

'JFK Plot' Informer Faces Quiz

NEW ORLEANS—(AP)—Perry Raymond Russo, who testified he heard Lee Harvey Oswald and two others plot to assassinate President John F. Kennedy, faces cross-examination today.

Counsel for Clay L. Shaw, wealthy businessman arrested by District Attorney Jim Garrison on a charge of conspiring with Oswald and David W. Ferrie to murder Kennedy, put off their questions yesterday until they could study scholastic and business records of Russo.

Before court reopened, mystery surrounding this "confidential informant" thickened. The riddle:

● Russo, 25, an insurance salesman from Baton Rouge, told the court he was in the apartment of David W. Ferrie here in September, 1963, and listened to the three conspire to kill the President and escape.

But two weeks ago, soon after Ferrie died of what the coroner termed natural causes and Garrison maintained was suicide, Russo told a newsman from New

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Orleans TV station WDSU Ferrie never mentioned Oswald's name to him, adding:

"I had never heard of Oswald until on TV . . . ahh . . . the assassination."

● Russo gave detail in court of the meeting in Ferrie's apartment, saying the plot involved sacrificing one man to allow the others to make a getaway; a possible flight to Cuba; diversionary shooting and "triangulation of crossfire."

Yet in an interview earlier with a Baton Rouge TV station, Russo explained he never came forth with his information before because "I left it to professionals . . . when they came out with Oswald as the man. Then I forgot it."

● Russo told the court Ferrie proposed flying the getaway plane into Mexico to refuel for a flight to Cuba.

Russo said Shaw interrupted to say that as soon as the shots were fired, "the world would know about it," and there would be no way to get the plane out of Mexico.

And Russo quoted Oswald as telling Shaw to "shut up Leave him (Ferrie) alone. He knows what he's talking about. He's the pilot."

But when Russo was asked by a newsman earlier whether he thought Ferrie might have had anything to do with the assassination, he replied:

"Well, that I don't know and it would be just speculation. Dave Ferrie had the ability because of a keen mind and ability to drive a plane. Now whether he would have used that is another

thing . . . It's only conjecture."

● Russo has said he did not get in touch with Garrison until two days after Ferrie's death — when he saw a newspaper picture of Ferrie. He said he had not then heard from Garrison.

That is the same date on which Garrison announced he had "solved" the case.

And Russo apparently is a major witness in Garrison's case — the "confidential informant" who, according to Garrison's application for a warrant to search Shaw's house, confirmed while under influence of "truth serum" that he overheard the plot to murder Kennedy.

Shaw is the only alleged conspirator still alive. Oswald was shot to death by Jack Ruby two days after the assassination and Ferrie died in bed Feb. 22.

Shaw, 54, a one-time Army major who was decorated in World War II, has denied taking part in any conspiracy.