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Subject: Assassination Records Review Board News Release

NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT: TOMI SAMUELSON APRIL 9, 1996 (202) 724-0088, EXT. 227 JFK ASSASSINATION RECORDS REVIEW BOARD RELEASES FILES OF JIM GARRISON AND CLAY SHAW DEFENSE ATTORNEY The Assassination Records Review Board announced today the release of records from the private files of former New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison and from the files of Edward Wegmann, a member of Clay Shaw's defense team. Garrison conducted an investigation into the assassination of President Kennedy in the late 1960's. Shaw was tried by Garrison and acquitted in 1969 on the charge of conspiring to kill the President. These are the first private records that the Board has made a part of the JFK Collection, said the Honorable John R. Tunheim, Chair of the Review Board. The Garrison investigation into the Kennedy assassination is an important part of the history of this case. As a result of the generosity of both the Garrison and Wegmann families, the public will be able to gain further insight into the investigation from two very different views. I hope their contributions will serve as a model for others who possess records that should be part of the JFK Collection and available to the public. Last year, as part of its effort to make the JFK Collection as complete as possible, the Review Board focused attention on potential sources of assassination records in New Orleans. The Board conducted a public hearing in New Orleans in June 1995. After being approached by the Review Board, the late Jim Garrison's family agreed to donate a collection of records on the assassination of President Kennedy that Garrison had kept at his residence. The collection includes records from his assassination investigation and prosecution of Clay Shaw, as well as other files on individuals or subjects that Garrison thought were connected to the assassination. There are approximately 15,000 pages in the Garrison collection. The family of the late Edward Wegmann, who was a member of the legal team which defended Clay Shaw at his 1969 assassination conspiracy trial, agreed to donate Mr. Wegmann's files to the JFK Collection. Some of the documents in the Wegmann collection came from the office files of District Attorney Garrison. William Gurvich, an investigator for Garrison, made copies of many internal memoranda and witness interviews from the District Attorney's files when he left the office after becoming disenchanted with Garrison and the investigation. He turned the documents over to Shaw's attorneys. There are approximately 6,000 pages in the Wegmann collection. The original documents being released today have been transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration for inclusion in the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection, which is housed at the National Archives facility in College Park, Maryland. Copies of selected documents from both the Garrison and Wegmann collections are available from the Assassination Records Review Board, 600 E Street, NW, Second Floor, Washington DC

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