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Division of Investigation

U. S. Department of Justice

Washington, D. C.

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THE DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION

The Division of Investigation has the responsibility of investigating offenses against the laws of the United States and collecting evidence in cases in which the United States is or may be a party, and possesses primary investigative jurisdiction of those offenses against the laws of the United States not specifically assigned by Congressional enactment to other Governmental agencies for investigation.

This Division does not investigate violations of the Narcotic Laws, Smuggling, Counterfeiting, Immigration Laws, and certain other miscellaneous statutes.

Among the most generally known violations investigated by the Division of Investigation are the following:

Bankruptcy Act; Antitrust Laws; National Bank and Federal Reserve Acts; Crimes on the High Seas and on Indian and Government Reservations; Frauds Against the Government; Impersonation; Peonage; Theft of Government Property; Bribery of Government Officers; Espionage; Escaped Federal Prisoners; Killing or Assaulting Federal Officers; Robbery of National Banks

or Member Banks of the Federal Reserve System; Crimes in connection with Federal, Penal and Correctional Institutions; Neutrality Laws; Perjury; Pardon, Parole and Probation Matters; and certain violations involving interstate or foreign transportation, including the National Motor Vehicle Theft Act, known as the Dyer Act; White Slave Traffic Act, known as the Mann Act; Kidnaping; Extortion; The National Stolen Property Act; Flight to Avoid Prosecution or Testifying in Certain Cases; Federal Anti-Racketeering Statute; and Thefts from Interstate Shipments. In addition to the above criminal statutes the Division is called upon to investigate a large number of civil matters including the defense of War Risk Insurance Suits.

#### Organization

It requires a comprehensive organization to investigate such a large number of important Federal crimes throughout the United States, Hawaii, and Alaska. In order to perform its work most expeditiously and economically, the Division has offices in thirty cities located throughout the United States. Its investigative activities are not limited by State boundary lines. A Special Agent in Charge has charge of each of its respective

offices which covers a definite geographic area. As occasion requires, the number of employees assigned to each office varies with the amount of work to be performed. For instance, if the number of cases in the territory covered by the Jacksonville, Florida, Office is comparatively few, while the number of cases covered by the New York Office is unusually large, employees may be shifted from Jacksonville to the New York Office, or from Portland to Philadelphia, or from New Orleans to San Francisco, as the occasion demands.

That is, of course, a distinct advantage, and permits thorough and prompt attention to be given every case referred to the Division for investigative action to the end that all pertinent evidence and facts may be collected and presented to the appropriate United States Attorney in proper form for his opinion as to prosecution.

#### Personnel

The Division gives most careful consideration to the selection and appointment of all its employees. Only duly qualified graduates of recognized law schools, who are usually members of the bar, or expert Accountants with practical experience, are appointed as Special Agents. Applicants for appointment to investigative positions must be between 25 and 35 years of age. Upon



their appointment, Special Agents are given intensive training courses at Washington, where they are required to master all phases of their work, including practical instruction in the use of all types of firearms. Special Agents in Charge of the field offices of the Division are in turn selected from those employees who have proven themselves to be possessed of investigative, administrative, and executive ability of the highest order. All employees are required to render appropriate assistance to law enforcement officials at all times and to strictly observe the rights of all persons with whom they come in contact. The Division as a result of the high standard maintained by its employees, is enabled to attract to its ranks individuals of integrity and ability.

#### Accomplishments

Statistics at best are rather dry, but offer the most concise method of outlining the achievements of the Division. Convictions were secured in 93.81% of all cases investigated by the Division which were brought to trial during the fiscal year 1934.

During the same fiscal year 3,531 convictions - that is, an average of almost 10 convictions for each day in the year - were obtained in cases investigated by the Division.

The sentences imposed in these cases included 11 life sentences and totaled over 5,073 years, exclusive of probationary sentences, totaling 2,501 years, and suspended sentences of 1,012 years. The fines imposed during the same year totaled \$772,938.73.

The total value of recoveries effected in cases wherein employees of the Division performed investigative work amounted to \$1,116,619.28. In addition to these recoveries the sum of \$261,672.26 was saved the Government in Court of Claims cases in which investigations were conducted by the Division.

In 1,659 War Risk Insurance cases investigated by the Division during the fiscal year 1934, a total savings of \$17,890,768.13 to the United States was effected.

During the same fiscal year 923 Federal fugitives from justice were located - an average of between 2 and 3 Federal fugitives located per day. In addition, the Identification Unit of the Division assisted various law-enforcement officials throughout the United States in identifying 4,356 fugitives during the same year. Stolen motor vehicles numbering 2,302 and valued at \$910,024.23 were recovered in cases in which the Division performed investigative work for the fiscal year 1934. Since the enactment of the National Motor Vehicle Theft Act, or to give its commonly accepted name, the Dyer Act, in October, 1919, until June 30, 1934, 36,695 stolen motor vehicles valued at \$23,827,167.75 have been recovered in cases in which the Division performed investigative work.

#### Identification Unit

The Identification Unit of the Division of Investigation is maintained at Washington, D. C., and was established on July 1,

1924, to operate as a national clearing house of identification data. At the date of its inception, it began with approximately 800,000 fingerprint records which had comprised the collections of the bureau maintained at the United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas, and of the National Bureau of Criminal Identification, Washington, D. C., which had been operated by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Since its establishment in 1924, the Identification Unit of the Division of Investigation has had a phenomenal growth. During the fiscal year of 1934 alone, it received 558,241 criminal fingerprint cards in addition to applicant and civil records.

On July 1, 1934, there were 4,372,619 fingerprint records on file, representing the largest and most complete collection of criminal fingerprint records of current value existing anywhere in the world. This Unit now receives criminal identification data from 6,774 contributors in the United States and foreign countries, and receives more than 2,200 fingerprint cards each day, replying to each of these cards within 36 hours.

The subjects of over 46% of all the prints received are identified as having prior criminal records. By means of posting notices of wanted persons in this Unit, the Division at present identifies an average of 363 fugitives each month, immediately



notifying the proper officials so that these fugitives may be taken into custody. This entire service is furnished free of cost and is maintained solely for the convenience and use of regularly constituted law-enforcement officials and agencies. These data are not made available for private purposes. At the present time the Identification Unit of the Division exchanges fingerprint records with 60 foreign countries to help cope with the operations of international confidence men, swindlers and gangsters.

#### "Fugitives Wanted by Police" Bulletins

As an aid to law enforcement agencies in their war upon crime and criminals, the Division publishes a "Fugitives Wanted by Police" Bulletin monthly, in which are listed the names, aliases, descriptions, and fingerprint classifications of wanted fugitives, together with the names and addresses of law-enforcement officials and agencies to be notified when the fugitives are located. These bulletins are distributed each month by the Division to the 6,774 law-enforcement officials and agencies who forward fingerprints for the Division's files.

#### Crime Statistics

By Act of Congress, approved June 11, 1930, the Division of Investigation was authorized to collect and compile criminal statistics. During the calendar year 1933, reports were received from 1658 police departments throughout the United States, repre-

senting a population area of 62,357,262 persons. A bulletin containing a digest of figures on crime statistics throughout the entire country is issued quarterly by the Division.

#### Single Fingerprint Files

As an adjunct to its main fingerprint files, wherein impressions are classified through the use of all fingers considered as a unit, the Division conducts a single fingerprint file wherein individual impressions of known gangsters, bank robbers, kidnapers and extortionists are classified and filed separately, to be susceptible of ready comparison with latent prints found at the scenes of crimes. In this manner the fingerprints of over 6,066 of such criminals have been so segregated in this special file. A detailed description of each of these criminals is also maintained, cross indexed on cards operated by a sorting machine system. Individual photographs further supplement this valuable adjunct to the Identification Unit.

#### Research Division

The Division also maintains at Washington a Technical Laboratory for the study of questioned documents involving analyses of handwriting, typewriting, erasures, paper texture, et cetera, as well as matters arising within the sciences of ballistics, microphotography, and forensic chemistry. To this laboratory is



forwarded evidence found during investigations, which requires examination by experts and through their reports many new leads are furnished the investigating agents in the field. When necessary the scientific findings of the experts are presented to the courts at which time detailed charts and enlarged photographs are prepared substantiating the conclusion reached.

Collections of standard specimens of typewriting from various models of machines; blue prints of the designs of tire treads; and sample bullets, shells and other ammunition of the different manufacturers, are filed in the laboratory for ready reference purposes, enabling quick identification of specimens submitted during the course of investigations.