

U . S . REVEALS DELOREAN EVIDENCE

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LOS ANGELES -- John De Lorean once offered to invest in Asian heroin and Colombian cocaine and said it was "tragic" that the deal fell through, according to government documents released Thursday in the automaker's drug trafficking case.

The papers were filed Jan. 11, but kept secret under an order by U . S . District Judge Robert Takasugi.

An appeals court last week ordered Takasugi to release all 28 documents, but said he must hold a hearing first for arguments from attorneys who might seek to keep specific documents sealed.

AFTER A HEARING Thursday afternoon, Takasugi released five documents. He also said he would ask the appeals court for a detailed clarification of its opinion.

Four of the released documents were government and defense motions to maintain documents under seal. The fifth was a lengthy defense exhibit detailing mortgage commitments on De Lorean's Bedminster, N.J., home, which he pledged with his homes in San Diego County and New York City to raise his \$5 million bail.

Takasugi said he would keep most of the documents sealed because release could violate the constitutional rights of people mentioned in the papers . Others must be kept secret, he said, because they identify the government's informant or concern other ongoing narcotics investigations.

EARLIER THURSDAY, U . S . Supreme Court Justice William Rehnquist turned down an emergency request by De Lorean's lawyers aimed at setting aside the appeals court order.

The 9th U . S . Circuit Court of Appeals had ordered release of the documents, saying Takasugi was wrong to issue a blanket seal in December on all pretrial documents in the case, after government allegations that De Lorean had connections to the Irish Republican Army drew worldwide publicity

De Lorean, 58, founder of a sports car company based in Northern Ireland, is charged with conspiring to distribute \$24 million in cocaine in an alleged effort to save the failing company. He was arrested in October, and trial is scheduled for Aug. 9. De Lorean is a former General Motors Corp. group vice- president.

The government document released Thursday said that according to undercover tape recordings of De Lorean's alleged narcotics transactions, "it is difficult to imagine a more willing participant in a narcotics transaction than John Z. De Lorean."

IN THE DOCUMENTS, Assistant U . S . Attorney James Walsh said De Lorean offered \$2 million to invest in Asian heroin and Colombian cocaine, but the funding "became unavailable due to the fact that the money had to be placed on deposit in a trust account to satisfy the British receivers of De Lorean's company."

"After informing the FBI undercover agent of this temporary setback, De Lorean himself stated, 'I feel as bad about this as you do,' characterized the setback as a 'tragedy' and said, 'Unless you've got some ideas, all I can do is, I'll try to develop an alternative.'

"These are hardly the words of an unwilling participant or a withdrawn co-conspirator."

WALSH RIDICULED De Lorean's contention that he was entrapped by government agents.

"It should be obvious that a defendant who is captured in a room with 25 kilograms of high-quality Colombian cocaine following a videotaped session in which he fondles the cocaine and toasts his future in the narcotics business has few defenses available to him," Walsh said.

Walsh said De Lorean later found an alternative for investing in narcotics by delivering stocks in his De Lorean Motor Co. to a U . S . Drug Enforcement Administration agent posing as an organized crime figure.

The document was filed to counter defense efforts to get more information on the government's case against De Lorean. It also attacked the defense contention that prosecutors were wrongly trying to link De Lorean to the Irish Republican Army.

"The connection between De Lorean and the IRA is not a figment of the imagination of a government informant or undercover agent," Walsh said. "It was announced by De Lorean, without prompting, in an effort to show the informant that he, too, had some tough associates who would look after his interests."

Caption: Photo United Press International

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