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PROBE 260

NEW ORLEANS, MARCH 25 (AP)--CLAY L. SHAW, THE KEY FIGURE IN THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION PROBE, RESTED DURING THE EASTER WEEKEND SOMEWHERE ON THE MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST WHILE THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE HUNTED TODAY FOR A RELUCTANT WITNESS.

SHAW, 54, DESTINED FOR TRIAL ON A CHARGE OF CONSPIRING TO MURDER PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY, WAS DUE BACK IN NEW ORLEANS MONDAY. HIS ATTORNEYS KEPT SECRET HIS WHEREABOUTS.

GORDON NOVEL, 29, WHOM DIST. ATTY. JIM GARRISON TABBED AS AN IMPORTANT MATERIAL WITNESS FOR THE GRAND JURY STUDYING THE CASE, WAS BELIEVED SEEKING REFUGE IN CHICAGO.

HIS LAWYER, STEVEN R. PLOTKIN, SAID HE KNEW WHERE NOVEL WAS STAYING, BUT HE REFUSED TO ELABORATE.

NOVEL SOLD HIS BAR ON THE FRINGE OF THE FRENCH QUARTER SUNDAY AND LEFT TOWN WHILE UNDER SUBPOENA TO APPEAR BEFORE THE GRAND JURY. PLOTKIN CONFIRMED THAT NOVEL HAD MOVED OUT OF HIS APARTMENT DURING THE WEEK.

THE ATTORNEY SAID HE WOULD FILE MOTIONS IN THE CASE MONDAY ON BEHALF OF NOVEL. PLOTKIN WOULD NOT DETAIL HIS STRATEGY.

THE CRIMINAL SHERIFF'S OFFICE SENT CHICAGO POLICE A TELEGRAM YESTERDAY, REQUESTING THE ARREST OF NOVEL.

THE WIRE SAID NOVEL IS A "MATERIAL WITNESS, TO WIT, CONSPIRACY TO MURDER JOHN F. KENNEDY." THE TELEGRAM GAVE CHICAGO POLICE AN FBI FILE NUMBER AND A FINGERPRINT CLASSIFICATION FOR NOVEL.

NOVEL WAS LAST REPORTED IN COLUMBUS, OHIO. HE DISAPPEARED THURSDAY AFTER LEAVING A NOTE SAYING HE WAS HEADING FOR CHICAGO. HE SAID HE DID NOT PLAN TO RETURN TO NEW ORLEANS UNLESS GUARANTEED FREEDOM FROM "HARASSMENT."

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