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DA Hypnotized

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Me—Russo

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New Orleans, March 16—The state's star witness in the Kennedy assassination "plot" hearing today testified he had been hypnotized three times by the District Attorney's office.

But 25-year-old Perry Raymond Russo couldn't recall just when the hypnosis sessions had taken place and was vague about other details of his questioning.

His answers under cross-examination by attorney Irvin Dymond were in contrast with the sharpness of his recollection under direct examination of events in 1963 when he said the plot was discussed in his presence.

District Attorney Garrison has accused Clay L. Shaw of conspiring with Lee Oswald and David W. Ferrie in plotting the murder of President Kennedy in September, 1963. His case rests largely on the testimony of Russo, who voluntarily came forward to tell of the alleged plot.

Garrison has said the conspiracy talk in Ferrie's apartment was heard by a "confidential informant" who told his story after being given a truth serum in the Coroner's office. The informant presumably is Russo.

Dymond, Shaw's attorney, drew from Russo the admission that he had been hypnotized by a Dr. Esmond Fadder in the office of Orleans Parish Coroner Nicholas Chetta. The witness could only place the hypnosis as having occurred sometime between Feb. 24 and March 13.

Q. Were you hypnotized on March 1? A. I'm sure I was but the DA can tell you better.

Q. How many times have you been hypnotized? A. My recollection—three times.

Q. Were you hypnotized yesterday? A. Absolutely not.

Q. Are you under hypnosis right now? A. Absolutely not.

Q. Were all three sessions in the Coroner's office? A. [Unsure]—I'd prefer you asked Dr. Fadder.

Q. What did Dr. Fadder do? A. Asked me questions. I tried to recall things. I am not qualified to talk about his technique.

Subject Relaxed

Q. I want to know what you saw Dr. Fadder do in the process of hypnotizing you. A. I relaxed, I was sitting down.

Q. What did Dr. Fadder do? A. He questioned me. He talked with me. All I remember was being asked questions.

Q. What instructions did Dr. Fadder give you? A. No specific instructions. He talked. It is not an instruction thing. He didn't order me. He talked. He questioned me.

Under continued questioning, the witness said he had been asked the same questions put to him earlier in the DA's office.

"He asked me nice, soothing, relaxing things," he said, referring to the hypnosis session.

Asked further about when the sessions occurred, he re-

plied: "I feel I was hypnotized in the middle of the week. I'm not sure. I'm not willing to say."

Q. How did Dr. Fadder bring you out of this hypnosis? A. He said, "When I hit a number, you will wake up," and I opened my eyes. I woke up at No. 5.

Q. Did you ever hear of post-hypnotic suggestion? A. [No reply.]

Q. What did Dr. Fadder tell you under hypnosis? A. He told me to come out with a smile on my face and be relaxed.

Q. You remember that and you can't remember any of the numbers before 5? A. No.

Russo has testified that when he first saw Shaw, whom he knew as Bertrand, in 1961 during a visit by President Kennedy to the city, he thought Shaw was a Secret Service man because he was booking at the crowd, not the President.

Dymond then sought to draw from the witness his reactions when he next met Shaw, allegedly in Ferrie's apartment when the plot was discussed.

Q. Wouldn't you have felt awfully uneasy in a group of four men while the assassination of the President was being planned if you felt one of those three men was an agent of the U. S. Secret Service? A. No.

The defense attorney also elicited from Russo that the last time he saw the man he knew as Leon Oswald, Oswald was neat and clean-shaved, yet he was unable to identigy him as Lee Harvey Oswald until police had drawn a beard on the man.

Near the end of his cross-examination Dymond asked Russo if, at the alleged meeting of the conspirators, he got the impression they were "actively participating" in a plot.

"I didn't get that impression, no," he replied.

He also said he heard no discussion of whether Oswald, Ferrie or Shaw was to leave the country after he assassination.

Finally he got bored with the whole conversation, he said, and looked out to see if "my ride home" was there yet. He had testified yesterday that he had no ride home and was hoping Ferrie would drive him.

Earlier, Russo was questioned about meeting Ferrie after the assassination in November, 1963. He said he saw him four or five times about seven months or so after the Dallas shooting, but had not known Ferrie had been arrested and questioned about any connection with the event.

"He seemed to be a broken man," Russo said. "I don't know why.

Ferrie, a former airline pilot, was found dead in his bed here on Feb. 22.