

2nd Peach



—States-Item photo.
JAMES HICKS, left, a witness in DA Jim Garrison's presidential assassination probe, discusses an attack in his hotel room by two Negroes early today with SGT. LOUIS IVON, chief investigator for Garrison's office.

DA WIT

James Hicks, a witness in District Attorney Jim Garrison's Kennedy assassination probe, said he was attacked in his hotel room early today by two unidentified Negro men and pushed through a plate glass door.

The witness, a 29-year-old Enid, Okla., civil service employe, was interviewed just before testifying at a session of the Orleans Parish Grand Jury.

Hicks went before the grand jury about 11:30 a. m. and remained in the jury room for about 40 minutes.

HICKS SAID HE WAS asleep when two Negroes entered his room, grabbed him, roughed him up and then threw him through a glass door leading to a balcony outside his sixth-floor room.

He said he told police that earlier he met two Negro men that he knew and had drinks with them. He invited

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them to his room, where they had more drinks, he said. He said when they left, he went to bed. The two Negro men who beat him up, Hicks said, were not the same men he had been drinking with earlier.

The incident took place in the Fontainebleau Hotel.

When Hicks appeared at the press conference in Garrison's office, he had scratch marks on his forehead and the side of his face.

HICKS WAS SUBPENAED to testify before the jury because he said he was present in Dallas on the motorcade route and witnessed the assassination of the President.

He said today that he thinks his testimony will "throw some light" on the events of that day, Nov. 22, 1963. Hicks, who said he is a surveyor, was living in Dallas at the time and was "looking for work."

"It's really hard to say what happened because it happened so fast, but I do remember the President being shot and I knew he was shot when it happened because I saw his whole head explode. It didn't look like one shot . . . his whole head exploded . . . this meant to me that his head was struck by more than one bullet," Hicks said.

Hicks said he heard four shots and one bullet came over his head and struck a traffic caution sign. The sign was removed almost immediately after the assassination, he said, and, as far as he knows, was never mentioned in the Warren Commission report.

He said it was removed by men "I assumed to be members of the Dallas police force. I assumed they would use it as evidence."

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Hicks said he gave his name to a patrolman that day but was never called to testify before the Warren Commission.

Garrison, he says, has photographs showing him at the scene.

HICKS SAID that he does not believe the attack on him this morning had anything to do with his presence in New Orleans as a witness. He said it might have been a burglary attempt.

He said, however, that he has received a number of crank calls, including one call threatening his wife and son if he doesn't keep his mouth shut. He said the whole string of events has made him extremely nervous.

Police said they found the glass doors of Hicks' room shattered when they were called to investigate.

SECURITY OFFICER Freddie Rawles told the officers he received a call from the front office of the motel shortly after 1 a. m. to investigate "a disturbance in room 650."

Rawles said he met two Negroes coming out of an elevator leading to Hicks' floor.

Rawles said he questioned the men and they told him they had "been to see a party in room 650."

The security officer said both men produced identification cards but he failed to make a note of the identifications.

Police said they reported the incident to Sgt. Louis Ivon, chief investigator for Jim Garrison's office, and Ivon was investigating the assault.