

(A Clipping in Space Below)

# Perry Russo Faces New Grilling

## DA's 'Star' Quizzed on Plot Story

Perry Raymond Russo was due back on the witness stand today for another grueling session of cross-examination by attorneys for Clay L. Shaw.

Russo, the state's star witness, was questioned closely yesterday about the claim that he heard Shaw plotting the assassination of President John F. Kennedy with Lee Harvey Oswald and David W. Ferrie.

Shaw, 55, is on trial in Criminal District Court on charges of conspiring to kill the president. District Attorney Jim Garrison is challenging the Warren Commission's view that Oswald acted alone in killing Kennedy in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963.

RUSO, A 27-YEAR-OLD book salesman, spent the entire day on the stand yesterday, unfolding his assassination plot story under questioning by chief prosecutor James L. Alcock and defending it against the assaults of Shaw attorney F. Irvin Dymond.

Here are the highlights of Russo's testimony yesterday: —At a party at Ferrie's apartment at 3230 Louisiana ave. pkwy. in September, 1963, Russo heard Shaw, Ferrie and Oswald plot to kill Kennedy.

—Russo knew Oswald only as "Leon" Oswald and Shaw only as Clem Bertrand.

—Initially, Russo attached little importance to the conversation in Ferrie's apartment, regarding it as only a "bull session."

—The controversial report by assistant DA Andrew Sciambra on his initial interview with Russo in Baton Rouge was incomplete and wrong on many points.

—The witness feels Dymond "forced" him into giving conflicting testimony on who accompanied him to the party at Ferrie's apartment. In fact, Russo can't remember who went with him or what

he was doing before he went.

—In interviews with newsmen prior to the preliminary hearing for Shaw in March, 1967, Russo failed to mention either Shaw, Bertrand, Oswald or the alleged party.

As court opened yesterday, Alcock drew out Russo's story much as it was told in the March, 1967, preliminary hearing.

Russo said he met Ferrie through a mutual friend Al Landry in 1961 and saw him extensively during 1963. He identified photos of the interior of Ferrie's apartment.

He identified a picture of Lee Harvey Oswald as the man he knew as "Leon" Oswald, who was identified to him as Ferrie's roommate.

RUSO THEN GAVE an account of the alleged party at which the assassination was discussed, giving much the same story he did at the preliminary hearing. But he did not mention Sandra Moffett, the girl friend he said in 1967 he brought to the party.

As in the hearing, Russo pointed out Shaw in the courtroom as the "well-dressed man" he saw at the party among eight or 10 persons, some Latins or Cubans. Shaw, he said, was introduced to him as Clem Bertrand.

As before, Russo said he had seen Shaw previously at the Nashville Ave. wharf on the occasion of Kennedy's visit here in 1962.

RUSO SAID he saw Shaw and Ferrie together on one other occasion, at a service station on Veterans hwy. in early 1964. He said he drove into the station and Shaw was sitting in a car talking to Ferrie, who worked there.

Alcock then turned to Russo's involvement in the Garrison probe. Russo said he wrote a letter to the DA on Feb. 21, 1967, (which was the day before Ferrie died) but did not mail it until two days later.

On Feb. 25, Sciambra came to Baton Rouge to interview him. He said he identified pic-

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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SECTION 1

STATES-ITEM

NEW ORLEANS, LA.

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Being Investigated

AT THIS POINT, court resumed for lunch and when it resumed Sciambra's 3,500-word memo on the Russo interview was read to the jury. Russo said the memo was long on many points. "I had seen Shaw the first time at I had seen Shaw at the Nashville Wharf, then at a station, and that then I had seen him at Ferrie's apartment," Russo said. The memo made no mention of a party at Ferrie's apartment.

The memo quoted Russo as saying he had seen Shaw (Bertrand) twice — not three times — first at the service station, then at the Nashville wharf.

POINTING OUT the mistakes as detailed by Russo, Dymond asked: "Are you sure it was Sciambra you talked with in Balon Rouge?"

Russo's emphatic "Yes, sir!" was nearly drowned out by a burst of laughter from newsmen and spectators crowding Judge Edward A. Haggerty's courtroom.

Alcock, with Sciambra slumped beside him at the prosecution table, questioned Russo about the memo.

"Did you relate to Sciambra what you have told this jury about what happened in Dave Ferrie's apartment?"

"NOT IN GREAT detail, but in essence, yes."

"How long did you talk to him?"

"Two hours, two and a half hours."

"Did he take notes?"

"He had a legal pad and he made a few scribbles but no notes, no."

In addition to the omission of seeing Shaw, Russo noted other discrepancies. Dymond counted 26 of them.

SCIAMBRA'S MEMO fell into the hands of newsmen early in Garrison's two-year-old probe. It was one of the things that triggered reports critical of the investigation.

In the memo, Russo told how he met Ferrie through Al Landry and said it was common knowledge that Ferrie was a homosexual. Ferrie practiced by ~~himself~~ ~~in~~ the memo stated.

"beatnik-type" Ferrie roommate, but couldn't remember his name.

IN 1962, Russo said, Ferrie became obsessed with how easy it would be to assassinate the president and how he was the type who could do it. In September or October, Russo said, he began making direct references to Kennedy.

Sciambra said in the statement Russo recognized the man whose picture he identified as Bertrand as the same man he saw at the Nashville Ave. wharf. Russo said he recalled him because of his looks.

Sciambra wrote that Russo, after some hesitation, identified Oswald's picture as one of Ferrie's roommates.

AFTER THE statement was read, Russo outlined what he considered his errors. He denied Ferrie ever admitted he was a homosexual and differed with the description of the roommate.

Russo said he never mentioned Shaw's name at all to Sciambra, only Bertrand's. It was only later he identified Shaw as the man he knew as Bertrand. Russo said he was not sure whether he had ever heard of Shaw before the Sciambra interview.

Russo said he did tell Sciambra of the meeting in Ferrie's apartment, "essentially, but not in great detail." He said he thought Sciambra mainly wanted to know about Ferrie's philosophy.

#### UNDER CROSS-EXAMINATION

by Dymond, Russo testified he didn't take the assassination discussion very seriously at the time because Ferrie was "prone to the fantastic" and couldn't always be believed.

Russo said he had difficulty in identifying the Oswald pictures, and various types of beards had to be drawn on it.

Dymond then questioned Russo closely about interviews he gave various newsmen. Transcripts of several interviews were read, and Russo said he couldn't quarrel with their contents.

In the interview, Russo was

the television of the assassination.

In an interview after Shaw's arrest, Russo was asked:

"DO YOU KNOW Clay Shaw?"

"No, I don't," he answered.

Dymond bore down hard on Russo's inability to remember who went to the alleged party with him. Russo stuck to his position that it could have been any of a number of persons he was closely associated with at the time, including Sandra Moffett, Nils "Lefty" Peterson and others. He told the preliminary hearing Peterson and Miss Moffett accompanied him to the party.

SANDRA MOFFETT, now Mrs. Harold McMains of Des Moines, Iowa, since has said she went to no such party, but refuses to come here to testify in the trial, saying she is afraid of Garrison.

Pinned down on this discrepancy by Dymond, Russo contended Dymond "forced" him in the earlier hearing to say definitely that Miss Moffett and Peterson were with him.

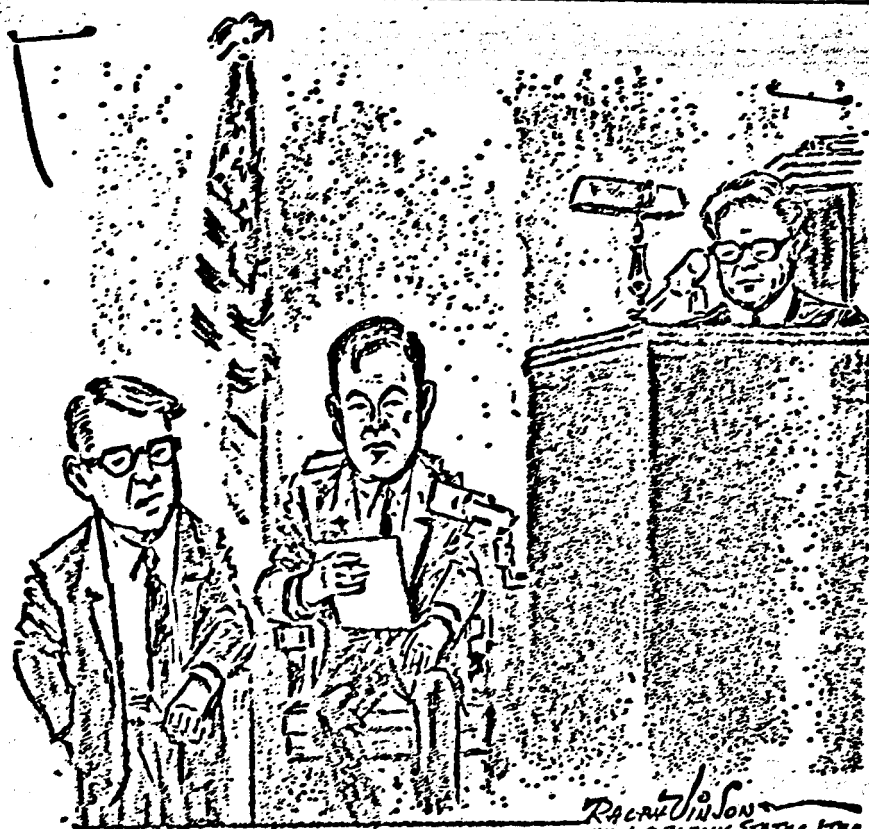
Russo said he meant it only as a "probable guess."

"Mr. Russo," said Dymond, "you don't state probable guesses under oath."

Judge Haggerty had one bit of good news for trial participants yesterday. He announced there will be no court session a week from today, Mardi Gras.



**JAMES L. ALCOCK READS SCIAMBRA MEMO TO JURY**  
... high point in yesterday's session of Shaw trial



*PERRY RUSO*  
NEW ORLEANS STATES-ITEM

**PERRY R. RUSSO STUDIES PHOTO OF "LEON" OSWALD**  
... questioned by James L. Alcock, left, at shaw trial