

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

NOVEL IS SERVED WITH WARRANTS

Says La. Police State; Questions Burglary Claim in Houma

Kennedy assassination probe witness Gordon Novel said today he has been served with two warrants charging him with theft in Orleans Parish.

Novel had earlier said the theft charges against him were filed by Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison in connection with the unpaid bills of a corporation known as Electronic Systems International Inc.

Novel claims he owns no part of the corporation and that the firm is in reality a front for New Orleans auto dealer Willard Robertson.

Novel in a telephone interview with the State-Times from Columbus, Ohio, said the new warrants "show what a police state they have down there."

He said he and his associates have found no record either with the FBI or Houma police regarding a burglary of a munitions bunker at Houma in 1961.

Novel and Sergio Arcacha Smith were indicted on charges of conspiring to steal munitions from the dump in that year.

Both men are also sought as material witnesses in the investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963.

Says Report Filed

In Houma, Dist. Atty. Wilmore Broussard said he had checked with two of his officers and that they told him a report was filed in connection with the burglary.

Broussard said the indictment against Novel and Smith was not brought in until this year because "only recently were we able to determine who was responsible."

In today's interview Novel was questioned about any relationship he might have to other principals in the Garrison investigation.

Novel said he did not know Perry Raymond Russo, the Baton Rouge man who was Garrison's star witness in a preliminary hearing for Clay L. Shaw.

Novel said he has met Shaw — the man Garrison has charged with conspiring to kill Kennedy.

He said he first met Shaw at an auto show in 1959. He said he next met him in 1964 "on a business deal" and on four or five occasions in connection with Shaw's duties as director of the International Trade Mart.

Novel also elaborated on the type equipment he installed in the governor's office in 1965 when — as a representative of Electronic Systems International Inc. — he sold surveillance and anti-anti-surveillance equipment for use in that office.

He said one of the items he installed was a voice-activated tape recorder "for monitoring

surreptitiously conversations in the room."

He said this recorder was installed in the desk of Gus Weill, who was McKeithen's executive secretary at the time.

Novel said the device was an automatic one that would play for four hours. He said it could be turned on to record conversations that took place in the office while Weill was outside.

Novel said he was retaining certain tape recordings of his own which he planned to play later.

He also said McKeithen himself was present many times while he was in the governor's office and again challenged McKeithen to take "an impartial, scientifically-conducted lie detector test" about his knowledge of Novel.

The governor claims he does not know Novel. Novel says the governor "is a liar."

Novel plans to fight extradition from Ohio if McKeithen ever signs extradition papers in an effort to have him returned to Louisiana.

"I don't plan to return to Garrisonville and the Garrisonville," Novel said.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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