

JFK Probe Seeks Girl At Party

Was Oswald Really There?

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NEW ORLEANS — A mysterious Alabama girl named "Sandra Moffett" was the focus of a nationwide search today by defense lawyers determined to show the New Orleans plot is a judiciary farce.

They believe she can tell whether Lee Harvey Oswald's alleged presence at a post-midnight "plot party" is pure myth or truth.

The third day of a preliminary hearing for Clay L. Shaw, 54, booked as conspiring to kill President Kennedy, got under way with Perry R. Russo, 25, Shaw's star accuser, on the stand and under torrid cross examination.

The fast-talking Russo's testimony was seriously shaken yesterday but did not tumble down. He had identified Shaw's "co-plotters" as Lee Harvey Oswald and David W. Ferrie, 49, a sometime familiar of New Orleans's large homosexual world.

Shaw is on \$10,000 bond pending trial.

Sandra Moffett became a vital witness when Russo testified she was the only woman at a party where Oswald, Ferrie and Shaw, a retired businessman, schemed to direct a "triangulation of crossfire" at President Kennedy.

Russo, a part-time student and insurance salesman, said Sandra left the party before the talk of killing the President began. But Shaw's lawyers believe she may be able to state whether the whiskery, sullen, dirty clothed, beatnik Russo said was Oswald also looked like a presidential killer to her.

The hearing probably will end today.

What Russo has done so far

Turn to Page 14, Col. 4 is to sketch a picture of a brooding Oswald, the erratic Ferrie and Shaw talking somewhat vaguely of a plot in which Ferrie would fly out the assassins from some unnamed assassination city.

Shaw and Ferrie—in Russo's twilight pale—have the quality of lightweight moths flirting with the dark intense flame of Oswald's killer capacity.

If Russo's story is untrue, the elaborate circus tent built up by New Orleans District Attorney Jim "Big Jim" Garrison to cover his assassination plot theory begins to shudder and collapse.

BATTERINGS

The Russo version took a battering yesterday under cross examination by defense attorney F. Irvin Dymond. These were the key matters of doubt raised:

- Why did Russo wait three years to tell of the "plot"? He said he had seen Oswald's picture at least 100 times after the assassination and had even thought he might be the man he knew as "Leon" Oswald at Ferrie's party.

- Why was he unable to identify Oswald yesterday in the famous picture snapped as avenger Jack Ruby shot him?

- Why did he testify he had seen Oswald three or four times at Ferrie's where Russo said Oswald was Ferrie's roommate and then later say in testimony he had seen him only once? ?

- Why did Russo say repeatedly he had seen Oswald at the Ferrie apartment in early October when the Warren Report said "Oswald left for Mexico City on Sept. 25, 1963" and did not return to New Orleans?

- Why was Russo's memory precise on the clothes and mannerism of the "plotter" when he could not remember what his companion at the party, Sandra, was wearing or how his friend George "Lefty" Peterson was dressed?

Peterson has already spoken with Garrison's men apparently without adding greatly to Russo's story. He has not testified.

- Why could Russo not remember exactly where Sandra lived although he had

dated her several times and picked her up on two or three occasions?

Russo's face was drawn with fatigue at the end of his day on the stand.

Dymond: "And approximately how many times did you see the man you know as Leon Oswald at Ferrie's apartment?"

Russo: "Three or four times . . ."

Dymond: "What made you think that testimony that there was a conspiracy might not be valuable?"

Russo: "I had never pushed myself . . . I didn't consider what I had to say would be of importance. They didn't say anything at all about Dallas . . . The Warren Commission was supposed to know what they were doing."

Russo said that even when the Garrison investigation began to get publicity last month he did not come forward because "I thought every screwball in the street was giving information."

Then Dymond tore into the witness:

"As a matter of fact didn't you wait until Ferrie was dead so that he wouldn't be on hand to dispute your talk of the conspiracy? Didn't you seize upon his death to come forward and get yourself some publicity?"

Russo explained that he was not certain "Leon" Oswald, the man he knew as Ferrie's roommate, was the same man as the presidential assassin until he contacted Garrison's office on Feb. 24 and a police artist sketched whiskers on a photograph of Oswald.

Russo said Ferrie had begun getting "obsessed" with the way President Kennedy was handling the Cuban crisis well before the mid-September party and once told him "we will get Kennedy and it won't be very long."