

Mobster admits plotting with CIA to kill Castro

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Graphic
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WASHINGTON (UPI)—Reputed Mafia boss Santo Trafficante has acknowledged publicly for the first time that he worked in 1960-61 with CIA agents in a plot to poison Fidel Castro. His motive, he said, was patriotism.

But he denied publicly yesterday that—six months before the 1963 shooting—he told an FBI informer the president would be “hit.”

Trafficante, 63, told his story to the House Assassinations Committee under a grant of immunity from prosecution. No pictures of him or recordings of his answers were permitted.

His role, said Trafficante, was that of an “interpreter” between crime figures, the CIA agents and Cuban exiles in the plot to kill the Cuban president.

The committee is probing the Cuban connection because of acknowledged Cuban contacts of Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused slayer of President John Kennedy, and Jack Ruby, the man who shot Oswald to death.

Conspiracy theorists have stated that Castro, angered by U.S. efforts to kill him, may have tried to turn the tables. Castro has denied knowing anything about the Nov. 22, 1963, assassination.

The reputed boss of a multi-million dollar gambling empire in pre-Castro Cuba, Trafficante seized the chance to rebut testimony from FBI informer Jose Aleman

who testified Wednesday that Trafficante foretold the assassination.

He knew Aleman, Trafficante conceded, but added, “I want to tell you something. I’m as sure as I’m sitting here that I never made a statement (to Aleman) that Kennedy was going to be hit.”

“I spoke to him in Spanish,” the slight, balding witness said. “He spoke in Spanish because he’s a Cuban. There was no reason for me to tell him in English that Kennedy was going to be hit; so I deny that statement.”

Aleman insists that in June 1963 Trafficante discounted his prediction that Kennedy would be re-elected. “He’s not going to be re-elected,” Aleman quoted Trafficante as saying. “No, Jose, he’s going to be hit.”

There is no way to say that in Spanish, Trafficante testified yesterday.

Trafficante also said he could “never

remember meeting Jack Ruby” or Oswald

He confirmed reports that Sam Giancana, whom the FBI said was Chicago Cosa Nostra chief in the 1960s, and John Roselli, another crime figure, were also involved in the anti-Castro plot. Both Giancana and Roselli were murdered in recent years after a Senate investigative body revealed their names.

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