

Arrest Novel, He



Steven R. Plotkin
Criminal Sheriff Louis A. Heyd Jr. said today he has asked Chicago police to arrest Gordon Novel as a material witness in a conspiracy to assassinate President John F. Kennedy.

In a telegram to the Chicago Police Department, the sheriff identified Novel as "white male . . . medium build, ruddy complexion, brown hair, blue eyes, date of birth 2/7/38, 153 pounds, 5 feet 9."

The telegram gave an FBI file number and a fingerprint classification for Novel.

The wire said the charge against Novel is "material witness, to wit conspiracy to murder John F. Kennedy."

yd Asks Chicago

3/24/67
Novel is believed to be in Chicago, but this is not certain. Today in New Orleans his attorney, Steven R. Plotkin, said he knows where Novel is, but would not divulge his whereabouts.

Plotkin said he intends to file some motions in the case Monday, but would not elaborate.

HE CONFIRMED THAT NOVEL has moved out of his apartment at 336 Exchange Place.

The sheriff's office reported today that a subpoena has been served on Lewton Martens to appear before the grand

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jury Wednesday in connection with the probe.

Criminal District Judge Matthew S. Braniff issued a warrant yesterday for Novel's arrest as a material witness.

Novel, 29, was last reported in Columbus, Ohio, where he left a note indicating he was going to Chicago.

Another witness, Donald Doody, was subpoenaed yesterday to appear today, but assistant DA James L. Alcock said today he was questioned fully yesterday and would not be asked to reappear.

Alcock said Doody is "not too important" in the case. He said the latter knew Clay L. Shaw, charged with criminal conspiracy in the Kennedy death.

Deputies said that if Novel is found in Chicago, he can make bond and return to New Orleans later.

IF HE FAILS to make bond, he can be charged as a fugitive from Orleans Parish and may obtain a hearing under the laws of the state where he is found, a sheriff's office spokesman said.

Braniff set bail for Novel at \$50,000. The affidavit termed him "a most important witness" necessary to the grand jury investigation.

Novel was subpoenaed to appear last Wednesday before the grand jury. But Plotkin said his client was in Washington, D. C., on personal business.

THE WITNESS popped up in Columbus the same day and said he did not intend to return to New Orleans unless guaranteed freedom from "harassment."

The affidavit requesting the arrest order said Novel sold his Jamaican Village Bar on the edge of the French Quarter and left the city while under subpoena, stating publicly he had no intention of returning.

It said Novel should be placed under sizable bond or the grand jury "will be deprived of a most important and material witness."

THE CONNECTION of Novel to the Kennedy probe has never been disclosed. When he was first subpoenaed to appear before the grand jury March 16, he said he thought Garrison wanted to question him "about activities during 1961 which are related to Mr. Sergio Arcacha Smith."

Arcacha, who now lives in

Dallas, said he never heard of Novel. Arcacha headed an anti-Castro group in New Orleans in 1961 which had the same address as some of the "Fair Play for Cuba" leaflets handed out by Lee Harvey Oswald.

Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison showed up at 1:30 p. m. today at his office in the Criminal Courts building. It was the first time newsmen had seen him since last week.

Garrison would make no comment.

Selected by lot to hear the Shaw case was Criminal District Judge Edward A. Haggerty Jr.

Judge Haggerty said he fears the big problem in the Shaw trial will be "how we can get a jury that is not prejudiced."

The judge, 53, said the Shaw trial will be handled "just like any other case."

HE SAID THE arraignment of Shaw probably will be within 10 days. "Then it will be up to the district attorney to set the trial date," he added.

Judge Haggerty said some of the press guidelines in the preliminary hearing for Shaw were a little too strict.

"One that I remember was against artists making sketches in the courtroom. I can promise you that one will be relaxed."

"I PLAN TO confer with the judges who handled the preliminary hearing and get their feelings about the situation," he said.

Meanwhile, in Auburn, Maine, a 26-year-old dishwasher for whom Garrison's office bought a plane ticket to New Orleans, admitted the information he claimed he had on the case was a hoax.

Arthur E. Strout said today he was drinking when he called Garrison's office and claimed to have a photograph

taken in Jack Ruby's Dallas night club, showing Ruby with Oswald and Perry R. Russo, star witness in Garrison's probe.

"THERE IS NO photograph . . . and I was never in Dallas," Strout said. He said when he got his ticket he went as far as Baltimore, then flew back to Boston and hitchhiked to Maine.

"I don't want to call Mr. Garrison myself, but I'd like him to know that I've changed my mind about the whole

thing and have nothing to testify about," he said.

Russo, a 25-year-old Baton Rouge insurance salesman, testified he heard Shaw, Oswald and Ferrie plot the assassination of Kennedy in September, 1963, at Ferrie's 3330 Louisiana ave. pkwy. apartment.

FERRIE WAS found dead here Feb. 22. Oswald, who the Warren Commission says acted alone in killing Kennedy was shot to death by Ruby two days after the assassination. Ruby died in a Dallas jail cell early this year of cancer.

Shaw, 54, a former managing director of the International Trade Mart, was reported spending the Easter holidays at a hideaway on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.