

EA79(RUSSO)INU

INFORMANT--WITH HEARING BJT 310

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ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

BATON ROUGE, LA., MARCH 14 (AP)-PERRY RAYMOND RUSSO, A 25-YEAR-OLD INSURANCE SALESMAN AND PARTTIME COLLEGE STUDENT, EMERGED TODAY AS THE "CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANT" IN DIST. ATTY. JIM GARRISON'S KENNEDY ASSASSINATION PROBE.

DESCRIBED BY HIS COMPANY SUPERVISOR AS A "REAL FINE GUY, A HARD WORKER, AN INTELLECTUAL," RUSSO TESTIFIED AT THE NEW ORLEANS HEARING THAT HE HEARD LEE HARVEY OSWALD, CLAY SHAW AND DAVID W. FERRIE PLOTTING TO ASSASSINATE THE PRESIDENT.

RUSSO WAS FIRST LINKED PUBLICLY TO THE CASE TWO DAYS AFTER FERRIE'S DEATH ON FEB. 22. AT THAT TIME HE TOLD NEWSMEN THAT FERRIE HAD TOLD HIM A MONTH BEFORE KENNEDY'S DEATH THAT "WE WILL GET HIM AND IT WON'T BE LONG."

RUSSO SAID HE DID NOT TAKE ANY OF FERRIE'S STATEMENTS ABOUT THE ASSASSINATION SERIOUSLY UNTIL HE SAW FERRIE'S PHOTOGRAPH IN A NEWSPAPER DURING GARRISON'S CURRENT INVESTIGATION. HE SAID HE WROTE GARRISON ON FEB. 24, RELATING HIS CONTACTS WITH FERRIE.

A DARK, INTENSE MAN, RUSSO IS A BACHELOR. HE LIVES IN A WHITE FRAME DUPLEX NEAR THE LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS. A COUSIN, WHO IS A STUDENT AT LSU, SPENDS MUCH OF HIS TIME AT THE APARTMENT AND NEIGHBORS REFER TO THEM AS BROTHERS.

MRS. ELEANOR DURAND, WHO LIVES IN THE OTHER HALF OF THE DUPLEX, DESCRIBES RUSSO AS "A NICE YOUNG KID. HE TOLD US HE'S HELPING HIS YOUNGER BROTHER THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL."

SHE SAID RUSSO AND HIS BROTHER MOVED INTO THE DUPLEX RECENTLY. "LOTS OF YOUNG FOLKS COME IN THERE AND HAVE A PARTY ONCE IN A WHILE," SHE SAID.

MRS. DURAND SAID SHE UNDERSTOOD FROM A NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR THAT RUSSO HAD A BODYGUARD ASSIGNED TO HIM.

RUSSO IS ONE OF 10 EQUITABLE LIFE INSURANCE CO. SALESMEN CURRENTLY TAKING A COURSE IN UNDERWRITING INSURANCE AT LSU.

A FELLOW STUDENT, WHO REFUSED TO GIVE HIS NAME, DESCRIBED RUSSO AS A "A REAL FINE BOY--A QUIET TYPE WHO IS INTERESTED IN POLITICS."

RUSSO, WHO PLAYED FOR AND MANAGED SEVERAL LOCAL BASEBALL TEAMS, ENROLLED AT TULANE UNIVERSITY FOLLOWING GRADUATION FROM A NEW ORLEANS HIGH SCHOOL. HE LATER TRANSFERRED TO LOYOLA UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH AND WAS AWARDED A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE IN 1964.

HIS PARENTS LIVE IN NEW ORLEANS.

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BATON ROUGE INFORMANT A79-80 1ST ADD: NEW ORLEANS.

RUSSO'S COUSIN IS STEVE DERBY, 20, A SOPHOMORE AT LSU.

"WE USUALLY GO UNDER IDENTITIES OF STEPBROTHERS, BUT ACTUALLY WE ARE THIRD COUSINS," DERBY SAID IN AN INTERVIEW. HE SAID HE LIVES IN BROUSSARD HALL ON THE CAMPUS BUT SPENDS MUCH OF HIS TIME AT RUSSO'S APARTMENT.

DERBY SAID HE ACCOMPANIED RUSSO TO NEW ORLEANS FOR QUESTIONING BY GARRISON'S STAFF. DERBY SAID HE SAW RUSSO GET HYPNOTIZED-- EXPLAINING LATER HE MEANT RUSSO UNDERWENT SODIUM PENTOTHAL (TRUTH SERUM).

GARRISON HAD DISCLOSED EARLIER THAT HIS "CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANT" VOLUNTARILY SUBMITTED TO SODIUM PENTOTHAL AS A MEANS OF VERIFYING HIS STATEMENTS CONCERNING THE MEETINGS IN FERRIE'S APARTMENT.

ASKED HOW THE GARRISON INVESTIGATION HAS AFFECTED RUSSO, DERBY SAID: "AFTER IT BEGAN TO DEVELOP, IT SEEMED TO UPSET HIM A BIT. HE'S THE TYPE OF GUY THAT DOESN'T LIKE TO HURT ANYBODY.

HE SAID RUSSO "IS REAL SMART AND HAS A LOT OF INTERESTS--BASEBALL, MUSIC AND POLITICS. POLITICS IS HIS SECOND LOVE AND BASEBALL IS HIS FIRST."

RUSSO "LIKES TO GET UP IN FRONT OF PEOPLE AND SPEAK," DERBY SAID.

"HE CAN DO ANYTHING HE PUTS HIS MIND TO," SAID PETE BARROUQUERE, JR., WHO PLAYED IN AN AMATEUR BASEBALL LEAGUE WITH RUSSO IN NEW ORLEANS.

BARROUQUERE, A SPORTS WRITER FOR THE NEW ORLEANS TIMES-PICAYUNE, RECALLS RUSSO AS "AN OUTGOING, FUN-LOVING PERSON. HE WAS A BIT UNPREDICTABLE AT TIMES," HE SAID.

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