) On April 19, 1956, defendants attempted to conceal and destroy certain records kept by them in connection with such gambling operations."

CI 92-103

It was further alleged that the defendants had attempted to evade a special tax of fifty dollars a year, required by Title 26, Section 4411, U. S. Code annotated, to be paid by persons engaged in business of accepting wagers on horse races and other sporting events. It was indicated that these individuals made bond in the sum of \$3,000 each, on June 22, 1956 at which time BENJAMIN LASSOFF's address was listed as 2730 Section Road, Amberley Village; SIMON KLAYMAN as 1535 Northwood Drive; MYRON DECKELBAUM, 1868 Larchwood Place; ROBERT LASSOFF, 7147 Eastlawn Drive, all Cincinnati, Ohio. It was indicated that this indictment had grown out of a raid conducted by Agents of the Internal Revenue Service at 1045 Monmouth Street, Newport, Kentucky on April 19, 1956.

By affidavit in this matter filed September 21, 1956, ROBERT and BENJAMIN LASSOFF averred among other things, that they were the owners of the property known as the Elmo Building, 1045 Monmouth Street, Newport, Kentucky.

The records reflected that on September 26, 1956, there was a hearing in United States District Court, Covington, Kentucky on a motion to suppress the evidence on the grounds of an illegal search and seizure. Evidence was taken and the matter taken under submission by Judge MAC SWINFORD, United States District Judge of the Eastern District of Kentucky and the Honorable MAC SWINFORD on January 14, 1957 sustained the motion to suppress the evidence.

It was noted that subject BENJAMIN LASSOFF testified on this motion, and stated that he had been the owner, with ROBERT LASSOFF, his brother, as a partner of the property located at 1045 Monmouth Street, Newport, Kentucky since 1940. He stated further that he had interests in two other buildings in the vicinity. He indicated that he was a licensed real estate investor and had a real estate license and indicated that that was his business at that location.

On cross-examination he admitted that he had never used his real estate license in the sense of being a real estate

CI 92-103

broker, and that he has never sold a piece of property to any person on a commission basis. He testified that he had a legitimate business interest, being interested in the Ohio Valley Plywood Company of Cincinnati, Ohio, and the Colonial Village, Incorporated of Cincinnati, Ohio. He indicated that this was an apartment development having 161 apartments.

He stated that he had two telephones under the name of B. LASSOFF in the Elmo Building. He admitted that on the door of the building there was a name, United Roofing and Siding, and stated that some man named [redacted] had run this business. He stated that there has also been a person named [redacted] connected with the operation at 1045 Monmouth Street in about 1955.

He stated that in 1953, 1954 and 1955, he, BENJAMIN LASSOFF, was in Las Vegas, Nevada; there being interested in the Dunes Hotel.

He stated that there had also been on the door at 1045 Monmouth Street, Newport, Kentucky the name of Kentucky Sales and Salvage Company. He advised that a man named [redacted] had [redacted] this company. He stated that he, BENJAMIN LASSOFF and [redacted] then opened the Federal Sales and Salvage Company in Cincinnati, Ohio, this being some time after 1951. He said that this business was concerned with buying damaged goods from railroad companies and salvage people, and reselling this goods. He admitted that after all of the salvage operation had been moved from 1045 Monmouth Street, Newport, to Cincinnati, Ohio that the telephone listed to the Kentucky Sales and Salvage had remained at 1045 Monmouth Street. He further admitted that in about 1951, he and his brother, ROBERT LASSOFF, and one [redacted] had been in the "race horse commission business". He stated further that there was on the door of 1045 Monmouth Street, the name "Bevabar Distributing Company."

Special Agents of the Internal Revenue Service also testified and it was indicated that an investigation had been



CI 92-103

made relative to one Namey's Bar and Grill in New Kensington, Pennsylvania, during which it had been determined that telephone calls were made from this bar to various places in the United States, among those places called was the establishment at 1045 Monmouth Street, Newport, Kentucky. The raid conducted at 1045 Monmouth Street, Newport, Kentucky was part of simultaneous raids conducted by IRS Agents in a number of cities.

ASSOCIATES

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] at the present time is a top hoodlum of the Louisville Division. [REDACTED] for many years has been connected with gambling activities in Newport, Kentucky.

[REDACTED]

These three individuals have been connected with gambling activities particularly the operation of horse race handbook operations in Newport, Kentucky.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] in [REDACTED] advised that [REDACTED] had a financial interest in Beverly Hills Night Club, a gambling establishment in Southgate, Kentucky.

[REDACTED]

In [REDACTED] advised that [REDACTED] was formerly connected with gambling in Newport, Kentucky, particularly the Merchants Club in Newport.

ROBERT LASSOFF

ROBERT LASSOFF is the brother of subject, BENJAMIN LASSOFF, and [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] advised that both ROBERT and

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CI 92-103

BENJAMIN LASSOFF had operated as partners for a number of years and seemed to be closely associated in their operations. ROBERT LASSOFF according to [redacted] is presently engaged in the operation of a layoff handbook at 10th and Boone Streets, Newport, Kentucky along with [redacted] and MYRON DECKELBAUM.

MYRON DECKELBAUM

MYRON DECKELBAUM is the brother-in-law of BENJAMIN LASSOFF and has been associated with LASSOFF in "layoff" operations in Newport, Kentucky.

SIMON KLAYMAN

[redacted] advised in [redacted] that KLAYMAN had for a number of years been associated with BENJAMIN and ROBERT LASSOFF. KLAYMAN is described as more or less a clerk for these individuals and is also a horse handicapper.

[redacted]  
BENJAMIN LASSOFF and ROBERT LASSOFF have both spent a great deal of time in the gambling offices of [redacted] Louisville Division top hoodlum.

[redacted] - Steubenville, Ohio

During a raid of [redacted] gambling establishment in April of 1956, the Internal Revenue Service confiscated records which reflected that LASSOFF was in contact with [redacted]

[redacted] former Cincinnati Division top hoodlum and according to [redacted] in [redacted] has been observed frequenting establishments in Newport, Kentucky, including LASSOFF's.

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CI 92-103

On [redacted] advised that the subject, LASSOFF, continues to retain his office over the Stables Cafe in Newport, Kentucky and for the most part has there on a continuous basis, [redacted] further advised that BENJAMIN LASSOFF although not actively engaged in the operation of ROBERT LASSOFF and MYRON DECKELBAUM at 10th and Boone Streets, is in effect, however, the brains behind the operation.

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CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

On [redacted] advised that LASSOFF is operating his bookmaking business at 1041 1/2 Monmouth Street and it appears that [redacted] is the only individual presently associated with him in the running of this business. [redacted] added, however, that the Stables Bar underneath LASSOFF's establishment is operated by one [redacted] who is assisted by his son, [redacted]

[redacted] stated it appears that LASSOFF not only has the run of the building in which he is located but also the Stables Bar allegedly owned and operated by [redacted] said that [redacted] has lived at that address with [redacted] for about 15 years. [redacted] indicated that LASSOFF presently has two telephones in his place of business and on one occasion [redacted] he subject telling [redacted] recently to "call 55" whereupon [redacted] dialed 211 (the number to obtain the long distance operator at the [redacted])

[redacted] and [redacted] said 55 Simmons, Omaha, Nebraska. After [redacted] had apparently reached his party, LASSOFF told him that he wanted "4 bills" on a particular horse. (LASSOFF mentioned the horse, however, the name of the horse could not be recalled.)

On [redacted] advised he had received information from [redacted]

[redacted] stated that the LASSOFF operation, as

CI 92-103

well as other large layoff handbook operators, now make use of telephone company credit card to cover the extent of their telephone operation. According to the informant, the individuals or gamblers have a person or persons in other distant cities procure a credit card in the other individual's name, which person would not be known to have any connection with the handbook operator. The operator then placing his long distance calls, would merely give the telephone company operator the credit card number and the call would be charged to the credit card holder. According to [redacted] the only record made by the telephone company relative to the call would be the date, charge, and the city from which it originated. The telephone number from which the call was placed would not be shown on the ticket. As long as the charges were paid by the credit card holder, the telephone company would have no reason to raise any question relative to the calls. In this manner, a check of long distance calls charged to the known telephones of the handbook operator would show very little activity. The informant [redacted]

[redacted]

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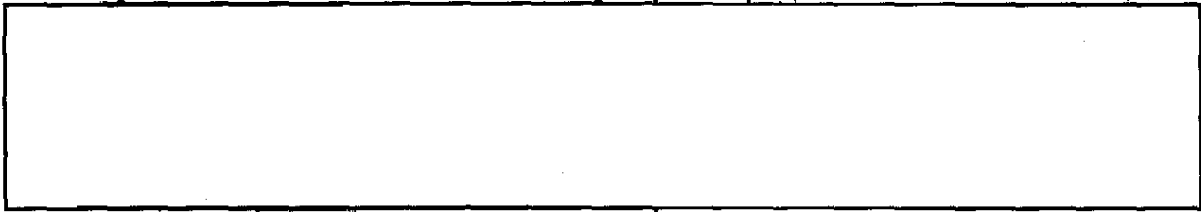
On [redacted] advised SA [redacted] that he had determined one of the credit cards being used by LASSOFF in his operations was that of [redacted] also known as [redacted] and [redacted] FBI [redacted] indicated that it is possible too that the credit card was issued in the name of [redacted] one [redacted] in Los Angeles, California.

On [redacted] advised that many of the small gamblers in Northern Kentucky, including one [redacted] Latonia, Kentucky, telephone number [redacted] and [redacted], another small operator, are losing their shirts taking

CI 92-103

layoff money from LASSOFF's gambling operation. [ ] stated for the past six weeks action at Latonia [ ] had lost approximately \$3,400 and the small gamblers who take LASSOFF's layoff bets feel that they are given only the most risky of the bets which are most likely to hit, while the LASSOFF operation takes and keeps bets on horses very likely to lose. By thus creaming the wagers which the LASSOFF organization receives daily from all over the United States, BENJAMIN LASSOFF and his associates are able to rid themselves of bets which are small risks that the horse will win and the wagered hit. [ ] stated that there is a general feeling among small gambling establishment operators that LASSOFF has broken faith with all his "customers" despite his frequent statement that his organization lays off all wagers for a straight 2½ per cent commission paid by gamblers with whom the bets are laid off if the horse loses and the gambler wins. [ ] stated that no commission is paid to LASSOFF if the horse wins and the gambler taking the layoff is forced to pay the "hit".

[ ] advised that the difficulties faced by small gambling establishment operators in trying to make money is that they do not do sufficient business to level off their bets thus securing a representative amount of betting on a particular race. For example [ ] stated that he knew



On [ ] advised that ROBERT LASSOFF, MYRON DECKELBAUM and [ ] who was the applicant for telephone service at Cincinnati telephone number [ ] have each purchased a Federal Wagering Tax Stamp.

[ ] indicated that the LASSOFF' purchase of the stamp was possibly to keep Internal Revenue Service Agents

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CI 92-103

from bringing pressure on their activities and further indicated that another underlying reason may have been the conviction of several gamblers in Indianapolis, Indiana, as a result of an Internal Revenue Service raid upon a gambling establishment at Terra Haute, Indiana, several years ago.

[redacted] also indicated [redacted]

On [redacted] stated that [redacted]

[redacted] advised that

LASSOFF is represented in legal tax affairs by [redacted] [redacted] 505 Walnut Street, and allegedly in the real estate business together with LASSOFF reportedly investing in real estate, using the name of [redacted] further advised that when [redacted] formerly Louisville Division top hoodlum, who now resides in Miami or Surfside, Florida, went out of business in Newport, Kentucky, the subject's brother, ROBERT, made a connection and stepped into [redacted] operation in Newport.

On [redacted] advised there is considerable gambling activity over the Stables Cafe on Monmouth Street, Newport, Kentucky; however, [redacted]

[redacted] advised on [redacted] that LASSOFF's liquor store as far as [redacted] is concerned is merely a front.

[redacted] stated that [redacted]

On [redacted] advised that both BENJAMIN LASSOFF and ROBERT LASSOFF are working in the operation of

CI 92-103

the Snax Bar in Newport, Kentucky. BOBBY LASSOFF works in the afternoons and BENJAMIN LASSOFF in the evening. [ ] advised that the LASSOFFs do not own the establishment outright but merely have a "piece" of the operation.

On [ ] advised that BENJAMIN LASSOFF has allegedly purchased an interest in the Snax Bar in Newport, Kentucky.

On [ ] advised that BENJAMIN LASSOFF had purchased the property adjacent to the Yorkshire Club in Newport, Kentucky and intended to extend the building in which the Snax Bar is located to run directly to the property adjoining the Yorkshire. He said that after this building is completed, LASSOFF intends to change the name of the establishment to the "Belmont".

[ ] further advised that as far as he knows the former [ ] of Newport, one [ ] still has some voice in control of the Snax Bar, allegedly looking out for the interests of the deceased PETE SCHMIDT. [ ] advised that at one time LASSOFF had a percentage of the Merchants Club now operated by the owners of the Yorkshire; however, many years ago he had been pushed out. [ ] advised that the reason for LASSOFF's having been pushed out was because of a "double cross". [ ] indicated that at a meeting of the "syndicate" members including [ ] of the Beverly Hills Country Club, a number of parcels of real estate were discussed as potential "good buys" and it was indicated that the syndicate might purchase them. Accordingly, LASSOFF left the meeting and advised his younger brother, ROBERT, of the location of said property and immediately thereafter, ROBERT LASSOFF, purchased the property for he and his brother. For this reason the syndicate members ousted LASSOFF and have held him in disfavor since.

On [ ] advised that BENJAMIN LASSOFF and his brother, ROBERT, had purchased the Snax Bar from [ ] or had at least bought a proprietary

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CI 92-103

interest in this operation.

[redacted] advised on [redacted] that in addition to LASSOFF's operation in the Snax Bar, LASSOFF continues gambling interests over the Stables Cafe with [redacted]

On [redacted] advised that BENJAMIN LASSOFF and his brother, ROBERT, were both working at the Snax Bar. [redacted] indicated that both LASSOFF and his brother were quite concerned with the operations of the dice tables in the Snax Bar. [redacted] indicate that inasmuch as LASSOFF and his brother were both Jewish, it is felt that their connection with the establishment might help to draw some of the Jewish gambling trade into the Snax Bar and thereby increase their operation.

On [redacted] advised that LASSOFF and his brother, ROBERT, are "helping to bankroll" the dice games at the Snax Bar. [redacted] stated that the LASSOFFs had not actually bought into the establishment but inasmuch as they were helping to bankroll the dice games they had a financial interest in the gambling operations.

On [redacted] advised that BENJAMIN LASSOFF continues his successful gambling operations at the Belmont (formerly the Snax Bar) in Newport, Kentucky. [redacted] indicated that LASSOFF is extremely greedy and land hungry and has acquired extensive real estate holdings over the years. [redacted] indicated that LASSOFF's real estate holdings are in the secret files of [redacted] tax attorney. [redacted] indicated that he had heard information that LASSOFF had tentative plans to build a luxury motel on property owned by him located near his liquor store. The building operations will commence in the near future to open entrances to the Belmont Bar on Yorks Street, Newport, Kentucky.



CI 92-103

LEGITIMATE ENTERPRISES

On November 12, 1958, the records of Hamilton County Court House were reviewed pertaining to property which records reflect that BENJAMIN LASSOFF is the sole owner of the property at 942 West Ninth Street, Cincinnati, having been purchased on June 18, 1941. Records pertaining to this property are in Book 139 - Plat 3 - Parcel 184, at the Hamilton County Court House. These records indicate that LASSOFF obtained this property from [redacted] on June 18, 1951, and is described as property 16 by 100 in dimension, land valued at \$520, building valued at \$2,910, for a total valuation for tax purposes anyway, of \$3,430.

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[redacted] COLONIAL VILLAGE INCORPORATED

Records of the Office of the Secretary of State, Columbus, Ohio, as reviewed on September 26, 1958, by SA [redacted] indicate that the Articles of Incorporation #207700 was approved for 1948 for filing in the name of [redacted] Colonial Village Incorporated, 161 Linden Avenue, Wyoming Cincinnati, Ohio. The Incorporators were listed as [redacted]

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The Agents for process was designated to be [redacted]

A Certificate of Amended Articles of a corporation was filed April 6, 1949, changing the name of the corporation to Walter Colonial Village Incorporated and the principal office to be Norwood, Ohio. Maximum shares of stock were set at 3,280. This certificate revealed that [redacted]

was [redacted] as [redacted] and [redacted] [redacted] was the [redacted] The law firm of Basler, Strauss and Troy, Fountain Square Building, Cincinnati, Ohio, represented the corporation in filing papers.

GI 92-103

THE OHIO VALLEY PLYWOOD COMPANY

Articles of Incorporation #212900 were approved for filing May 3, 1949, in the name of the Ohio Valley Plywood Company, St. Bernard, Hamilton County, Ohio.

The Incorporators were listed as [redacted] and [redacted]. The Agent for Process was listed as [redacted].

A Certificate of Amended Articles of Incorporation was filed May 4, 1956, which lists [redacted] as [redacted] and [redacted] as [redacted] and shares of stock outstanding numbered as 1,100.

This corporation was represented by the law firm of Strauss, Troy, and Ruehlmann, 1404 - 06 Fountain Square Building, Cincinnati.

ATLAS SUPPLY, INCORPORATED

Articles of Incorporation #199469 were approved for filing January 6, 1947 in the name of Atlas Supply, Incorporated, Cincinnati. The incorporators were listed as [redacted] and [redacted]. The Agent for Process was [redacted].

[redacted] 100 shares of common stock to be outstanding. This corporation was represented by the law firm of Basler, Strauss and Troy, Fountain Square Building, Cincinnati.

It is to be noted that the incorporators are not necessarily owners of any of the shares of stock of a corporation. The Secretary of State does not possess records as to the identity of the shareholders.

OIL LEASES

On October 15, 1958, at Shreveport, Louisiana, efforts by SA [redacted] to contact [redacted] were negative and his receptionist advised that her records indicated he did some accounting work for LASSOFF regarding the Bellevue Oil Unit. She stated that [redacted] was the [redacted] of that unit.

CI 92-103

On October 15, 1958, [redacted], Sklar Building, [redacted] of the Bellevue Unit and Oil field, advised that BENJAMIN LASSOFF held a .001399 interest in this field as a result of his interest in several oil leases obtained through [redacted] and that his monthly income from this source was approximately \$16 to \$17 with monthly expenses of approximately \$8 to \$8.50 at the present time.

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On October 16, 1958, [redacted] Mayfield's Drilling Company, and [redacted] Mayfield Drilling Company, Beck Building, advised that their records and recollections reflected that BENJAMIN LASSOFF had made the following investments in oil leases through them as indicated:

Wood Lease; located in Jefferson County, Mississippi, amount \$1,000, invested in November, 1954.

Catherine Nunn Lease; located in northern Louisiana, amount \$500, invested in March, 1950.

Plaster Lease; located in northern Louisiana, in the Bellevue Unit, \$500 invested in 1949; \$275 invested on April 20, 1954; \$275 invested in July 5, 1954; \$454.68 invested on October 21, 1954.

They advised that any income paid the investor from these investments would be paid by the Esso Oil Company, Shreveport, Louisiana, as SO purchases the output from these oil wells and maintains monthly records concerning these disbursements. They further advised that LASSOFF, like other investors, has paid periodic sums for maintenance, repair and operations, except regarding the Wood's Lease, which they indicated had been sold to another firm with their investors retaining an over-ride interest, free of any operating, etc. costs. They further advised that the firm

CI 92-103

of Basler, Strauss, and Troy, attorneys, Cincinnati, Ohio, had corresponded with them on several occasions on behalf of LASSOFF concerning the above-described interest. They concluded that the only interest LASSOFF has in the Bellevue Field is through his investments in the above-described Plaster Lease.

SO Oil Company, Shreveport, Louisiana, was not contacted to determine LASSOFF's income from the above investments since their records are kept on a monthly basis and a review of them from 1949 would be a time consuming task.

[redacted] advised that LASSOFF's liquor store is in operation at 1045 Monmouth Street, Newport, Kentucky. This address is one in which LASSOFF operated his layoff bookmaking business prior to a raid by IRS Agents in April of 1956. [redacted] advised that as far as he is concerned, this operation is strictly a front for BENJAMIN LASSOFF, who [redacted] believes is the brains of the operation now located at 10th and Boone Streets where ROBERT LASSOFF and MYRON DECKELBAUM are employed.

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#### PLACES OF AMUSEMENT AND HANGOUTS FREQUENTED

LASSOFF continues to frequent gambling establishments in the Newport area and frequents the Cincinnati Gymnasium several times a week subsequent to his heart attack in 1959.

#### PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The following physical description was obtained through observation and interview, records of the Bureau of Vital Statistics:

Name: BENJAMIN LASSOFF

CI 92-103

Also known as: BERNARD LASSOFF,  
"PORKY" LASSOFF,  
"PORKY"

Race: White  
Sex: Male  
Date of Birth: May 6, 1908, Cincinnati, Ohio  
(verified through BVS records)  
Height: 5'6" - 5'7"  
Weight: 175 pounds  
Hair: Light brown, thinning  
on top  
Eyes: Blue, wears glasses  
Complexion: Medium, light  
Religion: Jewish  
Education: 2 years high school,  
self-study - bookkeeping,  
finance and oil well drilling  
and pumping  
Occupation: Gambler, real estate investor  
Army Serial #: ASN 35677365  
Social Security #: 294-24-6398  
Business Address: 1041 Monmouth Street,  
Newport, Kentucky  
Residence Address: 2730 Section Road,  
Amberley Village, Cincinnati, Ohio  
Marital Status: Married -   
Relatives:  
Mother: CLARA LASSOFF, nee FRAZIER,  
1716 Berkeley Street,  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Father: MOVITZ LASSOFF, deceased  
Sister:  same address  
as mother  
Brother: ROBERT LASSOFF, 7147 Eastlawn  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Brother: JACOB LASSOFF, deceased  
Brother-in-law: MYRON DECKELBAUM, 1868 Larchwood,  
Roselawn, Ohio

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CI 92-103

Children:

[redacted]

age [redacted] in 1953 - adopted

[redacted]

age [redacted] 1953 - adopted

FBI #:

[redacted]

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Cincinnati, Ohio  
September 9, 1960

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No. 92-103

Title BENJAMIN LASSOFF, aka  
Ben Lassoff, Bernard Lassoff  
"Big Porky", "Porky"

Character ANTI-RACKETEERING

Reference Report of SA [redacted]  
dated 9/9/60 at Cincinnati.

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All sources (except any listed below) used in referenced communication have furnished reliable information in the past.

# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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Reporting Office <b>CINCINNATI</b>	Office of Origin <b>CINCINNATI</b>	Date <b>SEP 25 1960</b>	Investigative Period <b>7/29/60; 9/9/60</b>
TITLE OF CASE  <b>BENJAMIN LASSOFF, Aka.</b>		Report made by <b>SA [redacted]</b>	Typed By: <b>bae</b>
		CHARACTER OF CASE  <b>ANTI-RACKETEERING</b>	

Enclosures:

REFERENCE:

Louisville letter to Cincinnati, dated 8/15/60.  
Houston letter to Cincinnati, dated 8/19/60.  
New Orleans letter to Cincinnati, dated 8/22/60.

- P -

LEADS:

LOUISVILLE DIVISION

AT LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Will identify the subscriber of telephone number [redacted] and determine the association of this individual with subject LASSOFF.

Approved	Special Agent in Charge	Do not write in spaces below	
Copies made:		<b>92-3051-54</b>	<b>REC-35</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>② - Bureau (92-3051) <i>see 471 ✓</i></li> <li>2 - Louisville (92-86)</li> <li>2 - Miami (92-342)</li> <li>2 - New York (92-1007)</li> <li>2 - Cincinnati (92-103)</li> </ul>		<p>10-4</p> <p>SEP 22 1960</p>	

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Cover Page

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CI 92-103

MIAMI DIVISION

AT MIAMI, FLORIDA

Will advise Cincinnati any information concerning the type of instrument or device which gamblers are able to make long distance telephone calls to circumvent the recording of these calls by the telephone company equipment, it being noted that according to the New Orleans Division such instrument or device has come to the attention of the Telephone Company in Miami, Florida.

NEW YORK DIVISION

AT NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Will identify the subscriber to telephone number [redacted] and determine the association of that party with subject LASSOFF.

CINCINNATI DIVISION

AT CINCINNATI, OHIO

1. Will determine the identity of the subscriber to telephone number [redacted] and determine the association of this individual with LASSOFF.

2. Will maintain contact with informants regarding LASSOFF'S activities.

3. Will, through [redacted] bring total calls up to date regarding subject's residence telephone number [redacted]

4. Will conduct spot check surveillance of LASSOFF'S residence, 2730 Section Road, to determine the nature of his movements and activities.

CI 92-103

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

On August 16, 1960, [redacted]

[redacted] advised SA [redacted] that records reflect the following total calls were made from subject LASSOFF'S residence telephone ME 1-2620.

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Date	Place Called	Telephone Number
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[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
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Investigation previously conducted by the Boston Division determined that telephone number [redacted] is listed to [redacted]

[redacted] SA, New England

[redacted] advised the Boston Division that [redacted] is a number Bookie in Providence, Rhode Island.

[redacted] Intelligence Division, United States Treasury Department, New Orleans, advised on August 18, 1960 that he has recently received information that the [redacted]

[redacted] has discovered some type of instrument or device through which gamblers are able to make long distance telephone calls but circumvent the recording of these calls by the telephone company equipment. He advised that he received this information from an Internal Revenue Agent in Miami, Florida, and was under the impression that the Miami Office was familiar with the operation of this device and might have additional information regarding its operation.

He advised that he is particularly interested in determining if such a device is in existence as he has been supervising an investigation of large scale gambling operations of such operators as BENJAMIN LASSOFF and numerous others throughout the country and he has recently noticed that there

CI 92-103

has been a surprising decrease in their long distance telephone activity. He also advised that he has received information from a New Orleans gambler that the gambling circles have again been able to circumvent the telephone toll charges. [redacted] pointed out that approximately three years ago the telephone company was able to stop a number of employees from making a toll call without recording it.

Repeated efforts have been made to locate [redacted] and has been determined that this is the residence of his mother, [redacted] New Orleans telephone [redacted]. This residence is located at a Negro slum area and inquiry in the neighborhood developed that [redacted] is visiting relatives, current whereabouts not known and date of return to New Orleans not known.

As [redacted] is apparently a Negro groom at New Orleans fairgrounds during racing season additional efforts will not be made to locate him, unless the interviews with the other individuals named [redacted] set forth in the referenced report are unproductive.

INFORMANTS:

[redacted] is [redacted] who is known to the Bureau. [redacted] is [redacted] who is known to the Bureau.

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