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UPI-134

(RELEASE AT 4:30 P.M. EST)

(KENNEDY ASSASSINATION)

NEW ORLEANS--THE SATURDAY EVENING POST SAID TODAY DIST. ATTY. JIM GARRISON'S OFFICE "PROMPTED" STAR WITNESS PERRY R. RUSSO UNDER HYPNOSIS AND DRUGS TO DESCRIBE A 1963 MEETING AT WHICH THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY WAS ALLEGEDLY PLOTTED.

GARRISON'S OFFICE DENIED THE STATEMENTS.

IN AN ARTICLE FOR ITS MAY 6 ISSUE, THE POST SAID RUSSO NEVER MENTIONED THE 1963 "PLOT" IN HIS INITIAL INTERROGATION BY INVESTIGATORS.

IT WAS ONLY AFTER SESSIONS OF SODIUM PENTOTHAL AND HYPNOSIS, THE ARTICLE SAID, THAT RUSSO CAME UP WITH THE STORY OF THE MEETING, AT WHICH HE SAID BUSINESSMAN CLAY SHAW, PILOT DAVID FERRIE AND LEE HARVEY OSWALD PLOTTED THE PRESIDENT'S DEATH.

THE ARTICLE BY JAMES PHELAN QUOTED A 3,500-WORD CONFIDENTIAL MEMO TO GARRISON FROM ASST. DIST. ATTY. ANDREW J. SCIAMBRA IN WHICH, THE POST SAID, SCIAMBRA SAID RUSSO AT FIRST DID NOT MENTION THE 1963 MEETING AND FAILED TO LINK SHAW WITH OSWALD.

RUSSO LATER TESTIFIED ABOUT THE ALLEGED PLOT DURING SHAW'S PRELIMINARY HEARING.

A THREE-JUDGE PANEL ORDERED SHAW HELD OVER FOR TRIAL. HE HAS BEEN INDICTED ON CHARGES OF CONSPIRING TO MURDER KENNEDY.

SCIAMBRA SAID THE POST WAS "TELLING A HALF-TRUTH."

HE SAID PHELAN WAS FULLY ADVISED OF THE FULL RUSSO TESTIMONY BEFORE HE LEFT LOUISIANA.

"MR. PHELAN'S INFERENCE THAT OUR OFFICE IS GUILTY OF POST-HYPNOTIC SUGGESTIONS TO PERRY RUSSO IN AN EFFORT TO INFLUENCE HIM TO TELL OUR STORY IS RIDICULOUS," SCIAMBRA SAID.

4/24--GE410P

WASHINGTON CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE