

Carrafa's partner disappears

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ROCKVILLE — One month ago, the bloated body of a Derwood antique car dealer, known to everyone as an "honest, nice guy," was found floating off Staten Island, N.Y., the apparent victim of what police termed a mob-style murder.

Now, after forfeiting \$150,000 bond in New York, the partner of Eugene (Gino) Carrafa, 37, of 7828 Briardale Terrace, has disappeared along with his bodyguard, Bob White, known as the "Gorilla." White is a former Rockville resident.

New York police and the attorney

representing Jay Knohl, Carrafa's partner in Gino's Classic Cars in Abingdon, say they have no idea where Knohl is, or why he would let \$150,000 slip through his fingers by not showing up in court the week of Aug. 23.

Knohl, a resident of Seagate, N.Y., was out on a heavy bond after being arrested for sexually molesting two young sons of a New York District Attorney. Sources theorize that Knohl wanted to go to jail the week after Carrafa's body was discovered in order to escape possible underworld violence himself.

Sources also said that at least a portion of the bond posted was put up by an organized crime group, possibly

members of the Cosa Nostra. A New York bonding company, which Knohl's attorney said could shed some light on the situation, reported that they had not posted any bonds for over a year.

Knohl, who has a police record for extortion, rape and numbers, lived with White in New York, sources said. Acquaintances here said the two men were inseparable.

The mystery surrounding Carrafa's death, his connection with murdered Chicago mobster John Roselli, and the theft on July 23 of three valuable antique cars from the Abingdon agency is still being unravelled by police, who have

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clamped a tight security lid on any further information regarding a connection between the murder, Knohl's disappearance, or the thefts, with Mafia activities in several states.

Montgomery police entered the investigation at the request of New York authorities after Carrafa's chained and weighted body washed ashore on Aug. 4. An autopsy revealed that he had been strangled as well.

Scant publicity was given to Carrafa's death until the following week when the mutilated body of John Roselli was found floating in an oil drum off Biscayne Bay, Fla.

Roselli's legs had been amputated, and he had either been shot or stabbed in the chest before being tied with chains and placed in the drum to die of asphyxiation. The similarities between the two killings led first the police, later the FBI, to enter the probe into the deaths of both men, who appeared to have no connection with one another. Later, however, sources indicated that a relationship had developed between Roselli and Carrafa.

A Senate committee looking into Roselli's part in CIA attempts to assassinate Cuban leader Fidel Castro already had questioned Roselli once, and was seeking further information from him when he disappeared.

Another Chicago mobster, Sam (Momo) Giacana was murdered in his Chicago home last year before he had a chance to testify before the same committee on the same subject.

Sources said Carrafa, in a still unrevealed way, can be linked with both Roselli and Giacana. Sources also said Roselli and Carrafa met last spring in a Chicago motel, but the reason for the meeting has not been divulged.

Both Roselli and Giacana were gambling racketeers, and Carrafa was an extensive traveler, usually carrying large sums of money, purportedly for the purchase of antique cars.

It was on such a trip that Carrafa disappeared. His wife, Carol, who works at the Department of Motor Vehicles in Rockville as a title clerk, reported her husband missing on Aug. 1, after he supposedly left for New York to visit Knohl.

She also told police that Knohl called her to say that Carrafa had left for California to purchase a car. But, sources said Carrafa took no luggage and "didn't even take a toothbrush with him . . . or his hair blower," which he always carried even on an overnight stay.

No papers have yet been filed by Carrafa's attorney, Stanley Tashoff, with the Registrar of Wills at the Circuit Court in Rockville. An insurance company still is investigating the theft of the three antique cars, which have not been recovered and which were valued at about \$150,000.

The insurance policy on the cars recently had been raised from \$90,000 to \$157,000 when they were stolen. Carrafa's own car, a Continental Mark III which he drove to New York, also is missing.

There is one definite link between Carrafa, Knohl and a third possible "coincidence," the death of a Chicago woman on July 21. The woman, Janice Mae Piccerelli, was a companion of Chicago underworld figures and the former wife of Louis Piccerelli.

Carrafa, Knohl and Piccerelli all served together in the Marine Corps. Although Mrs. Piccerelli's death was listed as an apparent suicide, past gangland murders frequently have been committed to give the appearance of an overdose. Her death was ruled the result of an apparent overdose.

Mrs. Piccerelli was buried from a Silver Spring funeral home on July 26, after her cremated remains were delivered here from Chicago. Sources said her association with the Mafia led as high as Giacana's "lieutenants."