

Giancana Slaying Suspect Is Called Old Friend of His

When Sam Giancana was shot to death at his home outside Chicago last June 19, there was wide speculation that his slaying was connected with his role in a 1960 Central Intelligence Agency plot to assassinate Fidel Castro.

The speculation arose from the fact that Mr. Giancana was killed before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence had a chance to call him to testify about his involvement in the plot.

But both the Department of Justice and Cook County State's Attorney Bernard Carey, who is directing the slaying investigation, have said that no concrete evidence has been found to link the C.I.A. to the killing.

According to sources close to the investigation, the prime suspect in the murder is Dominic Blasi, a former lieutenant and trusted friend of Mr. Giancana.

A car Mr. Blasi was seen driving the night of the slaying was observed parked outside the Giancana home in suburban Oak Park shortly before the killing is believed to have occurred.

Pallbearer at Funeral

Mr. Blasi, 54 years old, who was a pallbearer at Mr. Giancana's funeral, has told investigators that his boss was alive when he left him.

But the investigators say they lack the hard evidence to seek an indictment against anyone as of now. The murder weapon, a .22-caliber pistol with a homemade silencer, was found in an adjoining suburb close enough to the street to have

been thrown from a car, they said.

The gun was delivered by the manufacturer to a Miami dealer on June 20, 1965, and was later sold to another Florida dealer, but the police have been unable to trace it further.

Went to Mexico

Mr. Giancana was boss of the Chicago Mafia when he moved to Mexico in 1966. According to a close friend, he enjoyed his semiretirement in Mexico, traveling to Beirut, where he kept an apartment, to Paris, London and the Far East, and visiting relatives and friends in this country.

The pleasant exile came to a sudden end in 1974 when the Mexican police entered Mr. Giancana's house in Cuernavaca early one morning, pulled him out of bed and drove him across the border, where Federal agents were waiting for him with a subpoena.

While appearing before a Federal grand jury in Chicago, Mr. Giancana resettled in his Oak Park house. He was given immunity by the grand jury and began testifying in the fall of 1974. His last appearance was the following February, and then he underwent gall-bladder surgery in Houston, returning to his home only a week before the killing.

Some law enforcement officials have speculated that his Mafia associates feared that in his weakened condition he might talk, so they had him slain.

But this theory is discounted by Mr. Giancana's friend.

"He told me he had been away so long he didn't know



Dominic Blasi

anything of value to tell the jury," the friend said in an interview. "And he wasn't afraid of jail. The last time he was in the can he was able to get his cigars, his liquor, anything he wanted."

He said that Mr. Giancana was probably killed because he got involved in a dispute within the Chicago Mafia.

Shortly after the slaying the Cook County authorities began to examine the contents of Mr. Giancana's desk. Mr. Giancana's family got a restraining order blocking the search from Judge Daniel Covelli, who serves in civil court.

But the Illinois Supreme Court unanimously overruled Judge Covelli, saying that as a civil court judge he had no jurisdiction in a criminal case.

The desk's contents were examined and they included a list of cash wedding gifts for one of Mr. Giancana's daughters. On the list was a \$500 gift from Judge Covelli. (He has denied making it, but the Cook County authorities said Mr. Giancana's family had confirmed the list's authenticity.)