

Nixon Threat Case Dropped

New Orleans

Charges of threatening President Nixon's life have been dropped against former New Orleans policeman Edwin M. Gaudet, U.S. Attorney Gerald Gallinghouse said yesterday.

Gallinghouse said the charges were dropped because the key witness was unable to identify Gaudet.

Gaudet had been accused in a federal warrant of "knowingly, willfully, unlawfully" making an oral threat upon the life of Mr. Nixon. The threat was allegedly made in a New Orleans drug store on August 15, five days before Nixon was to address the Veterans of Foreign Wars convention.

"The woman witness who had definitely identified Gaudet as the man who made the threat stated under oath this morning that she could not confirm her previous, positive identifica-

tion," Gallinghouse said.

Gaudet has been in custody since Wednesday when he surrendered to his wife and cousin, ending a three-day manhunt in the mountains of northern New Mexico.

In Albuquerque, officials said Gaudet is now in state custody on three counts of assault with intent to kill a police officer. The charges related to shots Gaudet allegedly fired at three local policemen during the manhunt.

Gaudet is being held in \$30,000 bond.

The manhunt in the New Mexico mountains began on Monday when Gaudet, 29, slipped away from an Internal Revenue Service agent.

Gaudet's wife has contended all week that her husband was at the commune, where they now live with their three children, when he was alleged to have made the threat in New Orleans.

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