

# JURIES HEAR

## NOVEL, N.Y.

# DA; BURBANK

# IS CALLED

10-19-68 S.T.



COL. THOMAS BURBANK

William Cahn, district attorney of Nassau County, New York, went before the Orleans Parish grand jury today as the jury continued its probe of organized crime.

Cahn says New Orleans has been a key spot in a multi-million dollar national gambling ring he uncovered.

Assistant Orleans DA Charles Ray Ward said today the ring operated in Orleans Parish early this year but has moved to a neighboring parish because of pressure from DA's office.

Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison has long contended there is no organized crime in Orleans Parish.

ALSO SCHEDULED to testify today were State Police Supt. Col. Thomas Burbank and George Stokes, a printer, of 2544-45 Dumaine. Ward said Stokes was to be

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**GORDON NOVEL**, left, who appeared today before the East Baton Rouge Parish Grand Jury, confers with his New Orleans attorney, **STEVE PLOTKIN**.

—States-Item photo.

questioned concerning the printing of football gambling cards.

In the Baton Rouge wing of the twin crime probe, elusive witness Gordon Novel went before the East Baton Rouge Parish grand jury.

Meanwhile, in Austin, Tex., a hearing was set for Nov. 21 to decide whether Texas should extradite New Orleans contractor D'Alton Smith to face charges of offering a \$25,000 bribe to Aubrey Young, a former aide to Gov. John J. McKeithen.

IN THE ORLEANS probe, Ward said Burbank was to be questioned about the investigation of organized crime by the state police to determine if any significant information has been gathered concerning Orleans Parish.

Much investigation has been done in New Orleans by the state police over the last 10 days, Ward said.

Cahn said on his arrival yesterday that the gambling ring operated in Miami, Nassau County and elsewhere. Ward predicted Cahn would tell the grand jury the ring is no longer operating here.

NOVEL, who flew into Baton Rouge under immunity from arrest from Columbus, Ohio, carried with him one tape recording of what he has claimed will be sensational testimony.

He was surrounded by attorneys and had little to say to newsmen except that he would take a lie detector test to back his statements to the grand jury.

The former New Orleans lounge operator who claims to

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have worked for the Central Intelligence Agency, is wanted by New Orleans DA Jim Garrison in connection with his probe of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

HOWEVER, he was granted immunity from arrest by East Baton Rouge DA Sargent Pitcher in order to testify before the grand jury on his alleged knowledge of organized crime.

Novel claims Garrison's assassination probe is a hoax.

He flew into the state capital from Ohio aboard a sheriffs' department plane yesterday and met with Pitcher for several hours. He stayed at a motel near the capitol.

CONSIDERABLE skepticism has been voiced by officials over the "sensational" nature of Novel's information. Novel reportedly taped conversations in the governor's office after being called in to "de-bug" the governor's suite.

It was Young who hired Novel to de-bug the offices. Novel says his information will "blow the lid off the state," but until yesterday he had produced no information.

After lengthy conversations with Novel yesterday, Pitcher did not appear too impressed, but fended off questions about what would be presented to the grand jury.

GUS WEILL, executive secretary to Gov. McKeithen, today said he doubts Novel planted electronic spying equipment in the governor's office.

Weill said he met Novel twice when he installed the de-bugging equipment in the former governor's office on the first floor of the Capitol. McKeithen's executive suite has since been moved to the fourth floor.

Young said he brought in Novel to detect whether the governor's phones had been tapped or if there was electronic eavesdropping.

Weill said neither he nor the governor is concerned about any Novel tape recordings.

"You can't lose when you operate from a base of innocence," he said.

MEANWHILE, the Labor-Management Board of Inquiries which is investigating labor racketeering in the area, moved to interrogate Novel at the suggestion of Edward G. Partin, head of the Baton Rouge Teamsters Union.

Camile Gravel, chief counsel for the board, and A.

Harry Roberts, chief investigator, met with Pitcher to see if they could work out an arrangement to interview Novel. Novel's attorneys were in on the conference.

The board acted after Partin told members Novel may have information on the cause of labor troubles in the Baton Rouge area.

Partin said failure to interview Novel would be "continuing proof that the main endeavor has been to make me and Local 5 scapegoats."

Gravel said he was uncertain if he could subpoena Novel because of the immunity granted him.

Pitcher said Novel would remain under immunity in the state so long as he was here to testify before the grand jury. There was some indication that Novel may continue his testimony tomorrow as well.

NOVEL once instituted a

*LIBEL SUIT AGAINST*  
\$50 million  
Garrison and Truth & Consequences, the private organization financing the New Orleans district attorney's assassination probe.

He dropped it after a judge ruled he had to return to Louisiana to give a deposition in the suit. Novel has successfully avoided extradition to Louisiana where he is under indictment by the Orleans Grand Jury for conspiracy to commit burglary.

However, it is established that Garrison wants him for questioning in the Kennedy investigation and has refused to grant him immunity from arrest, except in this case.

After McKeithen requested the East Baton Rouge Grand Jury look into charges of organized crime flourishing in

the state and the link between his office and an underworld figure—Novel issued a lengthy statement that he could shed considerable light on criminal activity and influence.

McKeithen told Pitcher to get Novel back to the state to testify and made available \$3,500 from his law enforcement fund to finance the effort.

THERE is a possibility the grand jury may make a report to a judge today, depending on what Novel says to it.

Thus far, the grand jury has handed down one indictment and that was against Smith, who was allegedly involved in a separate incident to free international Teamster President James Hoffa from federal prison.

The jury indicted Smith on a charge of public bribery for offering Young \$25,000 to arrange a meeting between him and Baton Rouge Teamster boss Edward Partin, whose testimony helped send Hoffa to jail. Smith surrendered on a fugitive bond in Texas.

In Austin today, Texas Secretary of State John Hill set the Nov. 21 extradition hearing.

IN NEW ORLEANS, Ward said that earlier this year one of the local principals in the national gambling ring operated "from a telephone at his residence in New Orleans. But when we conducted our investigation and surveillance he moved his operations to a neighboring parish.

"These layoff bookie operations involve every city in the United States and several in Canada where there is any betting on pro or college sports.

"It is not limited to New Orleans and probably exists in every major city in the United States."

WARD questioned whether the handbook betting could be called "organized crime."

"There is not one bit of evidence to indicate that this is part of any Cosa Nostra or Mafia network," he said.

"As a matter of fact, our evidence indicates that this is the typical layoff bookie operation, necessary wherever bets are made, in which small bookies who have received

bets that are too large, phone the bets to a larger operator."

Ward, who while Garrison is in California is acting district attorney, said that the international handbook ring is organized in the sense that it involves planning among a group of people.

"But this is not organized crime in the sense that it is syndicated as a monopoly controlled by one person or boss with a rakeoff going to one person in the Cosa Nostra, Mafia or any other organization.

"AS A matter of fact, this type of layoff bet is very competitive and bookies are betting with other bookies not in collusion but to win money from each other," he said.

Although no large-scale operations are now centered in New Orleans, Ward stated, "this does not mean that you cannot make a bet on an athletic event in Orleans Parish and that this bet will not be called to a bookie by use of a telephone. You can make a bet in any city in the United States, including New Orleans, but the books themselves are not operating in Orleans Parish."

SINCE there is no evidence that the key handbook figures are operating in Orleans Parish today, Ward said, "I do not expect any immediate indictments to be issued by the Grand Jury. Mr. Cahn has been invited by the district attorney's office to give testimony to determine if the operations still exist here."

Col. Burbank was notified last night he was to appear before the Orleans jury this afternoon. Burbank said he would pick up the subpoena today at the office of Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff Louis Heyd Jr.

Cahn, in a news conference in Garrison's office, said the gambling syndicate does more than \$100 million a year business in his jurisdiction alone.