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California Slaying Case Involves Ex-Mafia Figures and Krishnas

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NEWPORT BEACH, Calif., Nov. 1—The police in this pleasant coastal community are trying to unravel a mystery involving murder, kidnaping, narcotics, a Hare Krishna religious cult, former Mafia members from New York and New Jersey and huge amounts of money from mysterious sources.

Three men said by investigative sources to be former Mafia members who were secretly relocated in California by the Government after testifying against organized crime members have been charged with murder in the case.

Also charged with murder is Alexander Kulik, a 28-year-old member of the Hare Krishna sect, the Hindu-orientated religious group. Mr. Kulick lived in a \$450,000 ocean front house and was driving a \$100,000 Stutz-Blackhawk automobile when he was arrested.

According to the police, Mr. Kulick has been instrumental in investing hundreds of thousands of dollars in businesses in this area through a company called Prasadam Distributors Inc. Prasadam is a word used by the Hare Krishna sect to denote food.

The police declined to say where they believe the invested money originated. But the possible sources being investigated apparently include income from the sale of narcotics and what is believed to be substantial income derived by some Hare Krishna members from begging and selling literature at airports.

Police Have A Theory

In an interview today, Sam Amburgey of the Newport Beach police homicide unit said there were still many unanswered questions about the case. But he said the police were working on a theory that the Hare Krishna members hired former Mafia members to kill an associate who apparently embezzled money from the business operations and subsequently kidnaped Mr. Kulick and collected \$100,000 in ransom for his safe return.

The mystery began Oct. 22 when Steven J. Bovan, 36, of nearby Fountain Valley, was shot to death as he left a restaurant here. A witness reported seeing a green and white Cadillac speeding away.

The next day, after an attempt was made to sell a green and white Cadillac, the police arrested Jerry P. Fiore, 41; Anthony Marone Jr., 33; Raymond S. Resco, 28, and Mr. Fiore's woman companion, Deborah Addison, 24, of Huntington Beach.

Although the United States marshal in Los Angeles, Gaylord Campbell, refused to comment on the matter, investigative sources said the three men, as well as

two witnesses in the case, are among approximately 2,200 persons who with their families have been relocated since 1970 and given new identities under a program run by the Marshal's Service to encourage testimony against members of organized crime.

Mr. Kulick was arrested two hours after the murder and more than a pound of pure heroin found in his car. He was charged with murder last night as he was preparing to leave jail after arranging to post \$500,000 bail on the drug charge. He is still in custody.

Three Others Sought

The police are seeking three other persons associated with Prasadam Distributors Inc. Representatives of the Hare Krishna temple at Laguna Beach on the coast south of here called a news conference yesterday to say that none of the four men charged have any connection with the sect at this time. However, detectives said they believe the Hare Krishna sect still has connections with Prasadam.

Investigators outlined the following series of events that, they assert, led up to the murder:

Investing large amounts of money, Prasadam Distributors Inc. over the past year has purchased or started a large number of companies, including, one called The Bionic Bit Cookie Company and Delthic Auto Designs in nearby Costa Mesa.

"This year alone, hundreds of thousands of dollars went through Prasadam to other companies," Mr. Amburgey said.

Mr. Bovan was hired to help run one of the companies and Mr. Kulick and the three other Hare Krishna partners apparently began suspecting him of embezzling money.

At this stage, the authorities assert, Mr. Kulick and his associates hired what Mr. Amburgey called "five Italians" to discover who was stealing from the organization and to recover the loss. However, he said, it appears the five soon began attempting "to muscle in" on the company's operations.

In August, he said, Mr. Bovan and possibly other people kidnaped Mr. Kulick and released him only after \$100,000 was paid in ransom by Mr. Kulick's associates at Prasadam.

According to the police, representatives of Prasadam then "posted a reward" for Mr. Bovan who had told friends in recent weeks that he was afraid "the mob" was after him. Lawyers for those arrested so far in the case say their clients denied any illegalities.