



Paul Castellano's body is partially covered after Gambino boss was gunned down when he left midtown's Sparks Steak House in 1985. Inset, how The News covered the assassination, which was orchestrated by John Gotti. Salvatore Scala was an alleged gunman but never convicted. Photo by Thomas Monaster/Daily News



Gambino wastes away

Thug linked to Big Paul's rubout dies in prison

BY JOHN MARZULLI
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

A GAMBINO gangster suspected of being one of the four gunmen who assassinated crime boss Paul Castellano outside Sparks Steak House in 1985, has died in prison.

Reputed capo Salvatore (Fat Sal) Scala passed away Monday at Butner Federal Medical Center in North Carolina while serving a six-year sentence for shaking down the owners of a Manhattan strip club, said his lawyer, Lindy Urso.

Scala, 65, who had liver cancer, sought an early release so he could die at home, but the prison rejected the request, Urso said.

"The Bureau of Prisons killed him," Urso said. "They release you by wheeling you out."

Federal Judge Lewis Kaplan, who sentenced the gangster last year, wrote a letter to the director of the U.S. Bureau of Prisons in July as Scala's condition deteriorated.

"At the time of the sentencing

I made clear my view that his offense, though serious, did not in my view warrant his dying in prison," Kaplan wrote to Director Harley Lappin.

"I respectfully urge you to look into this man's situation with a view to the possibility of compassionate release of this apparently dying man."

A prison spokeswoman did not return a call for comment.

Scala was never charged with killing Castellano, an assassination orchestrated by John Gotti to take over the Gambino family.

jmarzulli@nydailynews.com



Salvatore (Fat Sal) Scala

Name game shuffle