



Jerry Capeci

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This Week in Gang Land

November 21, 2013

By Jerry Capeci

Cop Killer Feared For His Own Life Before He Did The Dirty Deed



In a chilling account of the execution slaying of police officer Ralph Dols, the leader of the Colombo family hit team testified last week that he pushed the murder plot into high gear when he realized that his own life was at risk if he didn't get the job done.



Dino Calabro

His fears, and his resolve to carry out the hit, said turncoat capo Dino (Big Dino) Calabro, were stoked by back-to-back discussions he had in the summer of 1997 with his mob superior, capo Thomas (Tommy Shots) Gioli, and consigliere Joel (Joe Waverly) Cacace — whose murder trial is expected to go to the jury next week. The prosecution is expected to rest Monday.

"You never know," explained Calabro, who admitted killing Dols in front of his Brooklyn home on August 25, 1997. "You back out of it, and three, four years from now you get killed, and not for that reason; they'll just make up another reason for it and you're dead."

Calabro has long maintained that neither he nor any members of the hit team knew Dols was a cop until after the murder. The 28-year-old police officer was only the second NYPD cop targeted for death and executed by the mob — and the first ever on American soil. The last time the Mafia killed a police officer was in 1909 when Detective Lieutenant Joseph Petrosino, for whom a small park on Cleveland Place was named in 1987, was killed by the Mafia in Sicily.

Calabro said that his talks with the two Colombo wiseguys — first with [Cacace](#) and then with Gioli — about the stalled hit contract took place shortly before Big Dino and two other mob associates shot the off-duty police officer to death on East 19th Street in Sheepshead Bay.



[John "Sonny" Franzese](#)



[Domenico "Italian Dom" Cefalu](#)



[Vincent "Chin" Gigante](#)



[Carmine "Junior" Persico](#)



[Anthony "Gaspape" Casso](#)



[Liborio "Barney" Bellomo](#)

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Ralph Dols



"It was right before the murder," said Calabro. He and Joe Waverly both arrived early for a scheduled meeting of all three men at a pastry shop in the Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn.

"He asked me to take a walk outside with him, and then he asked me what's going on over there," meaning in Sheepshead Bay, where Calabro, his cousin, Dino ([Little Dino](#)) Saracino and associate Joseph (Joe Caves) Competiello had been trying to track Dols's comings and goings.

"I said, 'We got heat.'" That is what Tommy Shots had instructed him to say if he were ever asked, Calabro testified, because "Joe Waverly was putting pressure on him" to kill Dols. "Tommy told me that [Joe Waverly](#) said to him that if your guys can't get it done, let me know and he'll get somebody else to do it, or do it himself," said Calabro.

What was your response, asked prosecutor James Gatta, who is trying the case with assistant U.S. attorneys Allon Lifshitz and Samuel Nitze.

"I told Tommy don't do that, we'll get it done," said [Calabro](#), who quickly instructed Little Dino and Joe Caves to get two "clean" guns, bullets, two police scanners and two "walkie-talkies." He also instructed them to steal a car to use that night. They swiped a four door Chevrolet Caprice with out of state license plates and parked it near Dols's home for use later.

"Then we set up to go out and kill [Dols](#)," he said. Calabro said the team parked a Mercury Cougar that he owned a few blocks from the cop's home. That was to be used as a getaway car by him and Little Dino after they killed Dols. He assigned Joe Caves to drive Saracino's Cadillac El Dorado — the "crash car" for the hit.

It was important, he testified, that the "crash car," which would be used to block the street, or crash into a pursuing car to stop it, be a "legitimate" car. "In case you crash into somebody, it's not stolen," he said. "You don't get in trouble for it. It's just an accident. Or if you stall out in the middle of the street, you're not in trouble for it."

After several long days of intense surveillance clocking the cop's movements, they set up for the kill when they spotted Dols returning home at 11:30 pm. But they had to abort the hit, when the two Dinos, waiting in the stolen Caprice, got stopped by a red light at the corner of Avenue V and E. 19th street. Dols, who made the light, parked his blue Cutlass Supreme, and made it safely up to his apartment .

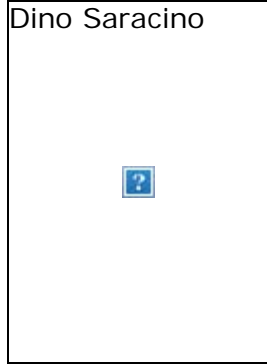


Their next run was more successful. This time, [Joe Caves](#), who also served as the lookout, was staked out on Avenue V. He spotted Dols early enough to alert the two Dinos in time for Calabro to get right behind Dols as he turned down East 19th Street. The hit team parked across the one way street at a fire hydrant, jumped out of their car, and confronted Dols as he parked his own car near Avenue U.

"He said, 'What's up?' and we started shooting him. I just emptied my gun," said Calabro. "He fell back into the car seat and then we were shooting through the car, through the car windows and the windshield. Then I seen him coming out of the car and fall across the hood of the car. I ran back to the car ... into the driver's side. My cousin Dino ran to the passenger side and we took off."

With Competiello following close behind, Big Dino drove to East 14th or East 15th street near Avenue S, and ditched the stolen car. The two Dinos got into Calabro's car, and drove to Saracino's house, where they regrouped with Competiello.

Dino Saracino



It was not until the next day that he learned, Calabro said, that Dols, whom Gioeli had identified as a Mexican who worked at a social club in Queens, was a cop.

"I seen the newspaper and I was like, 'Whoa, what the fuck'? It was a cop," he testified. "I went right home, got in my car, went right out to Gioeli's house in Long Island. We're not supposed to kill police officers. It's just a rule. You know, you don't hurt children, you don't hurt girls, you don't hurt law enforcement. It's just rules."

Gioeli also insisted that he didn't know that Dols was a cop. Calabro testified that he told [Tommy Shots](#) that Joe Waverly "must have known," but he never confronted Cacace about it.

From then on, they would place their right hand on their left arm as if giving an injection, or use the code word "AIDs" when discussing the murder, because "it was a deadly case for killing a cop. Deadly for the people involved; me, Joey, Dino, Tommy, Joe Waverly."

Cacace — as well as Gioeli and Saracino, who were acquitted at trial last year — were all eligible for [capital punishment](#) when they were indicted in 2008, but the death penalty was later taken off the table for all three defendants.

But even if it was against the rules, the successful hit brought its own mob rewards. Big Dino was inducted into the family in 2000, while Little Dino was made about five years later, Calabro testified. Joey Caves and Saracino's older brother [Sebastian](#), who each flipped and testified at both murder trials, were inducted the same day as Little Dino, Calabro testified.

On cross examination, defense lawyer David Stern got Big Dino to admit that even after he flipped and promised to tell the truth, he lied to the feds twice to lessen the culpability of his cousins — Little Dino and brother Sebastian — in murders they were involved in.

Calabro also conceded that he had been a professional liar who deceived and lied to people all his life, including friends, relatives and lovers of people he had killed. By testifying, he hoped to gain an early release from prison, he said, despite taking part in eight murders, including the 1999 killing of underboss William ([Wild Bill](#)) Cutolo, and a slew of other violent crimes.



But he insisted that his story about Joe Waverly's involvement in the murder of Ralph Dols was the truth, including the one conversation they had about it outside a Bensonhurst pastry shop.

In her opening remarks, attorney Susan Kellman stressed that the FBI, which had Joe Waverly under surveillance from 1996 through 2000, had produced no photos, no reports, or anything else that put her client with any of those she called "animals" who killed Dols. While prosecutors might prove Cacace was a mobster serving time for [racketeering](#), she said they would not be able to prove, as they had stated in their opening, that he killed Dols because he married his ex-wife.

The "challenge" jurors faced, she said, would be overcoming the words, Mafia, Cosa Nostra, and Colombo family. "The government hopes you will not be able to get past those words, and past the prejudice that comes with those words," she said.

"Mr. Cacace was jealous that his ex-wife had remarried," she scoffed. "An explanation like that, in my view, fails to pass even a straight-face test. Everybody who remarries doesn't run the risk of being killed by a former husband, even if that person is in the Mafia. That's all they have, is the ability to say, in the Mafia."



In the defense case, Cacace's lawyers are expected to argue that Wild Bill Cutolo, an ambitious, power-seeking wiseguy, was secretly behind the cop killing. The theory is that Cutolo, possibly with Gioeli's help, framed Joe Waverly for the murder so Wild Bill could eliminate him as a rival for control of the crime family.

"Even assuming that Gioeli told Calabro that the order to kill Dols came from Cacace (a proposition we reject), there is no reason to assume that the treacherous Gioeli was telling the truth," the lawyers wrote in court papers they filed with Brooklyn Federal Judge Brian Cogan last week. "The conventional wisdom on the street," they wrote, "is that William Cutolo ordered Dols' murder in an effort to frame Cacace" so he could increase his own power in the Colombo crime family.

After Eight Months Of Forced Retirement Danny Fama Back Pounding Rocks

Eight months after his arrest for a mob slaying that took place 23 years ago, longtime Gambino crime family associate Daniel Fama was abruptly released on bail this week. The move came after federal prosecutors, who had vigorously fought to detain Fama, unexpectedly dropped their opposition to his release.



But the likely reason that the feds changed their minds about springing the 49-year old ex con is a little less obscure: The decision came shortly after prosecutors spoke to turncoat underboss Salvatore ([Sammy Bull](#)) Gravano about the 1990 murder — the last killing ordered by late Dapper Don, [John Gotti](#).

Gravano has previously stated that he never told Fama and others he selected to take part in the hit on mob contractor Edward (Eddie The Chink)

Garofalo that Garofalo was being killed because he was suspected of being an informer.

Fama is charged with helping to kill Garofalo because he was believed to be a government witness. There's no evidence that Eddie The Chink actually was cooperating, but according to the charges in the indictment, it doesn't matter. If the triggermen believed him to be a squealer, that's enough, prosecutors said when they announced the long-delayed indictment in April.

Prosecutors still insist that [Gravano](#) isn't telling the whole story about the hit.

In their brief filing on the matter, Manhattan assistant U.S. attorneys Rebecca Mermelstein and Jason Masimore went out of their way to knock the once superstar prosecution witness as they agreed with a request by lawyer Seth Ginsberg to spring Fama. While they now believe that the same bail package he proposed in April is sufficient, they disagree with the "substance of Gravano's purported anticipated testimony" about the August 1990 slaying, prosecutors wrote.



Sammy Bull will testify that he never discussed the motive with his underlings, according to what he told attorney Charles Carnesi.

"Most significantly," Carnesi told Judge John Keenan, "is that at no time prior to the murder did (Gravano) discuss with any of the individuals who were part of that team a motive for the murder. And specifically that he never discussed with any of them prior to the murder any suspicion that Mr. Garofalo was, in fact, cooperating."

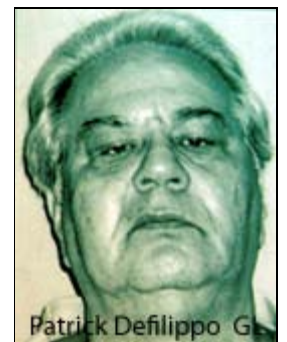
Even if the government is thinking of throwing in the white towel in the case — a hard to fathom scenario — [Fama](#) remains a target of a separate and still-pending drug investigation that Keenan has reviewed and decided to keep sealed, at least until his murder case goes to trial next year.

Until then, [Fama](#) better keep his nose clean, as well as other parts of his body. Under the terms of his \$2 million bail, under which he is free to travel in the New York metropolitan area, including New Jersey, where he owns a rock quarry, he will have to undergo regular drug testing.

"We're pleased that the government agreed to release Danny," said Carnesi. "We will have to wait and see where the case goes from here."

Patty From The Bronx RIP In Las Vegas

Patrick (Patty From The Bronx) Defilippo, an aging Bonanno wiseguy who was hammered with a 40 year sentence for a mob murder for which the feds failed to convict him at trial, cashed in his chips last week. Still, he had a couple last laughs at the government's expense. When he died at 74 he still owed the feds another 25 years on his prison term. The longtime mobster also owed the government a whopping forfeiture of \$4,376,787.



[Defilippo](#), an old school mobster like his father Vito before him, steadfastly refused to cop a 20-year-plea deal for the gangland-style slaying of Gerlando (George From Canada) Sciascia in 1999. According to trial testimony, Sciascia, 65, was shot and killed and dumped in the Bronx on orders from then Mafia boss Joseph Massino, the so-called Last Don.

Unlike codefendant John ([Johnny Joe](#)) Spirito, who took a 20-year plea deal and is due to be released in seven years, Defilippo opted for trial. He beat the murder charge, but as has happened so often over the years, ended up with a longer prison term than he would have if he had pleaded guilty. He got consecutive sentences totaling 40 years for crimes for which he was found guilty.

Joseph Massino



While the feds couldn't convince a jury that [Patty From The Bronx](#) was involved in Sciascia's murder, FBI records indicate that Massino wanted the killing to appear to be a drug slaying. When the order from the boss came down, Defilippo was a willing and loyal soldier to the end.

"Defilippo was in the front passenger seat" of Spirito's truck and "Sciascia was in the back passenger seat" during [George From Canada](#)'s last ride on March 18, 1999, Massino told FBI agents John Robertson and Kimberly McCaffrey, according to a report obtained by Gang Land. "Defilippo told (Massino) he shot Sciascia," the agents wrote.

Services for Defilippo, who died in a federal prison in Indiana, will be private, according to a spokesman for a Las Vegas Funeral Home in Las Vegas. His son Vito, and daughter Maria, who filed loving supportive letters for their dad at his sentencing, could not be reached.



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