Hypnotized by the DA During Probe: Russo

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New Orleans, March 16—Perry Russo, star witness of New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison, admitted on the stand today that the district attorney had had him hypnotized two or three times while questioning him about an asserted plot to kill President Kennedy.

But Russo denied that he had been under hypnosis when testifying, and finished two days of grueling cross-examination here this afternoon seemingly unshaken.

A three-judge panel conducting the hearing still has to decide whether there is enough evidence against businessman Clay Shaw, 54, accused as one of the plotters, to warrant a trial. But the defense failed to crack Russo, who has testified he was present when Shaw, Lee Harvey Oswald and an ex-pilot named David Ferrie, now dead, discussed ways of assassinating Kennedy.

Russo, 25, an insurance salesman from Baton Rouge, was virtually unruffled by today's probing questions in comparison with yesterday, when he was visibly shaken a number of times.

Although he admitted that Garrison had had him hypnotized; he calmly denied that he had been under hypnosis either when he described the plot to the preliminary hearing Tuesday or during today's hearing. He denied also that he had attempted suicide while in high school. He said he had been given no role in the alleged plot and had not taken part in the discussion.

The Tape Recording

Yesterday, he was obviously nervous when confronted with a tape recording of a Feb. 24 TV interview in which he seemed to contradict his testimony that he had known Oswald. His explanation, repeated today, was that he had known the alleged assassin as Leon Oswald in New Orleans and had not been certain earlier that it was the same man.

Perry Russo
A better day on stand

At least three more witnesses have been subpenaed by the prosecution and it was expected the hearing would continue a while. Presiding Judge Bernard J. Bagert mentioned the possibility of night and even Sunday sessions.

Before defense attorney Irvin Dymond let Russo go, he took the witness once more through his story of hearing a plot discussed in Ferrie's apartment in September, 1963.

Adds Some Details

Russo added more details as he repeated his testimony that Ferrie had talked of catching Kennedy in a crossfire and of sacrificing one plotter to the po-

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Dishwasher Has a Story

Boston, March 16 (Special) —A hotel dishwasher said here today that he was going to fly to New Orleans to give "explosive information" about the assassination of President Kennedy.

Although there was skepticism about what the dishwasher, Arthur Edward Strout, 28, a drifter who lives in Boston's South End, might have to offer, New Orleans District Attorney J. Garrison, is paying Strout's fare.

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lice so that the others could escape.

He said Ferrie referred to a woman who had managed to get close to President Kennedy while he was visiting New Orleans. Ferrie, who died about three weeks ago, said that if she could get so close it would be easy to kill a President.

Then, Russo said, Ferrie mentioned the visiting President of Mexico and said he could be killed if there were two or more persons in the plot. Russo quoted Ferrie as saying "the first would just fire a shot and the impact would cause everyone to look round and the front man would then make the necessary shot and do the job."

Scapegoat Not Specified

Russo testified that the plotters did not say who would be sacrificed and did not describe the role each participant would play.

"I didn't get the impression that all three would actively participate," he said.

In the morning session, Russo denied that he ever attempted suiside by jumping through a high-school window.

Again asked by Dymond why he had not come forward with his story before, Russo replied that he was "no authority" on the assassination. He said he was only 22 at the time and not prepared to fight the federal government, which was satisfied that Oswald had acted alone. "I was just a voice in the wilderness," he said.

Then Thought of Helping

It was after Garrison told newsmen that Ferrie was involved that he decided "I might be able to help, since I knew Ferrie and something of his friends."

Russo said he and Ferrie never discussed Kennedy after November 1963. "He seemed to me broken after the assassination," the witness said. "He didn't like what was going on. He was starting to build up a resentment against authority. He was no longer a spectacular person."

"Did Ferrie ever say his plan to kill President Kennedy had succeeded?" Dymond asked? "No, sir," Russo answered.

"Did you ever ask him any questions about the assassination?"

"No, sir."

Russo said Ferrie was not the sort of person you quetioned.

The witness then told of being hypnotized three times by Dr. Esmond Fatter at the instance of Garrison's office, but that he had "absolutely not" been under hypnosis when he testified about the asserted plot to kill Kennedy.

"Are you hypnotized right now?" Dymond demanded. Again Russo replied firmly, "Absolutely not."

The defense asked him if he had ever heard of post hypnotic suggestion and Russo said he had.

Dymond then took the witness back to the fist time he said he had seen Shaw. This was at a ceremony here in 196 attended by President Kennedy. On Tuesday, Russo testified he had noticed Shaw because of Shaw's large stature and because he was not looking at the President.

Thought He Was an Agent

Today he said he thought at that time that Shaw might be a Secret Service man. Dymond then asked him about his next meeting with Shaw. This was a Ferrie's apartment when, Russo testified, the alleged assassination plot was discussed.

'Wouldn't you have felt awfully unueasy being present in a group while the assassination of the President was being planned if you thought one of them was an agent of the Secret Service?" Russo replied that by the time the discussion o fthe plot began, he no longer believed Shaw was a Secret Service man.

Russo said that after. the Garrison probe began, he identified Shaw through a one-way mirror in the DA's office.

"What part were you to play in the assassination?" Dymond asked. "I had no part, nothing, Russo replied.

"Had you said that you wanted to see President Kennedy killed?"

"I never said that," Russo answered.