



**ANDREW KISSEL**  
"Suicide hit man" theory.

# Kissel's servant top slay suspect

**EXCLUSIVE**

By DAN MANGAN

A Colombian national who worked as an "all-purpose right-hand man" for swindler Andrew Kissel is now a prime suspect in the murder of the shady millionaire in his Connecticut mansion, The Post has learned.

The Colombian, who was only identified as Carlos, is a "suspect under that theory that this guy [Kissel] hired someone to kill himself" so the dead developer's kids could collect on a \$15 million life insurance policy that has a suicide exemption clause, a source said.

Connecticut authorities focused on Carlos after discovering he was involved in "unusual financial transactions, liquidating jewelry and some unusual travel in and out of the country" shortly before the 46-year-old's murder, another source said.

Carlos hired Connecticut criminal defense lawyer Lindy Urso on Thursday after speaking with cops in the days since Kissel's bound and repeatedly stabbed body was found April 3 in his mansion's basement.

"Prior to seeking counsel, police had already spoken to him. He's given DNA samples, fingerprints," as well as access to his car and personal documents, said Urso.

The lawyer answered, "Of course not," when asked if Carlos killed Kissel, who sources said had employed the Colombian as a driver, house cleaner and gofer for about five years.

Greenwich police have indicated Kissel likely knew his killer because there were no signs of forced entry or robbery at the developer's gated home, nor was there any blood found outside of the basement.

Before he was murdered, Kissel had been expected to plead guilty this month to a set of state and federal fraud charges in New York.

[dan.mangan@nypost.com](mailto:dan.mangan@nypost.com)

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SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1877 • THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2006

FIFTY CENTS

## Kissel assistant searched

### Lawyer says police looked for knife, checks in storage room

By Martin B. Cassidy  
Staff Writer

Police searched the Bridgeport storage room belonging to the longtime assistant of slain developer Andrew M. Kissel, seeking a knife and checks written to the Colombian national by a Greenwich Avenue jeweler, an attorney representing the assistant said.

According to a copy of the warrant obtained by Greenwich Time, police were seeking uncashed checks made out to Carlos Trujillo by Betteridge Jewelers, in addition to jewelry, a knife, Kissel's

cell phone, and other personal property of Kissel, who was found stabbed to death the morning of April 3 in his back-country home. The storage room was searched Tuesday afternoon.

Lindy Urso, Trujillo's lawyer, said that police questioning of his client indicates investigators theorize Trujillo may have taken part in a suicide-by-murder plot hatched by Kissel and may have been paid in jewelry for the job. But Urso said his client sold the jewelry with Kissel's permission and returned the proceeds, between \$12,000 and \$15,000,

to his boss.

Police have not disclosed the names of any suspects or discussed possible motives for the murder. Urso said his client had nothing to do with Kissel's death and has been "100 percent cooperative" with authorities, allowing them to search his home and belongings — at an address Urso would not disclose — and submitting DNA samples and taking a lie detector test.

"I'm very interested to see the contents of the affidavit which convinced the judge to sign the warrant," Urso said.

"I find it hard to believe they have probable cause."

Albert "Terry" Betteridge, owner of Betteridge Jewelers, a high-end jewelry store at 117 Greenwich Ave., declined comment yesterday.

Urso said Trujillo last saw Kissel on April 1 or 2 when he stopped by to check in on his boss.

Kissel was expected to plead guilty April 6 in federal court in White Plains to charges of fraudulently obtaining bank loans. He was expected to serve

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## Police Focus on Driver of a Slain Developer

By ALISON LEIGH COWAN  
and ALEJANDRO LAZO

GREENWICH, Conn., May 9 — Since Andrew M. Kissel, a real estate developer, was found stabbed to death on April 3, the Greenwich police have issued more than two dozen search warrants, all under seal, according to court records. But they have trained most of their attention on Mr. Kissel's driver, Carlos Trujillo, his lawyer, Lindy R. Urso, said on Tuesday.

Twice in the last week, detectives went to Sunnyside, Queens, to interview Mr. Trujillo's family members, according to John Tafur, a Colombian citizen whose sister, Luz Tafur, lives with Mr. Trujillo.

"They're going to continuously look at Carlos because he's an easy mark," Mr. Urso said. "As long as they don't develop a real suspect, they'll continue to look at Carlos."

He said his client has fully accounted for his whereabouts in the hours before Mr. Kissel's death and has E-ZPass records "that back up at least part of what he said."

Mr. Trujillo, who lives in Bridgeport, had told the police in interviews that were conducted before he hired a lawyer that he had stopped briefly at the Kissel home sometime around 6 p.m. on April 2 to check on Mr. Kissel. He was on his way to visit friends and relatives in Queens, he told the police.

That would have made Mr. Trujillo the last person known to have seen Mr. Kissel alive, according to the police.

The driver also told the police that he took jewelry from the Kissel home to a Greenwich jeweler and received about \$12,000 for the items in the weeks before Mr. Kissel's death.

According to Mr. Urso, the sale of the jewelry was done at the behest of

*Alison Leigh Cowan reported from Greenwich for this article and Alejandro Lazo from Sunnyside, Queens.*

Mr. Kissel, whose bank accounts were being attached by creditors. Mr. Kissel, facing multiple fraud charges, was being confined under house arrest.

Further adding to the air of mystery around the Trujillo family is Mr. Trujillo's roommate, Luz, who is also known as Stella. She spent several years keeping the books for Mr. Kissel and some of his properties, according to investors in Mr. Kissel's deals. In phone calls on Tuesday to her relatives and lawyers, she could not be reached for comment.

She is married to Mr. Trujillo's brother, George, who once worked for Mr. Kissel as well, but George

swearing that he was telling the truth.

At one point, he said, detectives took his cellphone and would not return it until they had helped themselves to phone numbers he keeps in the phone. He said he got the impression that the police believe someone paid Mr. Trujillo to kill his boss.

"This is what the police think," Mr. Tafur said.

On Saturday evening, he said the detectives returned. This time, he said, they were looking for his 23-year-old nephew, Jose A. Montealegre, Luz's son from a previous relationship.

Walking into the fourth-floor apartment, the police spotted a pair of white K2 downhill skis and accused Mr. Montealegre of having taken them from the Kissel home, according to Mr. Tafur.

Mr. Tafur said that his nephew found the skis in Queens by a trash bin and was offended by the detectives' tone. He said his nephew told the police that he would like to talk to his lawyer and refused to answer any more questions. Mr. Tafur said Mr. Montealegre was not available for comment.

James A. Walters, the Greenwich police chief, said on Tuesday that he had "no reason to believe that any of my detectives have done anything inappropriate."

"They are aggressively investigating a homicide and I hope they continue to do everything in their power to bring it to a successful conclusion," he added.

Mr. Urso and other defense lawyers in the case said they were not shocked by their clients' descriptions of the detectives' tactics.

Still, he said, "given the fact the municipal police departments in Connecticut do not have grand jury power and do not have power to compel people to give testimony, you would think they'd follow the adage that you get more with sugar than spice."

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### Greenwich detectives travel to Queens to interrogate the family of a possible suspect.

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Trujillo moved back to Colombia last year, and relatives say it was always Carlos Trujillo whom Luz loved.

Last Thursday, two Greenwich detectives assigned to the homicide investigation visited an apartment building in Queens where some of Mr. Trujillo's relatives live, and found John Tafur at home.

Speaking in Spanish, Mr. Tafur told a reporter on Monday night that he cleans offices for a living and had done some work for Mr. Kissel at his home, building metal shelves to hold boxes. He said he had no knowledge of who would have killed his relative's boss. He also said he could not recall seeing Mr. Trujillo the weekend before Mr. Kissel died.

Mr. Tafur said he gave similar information to the police in questioning that lasted more than an hour. He added that he signed a statement

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SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1877 • MONDAY, JULY 31, 2006

FIFTY CENTS

## FBI, other agencies join Kissel probe

By Martin B. Cassidy  
Staff Writer

In their investigation of the April murder of real estate developer Andrew M. Kissel, police have so far enlisted Federal Bureau of Investigation, immigration authorities, and state police.

Capt. Michael DeAngelo, head of the Criminal Investigation Division, confirmed the involvement of the agencies in investigating the murder of the 46-year-old developer, but declined to say what specific assistance they were providing.

"They are involved in various aspects of this case," DeAngelo said last week. "If the investiga-

tion goes into a particular direction that we need them they have been available to us."

Kissel's father, William Kissel, 75, and the lawyer for Kissel's assistant and driver, Carlos Trujillo, both said the involvement of outside law enforcement was encouraging.

Police have not identified any suspects in the murder but have said they consider Kissel's death a targeted killing and not a random murder.

Kissel was scheduled to be sentenced in U.S. District Court in White Plains, N.Y., on bank fraud charges three days after his body was found on April 3.

Mortgage companies and former partners have made millions of dollars worth in claims against Kissel based on his fraudulently obtaining mortgage loans with forged documents.

His father, William Kissel, said that because of his late son's complicated financial crimes and long list of victims, the extra help was needed to find his killer.

The Florida resident said as the months pass without an arrest, he grows more anxious whether the case will go unsolved.

"I'm happy if the FBI is helping," Kissel said. "A lot of people were angry with Andrew and it will take a huge effort to

find the killer."

Police Chief James Walters said last week that the investigation was moving forward and making progress.

Lindy Urso, the Stamford-based attorney for Carlos Trujillo, said he felt that police would have a better chance of finding the killer with the help of outside agencies.

Police executed a search warrant in late April of a storage bin rented by Trujillo, seeking uncashed checks to Trujillo from Betteridge Jewelers on Greenwich Avenue, a knife, and other personal property of Kissel's.

Warrants in the case have

been sealed indefinitely in state Superior Court in Stamford, Urso said, and police have not informed Urso of the results of a lie-detector test taken by Trujillo.

"I think police need to look at every possible area of interest in order to find the true killer," Urso said. "I think when they solve this the killer will come from an unexpected quarter."

But last week Urso accused police of using hardball tactics against his client's family to generate evidence against Trujillo.

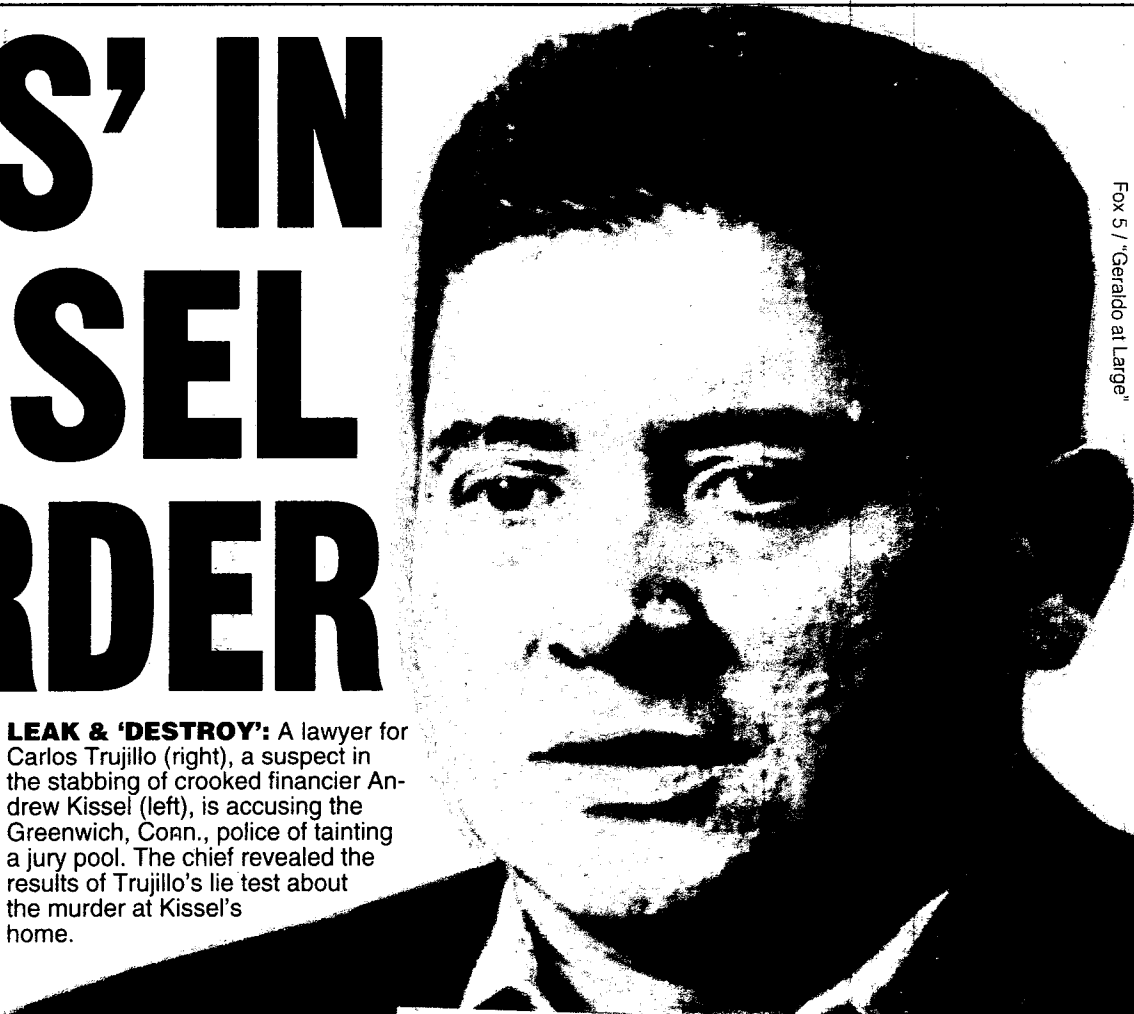
On Friday, Jose Montealegre, Trujillo's nephew in Queens, was arrested by federal immigra-

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# 'LIES' IN KISSEL MURDER



**LEAK & 'DESTROY':** A lawyer for Carlos Trujillo (right), a suspect in the stabbing of crooked financier Andrew Kissel (left), is accusing the Greenwich, Conn., police of tainting a jury pool. The chief revealed the results of Trujillo's lie test about the murder at Kissel's home.



Fox 5 / "Gerardo at Large"

## Aide fails 'every question' in test

By DAN MANGAN

The prime suspect in the brutal murder of Connecticut swindler Andrew Kissel failed a lie-detector test when cops grilled him about the killing, a top police official has revealed.

Kissel's personal assistant, Carlos Trujillo, lied every time he was asked a significant question — such as whether he stabbed the crook to death — during a polygraph exam given shortly after the April slaying, Greenwich, Conn., Police Chief James Walters said.

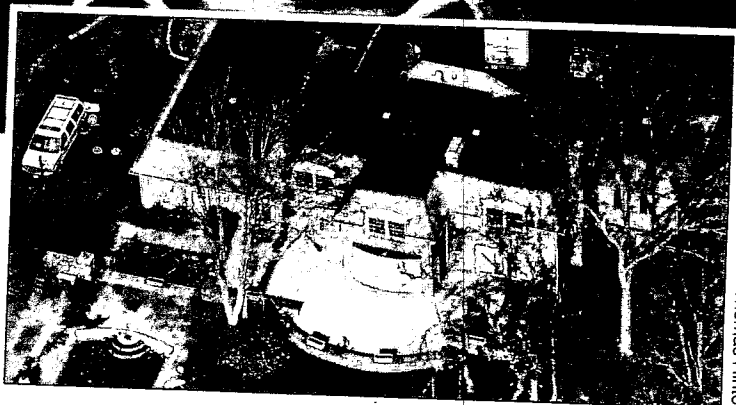
"Deception was indicated on every question of material fact," Walters told the Greenwich Time newspaper. "We believe it [the exam] was administered by an experienced polygraphist

and we can believe in his results."

Walters' highly unusual public disclosure of the lie-detector test of Trujillo — a Colombian national who is not charged in the case — was blasted by the subject's lawyer.

"I think it's egregious and completely irresponsible," defense lawyer Lindy Urso told The Post yesterday. "It's obvious that the Greenwich police are more interested with their image than they are in solving the crime."

Urso said disclosure of the polygraph could taint potential jurors if Trujillo, 47, is ever charged. He also noted that polygraphs cannot be admitted as evidence at a trial



Thomas Hinton

Trujillo denies killing his longtime boss. He originally cooperated with cops after Kissel's bound body was found in the basement of the real-estate developer's Greenwich mansion on April 3. Kissel was set that week to plead guilty to various frauds that could have sent him to prison for a decade or more.

Trujillo told the Greenwich Time that cops encouraged him to sign a confession to get a prison sentence of just two years. "I wasn't signing anything," Trujillo said.

He also revealed that days before Kissel's body was found, when his estranged wife, Hayley Wolff Kissel, and their two kids were moving out, the cou-

ple argued vehemently because Hayley discovered there was cash hidden in the house.

At the time, Kissel was supposed to be nearly broke. Hayley believed he had stolen the money from her, Urso said.

The next day, April 2, Kissel told him that he had taken his mind off of the marital squabble by having a prostitute over, Trujillo said.

Urso told The Post that Kissel's hiring of prostitutes at his home and evidence that he was accepting deliveries of cocaine there raise "all kinds of possibilities" that a drug dealer, hooker or pimp had killed him.

dan.mangan@nypost.com