

## CHAPTER 33

### MONTREAL, MAY 21, 2003

From the sidewalk, the repetitive hip-hop beat of dance music throbbed through the doors of the Joy Club, on La Montagne Street, one of many nightclubs in Montreal's crowded downtown. The music became an ear-splitting roar when Mitchell Janhevich pulled open the doors and stepped inside. Janhevich, a Montreal city policeman, was one of several officers patrolling downtown nightclubs, keeping tabs on street gang members and drug dealers who were filling the void left by the arrest of the Hells Angels leadership. Tuesdays are typically slow for the clubs, but it was the Joy's busiest night. Billed as "staff night," it was an opportunity for those who made a living by giving others a good time each weekend to relax and enjoy themselves. Tuesdays brought bartenders, bouncers, strippers, waitresses and busboys from many other clubs to party at Joy.

By the time Janhevich walked into the club, Tuesday night had become Wednesday morning hours before, but the place was still hopping. Several customers caught the officer's attention: standing at the bar was one of the few men closely associated with the biker war who remained free; nearby were two men from a street gang he had arrested for firearm possession a few weeks before. Then, through the dim light, Janhevich saw five men huddled together in a raised and separate area of the club, the VIP section. He had to look twice to make sure, but there was Vito Rizzuto and four other men, sitting and talking.

"It was strange. You walk in and there is one of the last people from the Hells Angels and then some street gangs and then him—it was like the jackpot for a police officer," Janhevich said. "He looked to be in a little meeting with them. I thought, 'What the hell is he doing here?' It was not the type of place you'd expect to see him. I thought this was strange. I went out and checked his name and when you check his name, the computer almost blows up—you have to call the intelligence

unit and give them the details.” Janhevich and his team watched the club from outside. Vito and his friends soon walked out and climbed into a Mercedes, Vito into the front passenger seat beside the driver and three men into the back. The car pulled away but had not gone far before Janhevich pulled it over and approached the driver.

“Is there a problem?” the driver asked, handing over his driver’s license and registration.

“No, I just want to check things out,” replied Janhevich, who then noticed that one of the passengers in the backseat was not wearing a seatbelt. “That is an infraction. I’m going to have to see some ID,” he said to the man. The passenger refused, Janhevich said.

“Listen, if you don’t identify yourself, plain and simple, we’re going to arrest you. Whether it takes one guy or 10 guys, you are going to get arrested and we’re going to identify you,” Janhevich said, but the passenger continued to refuse. At that point, Vito climbed out of the front seat of the car and walked toward Janhevich.

“What the fuck is going on? What the fuck did we do? Why are you harassing us?” Vito said, according to Janhevich. “What the fuck are you guys doing? Why are you fucking with us?” Vito continued. Janhevich has a policy when policing the city’s streets: he is polite to a fault until he meets with obstinacy; then he meets swear word for swear word.

“First of all, stop fucking swearing because if you want to make a show, I’ll make a show, that’s no problem. There is no need to fucking talk to me like that. I have a job to do, so stand back and let me do my job,” Janhevich said.

Vito seemed surprised. The two men, both tall and slim, were facing each other, inches apart, and their voices were getting louder. Passersby had stopped to watch; other officers watched with wide eyes.

“Do you have any idea who I am?” Vito said.

“Yeah. Do you have any idea who I am?” the officer shot back. “This is my street. When you’re in your business or in your home, you do your stuff. When you are on my turf, you go by my rules. And right now you’re in my territory. It’s my show. It’s my game here.”

Vito seemed to suddenly relax. A slight smirk fell across his face, as if he liked the argument and the firm response from the officer.

“Okay, okay, take it easy, take it easy,” Vito said.

Janhevich then arrested the man in the backseat. Vito asked what would happen next, and when he was told that his friend would be taken to a local police station to be identified, he tried to intervene.

“Well, okay. I’ll give you his name,” Vito said. He was Vincenzo Spagnolo, Janhevich was told. With no identification forthcoming however, the officer still took the man into custody. Vito wanted to know where he would be taken and if he could go there to help Spagnolo out. Janhevich told him they were heading to the police operations center on Guy Street. When Janhevich arrived, the officers at the front desk called to him, saying in amazement that Vito Rizzuto was there to see him.

“I went out in the lobby and he put his hand out to shake my hand and said: ‘You remind me a bit of me. You stick up for your men, I stick up for mine. I respect that. I like the way you handled my men. I handle them the same way.’”

His men. Vito had plenty of those.

The tall almost patrician mafioso, standing in the brightly-lit lobby of the police office, had come a long way. So, too, had the family he had become the leader of—not the “boss,” but the natural-born leader. His men, under Vito’s tutelage and that of his father, Nick, formed a criminal unit that far outstripped the position the Sixth Family held in official American organized crime charts. By 2003, the Rizzuto organization was variously listed in FBI and DEA files as merely “the Canadian crew of the Bonanno Family” or the “Montreal faction of the Bonannos.” The reality is far different. The territory under its control is huge—more than a million square miles of Quebec and Ontario directly fall under its influence, an area larger than one-quarter the size of the entire United States. It includes major cities, the busiest border crossings between the U.S. and Canada, and many mature Mafia clans that are, by and large, cooperating under the Sixth Family’s banner.

Where American Mafia bosses controlled criminal activity in portions of a city or a New York borough or the criminal activity in an industrial or commercial sector—such as construction or New York’s garment district—the Sixth Family was an enterprise with a true global reach. The Sixth Family had outpaced any crew in the Bonanno Family and, indeed, man-for-man, dollar-for-dollar, had eclipsed the family as a whole.

Vito could step onto an airplane and fly to any of a dozen countries where he would be immediately recognized and respected. He spoke to associates in several different languages—English, French, Italian and Spanish. He fit in at the highest levels of commerce and industry without embarrassment or social allowances. While the turf of an American Mafia crew might expand street by street into a neighborhood, or into new criminal ventures, the Sixth Family expanded into countries and across

continents, penetrating diverse economies and reaping untold reward. The 20 men the Bonanno administration considers to be Montreal's membership are but a pale shadow of what the Sixth Family has become.

It is no surprise that Sal Vitale admitted the Bonanno administration feared a war with Montreal after the slaying of Gerlando Sciascia in 1999.

The Sixth Family's organization is awesome.

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The Sixth Family blends the traditions of the Sicilian Mafia with a modern corporate structure, building a rugged, durable, ever-expanding corporate Mafia. It maintains the secretiveness of the mafiosi tradition but keeps its inner circle far more tightly controlled than in the American Mafia. The Sixth Family has shed the old militaristic organizational structure of the Five Families—which has soldiers answering to captains who answer to a boss. It has been replaced with a structure that is even more ancient—the family. It is not merely a Mafia initiation ceremony that binds its core, but rather, almost without exception, marriage vows and blood ties. It is far more effective at engendering loyalty and trust; for protecting the organization from betrayal and infiltration. It is one thing for an informant to turn on friends, neighbors and colleagues, but quite another to turn on brothers, uncles and cousins. An informant from within the Sixth Family would need to sever all ties with their kin.

The Sicilian Mafia has been compared to an octopus, because it is a malleable, multi-tentacled beast that reaches out and grabs its prey but, when one arm is lost, another soon grows to replace it. It is a reasonable analogy. Beyond comparisons to the world of business, other criminal organizations and the animal kingdom, however, perhaps the best comparison of the Sixth Family is to a cult. From birth, its members are separated from mainstream society—intellectually, morally and culturally—and incubated in an insular world where each lives in accordance with the family's special rules, values and beliefs. It demands total commitment and loyalty. Members are taught that the end justifies the means. It breeds an explicit and highly polarized us-versus-them mentality. It is not accountable to the rest of society. It is preoccupied with making money and benefiting the group even at the expense of an individual member. There are threats and consequences to leaving.

The cult model has served the organization well. Protected by its insular nature, made wealthy through drug transactions and powerful through its street presence, the Sixth Family has developed a dominant place in the underworld, with a commanding physical presence, forcing its fingers into all aspects of street life, politics, finance and crime, both sophisticated and petty. It is a blending of the old and the new, the best of the traditional Sicilian Mafia and the best of the American Mafia, to form an almost perfect criminal enterprise. Flexible, adaptable and rapacious, it finds a way of working around any obstacle, always consuming whatever lies in its path while at all times protecting its core. That core, for now, is formed by the Rizzutos, which provides the Sixth Family's leadership.

"There is no crowning, no vote to make a leader in the clans you call the Sixth Family. The leader naturally emerges and he is more of a steward, guiding the interests and activities of several blood relatives and in-laws," said an Italian police investigator who has studied the Sixth Family clans. "He doesn't take power and he isn't bestowed power. Power flows to him naturally. Not every interest is of the criminal. He is involved in or knows intimately the marriages; the marriages that are in trouble; the births of the children; the status of the older generation. He consults with the older generation, who may be retired but are still very knowledgeable of the Mafia and have connections and relationships of their own."

Within the Sixth Family, for now, at least, that head is Vito Rizzuto. He is an impressive leader. Had he not been brought up confined within the Mafia, he would likely have succeeded in legitimate business or perhaps politics; he is charismatic, efficient, energetic, intelligent and ambitious.

"Vito Rizzuto heads the family as a business," says an RCMP report on the organization.

As a leader, Vito's presence and name have meant much in the underworld, but his hands-on links are carefully hidden. He declares modest salaries on his income tax but drives luxury automobiles. He once maintained a Lincoln, a Mercedes-Benz, a Jaguar and three Corvettes, one of them a vintage 1959 model. He has led a busy and hectic life but one that rarely involves steady nine-to-five employment. He played golf more than 100 times a year, often using the private time on the links to discuss intimate organizational details with other members of his carefully selected foursome. It is a gentleman's version of the mob boss's traditional "walk-and-talks," where a gangster would

go for a brisk walk with criminal associates to avoid having the chat caught by police microphones. Vito maintained a presence at the Club Social Consenza and three other clubs and cafés that were part of his regular routine. His job was largely to show up, to just show his face and lend his name. Transactions rarely took more than that. His father had prepared him well.

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Vito has long relied on his father, Nick, as his most senior and trusted advisor, police say.

Nick spends much of his time at the Club Social Consenza, jovially playing cards with close friends behind a large window that looks out on to the public walkway of the strip mall where the club is located. He is invariably neatly dressed and often formally attired in shirt, jacket and tie when he moves about the city. He evokes a distinctive gangster chic with his penchant for wearing a fedora to cover his almost bald head and sunglasses as a bid, perhaps, at greater anonymity.

In his younger days, Nick could look menacing and forceful. He walked with confidence and could flash a look of disapproval that associates quickly learned to recognize and appease at the earliest opportunity. As a senior citizen, his image has muted considerably. He has shed much of his bulk and his facial features have been softened by time and frequent flashes of a teeth-baring smile. His grin might be provoked by what police say happens when many of these associates meet with him. At the Consenza, or other restaurants that he frequents in Montreal, such as the Roma, police say he has quiet discussions with visitors who outline plans and schemes; Nick then gives those plans that meet with his approval the family's blessing, police believe. Nick then often leaves with a packet of money, what is referred to in French as *cote d'argent*—literally, “dues money,” but more accurately what American mobsters call “tribute money,” profit flowing up the hierarchy of the organization. Police say he hides the money in his jacket, topcoat or other articles of clothing until he can unload it. Most suitable for a man of his position and esteem, this is not money that Nick “collects,” but rather, money he “accepts.” His role, police say, is of utmost discretion. Vito would not want it any other way.

Nick's leisurely routine, however, does not mean he is removed from the family's affairs. He is a frequent ambassador at important

meetings. Almost daily, Nick meets at the Consenza club with Paolo Renda and Francesco “Frank” Arcadi, described by police as a leading Rizzuto captain. Arcadi was convicted of operating an illegal gaming house in 1984, but came to fuller police attention when he was seen at Vito’s side at the funeral of Joe LoPresti in 1992. He then started spending time with Vito, turning up in cars with Vito when they were stopped by police and during police surveillance of family weddings and funerals, including the Toronto funeral of Gaetano Panepinto. Police believe that Arcadi is taking over supervision of much of the street level action on behalf of the family and has responsibility for both the Saint-Léonard and Rivière-des-Prairies areas of Montreal.

Paolo Renda is himself now a senior citizen, although a robust and often dapper-looking man with his hair graying and thinning at the front. A quiet operator, Renda has been at the Rizzutos’ side all his life. He is Nick’s cousin and went on to marry Maria, his daughter. As Vito’s brother-in-law, he bonded with Vito and the men’s friendship was baptized by fire in the botched arson in their early days.

Renda has been given little attention by police over the years, despite at one time being a suspect in the killing of Paolo Violi. Renda is a businessman. He runs a construction company, Renda Construction Inc., that at one time had Vito listed as a secondary shareholder, vice president and administrator. Its office address was in the same strip plaza as the Consenza social club, where Renda is seen most days. The firm was not a flourishing success, police documents show: in 2001, the company declared just \$21,008 in earnings; the following year that dropped to \$8,031, before bouncing back, in 2003, to a declared \$34,032. Renda is involved in other companies as well, including a second construction firm, a motel, a bistro and a restaurant in Longueuil, Quebec. His wide business involvement has led police to suspect that he runs the financial wing of the family.

Police have also followed the careers of Vito’s sons. Investigators have pegged Leonardo, Vito’s youngest son, as the most capable of achieving leadership of the family enterprise. Leonardo is bright, having attended the University of Ottawa’s law school, and is now a lawyer in Quebec. Along with his sister, Bettina, he works at the law firm of Loris Cavaliere, who often represents Vito. Leonardo causes tremendous grief for police investigating Vito and his associates because of his special legal standing. Leonardo, police say, has frequently sat in on meetings between family members,

including his father and brother—extending to the meetings the protection of lawyer–client privilege. Police have been reluctant to listen in on such conversations because these intrusions, as was shown when the RCMP previously bugged the dinner conversations of Vito’s lawyer, are viewed dimly by the courts.

Nick, Vito’s first-born son, is more of the hands-on guy in the family, police allege. He frequently meets with someone before that person is allowed to meet with Vito. An astute man with street smarts, he checks out strangers wishing to get close to the family; he often speaks on his family’s behalf. He and a key associate also run a Longueuil real estate firm.

The Sixth Family’s ranks—the men under Vito’s command—are expansive.

“The nucleus of the Montreal-based Sicilian Mafia . . . [comprises] hundreds of soldiers and associates,” says a Canadian police report drafted in 2004. Those who merely do business with the Sixth Family or work with them in short-term ventures are not included in this. Neither, generally, are the businessmen who do mostly non-criminal favors for the organization. Enumerating the strength of a secret organization is fraught with difficulty. Some members, no doubt, manage to keep below the radar of police and other observers of organized crime. Some members die—some of natural causes, others killed in disputes—and others are imprisoned. The jailed members will, for the most part, remain associated with the group, both inside and outside of the institution, but hardly count when calculating the street strength of an organization while they are away. There are also many fringe players who, for convenience, safety or profit, pledge fealty to the organization but are not a part of it. This applies to a growing number of street gang members in Montreal who have taken up the slack in the Hells Angels drug distribution.

There is evidence to suggest the number of people who are a routine and continuing part of the Rizzuto criminal organization, those who appear to have a formal role, a specific job and a designated reporting mechanism within the network’s enterprises and are considered to be members by police, exceeds 500 people. For instance:

- A recent internal police report on those considered to be the leading targets for investigation as part of the Rizzuto criminal organization in the city of Montreal shows three large *cellules*, or “cells,” of the



organization, two of them comprising roughly 50 people, and a third, 30 people.

- Each of the cells has its own reporting structure and leadership. Three people supervise each of the two large cells and one leader oversees the smaller one. These seven bosses, who have for decades been among the most prominent men of the Sixth Family, are shown as reporting to Vito.
- The Sixth Family's Montreal-based operations also have two smaller satellite cells, comprising about a half-dozen members each, one based on the South Shore, the communities across the St. Lawrence River from Montreal, and the other in Cornwall, Ontario, a small border city linking Quebec, Ontario and Massena, New York. There is another outpost linked to the Kahnawake native reserve, also on the South Shore.
- A dossier on Vito, compiled by the Montreal police, documents some of his meetings and telephone conversations with alleged associates, recorded during police operations into organized crime activities. Taking only those people listed in meetings since 1985, after the death of Vic Cotroni, and removing frivolous or apparently purely social gatherings, the list exceeds 75 names. Most have criminal records and most are well known in the underworld. Only 14 of the names also appear on the above lists.
- A classified chart prepared by the RCMP's Criminal Analysis Branch maps out "Vito Rizzuto's Criminal Affiliations by Kinship and Inter-marriage." It traces the marriages and blood ties between Vito and 10 other families, comprising some 40 people, most of whom form the innermost core of the Sixth Family. Almost all of them have family members who have faced drug arrests or other criminal charges and all of them have members who appear in criminal intelligence files as organized crime members or associates.
- Yet another confidential police report tracks the organization's leadership in Montreal in 1997. It shows a spider web of lines linking "sub-organizations" and "henchmen" back to Vito and his father Nick. It shows 13 cells, each headed by a senior underworld player who reports directly to Vito. Another three key men are shown separately as

also reporting to Vito. Another four separate cells—the remnants of the old Cotroni and Violi organization, including some of the most venerable mobsters in Montreal—are shown as reporting to Vito, with the now-deceased Frank Cotroni acting as an intermediary. Another four cells are shown reporting to Nick through Agostino Cuntrera. Other core members of the Sixth Family are noted individually on the chart, with most linked to Vito through Nick.

- A recent report on the Sixth Family's chief operatives in Ontario shows 15 key men, most of whom run their own powerful Mafia organizations in the Toronto area. These groups range in size from a crew of five or six to a sprawling organization of several dozen, typically related, members that is, itself, an impressive Mafia organization. Also in Ontario, police allege, are four or five active and successful businessmen with no criminal records who work intimately on Vito's behalf.
- The Sixth Family has other branches or operatives, smaller in size, in other Canadian cities, most notably Vancouver, a large city on Canada's west coast, where there is a "western front" documented by police.
- There is a separate group of Sixth Family members that police refer to as the "new generation," which is generally made up of the sons, nephews and younger cousins of older Sixth Family members. Rizzuto, Sciascia, Manno, LoPresti, Renda and Cuntrera are all last names that cascade through the generations while continuing to find their way into police files.

Internationally, as well, the Sixth Family's interests are extensive. Beyond its numerous activities in Canada and the United States, its trafficking enterprises in Venezuela and Colombia and its relatives who remained in Cattolica Eraclea and surrounding Sicilian villages, an unreleased analysis by Canada's Department of Justice tracked financial holdings and connections from the Sixth Family to 16 other countries. They include:

- money laundering, investments and financial transfers through Switzerland, Germany and Great Britain. The family also has at least one operative located in London, England;

- investments in Saudi Arabia achieved with the suspected involvement of a member of the Saudi Royal family;
- importation of wood products and wood flooring from, and financial investments in, China;
- financial investment ventures in Algeria, a North African nation, and in the United Arab Emirates, an oil-rich Middle Eastern country on the Persian Gulf;
- investments in Cuba, along with periodic visits and extended stays in the country;
- drug transactions through meetings in, and visits to Mexico;
- alleged infiltration of public works projects in Italy. Also, at least one family operative is based in Rome and another in Milan;
- drug importation and involvement in airport servicing in Haiti;
- gambling enterprises in Belize, a small Central American country that borders Mexico;
- family members and associates traveling to and attending meetings in Panama, Aruba, Bahamas and the Dominican Republic.

Perhaps the most alarming aspect of police allegations concerning the Sixth Family's fulsome ranks is that it has a "Lawyer's Branch," one of its most protected, secretive and valued divisions. Police claim that practicing lawyers are involved in the family's enterprises to such an extent that a small proportion of them is considered by investigators to be a distinct branch of the organization. Police believe that the main cells of the organization each have their own designated lawyers. This would be a key distinction from other criminal organizations that maintain above-board but ongoing professional relationships with lawyers. Investigators suspect that the legal branch is not acting solely as judicial participants. There are no fewer than 11 lawyers from different law firms in Quebec that have raised police suspicions. Another has been identified by police as working closely with the family's business in Ontario. They have

played varying roles in the family's enterprises, police suggest. But by no means are all lawyers who have acted for members of the Sixth Family implicated in improper activities; in fact, most are not.

One lawyer is dubbed "the Messenger" by police investigators. They say he carries messages: for instance, from Montreal he went to New York City; from New York City he went to Toronto; from Toronto he went to a jail north of the city. Along the way, the Quebec attorney spoke softly and passed along advice and warnings, according to police. He spoke to members of the Sicilian faction and other members of the Bonanno crew in New York, many of them in jail or out on bail, an investigator said. In Toronto he met with lawyers representing the Sixth Family's associates who were facing charges in that city. In a visitor's room in an Ontario prison, police say he met with a senior member of the Caruana-Cuntrera Family.

Police have found that lawyer-client privilege is being used as a prime defense by the Sixth Family. One lawyer, police have marveled, seems to have the job of sitting in on family meetings, bringing down the veil of legal privacy to discussions, as his daily activity. The lawyers' jobs are often simple: keep the lines of communication open, and prevent Vito's name and affairs from being brought up in court. Combative, aggressive men facing organized crime charges have meekly made the best deal they could and pleaded guilty, at the behest of Montreal. One suspect, believing he could beat drug charges, told his own lawyer to tell a certain Quebec lawyer that he had a good shot in court.

"This isn't about him," the Quebec lawyer allegedly told the accused man's counsel. "This is about the big guy. Don't make beating the charge the saddest day of your client's life."

Informants have talked about investing money through a law firm, about the office being used as a safe meeting place for critical discussions and about escrow accounts being used to launder drug money. Sometimes a lawyer is present for a meeting; at other times he absents himself to another room. Wiretaps on Sixth Family targets that have made their way into the court record have captured loose talk of questionable relationships with some of their lawyers. One gangster spoke of trying to pay his lawyer for certain services but being told the lawyer could not take the cash; the lawyer then said he could sure use a new computer. Others speak of using lawyers to help in getting false travel papers, to unearth personal information about people and other irregular duties. There was the lawyer who was allegedly involved in

receiving the payment from the Toronto car dealer on Vito's behalf. That the substantial sum was returned when the businessman raised the possibility of exposing the lawyer's involvement suggests the value placed on the branch's secrecy.

Some other clues have emerged. Meetings allegedly about large cocaine shipments during which José Guede, a Montreal lawyer, was present are outlined in a Montreal police report filed in open court. (The charges against Guede were later dropped.) Similarly, the odd connections between Ramon Fernandez, Vito's man in Toronto, and lawyer Carmine Iacono emerged during the Project R.I.P. prosecution. Earlier, Joe Lagana, a lawyer for Vito, and three junior lawyers from the same firm, pleaded guilty to laundering drug money after the RCMP's sting operation at the money exchange house.

"The lawyers are a tricky part of getting at the Rizzuto family," an organized crime investigator said. "When we're up on the wires [running wiretaps], the minute we know it's a lawyer, we have to minimize [shut the recorders off]." With Vito and his key administrators keeping so many lawyers around them, that leads to a lot of minimizing.

"We're in a Catch-22 situation," said another officer. "If we want to put in an affidavit [requesting a judge's permission to intercept phone conversations] on a lawyer, we have to say that we have reason to believe that the lawyer is involved in crime. But you don't have that evidence because you can never listen in on their conversations. We need someone to come forward and tell us that they have evidence of a crime so we can move forward."

Several senior and experienced police investigators say they suspect lawyers are used in a number of different ways to thwart police monitoring of conversations.

"If you are on the wires and a lawyer comes into the conversation, the authorization says you have to cut out. The lawyer comes on the phone and clearly identifies himself as a lawyer and then says, 'OK, now turning to the case you and I are involved with.' And you have to stop listening. *You have to stop.* If the guy is involved in crime, we don't get to hear it," said an officer involved in extensive investigation of Sixth Family targets.

Some phone numbers are known by police to be a number for a lawyer's office and so officers realize a call is likely being made to a lawyer before any conversation even takes place. More often than not, officers turn off the wire without even waiting for a connection

in a scrupulous bid to adhere to the court authorization allowing the wiretap which explicitly forbids intercepting calls between lawyers and their clients. Some officers believe, however, that this situation is being exploited. Investigators say some lawyers are registering cellular telephones in their names and then giving the phone to members or associates of the Sixth Family to use.

“You now have a bad guy carrying the phone of a lawyer. These guys know we can’t listen to a lawyer. We don’t want to taint the case so we cut out when the call is made,” said an investigator. In the old days, officers might listen to conversations they should not be hearing and then erase the tapes later and pretend it never happened. In a digital age where the calls are exhaustively logged and recorded, there is a permanent record that cannot be hidden.

“They’ll know if we breach the court order. Is it worth it? No. It is extremely frustrating,” said an officer. At all times, the poor track record of previous investigations against Vito looms large.

Officers also suspect that some lawyers do third-party transfer of telephone calls. A target of an investigation may call a lawyer, engage in a conversation that would be covered by lawyer-client privilege and then—when they are pretty sure police would have cut out of the conversation—transfer the call to a third person, to allow them to engage in an unmonitored chat.

“We need some help from the Justice Department,” said an investigator. “We need some ability in certain cases to listen in and see, to just see if it is a legitimate lawyer-client call or something else.”

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As the new millennium dawned, Vito headed an unprecedented criminal organization, the likes of which Canada had never seen. As law enforcement beat back the Five Families in New York, the Sixth Family, safely operating from its base in Canada, steadily expanded its wealth and position. Those two opposite trajectories—the near collapsing of the American Mafia organizations and the growth of the Rizzuto organization—have seen the Sixth Family eclipse the families of the New York Mafia.

It has forged an organization few criminal cartels in any of the Americas can overshadow.