'Mystery Man' Calmly Tells Story

District Attorney Jim Garrison, a pipe in his hand, called Perry R. Russo to the stand in today's Kennedy assassination plot hearing.

"How old are you," he asked.

"Twenty-five."

"I WANT to ask you a few questions and when I do I want you to speak up so that everyone can hear."

"What is your occupation?" asked the DA.

"I work at Equitable Life Assurance."

"What is your education?"

"I completed high school at McDonogh . . . I had two years at Tulane and switched over to Loyola, where I got a bachelor's in political science."

RUSSO said he had also had one year of law school. The DA then asked, "Did you know a man named David Ferrie?"

"Yes, sir."

"If I showed you some pictures of David Ferrie do you think you could remember him?" asked Garrison.

Russo said he could remember the man.

"I show you a photo marked for identification F-10. I ask can you identify it?"

"Yes, sir."

"WHO IS this man?" asked the DA.

Garrison then showed Russo a second picture and asked if he could identify the person in it.

"Yes, sir. That is the same Dave Ferrie."

Garrison asked Russo to explain to the court how he came to know Ferrie.

He said he first met Ferrie in 1960 and had known him "all the way to 1964."

THE DA asked Russo to tell the court the background of the association.

"I had occasion to have a friend who was in the Civil Air Patrol. He had made mention of . . ."

At this point attorneys for Shaw objected on grounds that the testimony was hearsay.

A long legal debate followed involving attorneys for the defense, all three judges sitting at the hearing and attorneys representing the prosecution.

DEFENSE counsel Irvin Dymond contended that under the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution, which he said is applicable to state courts, the accused man has a right to confrontation by the accuser.

Alcock contended that hearsay evidence is admissible in a hearing such as the one being conducted today.

Under the law, said Dymond, testimony in the preliminary hearing would become a part of the record if there is a trial.

Edward Wegmann, another attorney for Shaw, contended that under the Sixth Amendment if "a man has a right to counsel, he has a right to be confronted by his accusers."

ALCOCK contended that the hearing was "not trying to determine guilt or innocence. We are only trying to determine probable cause."

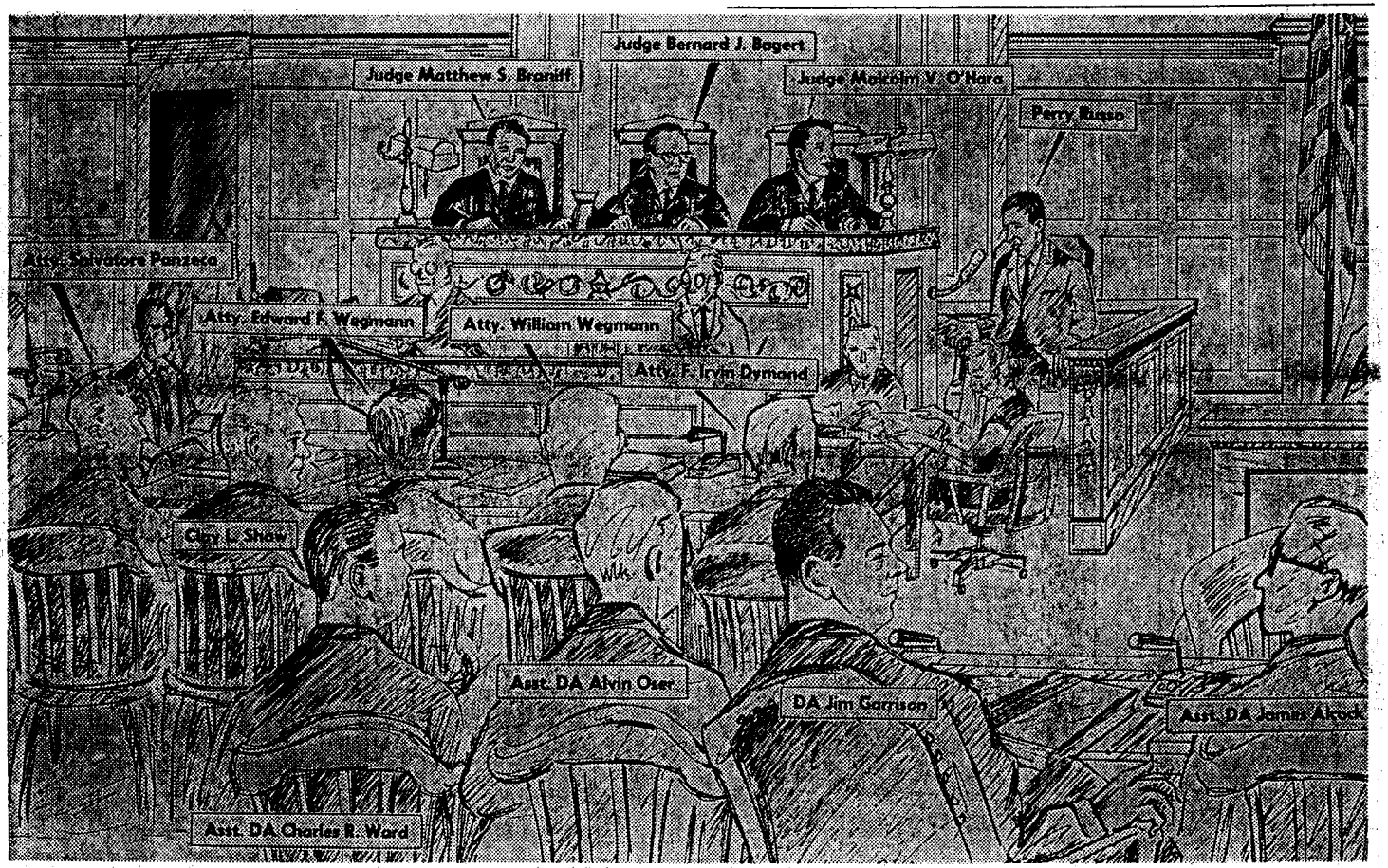
He contended the court should have before it "every possible shred of evidence . . ."

After several conferences Judge Bagert asked that the disputed question be read again and, after another conference, said, "We sustain the

See RUSSO— Page 14-A

—States-Item photo.

CLAY L. SHAW ARRIVES FOR HEARING today flanked by attorneys F. IRVIN DYMOND, left, and EDWARD WEGMANN.



—Composite sketch by artist Louis Benedic.

STATES-ITEM ARTIST'S CONCEPTION OF SHAW HEARING COURTROOM SCENE

Based on basic sketch drawn prior to court's ruling against sketches in courtroom

objection. Possibly after the recess there may be a change in that position."

He indicated that the judges would again research the law on the point.

GARRISON took over the interrogation of Russo again, asking him to "tell us how you first met David Ferrie."

Russo said he had met Ferrie through a friend when he went to a meeting of the Civil Air Patrol.

"He conducted the meeting," said Russo. "He put on a couple of demonstrations that impressed me."

Asked what the demonstrations consisted of, Russo said, "He put on a demonstration of hypnotic ability, using some of the 'boys' attending the meeting."

Russo said that after a matter of time, he made Ferrie angry by breaking up a friendship between Ferrie and Russo's friend. He said he and some others had talked Ferrie's friend "into telling Dave, 'I don't want to see you anymore.'"

GARRISON then asked Russo to identify several pictures of Ferrie's apartment at 3330 Louisiana ave. pkwy.

Russo identified a hallway, the living room, the dining room and a second hallway leading to a back entrance to the apartment. He also identified books in one of the pictures as belonging to Ferrie.

Asked if he had gone to Ferrie's house often, Russo said, "He had come to my house and I had gone to his on many occasions in 1963 and 1962."

Russo was asked by Garrison if he could recall anything "unusual" about 1963.

RUSSO SAID during the summer of 1963 Ferrie had come to his house late at night on several occasions.

"He had introduced me to some of his friends, which was all right with me," said Russo.

At this point, Dymond raised another objection on hear-say but was overruled.

Garrison continued with his questions, calling the witness by his first name.

"DAVE FERRIE gave me an open book invitation to come to his house at any time," Russo said.

There was another legal hassle at this point, with Dymond again objecting to the testimony by Russo.

It was also at this point that Garrison asked that the hearing not be recessed until Russo could finish his testimony.

Russo continued his testimony, saying he had an arrangement with Ferrie whereby each could come to the other's home at any time.

"DURING September and the month before he (Ferrie) showed to me that he was obsessed with Kennedy."

Dymond immediately objected, calling the testimony hear-say, and contending that "this is a conclusion of the witness."

Judge Bagert sustained the objection.

Following another legal hassle, the DA continued his questioning, asking Russo to direct his attention to 3330 Louisiana ave. pkwy. and asking, "Do you remember anything unusual happening in the fall of 1963?"

Russo said he remembered that Ferrie carried clippings around with him pertaining to the President and that "there was much talk . . ."

"AROUND the middle of September, I had occasion to go to the house on Louisiana ave. pkwy.," said Russo. "I walked in, and there seemed to be some sort of party in progress."

He said about 10 persons were sitting around drinking.

After awhile, Russo said, there were only four persons left in the apartment and that he had waited around because he did not have a ride home.

He identified the other three as Ferrie, "a person I had seen several times . . . Leon Oswald and a third person, Clem Bertrand."

GARRISON then asked Russo, "Do you see the man you knew as Bertrand in the courtroom?"

"Yes, sir," Russo answered.

"Would you point to the man?" said Garrison.

Russo leaned slightly to his left to see around a corner of the judges' bench, fixed his eyes on Shaw and pointed at the defendant.

Garrison asked Russo to describe the color of the coat and the color of the hair of the man at whom he was pointing.

Garrison then asked Russo to identify pictures of Oswald. Garrison asked Russo to describe the conversation that went on in the room at the time the four were present.

He said, "Dave Ferrie began the conversation, pacing back and forth as he talked." He said Ferrie stressed "diversification" in a plot to kill the President.

HE SAID he stressed the fact that "an assassination attempt would have to use diversionary tactics."

He said Ferrie used three fingers of his hand to stress that "there would have to be a minimum of three people involved. Two of the persons would shoot diversionary shots and the third . . . would shoot the 'good' shot," Russo told the court Ferrie said.

He said one of the three would have to be the "scapegoat."

In answer to a question for clarification from Garrison, Russo elaborated, "If there were three people, one of them would have to be sacrificed."

Russo was asked again by Garrison who participated in the conversation and he answered, "Mr. Bertrand and Mr. Oswald."

"Is that the same Mr. Bertrand who's sitting here?" asked Garrison.

"YES, SIR," Russo replied.

He said he talked about guns and the availability of exits from the assassination scene.

Russo said that the sacrifice man would give just enough time for the other one or two people involved to escape.

"Ferrie was a pilot . . . he said they could either go to Mexico or they could fly direct to Cuba. He talked about the risks of flying to Cuba."

HE SAID Bertrand argued that once the shot was fired, the world would know, and the assassins would not be able to get out.

Russo testified that in the discussion about escape it was decided that "Mr. Ferrie, Mr. Oswald and Mr. Bertrand would be in the public eye."

He said, "Dave Ferrie said something about making a speech at Southeastern."

Russo quoted Bertrand as saying that, "If this is the alternative, he would go on a business trip for his company."

"Did he say where he would go?" Garrison asked Russo.

"He said he would go to the West Coast," Russo replied.

In a dramatic conclusion to the testimony by Russo Garrison asked him to step from the witness stand and identify the man he knew as Bertrand. He asked Russo to walk behind the defense table and "put your hand over his head."

RUSSO walked without hesitation to stand behind Shaw and placed his hand, palm outstretched, over Shaw's head. As he did so, he looked over his right shoulder at Garrison.

A murmur ran through the courtroom, and the court attaches yelled for order.

Judge Bagert almost immediately recessed the court.