

Court in Ohio Tosses Out 3 Charges Against Novel

T-P 4/4/67
No Reason to Hold N. O.
Probe Figure Found

An Ohio official said Louisiana will have to start all over again in extraditing Gordon Novel after a court of that state threw out current proceedings against the fugitive witness District Attorney Jim Garrison has sought for testimony in his assassination investigation.

Judge William Gillie said in Columbus Municipal Court that he saw no reason to hold Novel any longer and he dismissed three charges against him. Judge Gillie said Ohio received no legal extradition papers.

John McElroy, administrative aid to Ohio Gov. James A. Rhodes, commented on the situation after the court's decision.

He said he wrote to Gov. John J. McKeithen a week ago reminding him of a request sent a month ago for necessary supplemental papers to make extradition documents valid. McKeithen did not reply, he said.

TIME UP

The time in court was up, McElroy said, "and we had no reason to hold Novel. It would appear to me that Gov. McKeithen will have to start all over again."

Judge Gillie dismissed Ohio detainers against Novel on charges of conspiracy to commit burglary of a munitions bunker, burglary and theft.

Novel said in an interview that he returned to New Orleans once since the extradition fight started, but no one noticed him because he dressed as a priest, wore a bowler and dark glasses and smoked a cigar.

Novel said that he will return to Louisiana again if Garrison sets an irrevocable recognizance bond for him on pending charges.

THREE CONDITIONS

Novel's Columbus attorney, Jerry Weiner, said that Novel will return for questioning if Garrison agrees to three previously stated conditions:

—That Garrison drop charges

pending against him.

—That he be granted immunity from arrest.

—That he be questioned at an open session of the Orleans Parish grand jury.

Novel was asked why he was not on a National Broadcasting

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NOVEL FREED

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Co. program which raised questions about Garrison's investigation.

Novel replied that it was because NBC prefaced its program by saying that none of the witnesses interviewed were paid.

'ON PAYROLL'

Novel added that he was on the NBC payroll from Feb. 1, 1967, through April 1, helping the network gather information and material for the program.

Novel denied ever being an agent or operative of the Central Intelligence Agency, but said he acted as a CIA intermediary until June of 1961.

Garrison has charged him with conspiring in New Orleans to burglarize a munitions bunker near Houma in August of 1961.

Novel said that munitions taken from the bunker were brought to the office of the late Guy Banister, former Federal Bureau of Investigation agent and assistant superintendent of police, and later were trucked to Miami.