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Subject: Garrison and Wegmann Collections Release
Today's ASSOCIATED PRESS story. Copyright 1996 THE ASSOCIATED PRESS. All rights reserved. THE INFORMATION contained in this news report may not be published, broadcast or otherwise distributed without the prior written authority of the Associated Press. By MELISSA B. ROBINSON Associated Press Writer WASHINGTON (AP) -- A former aide to the late New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison said the prosecutor, in an effort to prove businessman Clay Shaw was involved in a plot to kill President Kennedy, had potential witnesses coached and paid, documents show. Private records released today by the National Archives include a transcript of a 1967 interview between Shaw's defense lawyers and William Gurchich, an investigator who quit Garrison's office and provided Shaw's lawyers with information on the district attorney's tactics. "You know they will say anything," Gurchich told Edward F. Wegmann, a New Orleans lawyer who was part of the defense team, referring generally to possible witnesses that Garrison was pursuing in building his failed case against Shaw. "You can approach Darrell Garner and just tell him who you are and he will just ask you what you want to know and ask you how much you will pay him," Gurchich said, referring to one possible witness. "Darrell Garner has about 30 arrests in the last four years." Garrison, who believed CIA hard-liners had Kennedy assassinated on Nov. 22, 1963, put Shaw on trial in 1969 on charges of conspiring to kill Kennedy. The jury heard 34 days of testimony, then deliberated less than an hour before acquitting Shaw. Garrison's probe received fresh publicity as the basis for Oliver Stone's 1992 film, "JFK." It could not be determined immediately whether Gurchich was referring to the Darrell Garner who was a suspect in the shooting of a witness who claimed he saw Lee Harvey Oswald flee the scene of the fatal shooting of a Dallas police officer shortly after Kennedy's assassination. Garner died in 1970, and there is no telephone listing for Gurchich in New Orleans. The Gurchich transcript, which was typed on stationery from Wegmann's New Orleans law office, was among the private files obtained from the families of Wegmann and Garrison by the Assassination Records Review Board, which is reviewing assassination-related records for public release. They are the first private records that the board has made a part of the John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection at the National Archives. The records have never before been released publicly, although some of the information has been made available previously to private researchers. As far as potential witnesses against Shaw, they were paid and coached, Gurchich said. "He doesn't put out much -- he only puts, like 10 or 20 on Clyde Johnson when Clyde comes in and I think (Johnson) is worth a lot more than ... Garner," Gurchich said in explaining that he did not know precisely how much Garner was paid. Garrison, Shaw, Johnson and Wegmann are all dead. Gurchich painted an unflattering portrait of Garrison, at one point telling Wegmann that Garrison sometimes had no Record

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