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Former Apartment of JFK Probe Figure Ransacked

NEW ORLEANS, May 27 (AP)—The apartment where a letter was found linking Gordon Novel to the CIA has been ransacked and burglarized, its occupants told the district attorney's office today.

Two young women who rented the French Quarter apartment, where Novel lived before leaving New Orleans, said they found the lock ripped from the door Thursday evening.

That was the day before publication of a letter found in the apartment. The letter, apparently written by Novel, asks a "Mr. Weiss" to get him "out of this mess" in March.

Novel has been staying at Columbus, Ohio, and fighting extradition to New Orleans, where Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison wants him as a material witness in the Kennedy death plot investigation.

The young women, who asked that their names be withheld, said an intruder methodically searched through cabinets, dresser drawers, personal papers and clothes.

A television set and a radio were stolen during the foray, but Asst. Dist. Atty. Andrew Sciambra said he believed the theft was "no more than a cover." Sciambra said:

"I don't believe there is any

doubt that this entry and search was directly connected with the finding of Novel's letter. There is too much evidence that whoever was here was looking for something besides a TV set and a radio."

Although reports of the letter find had not been published by the New Orleans States-Item when the apartment was entered, the newspaper said a number of persons knew it had been discovered in Novel's former lodgings.

The letter was found under a plastic drainboard on the sink while the girls were cleaning.