

Witness Relates Doubts on Shaw's Conspiracy Role

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NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 11 —

The state's chief witness testified today that he had told many persons that he had doubts that Clay L. Shaw, New Orleans businessman, was the man he said he had heard conspiring in 1963 to murder President John F. Kennedy.

Perry Raymond Russo said at one time that he had even told a New Orleans police sergeant who had given him a lie detector test that if he were forced to say "yes" or "no" to the question whether Mr. Shaw was at a party where he heard the assassination "conspiracy" discussed, "I would have to say no."

Mr. Russo, a 27-year-old encyclopedia salesman, said he had told Sgt. Edward O'Donnell that he had identified Mr. Shaw positively at a preliminary hearing in March, 1967, because Mr. Shaw's chief defense attorney, F. Irvin Dymond, "had gone for the jugular" on cross-examination at that hearing.

The conversation with Sergeant O'Donnell took place in either June or July, 1967, after Mr. Shaw had been ordered to stand trial largely on a basis of Mr. Russo's testimony.

Denies Hearing Agreement

Mr. Shaw is being tried for conspiring to murder, a charge punishable by one to 20 years in prison in Louisiana.

Mr. Russo, who appeared tired and edgy after almost two days of testifying, said also that he had never heard Mr. Shaw agree to any plot to kill President Kennedy.

The only person he said he heard mention murdering Mr. Kennedy was David W. Ferrie,

a former airline pilot and hypnotist who died shortly after Jim Garrison, New Orleans District Attorney, began an investigation of the assassination.

"We're going to get him," Mr. Russo testified he heard Mr. Ferrie say.

Neither Mr. Shaw nor Lee Harvey Oswald, the others placed at the meeting by Mr. Russo, said anything about killing Mr. Kennedy, the witness testified.

Mr. Ferrie was found dead on Feb. 22, 1967, with a farewell note beside his body that was addressed to a male friend. Mr. Garrison said Mr. Ferrie had either been killed or committed suicide, but the coroner ruled that he died of a stroke, an aneurysm rupture in the brain.

Although Mr. Garrison's assertions that the Kennedy assassination had been planned in New Orleans appeared to be collapsing from lack of substance, the District Attorney's staff was preparing to introduce evidence from spectators who were on the murder scene in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

Told of His Doubts

Mr. Russo testified, under a dogged cross-examination by Mr. Dymond, that he had told several reporters that he had doubts that Mr. Shaw was the man he said he had seen in Mr. Ferrie's apartment in September, 1963.

But he said he had been "leading them on" at the request of Mr. Garrison, that the District Attorney wanted to "see how far they would go."

Mr. Garrison bugged his home and his telephone, Mr. Russo testified, and told him to indicate to the reporters that he was wavering in his identification of Mr. Shaw.

Mr. Russo attempted to reconcile his statements to Sergeant O'Donnell that he was not sure of his identification of Mr. Shaw.

"I was under terrible stress," he said.

Reporters were hounding him daily, proclaiming that Mr. Shaw was innocent and warning him that Mr. Garrison would

"turn on me" in the end, he said.

The young book salesman said that before he testified before a preliminary hearing on the Shaw charges in March 1967, he was hypnotized three times.

At the first two sessions, a transcript of questions and answers was made, he said.

Mr. Dymond said the defense would call a nationally honored psychiatrist and hypnotist to testify that the questions asked at the first hypnotic suggestion were such that the whole idea of a conspiracy and Mr. Shaw's alleged involvement could have been "implanted" in Mr. Russo's mind.