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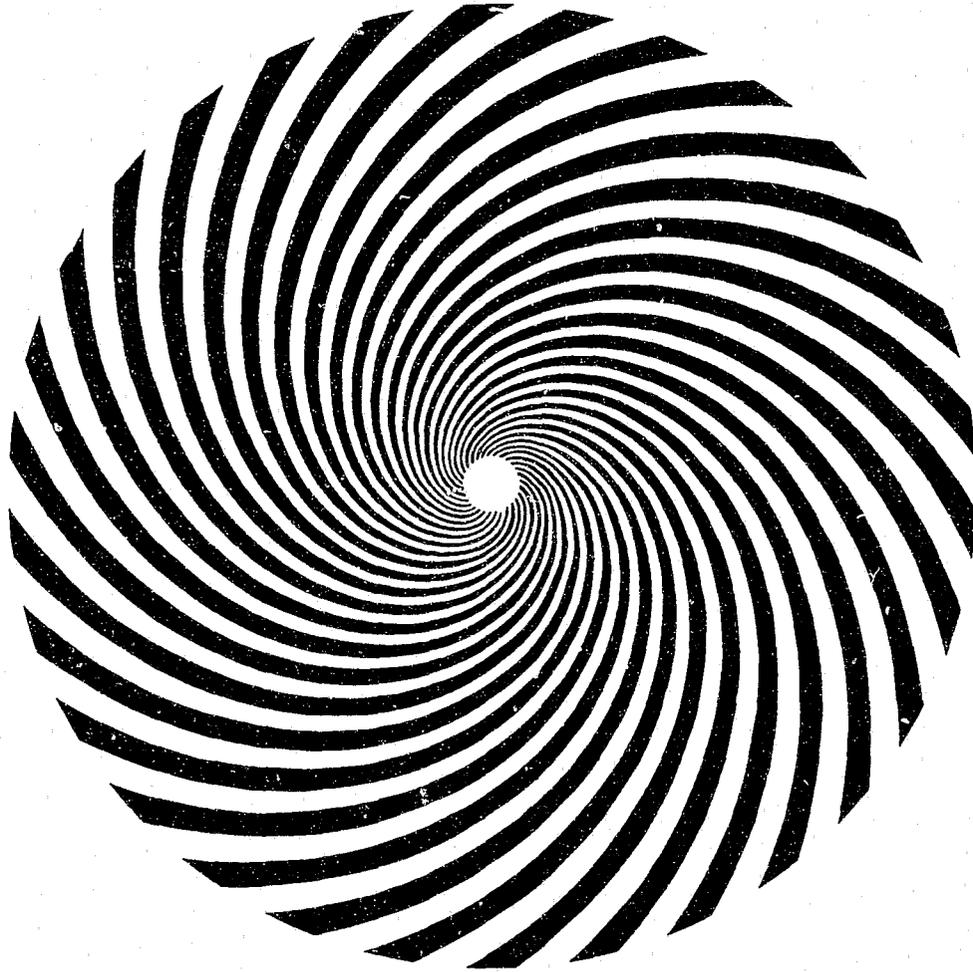
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The revolving manipulations of illegal gambling are difficult to follow.

Gambling Investigations

For sheer complexity, diversity, and number of obstacles to be overcome, few investigative operations present the law enforcement officer with more of a challenge than do those involving professional, illegal gambling.

To begin with, unlike most crimes, few gambling violations start with a complainant—that is, a person who feels he has been injured and is willing to cooperate in the detection and prosecution of the criminal responsi-

ble. On the contrary, bettors are more apt to think of themselves as members of the gambling “fraternity,” rather than victims of it. Moreover, in many states the bettor himself has violated gambling laws by making bets, and so is often reluctant to report the crime or testify.

Through vast wealth and power, the hoodlum combines promote organized gambling and secure the electronic devices and other material needed to help them thwart police ef-

forts. Often graft and corruption make it possible for them to buy “protection.”

The world of gambling, filled with inventive and original schemes to make money or simply to make a bet, extends into many forms of American life. Illegal gambling is an underestimated crime—one which earns its financiers billions of dollars annually. There are few independent “bookies” in this day of speedy transportation and far-reaching communications; if

the bookie is making money, the bosses of organized crime are getting their percentage. Failure to combat illegal gambling effectively is a definite aid to the business of crime—helping to finance narcotics and vice rings as well as other underworld rackets.

The solution is complex. First, we must recognize illegal gambling as a serious threat to our country; and second, we must resolve to defeat it in an organized and continuous campaign. The difficulty of this task is not readily apparent. The average citizen sees little, if anything, wrong with placing a \$2 bet at the local tavern and will lend little support to a campaign to halt gambling. The pressure of more urgent police business often deters police efforts against illegal gambling. It is easy to delay action until a more opportune moment. However, a significant percentage of the profit from illegal gambling is now being invested in legitimate businesses. This itself is sufficient reason why a successful battle against illegal gambling is necessary. We must remember that organized crime and illegal gambling are closely entwined.

Arrests and Convictions

Since 1962 and through fiscal year 1978, 10,315 convictions of hoodlums, gambling and vice figures have been convicted as a result of the FBI's efforts.

During the course of organized crime investigations, FBI Agents develop information pertaining to criminal offenses falling within the investigative purview of other Federal, state, and local agencies. As a result of information furnished to other agencies during fiscal year 1977, 121 gambling raids were made; 635 arrests were made; 54 convictions were obtained; and \$1,511, 836 in currency and gambling paraphernalia were recovered.

Emphasis is placed on the need for close cooperation in the field of drug investigations. DEA has primary jurisdiction over narcotics offenses and the FBI is charged with the responsibility of assisting DEA through the exchange of data and other supportive activities. Information obtained during the course of FBI investigations resulted in the recovery of \$157,642, 844 in currency, weapons, contraband, and narcotics; and 542 arrests in local, state, and Federal narcotics matters.

As a part of its drive against organized crime, the FBI cooperates closely with other Federal, state, and local agencies, particularly those responsible for investigating gambling and narcotics violations. During fiscal year 1978, information originally developed by the FBI and disseminated to other agencies, resulted in more than 806 gambling and narcotics arrests; the confiscation of in excess of \$192,000,000 worth of narcotics; and the seizure of in excess of \$127, 000,000 in cash, property, weapons, and wagering paraphernalia.

Illegal gambling investigations require the use of foresight, planning, imagination, and quick thinking on the part of the FBI Agents and police officers conducting such investigations.

While much has been written and discussed about locating and entering illegal gambling establishments, investigating agencies cannot, of course, publicly divulge all their techniques and know-how. Basic flexible investigative approaches, modified with sufficient imagination and ingenuity to meet a given situation, are usually preferable. Alertness and keen observation on the part of officers are essential. And of course, there is no substitute for experience. Ruses, disguises, and countermeasures used by gambling figures must be spotted

quickly and recognized for what they are.

Probably no other single phase of a gambling raid is so essential to success as is the approach and the gaining entry before the subject of the raid can destroy his workpapers and any other incriminating evidence which he may have in his possession at the time. As most investigating officers know, gambling evidence is primarily paper in nature and may be burned, bleached, dissolved, or flushed down a toilet in a matter of seconds. For this reason, the more planning that goes into a raid, the more successful it is likely to be.

Runners, writers, or other representatives of big gambling rings can often be traced from sites where they normally pick up their wagers. One ring in a southern State was broken up when an alert police officer noticed that an unusually large number of customers were leaving a shoeshine parlor with dirty footwear. In another State a bookmaker taking advantage of a nice spell of weather was arrested when police became suspicious of the steady stream of motorists stopping to visit a certain clump of bushes in a local park. And in many areas vice squad officers like to see rain since runners often become less security conscious and head straight for their destination without checking to make sure they are not being followed.

One source who manages a store that specializes in selling and repairing adding machines advises that he can usually spot a member of the gambling element when the latter brings in a machine to be repaired. Whereas most legitimate customers carry their equipment around without any protective covering, bookmakers and policy operators often transport theirs wrapped in blankets, paper, or some other type of screening material.

In the Midwest an unguarded window allowed ten persons to flee a gambling raid by dropping two stories

to the ground. More than 100 others also tried to flee but were trapped inside when a 300-pound man became stuck in the window and prevented anyone else from getting out.

Attempted Elusions

In another area, during surveillances of the hoodlum and gambling elements, police ascertained that some of them were driving into parking lots and car-sales firms run by associates and then driving out in different cars which they had borrowed in hopes of throwing off possible "tails." And in many parts of the country, gamblers reportedly monitor police radio calls in order to get advance warning on pending raids.

In an east coast city at least one numbers runner provides his customers a convenient service that also affords him a personal measure of security from detection. Instead of meeting the bettors in a public place and risking being seen recording their wagers, he has keys to their houses or apartments, where he drops in daily to pick up the money and the numbers on which they desire to place a wager.

In the same locality officers raiding a numbers "bank" could not understand at first why there were no records to seize when the gamblers obviously had not had time to destroy them. Finally one of the officers took down a roll of paper towels from a rack on the wall and found the records hidden inside the cardboard roller.

In another major city police saw a woman clerk pop some bookmaking papers into her mouth during a raid and assumed that she had swallowed them. Subsequently, during a search at the jail, the officers discovered that the woman—instead of downing the records—had stuffed them under her false teeth.

Three of the most popular methods employed by gamblers to destroy their

records in the event of a police raid are by fire, by the use of water-soluble paper (which completely disintegrates when exposed to water), and by flushing the records down a convenient toilet. Recognizing this, law enforcement officers have devised a number of techniques to prevent such destruction or at least to reduce it to a minimum while they are gaining access to the site of the records.

Charred Wagering Data

Several agencies advise that their men routinely wear asbestos gloves on gambling raids in case they have to snatch betting slips or similar wagering data from a fire. Others carry a fire extinguisher with them. If neither works, careful preservation of the ash residue can still be useful, particularly when forwarded to the FBI Laboratory for restoration and examination. In a recent case a mass of charred documents was identified by the Laboratory as being numbers-pool and horserace plays.

Although water-soluble paper leaves no incriminating records to be restored and introduced into court, Laboratory examiners have been successful in identifying the chemical compounds of soluble paper found in a container of water at a bookmaker's establishment. Testimony to this effect was offered in court as corroborative evidence of the nature of the bookmaker's operation. In addition, a careful search of the raided premises will sometimes uncover records from previous periods which were not readily available to the gambler when he was forced to destroy his current workpapers.

One of the most unusual dilemmas to confront police in some time, however, occurred on the East Coast recently when a woman policy writer slipped out of her housecoat, gathered up her records written on water-soluble paper, and leaped into a bathtub

before the raiding party could break down her outer door. By the time the officers reached the bathroom, the woman was sitting in the tub, stirring the paper in the water, and shouting at the police not to enter.

Countermeasures

For the gamblers who specialize in flushing their records down a toilet, at least two countermeasures have been developed. In one town police arranged to have the subject's water cut off ahead of time in order to preclude the loss of more than one load of documents. In another town the sewerline leading from the policy "bank" was disconnected just prior to the commencement of the raid, the end of the pipe was covered with a burlap sack, and the evidence flushed down the toilet was recovered and led to the conviction of the operator.

Similarly, to circumvent a bookmaker who grinds up his documents in a garbage-disposal unit or records his incoming messages on quickly erasable tapes, officers may have his electricity cut off before they announce the raid.

On the other hand, law enforcement officers will occasionally encounter new and bizarre destruction techniques requiring fast thinking and fast action. A west coast bookmaker, for example, supplied himself with a number of balloons and a helium container. When local police tried to gain entrance to the gambler's office, he jammed his papers into the balloons, filled them with gas, and tossed them out a window to disappear into the sky. Unfortunately for him, however, a high-jumping detective outside the window managed to snare the evidence before it could be wafted away.

In addition to the Federal, State, and local laws specifically banning gambling operations, broader legislation, such as that governing health,

safety, and fire conditions in a community, is available for use if necessary. Other areas in which a gambling operation may be vulnerable are in its communications and transportation.

Because few bookmakers could stay in business long without a telephone, the provision in the interstate transmission of wagering information statute which requires a telephone company to terminate service to a professional gambler is a most valuable weapon in the drive against organized crime. According to the statute, which has been upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court, any common carrier subject to the jurisdiction of the Federal Communications Commission—after being alerted by a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency that its facilities are being, or will be, used for the transmission or receiving of wagering information, and after giving "reasonable notice" to the offending subscriber—must discontinue its services to that subscriber.

For marking money in gambling investigations, a number of agencies use common substances, such as an eyewash, which are not visible under ordinary light but which will fluoresce under an ultraviolet or infrared light.

In Paris, France, a major investigation of 25 bookmakers was finally brought to a successful conclusion through the use of an assortment of techniques, including television coverage of the meets between the bookmakers and their customers.

When a bookmaker adopts the line that any slips found on him are personal bets he is making himself, it is usually possible through careful scrutiny to identify a number of duplicate, conflicting, or self-defeating wagers on opposing teams, which are almost certain not to be found on a personal bettor.

From a legal standpoint, agencies contemplating raids on gambling establishments should make arrange-

ments, once the premises have been secured, to have telephone company experts conduct a survey to identify any telephonic equipment located thereon. Another advantage stemming from this procedure was discovered by one department when a bookmaker yanked three telephones out of the wall and tossed them through a window in an attempt to prevent officers from monitoring incoming bets during the raid. Fortunately, however, the telephone company employee accompanying the police retrieved the instruments and had them in working condition less than 10 minutes later.

Casino equipment, especially that which has been rigged to cheat players, is often quite complex. Because it has been designed to fool even knowledgeable bettors, close examination by trained personnel is generally necessary to detect the rigging devices. In any event it is recommended that the raiding officers take detailed notes and extensive photographs of the equipment seized, including a complete description of anything that may conceivably be of value. In some instances, a concealed wire leading to batteries in the basement or an adjoining room may indicate the rigged nature of a table or wheel. In others the power unit and all necessary equipment may be self-contained in the table, and nothing less than careful examination under laboratory conditions could possibly uncover them. In fact, careless dismantling of such an item may ruin the evidentiary nature of anything found therein. The same, of course, also applies to telephonic devices, such as "cheeseboxes" and "black boxes," which are often sealed in such a manner that they cannot be opened without destroying them.

In gambling investigations, the thing to expect is the unexpected.

Most criminals usually make some effort to cover their unlawful activi-

ties. None, however, is more adept than the wary gambler when it comes to evading exposure and arrest. Most of the time investigators find it is not only a battle against crime, but also a battle of wits.

The FBI Laboratory has gambling experts available to examine various types of gambling paraphernalia, including records, results of court-authorized wiretaps, and such items as cards, dice, electronic devices, carnival games, etc.