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AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE: CIA AND THE MOB

Surrounded by his soldiers, Castro enters Havana in triumph after ousting the Batista government.

Deprived of its Havana casinos, U.S. mob joined CIA in series of plots to kill Castro, using everything from poison to dynamite

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(Visitors were allowed on the Castro side only if they were willing to pay a \$5 fee.)

"We were just kids," Frank recalled, "and we were scared to death. But we were also curious. We wanted to see what was going on."

Frank and his friends made their way to the Tropicana nightclub, where they found a group of rebels lounging around, drinking rum and smoking cigars. "They were friendly enough," Frank said, "but they were also very serious about what they were doing."

The rebels had set up a makeshift headquarters in the club, and they were using it as a base of operations. "They had maps spread out on the tables," Frank said, "and they were planning their next moves."

Frank and his friends spent the rest of the day exploring Havana, taking in the sights and sounds of the city. "It was an amazing experience," Frank said. "We felt like we were witnessing history in the making."

But as the day wore on, the mood in the city began to change. "The rebels started to get more aggressive," Frank said. "They were stopping cars and searching people."

Frank and his friends decided it was time to leave. "We didn't want to get caught up in anything," Frank said. "We just wanted to get back to Miami."

They made their way to the airport, where they found a group of American tourists waiting for a flight back to the United States. "We were all relieved to be getting out of there," Frank said. "It was a crazy time."

Frank and his friends returned to Miami, where they resumed their normal lives. But they never

forgot their trip to Havana. "It was an adventure," Frank said. "Something we'll always remember."

at preventing similar abuses in the future.

Money from CIA

Despite the failure of the plots, the CIA's involvement with the mob remains a fascinating chapter in the history of the Cold War.

The CIA's involvement in the anti-Castro plots began in the early 1960s, when the agency began recruiting members of the American Mafia to help assassinate the Cuban leader.

The agency's first contact was with Johnny Roselli, a high-ranking member of the Chicago mob. Roselli was approached by a CIA operative who offered him \$150,000 to help kill Castro.

Roselli agreed to the deal, and he brought in two other mobsters, Sam Giancana and Santo Trafficante, to help with the operation. The three men began plotting ways to kill Castro, using everything from poison pills to dynamite.

The CIA provided the mobsters with money and equipment, and they even arranged for them to meet with anti-Castro Cuban exiles who could help with the operation.

But the plots were never successful, and the CIA eventually abandoned its efforts to kill Castro. The agency's involvement with the mob was later revealed during the Senate's Church Committee hearings in the 1970s.

The revelations were a major embarrassment for the CIA, and they led to a series of reforms aimed