
Background of 'Plot' Witness

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — A baseball buff with a burning interest in politics is the man who named Lee Harvey Oswald, Clay L. Shaw and David W. Ferrie as plotters to kill President John F. Kennedy.

Perry Raymond Russo, a 25-year-old political science graduate of Loyola University of New Orleans, testified yesterday he heard Oswald, Shaw and Ferrie discuss killing President Kennedy in 1963.

Russo, a fast-talking young man, is the newest figure in Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's controversial probe of the assassination of Kennedy. He emerged as Garrison's apparent "confidential informant" on what the D.A. contends was a conspiracy, hatched in New Orleans, to kill Kennedy.

Russo, a bachelor with dark eyes and hair, contacted Garrison two days after Ferrie died Feb. 22.

Russo attends a special insurance underwriting course at Louisiana State University here. He lives with a friend, Steve Derby.

Russo's brother Edwin, 28, an engineering instructor at LSU, said he was not close to his younger brother. He said he had to read the newspapers to find out that Perry was involved in the probe.

"We got along but we're not close," Edwin said.

The older brother denied that Derby was a relation to the Russo family. Derby told newsmen yesterday "we usually go under identities of stepbrothers, but actually we are third cousins."

Edwin said Perry was an avid baseball fan. He coached several teams in New Orleans, Edwin said, and he played for some.

Perry Russo attended McDonogh High School in New Orleans. He was a class vice president while there. He attended Tulane University and switched to Loyola where he graduated in 1964 as a political science major. He also attended Loyola Law School.

The Russo family grew up in the Gentilly section of New Orleans.
