

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Perry Russo Called Popular by Brother

By DICK WRIGHT

"Extremely popular" is the way Edwin Russo described his now famous brother, Perry, in an interview Tuesday night.

The big brother, an engineering instructor at LSU, recalled that Perry had always had plenty of friends and when he was at McDonogh High School in New Orleans won vice president of his class one year with something like a 400-70 vote.

Edwin Russo lives with his wife and three children, including 14-month-old twins, on Seymour Drive just off Highland Road south of the LSU campus. Russo said he and his bachelor brother were never very close, especially since both have left home. He also noted the three years difference in their ages. "We got along but we're not close," he commented.

Still Has Package
They don't see each other much in Baton Rouge either, Russo said, and pointed to a Christmas package on the table, saying it was Perry's.

Russo said he first learned of his brother's connection to Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's investigation from the newspapers.

A New Orleans television station later called his house trying to locate Perry, Russo said. He said he left a note at his brother's home on State Street just off the LSU campus.

Edwin Russo related he and Perry grew up in the Gentilly section of New Orleans, went to St. Mary's School and then on to McDonogh.

The brothers' father, Francis Russo, works as a machinist in New Orleans. Their mother died in 1962. The only other member of the family was a sister,

Frances, who died of polio when she was 12.

Active in College Affairs
Perry first attended Tulane then transferred to Loyola University where he graduated with a political science degree. Edwin said his brother was very active in college affairs.

Russo said he thought his brother was taking two courses at LSU now, paid for by the insurance company he works for.

Perry lives with a friend, Steve Derby, who brother Edwin said is no relation to the family.

"They probably got together because of their mutual interest in baseball," Russo said. Perry is interested in baseball and basketball and once coached St. Leo's CYO team in New Orleans, Russo said.

Though reared a Catholic and having attended Catholic

schools, Perry couldn't be called a practicing member of the Church now, Russo said.

As for his brother's connection with the Garrison investigation, Russo said he knew only what he read in the papers and saw on television.

Nor does he recall ever having heard the names "David Ferrie" or "Clay Bertrand" which figure prominently in the investigation.

Russo said he could have heard them but at the time the names wouldn't have meant anything to him.

"Perry had lots of friends," he said.

Believes Telling Truth
Asked if he thinks his brother is telling the truth about the alleged conspiracy, Russo replied "I think so."

"It sounds like Perry," he continued. "I believe he's telling the truth."

As for a contradiction in the story Perry told in an interview Feb. 24 and the version he gave in testimony at New Orleans Tuesday, Russo commented:

"That's a good question for the defense lawyer."

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

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ENCLOSURE



STAR WITNESS — Perry Raymond Russo, 25, Baton Rouge, testified Tuesday he heard Clay Shaw, Lee Harvey Oswald and another man plot to kill President Kennedy. Russo appeared at a preliminary hearing for Shaw, accused by Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison of participating in a plot to kill Kennedy. —AP wirephoto