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Discussed 'Clem Bertrand' in First DA Interview, Russo Testifies Key Witness Contradicts Shaw Lawyer

Perry Raymond Russo testified today he discussed a man he knew as "Clem Bertrand" with an aide to District Attorney Jim Garrison in his first contact with the DA's office.

Russo thus contradicted a claim by E. Irwin Dymond, chief counsel for Clay L. Shaw, that Russo never mentioned Shaw or Bertrand in his Feb. 25, 1967, interview with assistant DA Andrew Sciambra.

RUSSO TOOK THE STAND TODAY as Shaw's trial entered its third week, and generally repeated testimony he gave at a preliminary hearing for Shaw in March, 1967.

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PAGE 1

SECTION 1

STATES-ITEM

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Shaw, 35, is on trial in Criminal District Court on charges of conspiring to kill President Kennedy. Russo testified today and at the earlier hearing he heard Shaw plotting the assassination with Lee Harvey Oswald and David William Ferrie here in September, 1963.

Dymond, in his opening statement to the jury Thursday, said Russo met with Sciambra in Baton Rouge on Feb. 25, 1967, for 3 1/2 hours. He said Sciambra then wrote a 3,500 word memo on the conversation and never mentioned either Shaw or Bertrand.

RUSSO SAID HE MADE HIS first contact with the DA's office when he wrote Garrison a letter on Feb. 21, 1967. (This would have been the day before Ferrie's death here.)

The witness said he did not mail the letter until two days later. He said Sciambra came to see him as a result of the letter.

During the Sciambra interview, Russo said, he identified pictures of Ferrie, Oswald-Bertrand, Sergio Arcacha Smith and Emilio Santayna.

Russo said he did not tell Sciambra in detail what he testified to today, but gave him "just a gist."

Asked if he identified pictures of Shaw, Russo said:

"I HAD NEVER HEARD the name Shaw before I identified him as Bertrand. He asked me what was Bertrand's first name and I said Clem."

Chief prosecutor James L. Alcock then called Russo's attention to a conversation with James Phelan, then a writer for the Saturday Evening Post, on March 21, 1967.

Russo said: "I was shown a memorandum of the interview I had with Mr. Sciambra and Mr. Phelan pointed out discrepancies between this interview and my testimony at the preliminary hearing."

Dymond objected and Alcock offered to produce copies of the memo. The court recessed to give the defense time to study the memo.

EARLIER, RUSSO TESTIFIED, as he had at the preliminary hearing, about a party he says he attended at Ferrie's apartment at 3330 Louisiana ave. parkway in September, 1963, at which the assassination of Kennedy was discussed.

There was one major difference in Russo's testimony today and his preliminary hearing account: At the hearing, he said he came to the party with a girl friend, Sandra Moffett. Today, he said he "probably" came with some friends from Loyola University, but did not list Sandra among them.

Sandra Moffett, now Mrs. Harold McMainer, says she could destroy Russo's testimony about the alleged party but refuses to come to New Orleans to do so because she says she is afraid of Garrison.

RUSSO, A 27-YEAR-OLD BOOK salesman, pointed out Shaw as the man he was introduced to at the party as Bertrand. In this, he followed his testimony at the earlier

hearing. Similarly, he said he knew of Leon Oswald as Lee Harvey Oswald.

The Warren Commission named Oswald as Kennedy's lone assassin. Garrison has named Ferrie as a key figure in the assassination plot.

The trial was resumed today before Judge Edward J. Haggerty Jr. after a Sunday recess.

As court opened today, Dymond asked that minutes of the preliminary hearing be on hand. He objected to the introduction by Alcock of the picture of a black Cadillac and of leaflets which witnesses say they saw Oswald handing out on the street here.

THE BLACK LIMOUSINE figured in testimony last week when several state witnesses said they saw Shaw and Oswald in such a car in Clinton.

Judge Haggerty overruled the objection and allowed the material to be introduced. Then Russo took the stand.

After routine identification, Russo said he met Ferrie in 1960 when Ferrie lived in Kenner. He said he saw Ferrie extensively during the period of 1963 and 1964, "twice a week or better."

At this time, Ferrie lived at 3330 Louisiana ave. parkway. Russo identified photos of this house.

RUSSO SAID HE MET Lee Harvey Oswald at Ferrie's apartment in September, 1963. He said Oswald was introduced both as Leon Oswald and as Ferrie's roommate.

Oswald, Russo said, wore dirty clothes, had unruly hair and a light beard. He said the beard appeared to be of three or four days' growth.

When he met Oswald, Russo said, he was cleaning or polishing a rifle. Alcock produced a rifle which Russo identified as the one Oswald had.

Russo then was questioned about the alleged party which was the focal point of his preliminary hearing testimony. He said it took place in the middle of September, 1963.

HE SAID HE "JUST DROPPED IN" and found eight to 10 persons there, including Oswald and Ferrie, "three or four Latins or Cubans, a couple of young guys and one well-dressed man."

(He made no mention here of Sandra Moffett.)

Russo then identified the "well-dressed man" as Shaw, pointing him out in the courtroom.

He said Shaw was introduced as "Clem Bertrand."

Asked if he had ever seen the man before, he related an incident at the Nashville ave. wharf in 1962 when Kennedy visited New Orleans.

RUSSO SAID HE NOTICED Shaw because he "didn't seem to be paying any attention to President Kennedy. He was looking around."

Returning his testimony to the party, Russo said Ferrie "pretty much monopolized the conversation, talking about the Cuba thing, just talking."

He quoted Ferrie as saying "We'll kill the President" but added Ferrie had said that many times before.

The conversation involving Shaw lasted three or four hours, Russo said, with Ferrie, Oswald and Russo present. Asked if anyone else was in the house, Russo said: "Not that I know of."

HE IDENTIFIED PICTURES of the interior of the Ferrie apartment.

Asked to describe the conversation, he said Ferrie carried newspaper clippings dealing with Kennedy and "walked up and down talking about the projected assassination and how there could be a triangulation of evidence."

Russo said Ferrie talked about three persons being

...either have one diversionary shot or we could have all three shoot at one time. The diversionary shot would be to draw the attention of the police and after that the other two could shoot for the kill.

RUSSO QUOTED FERRIE as saying there would be no way to escape except by airplane. "They discussed Brazil and Cuba, but to go to Brazil would mean stopping to refuel. He then mentioned Mexico."

Shaw, Russo said, remarked that was not possible. "There would have to be a stop for refueling and it would have to be some friend to give them assistance to fly and the police would be everywhere."

Oswald, Russo continued, told Bertrand to shut up. "Ferrie knows what he's doing, he's a pilot."

FERRIE SAID ALIBIS would be needed, and Shaw said he could go to the West Coast on business and Ferrie said he could be in Hammond, Russo said. Oswald said nothing.

The gun to be used, Russo testified, was to be a rifle. Russo said he came "probably" to the party with several people from Loyola University, including Lefty Peterson, Mike Ogden, Tammy Hopkins, Hopkins' brother and Kenny Carter.

Alcock asked if at the time Russo knew Sandra Moffet. "I did," Russo said, and agreed he would term her his "constant companion." But he added there were times he would not see her for a week or so.

HE SAID SANDRA WAS ONE of several girls he was going out with at the time.

Russo said there was no further conversation at the party. He said he left about midnight and took a bus home.

The witness said he saw Shaw again at Ferrie's apartment a few days later, with Ferrie and Oswald present. He said Oswald and Ferrie appeared to be having "a private discussion."

He said Oswald said he was having trouble with his wife and Ferrie told him not to worry, that he would take care of it.

RUSSO SAID HE SAW OSWALD at the apartment once more, a few days later, and Oswald then was packing to leave town.

Oswald, Russo said, told them he was going to Houston. He said Oswald looked clean at this time but did not remember whether he had a beard.

Asked if he had seen Shaw again before 1967, Russo said he saw him at a gas station on Veterans Hwy. early in 1964. He said the gas station was operated by Ferrie and that he, Russo, went there because he had car trouble. He said Ferrie was talking with Shaw, who was sitting in a car.

RUSSO SAID HE DID NOT talk to Shaw at this time.

Alcock then began questioning Russo about how he got in touch with Garrison's office.

In Washington, D.C., a court hearing will be held Friday on Garrison's subpoenas for the autopsy report and photos of the President's body, concealed in the national archives until 1977 at the request of the Kennedy family. Garrison also wants the clothing JFK was wearing when he was shot and the rifle with which the Warren Commission says Oswald shot him.

Judge Charles E. Halleck Jr. of General Sessions Court in Washington has said he will not order the materials

prove they are relevant to the Shaw case.

ON SATURDAY, Judge Edward A. Haggerty Jr. issued a statement denying he was critical of the three-man panel which handled the preliminary hearing. The judge said newsmen misinterpreted his remarks during Friday's trial session.

The matter grew out of the examination of state witness Vernon Bundy Jr. Judge Haggerty ruled the witness did