

T-P

Novel Asks Damages Which May Total \$50 Million

Suit Filed Against DA, Members of Group

Damages which might amount to about \$50 million are sought in a suit filed Wednesday in federal district court against District Attorney Jim Garrison and members of Truth and Consequences, Inc.

The suit was filed on behalf of Gordon Novel, 29-year-old former New Orleans bar operator who has been termed by Garrison a major witness in the Kennedy assassination plot investigation.

Damages of \$10 million are sought from Garrison. Other defendants from whom \$1 million each is sought include Truth and Consequences, Inc., Willard Robertson, Joseph Rault Jr., Cecil Shilstone and "John Does," who are sued as unidentified individual members of the

Truth and Consequences organization.

FREE ON BOND

Truth and Consequences, Inc., was established shortly after the Garrison investigation became known publicly after the district attorney complained that his probe was being hampered by public disclosures of his office's expenditures.

It was organized by about 50 businessmen who agreed to contribute funds to finance the probe. Robertson, Rault and Shilstone were prime movers behind the organization.

The suit was signed by attorneys Steven Plotkin of New Orleans and Jerry Weiner of Columbus, Ohio.

Novel is free on a \$10,000 bond in Columbus where he was arrested April 1 on a warrant issued by Garrison's office charging him with conspiring to burglarize a munitions bunker at Houma.

DAMAGE CLAIMED

It is alleged in the suit that

the defendants conspired to use the district attorney's office to charge various individuals with being involved in a plot to kill President Kennedy.

The action claims that Garrison's statements and accusations against Novel have ruined his "reputation as a man of honor, honesty and probity."

Until the investigation began, it is charged, Novel had never been "suspected of or charged with the crimes of being a material witness; conspiring to commit a simple burglary and theft of merchandise or being in any way connected with or have knowledge of the conspiracy to assassinate the late President John F. Kennedy."

LIST OF QUESTIONS

It is also alleged that the various defendants conspired with Garrison and authorized him to speak and publish "malicious and scandalous words" about Novel.

As a result of these actions,

it is charged, Novel has suffered loss of property and business in New Orleans, has been unable to obtain employment, credit and enjoy his freedoms guaranteed under the Constitution of the United States.

Attached to the suit are a list of questions which Novel's attorneys seek to have the defendants answer, including the names of all members of Truth and Consequences.

A hearing on the suit has been set for May 31 before Federal District Judge James A. Comiskey on a motion asking that the plaintiff be allowed to propound the interrogatories.

One species of large, red jellyfish sometimes reaches seven feet in diameter and grows tentacles five feet long. It may weigh as much as half a ton.