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Subject: Reuters Story on New Orleans Court Hearing

Copyright 1996 Reuters Ltd. All rights reserved. The following news report may not be republished or redistributed, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of Reuters Ltd. By Christi Daugherty NEW ORLEANS, March 25 (Reuter) - New Orleans District Attorney Harry Connick Sr was ordered on Monday to reach agreement with a government board that wants his files on a controversial 1960s investigation into the assassination of President John Kennedy. U.S. District Judge Marcel Livaudais indicated that he thought Connick should hand the files over to the JFK Assassination Records Review Board, but said he would wait for the two sides to work out a deal. The records board, created by Congress in 1994, wants Connick to turn over papers from an investigation by then-U.S. Attorney Jim Garrison, who charged that New Orleans businessman Clay Shaw conspired with Lee Harvey Oswald to kill Kennedy. Shaw was tried in 1969, but acquitted. Garrison died in 1992, but his story became the basis for the controversial film "JFK" by director Oliver Stone. Connick has refused to hand over the files, which have been in his position for a number of years, saying the Garrison investigation was a sham and of no use to the records board. "Every man and woman alive and above the age of reason in New Orleans in 1969 when this was happening knew this investigation was a farce. It is no more relevant to the assassination of President Kennedy than the movie 'JFK' is," said Connick's attorney William Wessel. But Connick also is using the Garrison files as leverage to regain grand jury records from the investigation, which were sent to the records board last year by an assistant district attorney after Connick denied their existence. Connick, who is the father of singer Harry Connick Jr., has said the grand jury records contain names of witnesses who are still alive and whose privacy will be violated if their names are disclosed. But Livaudais warned Connick that the records board may have a right to the Garrison papers. "If these are assassination records, and I'm inclined to say they are, then the board could take them whether you want them to or not," he said. The judge said he would give the two sides two to three weeks to reach an agreement before deciding whether to bring them back to court. REUTER

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