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Charles I. Spiesel, a New York accountant, pauses before entering the courthouse in New Orleans to testify as a prosecution witness in the Shaw conspiracy trial.

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Shaw Trial Jarred By Surprise Witness

By John P. MacKenzie
Washington Post Staff Writer

NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 7 — The conspiracy trial of Clay L. Shaw took a dramatic turn late today with the damaging testimony—and equally damaging cross-examination—of a surprise prosecution witness.

The witness, Charles I. Spiesel of New York, testified that he attended a French Quarter party in June, 1963, at which Shaw and the late David Ferrie talked freely about methods of killing President Kennedy and getting away with it.

This evidence, devastating to Shaw if accepted by the jury, directly attacked the 55-year-old businessman's contention that he "never knew or laid eyes on" either Ferrie or the late Lee Harvey Os-

wald and could never have been part of an assassination plot.

On cross-examination, however, Spiesel, a short, balding man in his 50s, told of filing civil suits of more than \$16 million against the New York Police Department, the Pinkerton Detective Agency, a psychiatrist and others, charging they conspired to keep him under hypnosis and drive him out of the tax accounting business.

Spiesel denied having tried to "sell" his story to the Columbia Broadcasting System, but admitted telling a network official he would go on the air with his account for less than \$2000.

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0 Assassination of Pres John F. Kennedy

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not match Shaw's home. The Judge withheld a ruling.

Then, referring to court records in New York, Dymond asked the witness if he had ever claimed in law suits that police "hypnotized and tortured you and forced you out of business." Spiesel replied, "Not in that terminology."

Why had he been persecuted Spiesel said he did not know, but that his father had done "undercover work for the FBI" dealing with Russia.

Spiesel said his complaint did not charge a continuous hypnotic spelling between 1962 and 1964 as suggested by Dymond, but only a "conspiracy" to hypnotize him "from time to time."