

Investigation of Spica car-bomb slaying focuses on East Side

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Much of the investigation of the car-bomb slaying of hoodlum John Paul Spica Jr. — including tattered pages of an address book with names of three organized crime figures — has turned to the East Side, authorities said.

Jennings Police Lt. Col. Harry Slaten, who heads the Major Case Squad, said Friday that eight investigators would go to Illinois to check Spica's reported connections with vending machine firms there.

Other possible factors in the murder of Spica also are being investigated.

Slaten said police are trying to locate Robert Emmett Burns, 48, recently released from the Missouri State Penitentiary. Burns was a member of the old armed robbery gang of Marvin Dale Berry here and was sentenced to 75 years in prison in 1959 on assault with intent to kill charges.

SPICA WAS in prison with Burns, and Slaten said there was some information about possible movement

of narcotics in the prison that they would like to talk to Burns about.

"We are attempting to locate him, but we understand he has left the area," Slaten said.

Spica was subpoenaed in 1978 by a special U.S. House of Representatives committee which was investigating the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Spica once lived in the same cellblock with James Earl Ray, the man convicted of murdering Dr. King. Government officials involved in the inquiry discounted any connection between Dr. King's death and the Spica car-bombing.

Some 25 Major Case Squad and Richmond Heights detectives, as well

as federal Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms agents are investigating the bombing death of convicted contract-killer Spica.

More evidence linking the 42-year-old Spica to reputed St. Louis gangland figures was revealed Friday.

Police sources said pages torn from a notebook-address book, found among the debris of Spica's Cadillac, contained the names of Anthony J. "Tony G" Giordano, James Giammanco, and Paul J. Leisure.

Giordano is a reputed St. Louis gangland boss. Giammanco is Giordano's nephew and has been described by authorities as Giordano's

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Dina M. Bachelier and her attorney, Donald L. Wolff, leave the Richmond Heights police station Friday.

—Globe-Democrat Photo by Ken Winn

East Side is focus of car-bomb inquiry

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"enforcer." Leisure has been linked by authorities to Giordano and the so-called Syrian faction of St. Louis organized crime.

SLATEN SAID the notebook pages also contained some times and locations of what were thought to be meetings by Spica "that might also be significant."

Some authorities say rumors have circulated that Giordano split with Spica within the last few days, but other police sources say that is unfounded street talk.

Police sources said recent surveillance has put Spica at meetings on the East Side with Giordano, Giammanco and Matthew Trupiano, another of Giordano's nephews, and old-line gangland figure Ralph Caleca.

Slaten said attempts Friday to question Giordano at his East Side offices failed when he told officers "to get the hell out."

Spica's connections to the St. Louis gangland establishment were revealed Friday by The Globe-Democrat.

Quotes in the Friday Globe-Democrat that, "We can put him (Spica) in the presence of Giordano recently, but I can't tell you any more about that," were erroneously attributed to J.R. Gitlin, St. Louis district supervisor for the state Office of Probation and Parole. The quotes were from police sources. The Globe-Democrat regrets the error.

Spica has been linked by police sources to the BGG Amusement Co., Fairmont City, Ill., and Silver Creek Amusement Co., Belleville.

Illinois state records list the officers of BGG as Giordano, Giammanco and Dina Bachelier. Spica had been living with Dina M. Bachelier at a duplex at 1115 Claytonia Terrace, Richmond Heights.

Police sources said Miss Bachelier, 37, reportedly ended her connection with BGG about six months ago.

Spica had left the duplex Thursday morning to go to his car which was parked on the street. He was killed when what authorities are convinced was a dynamite bomb exploded.

MISS BACHELIER refused to answer police questions Thursday but appeared at 11 a.m. Friday at the Richmond Heights police station with her lawyer, Donald L. Wolff, and Spica's brother, Glen, and his sister Cathy.

After two hours of questioning by

Slaten and Richmond Heights Police Capt. Lee Lankford, they left police headquarters without making any statements to waiting reporters.

Miss Bachelier came from the questioning with her coat pulled over her head to avoid waiting photographers.

During a break in the questioning, Lankford turned his thumbs down when asked about any positive information coming out of the session.

Lankford said Miss Bachelier and Spica's brother and sister were cooperative but had no solid information to offer.

Slaten and Lankford followed Miss Bachelier and the others from police headquarters to the Claytonia duplex where they reportedly were allowed a

search that police were denied Thursday.

Police sources said that BGG Amusement Co. took over the Silver Creek Amusement firm about six months ago.

MOST RECENT Illinois state records list the president of Silver Creek as Edward Wortman, brother of the late East Side gangland boss Frank "Buster" Wortman.

Coin-operated machines were long a keystone of Frank Wortman's East Side operations, and some authorities have speculated that there may have been some anger in Chicago about Giordano's expansion into the old Wortman East Side territory.

Other investigators worked Thursday night and Friday to try to bring together some evidence that would confirm or deny the various theories about the reason for Spica's death.

Major Case Squad and Richmond Heights detectives went door-to-door in Spica's neighborhood, questioning neighbors about anything they might know about Spica or the bombing.

Spica's quiet lifestyle had kept most of his neighbors from knowing of his violent background.

Spica was released from the Missouri State Penitentiary in 1973 after he served 10 years of a life sentence in connection with the murder of St. Louis County real estate dealer John T. Myszak.

Spica's son, John Stayanov (his

mother's maiden name) confirmed Friday that Spica was on his way to meet with his parole officer Thursday morning when his car exploded.

ONE NEIGHBOR reported seeing a blue van parked near the Spica duplex about 2 a.m. Wednesday — the day before the bombing. She told police she got suspicious because the occupant of the van held a newspaper in front of him as though he were reading it but did not have the dome light on in the van. Frightened because of the recent wave of rapes in the St. Louis area, the woman drove past her house and went to her parents' house for the night, police said.

Police also are searching for the driver of a yellow pickup truck Wellston Patrolman Nick Sturghill saw speeding from the scene of the bombing Thursday morning. Sturghill was one of the first persons on the scene after the bombing.

Detectives also were checking rooftops Friday to determine whether any fragments from the bomb that killed Spica could be found.