

DUG UP,

Witness Links

MOVED

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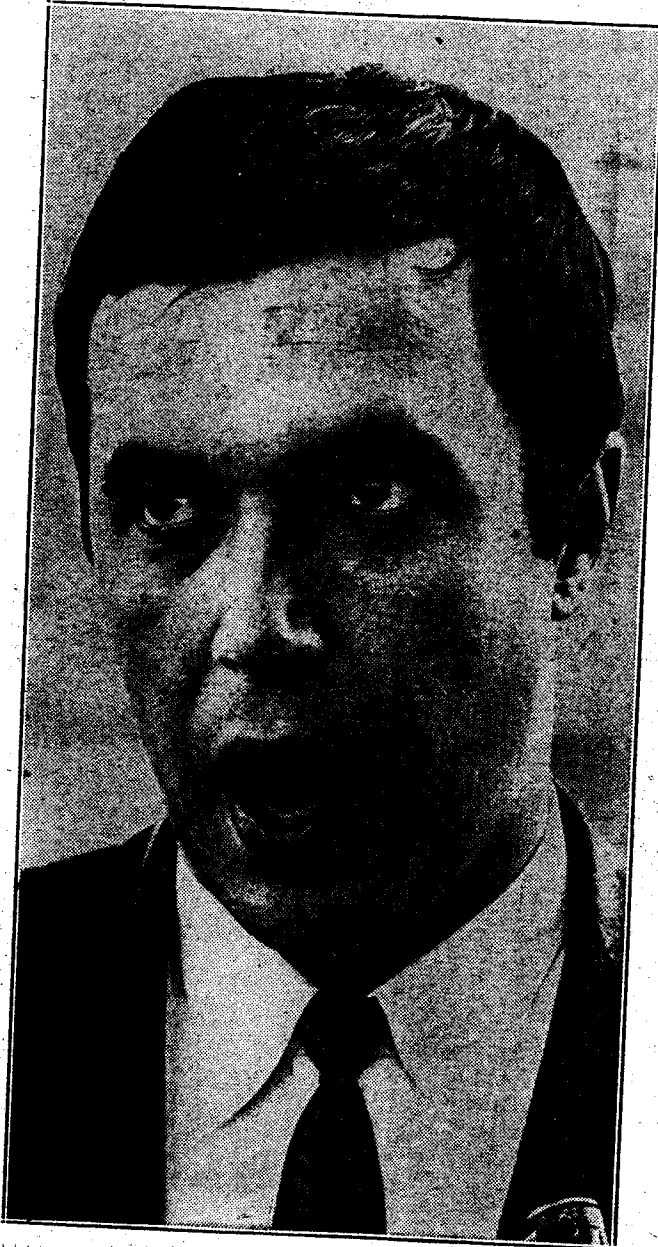
Shaw to Oswald



Businessman Clay Shaw, 54, arrives at court house in New Orleans for preliminary hearing at which he was dramatically linked with Lee Harvey Oswald in the assassination of President Kennedy. District Attorney Jim Garrison supported his charge of an assassination plot by producing his mystery witness, insurance salesman Perry R. Russo, 25, who told the hearing that Oswald and Shaw discussed the murder of Kennedy two months before the Dallas tragedy.

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3/15/67 NY DAILY NEWS



(Associated Press Wirefoto)

Perry Russo—mystery witness produced by DA Jim Garrison.

Heard Oswald, Shaw Plot to Kill JFK, He Says

By WILLIAM FEDERICI and ANTHONY BURTON
Staff Correspondents of THE NEWS

New Orleans, March 14—Insurance salesman Perry R. Russo, 25, in a dramatic court scene, accused New Orleans businessman Clay Shaw today of conspiring with Lee Harvey Oswald and David Ferrie, a pilot, to assassinate President Kennedy.

It was the sensational development long promised by District Attorney Jim Garrison to support his charge that the late President was the victim of a conspiracy.

Russo, a mystery witness whom Garrison had kept under wraps until today, told a preliminary court hearing here that two months before the assassination in Dallas he heard Oswald, Shaw and Ferrie discuss a plan to murder the President. Ferrie died in his apartment here Feb. 22.

Although the coroner's office ruled that Ferrie died of natural causes, Garrison has insisted that the death was a suicide.

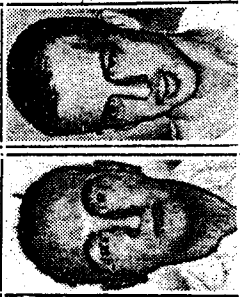
On the stand, Russo linked Shaw, 54, former director of the city's International Trade Mart, with Oswald by describing meetings at Ferrie's home in which he said the three plotted to kill the President.

Talked of a Crossfire

He testified that they talked of killing Kennedy in a crossfire. He said Oswald had a rifle at one of the meetings. He said they decided that one of the conspirators would have to be sacrificed as a scapegoat. He said they agreed the other plotters would try to escape from the country in a plane piloted by Ferrie.

And, in a move that hushed the courtroom, Russo left the stand to identify Shaw as one of the conspirators by standing behind the accused and placing a hand above his head.

It was a triumphant moment for Garrison, who had been confronted by jeers and skepticism ever since his announcement that



The late David Ferrie The late Lee Oswald

judge panel was to decide if there was enough evidence

against Shaw to warrant his trial.

Russo told the judges that in the September before the November assassination he was present in Ferrie's apartment in New Orleans when Oswald, Shaw and Ferrie discussed methods of carrying out the murder.

"The discussion centered around the fact that an assassination attempt would have to use diversionary tactics. There was talk of triangulation of crossfire as diversionary action," Russo said. "He (Ferrie) would put up

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as to why the alleged conspirators wanted to kill Kennedy.

Unlike many of the figures who have been connected with the Garrison investigation, Russo is described by those who knew him here as a highly respectable young man, with a perfectly normal background.

Ferrie Had a Record

Ferrie had been arrested in neighboring Jefferson Parish (County) on a morals charge, an incident that cost him his job as an airline pilot. Shaw, though a respected businessman, was rumored to have led an eccentric private life. When his home was searched prior to his arrest, investigators removed whips, chains, a black hood, gown and cape.

Other men questioned by Garrison's investigators form an unsavory company, including crooks, kooks, psychos and weirdos. Many of them continually change their stories, contradicting themselves when talking to reporters.

Shaw was arrested by the DA March 1 and accused of taking part in the plot. Today's hearing at the Orleans Parish Criminal Court House before a three-



District Attorney Garrison
Brings forth his witness

he had uncovered a plot to assassinate the President.

Silence Not Explained

There was no explanation as to why Russo had not come forward with his story before. This pointed to an obvious line of attack for defense attorney Irvin Dymond.

Nor was there any explanation

Friends Vouch for Key Witness



Perry Russo
Tells of "plot" meeting

New Orleans, March 14 (Special)—Perry Russo, the young insurance man who today described a plot to assassinate President Kennedy, is "no glory hound," a close friend said tonight.

"He is loyal to American laws and fully understands the penalties of perjury," said the friend, Peter Barrouquere, who went to high school with Russo and still plays baseball with him.

"He's a good-looking guy who has led a very full and active life. He's got a wonderful sense of humor and because of his wide interests he's very much in demand at social activities."

Russo is unmarried. His family lives in Baton Rouge.

Other friends described Russo as "a brilliant boy" who could do anything he set his mind to. Fellow workers at the Equitable Life Assurance Society described him as a "very active Republican."

They said he had joined Ne-

groes in sit-in demonstrations in Louisiana. One friend said he remembered seeing Fair Play for Cuba leaflets in Russo's home. Lee Harvey Oswald distributed such leaflets while in New Orleans.

Referred to Dynasty

Russo is a keen athlete who was instrumental in the setting up of Young Republican baseball leagues here. One friend recalled that he had spoken once of the Kennedy dynasty and had remarked: "The only way to kill the Kennedys is at the polls."

Born in New Orleans, Russo majored in political science at Tulane University before transferring to Loyola University here. He is currently taking a course in underwriting at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge.