

A Mental Check For 'Plot' Figure

Bismarck, N.D.

A mistrial was declared in a \$3 million insurance fraud prosecution yesterday after a defendant's bizarre tale that he was attacked by gunmen because he had vital information about President Kennedy's assassination.

U.S. District Court Judge Edward Devitt ruled in ordering the mistrial, "there is reasonable cause to believe that (attorney David R.) Kroman may be insane or otherwise so mentally incompetent that he is unable to assist in his own defense."

Devitt revoked Kroman's \$5000 recognizance bond and ordered Kroman committed for 45 days to the Federal penal hospital at Springfield, Mo., for mental examination.

SHOTGUN

Kroman, 43, was found partially conscious — a loaded shotgun across his knees — in a rented car on the shoulder of a highway about 30 miles east of Bismarck early yesterday.

Kroman later told Judge Devitt that he was forced off the highway at pistol point by pursuers as he drove here with documents which "tend to prove or in some cases do prove" that persons other than Lee Harvey Oswald killed President Kennedy.

Kroman told Devitt that he was followed by two cars as he drove toward Bismarck from Minneapolis, Minn.

CAR

As he neared Bismarck, Kroman said, one car drew abreast of his auto and an occupant leaned out and pointed a gun at him.

"I would either be shot or I would go off the road. I went off the road," he said.

Kroman said he was convinced the highway incident was connected with his investigation of the Kennedy assassination and not with his trial in the alleged insurance fraud conspiracy.

"Nineteen people have died in connection with the Kennedy investigation, I don't want to be the 20th," Kroman told Devitt.

Later in a hospital room, Kroman told newsmen "the assassination is solved" and that he would reveal the

name of Kennedy's killer within the next few days.

FRAUD

Court-appointed physician, said Kroman's condition was caused by an epileptic seizure. But Kroman said that wasn't so.

Kroman is one of five defendants being tried on fraud and conspiracy charges, in connection with the collapse of American Allied Insurance Co. of St. Paul, Minn.

The Government contends the defendants participated in a scheme to siphon several million dollars in assets of the high-risk auto insurance firm which led to its collapse. Kroman was an officer of an American Allied subsidiary.

U.P. & A.P.