

# NOVEL CIA ATTORNEY

# AGENT, ADMITS

5-23-67

## S-I Uncovers Letter

By JOHN M'MILLAN AND HOKE MAY

Gordon Novel's New Orleans attorney today said his client worked for the Central Intelligence Agency here in early 1961.

The public statement by Steven Plotkin followed the States-Item's discovery of a letter which Plotkin said was written by Novel and apparently directed to an official of the CIA.

Plotkin reported that Novel drafted the penciled letter, which was found in the 29-

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year-old former tavern owner's one-time French Quarter apartment.

In the letter, Novel tells a "Mr. Weiss" that he wants to be taken "out of this mess" by an unspecified date in March of 1967.

Novel, whom Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison has called an important witness in his Ken-

nedy death plot investigation, disappeared from New Orleans in mid-March.

HE WAS ARRESTED APRIL 1 AT Gahanna, Ohio, on a warrant charging him with conspiracy to burglarize an oil service company's munitions bunker at Houma in 1961.

Since that time, he has been free on \$10,000 bond while fighting extradition from Ohio.

Today, Plotkin said his client served as an intermediary between the CIA and anti-Castro Cubans in New Orleans and Miami prior to the April, 1961, Bay of Pigs invasion.

Novel's role as a CIA operative was first disclosed by the States-Item in a copy-

righted story April 25.

Garrison has charged that persons connected with the CIA became angry at Kennedy and plotted his death at Dallas. He has charged the CIA with fomenting a "monstrous coverup" and duping the Warren Commission.

**PLOTKIN SAID NOVEL'S CIA WORK** had "little or nothing to do with the Bay

When Novel left here in mid-March, he went first to McLean, Va., to take a lie detector test. McLean is the headquarters of the CIA.

Plotkin said Novel has tapes, photographs and other data which will be released shortly and will "prove beyond any shadow of a doubt that Mr. Garrison's investigation is a fraud and a hoax."

**HE SAID NOVEL** has turned the information over to a national news medium and that tape recordings and other matters in Plotkin's possession will be released in case Novel dies.

In the handwritten letter draft found in a hiding place at Novel's former French Quarter apartment, the fugitive witness tells "Mr. Weiss":

"Our attorneys and others are in possession of complete sealed files containing all information concerning this matter. In the event of our sudden departure, either accidental or otherwise, they are instructed to simultaneously release same for public scrutiny in different areas . . ."

At the same time, the letter speaks of taking "appropriate counteraction relative to Garrison's inquisition concerning us . . ."

It suggests that the business of handling Garrison may best be carried on "through military channels via a vis the D.I.A. man."

D.I.A. is the abbreviation for Defense Intelligence Agen-

cy, an organization established by President Kennedy to supervise CIA after the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion.

of Pigs invasion and certainly had absolutely nothing to do with the assassination of President Kennedy."

The attorney said Novel worked as what he termed "chief of security" for Garrison before "his forced departure from New Orleans."

But the lawyer declared his client actually was serving as a double agent in the employ of a "national news media."

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Speaking of the letter draft today, Plotkin said the "letter was intended to the addressee of th letter."

"As to the contents of the letter or whether the letter was actually sent, I don't know," he added.

"NEVERTHELESS," Plotkin admitted, "the only comment is that everything in the letter as far as Novel is concerned is actually the truth."

Plotkin said the purpose of the letter was to inform "the person to whom the letter was addressed . . . of activities going on in Louisiana."

Garrison has charged that Plotkin and other lawyers representing figures in the Kennedy inquiry are being paid by the CIA. Plotkin has denied the allegation.

**THE LETTER** draft, which a handwriting expert says was written by Novel, is a strange concoction of clipped phrases, cloak and dagger terminology and veiled references to "top secret" activities.

It begins:

"This letter is to inform you that District (Attorney) Jim Garrison has subpoenaed myself and an associate to testify before his Grand Jury on matters which may be classified TOP SECRET. Actions of individuals connected with DOUBLE-CHEK CORPORA-

TION in Miami in the first quarter of 1961."

The recent book, "The Invisible Government," which carries details of CIA operations, identifies Double-Chek of Miami as a CIA front.

On page 79, the book declares that Double-Chek was the company through which pilots and other persons connected with anti-Castro Cuban operations were recruited.

"We have no current contact available to inform of this situation," the Novel letter draft continues. "So I took the liberty of writing you direct and appraising you of current situation . . . expecting you to forward this through appropriate channels."

Although the draft is undated, the sequence of events it relates places its writing sometime in late January or early February.

It tells of "avoiding" one Garrison subpoena but says that attorneys have warned other subpoenas are to follow.

"The Fifth Amendment and/or immunity (and) legal tactics will not suffice," the letter states. **END**

DA Seeking  
Copies of 'CIA'  
Letter by Novel

Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison today asked for copies of a letter purportedly directed to the Central Intelligence Agency by fugitive witness Gordon Novel.

The letter, which Novel's lawyer said was written by his client, came into the possession of the States-Item. It was reported to have been found in Novel's former apartment in the French Quarter. It apparently was written before Novel's departure from New Orleans after he was subpoenaed to testify in Garrison's Kennedy death plot investigation.

NOVEL, WANTED both as a material witness and on charges of conspiracy to burglarize a munitions dump at Houma, is free on \$10,000 bond at Columbus, Ohio, awaiting an extradition hearing.

A copy and transcript of the penciled draft were given to Steven Plotkin, Novel's New Orleans attorney, early this week. Yesterday, Plotkin said his client worked for the Central Intelligence Agency here during 1961.

Plotkin said Novel wrote the draft, and added "everything as far as Novel is concerned, is actually the truth."

But Novel appeared to con-

tradict his lawyer late yesterday when he said the letter was a "final trap" for Garrison.

"Mr. Garrison has finally fallen into the last trap. I thought his fine Cajun gumshoes were going to miss it. Under the rug, ha, ha!"

ACTUALLY, THE letter was delivered to the States-Item by a college professor who is a friend of a reporter on the staff. A student gave it to him, and the student received the letter from a girl friend who is renting Novel's former apartment. It was found under linoleum on the kitchen sink drainboard. Noting a story about the letter in yesterday's final edition, Garrison asked the States-Item to give his office copies. He would not comment further.

The statement by his attorney that Novel worked for the CIA here confirmed a report of the witnesses' government activities published first in the States-Item on April 25.

Garrison has charged the CIA with engaging in a "monstrous coverup" following the Kennedy assassination and of duping the Warren Commission into inaccurate conclusions.

The Warren Commission concluded that Kennedy was slain by a Communist-oriented, distraught youth, Lee Harvey Oswald. It said it could find no evidence that Oswald was aided by anyone.

GARRISON HAS said that "Latin adventurers" employed in CIA-sponsored anti-Castro operations killed Kennedy out of anger over an abrupt end to their support by the U.S. government.

Plotkin said Novel worked with the CIA as an "intermediary" with anti-Castro Cubans. But he said his client's CIA activities "had little or nothing to do with the Bay of Pigs invasion and certainly had nothing to do with the assassination of President Kennedy."

Sunday, Novel told police he was fired upon several times by a hidden sniper in Nashville, Tenn. He said he was wounded by flying glass. A Nashville radio-TV newsmen who was with him told the same story.

In the letter draft which Plotkin said Novel wrote, the 29-year-old former bar owner asks "Mr. Weiss" to get him out of "this mess" by an unspecified date in March.

The letter says the writer had received one subpoena to testify in the Garrison probe, but has been able to avoid it. It adds that attorneys have informed him other subpoenas would be issued.

The letter asks Weiss to help him so that he will not have to reveal "top secret" activities of an organization he refers to as Double-Check Corp. of Miami. END