

2 plead guilty in Chicago mob case

by UPI

CHICAGO - Two defendants in the "Family Secrets" mob case pleaded guilty Monday in federal court in Chicago.

The pleas reduce the number of defendants remaining in the case to five, the Chicago Tribune reported. Jury selection is scheduled to begin Tuesday.

Nicholas Ferriola's plea includes a stipulation that he will not be called as a witness in the trial. He admitted racketeering conspiracy and running illegal gambling as part of the organization's Chinatown crew.

Joseph Venezia also pleaded guilty to illegal gambling and tax fraud conspiracy.

Prosecutors describe the remaining defendants as the backbone of organized crime in Chicago in the 1970s and 1980s. They include Joey "The Clown" Lombardo, now 78 and confined to a wheelchair, and James Marcello, reputedly the former boss of the Chicago mob.

The other defendants are Frank Calabrese Sr., allegedly once Chicago's top loan shark, Paul "the Indian" Schiro and former Chicago police officer Anthony Doyle.

Last week, Michael Marcello pleaded guilty, admitting he passed information to an imprisoned half-brother, Nicholas Calabrese, who is expected to be a prosecution witness. Another defendant was severed because of poor health and may be tried separately.

The indictments include allegations concerning 18 alleged mob killings.

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