

NEW ORLEANS STATES-ITEM

FINAL SPORTS ***** MARKETS

VOL. 91—NO. 44 TUESDAY, AUGUST 1, 1967 PRICE 10c

Judge Reduces Bond

Novel May Return To Face N.O. Jury

Gordon Novel, the talkative fugitive witness who has thwarted Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's attempts to return him here for questioning in the Kennedy death plot investigation, may be coming home.

Criminal District Court

Judge Bernard J. Bagert today ordered bond reductions in three cases pending against the 29-year-old one-time New Orleans night club owner.

At the same time, the judge said Novel's attorney indicated that the loquacious electronics expert will return to face the charges and tes-

tify before the Orleans Parish Grand Jury.

GARRISON'S OFFICE has charged Novel with conspiracy to burglarize an oil well service company's munitions bunker at Houma in 1961.

Two other accusations pending against Novel involve what the DA's office charges were failures by Novel to pay outstanding bills owed a local printing firm and commercial artist.

Bail in the three cases amounted to \$10,000. Today, Judge Bagert ordered the bonds lowered to \$5,500.

In addition to the criminal charges, Garrison had a fugitive witness warrant sworn out against Novel. Bagert said the DA's office has agreed to drop this count if Novel returns voluntarily.

THE JUDGE QUOTED Steven Plotkin, Novel's New Orleans lawyer, as saying his client would post bond in the three cases if his bail reduction motion is granted.

Judge Bagert said Plotkin told him Novel would also be willing to face the grand jury and testify in Garrison's inquiry into the murder of the late President John F. Kennedy.

Novel, who admitted serving as an "intermediary" for the Central Intelligence Agency prior to the CIA-sponsored Bay of Pigs invasion, left New Orleans in mid-March.

The DA's office has attempted repeatedly to have him returned from Columbus, Ohio, where Novel sought refuge. However, Ohio Gov. James Rhodes' office several times rejected extradition requests because of what it said were "technical deficiencies."