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Rosselli, John

CASTRO, Fidel

CIA 4.01 ASSASSINATION

Cain, Richard

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# The mobster CIA hired as hit man



MOBSTER JOHN Rosselli says he isn't want to be deported to Italy, he won't play his one ace in the to save himself—his claim to have an architect of an alleged assassination plot on Cuban strongman Fidel Castro.

That's what intimates of the one Chicago and Los Angeles Mafia member have told this column as national controversy over reported Central Intelligence Agency execution names swirled about the retired, 70-year-old hoodlum's head this week.

Rosselli, who sometimes spells his name Roselli, but whose real moniker Filippo Sacco, maintains he did, in fact, make arrangements for at least two attempts on Castro's life before and after the abortive CIA sponsored Bay of Pigs invasion of the Caribbean.

HE BOASTS privately that he acted at the behest of the CIA, which needed Cuban connections and those of ex-Chicago crime syndicate boss Salvatore

He doesn't want to hurt the cause of the United States."

Actually, Rosselli's concern for the national image appears to be a facade. He has already used the allegation of having been a cooperative tool of the CIA in legal efforts to stave off deportation to his native Italy from whence he was brought here as an infant.

In 1968, Rosselli was convicted in Los Angeles of failing to comply with alien registration laws and was finally ordered deported last Jan. 10.

However, in an appeal from the deportation order, Rosselli has claimed that he assisted the CIA in a plot to murder Fidel Castro and is therefore entitled to political asylum to avoid persecution in Italy.

Further, he wants the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service to subpoena columnist Jack Anderson to confirm his account. Anderson first reported allegations of the supposedly Mafia-managed murder contracts on Castro in 1971.

"You listen to these stories and you wonder which came first, the chicken or the egg," observed one investigator wryly. "You wonder if Rosselli got the idea from Anderson's column or vice versa."

In any event, Rosselli undoubtedly has the underworld credentials to have given a helping hand to any attempt to wipe out the Cuban dictator.

After a lifelong criminal career, he is well connected with mob chieftains thruout the country, including Giancana and Tampa, Fla., gangland boss Santo Trafficante, both of whom enjoyed cordial relations with the pre-Castro regime of Fulgencio Batista in the days of wide open gambling in Havana.

And Giancana, along with the late elder statesman of the Chicago mob, Paul [The Waiter] Ricca, were among Rosselli's prime sponsors in the years he reigned supreme as a Hollywood gangster character.

Like Rosselli, Giancana has been quick to use the CIA name when in potential ditch with federal authorities. He also claims to have been approached by the intelligence agency now under fire for alleged domestic spying and overseas assassination scenarios.

Further, whenever Uncle Sam has leaned on him since his ouster from a Mexican sanctuary a year ago, Giancana has repeatedly demanded consideration because of his self-proclaimed role as an undercover agent for the CIA.

If one believes the story, the two mobsters used their connections in Havana to help fashion three unsuccessful hits on Castro—twice by using poison and once by a round from a high-powered rifle.

And Rosselli would like folks to think he was so patriotic he dug into his own pockets to finance landing assassination teams on the Cuban coast and that Giancana was influential in paving the way for their penetration to within a few hundred yards of Castro's Havana lair.

ROSSELLI and Giancana are not alone in claiming affinity with the CIA. Richard Cain, the former Cook County sheriff's police chief investigator later bared as a Mafia double agent, also spread the word he had labored for the agency in Mexico before his gangland style murder in 1973.

Cain claimed the CIA had solicited Giancana's aid in developing a spy network inside Cuba a year before the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion. And Cain was supposedly appointed by Giancana to act as his liaison with Havana sources, also conferring with Giancana's business associate from Havana casino days, Miami mobster Meyer Lansky.

Rosselli today lives in retirement in Plantation, Fla., near Fort Lauderdale. He spends a lot of time fishing. But in his day, he was a remarkable mobster. So more about him tomorrow.



Rosselli: Aided CIA plots.

Monomaniacal Giancana to penetrate Castro's will. But he insists to friends and relatives that he would rather endure being shipped back to the old country than become a stool pigeon on Uncle Sam.

"I think he would rather suffer the consequences than give out the story."

Rosselli's family spokesman told us. That's how strongly he feels about it.