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**ALLEGED ACTING BOSS AND LIEUTENANT OF GENOVESE
ORGANIZED CRIME FAMILY PLEAD GUILTY TO EXTORTION**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that Acting Boss of the Genovese Organized Crime Family, DANNY LEO, a/k/a "The Lion," 66, and his primary lieutenant and nephew, JOSEPH LEO, 45, pleaded guilty today to charges of extortion. DANNY and JOSEPH LEO pleaded guilty in Manhattan federal court before United States Magistrate Judge ANDREW J. PECK. According to the Indictment and statements made during bail hearings and the guilty pleas:

From 2002 to November 30, 2006, DANNY LEO and JOSEPH LEO agreed to extort a business owner ("Victim-1") by threatening Victim-1 with physical violence and other harm if he did not make prompt repayment of various loans and debts. Also, from about January 2003 to January 2006, DANNY LEO agreed to extort the owners and operators of an illegal gambling business involved in interstate commerce ("Victim-2" and "Victim-3"). DANNY LEO and other members and associates of the Genovese Organized Crime Family, agreed to use threats of economic harm and violence to force Victim-2 and Victim-3 to make payments to a member of the Genovese Organized Crime Family.

DANNY LEO pleaded guilty to two counts of conspiring to commit extortion. Magistrate Judge PECK ordered both defendants to continue to be detained. JOSEPH LEO pleaded guilty to one count of extortion. DANNY LEO faces a maximum sentence of 40 years' imprisonment and a maximum fine of \$250,000. JOSEPH LEO faces a maximum sentence of 20 years' imprisonment and a maximum fine of \$250,000.

Mr. GARCIA praised the work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the New York City Police Department, and the New York State Police in this investigation.

Assistant United States Attorneys ERIC SNYDER and BENJAMIN GRUENSTEIN are in charge of the prosecution.