

Bail Case Jurist Has Conflict, Connick Says

Federal District Judge Lansing L. Mitchell should recuse himself from consideration of a suit involving \$1,040,000 in bail bond forfeitures, former assistant U.S. attorney Harry F. Connick said today.

Connick is expected to be a candidate for district attorney.

Connick said Judge Mitchell should declare himself ineligible because of his former association with the law firm of Deutsch, Kerrigan and Stiles, which is representing the suit's plaintiff, Maryland National Insurance Co.

CONNICK also criticized the district attorney's office for failing to collect the million dollars.

"That money could have been used to expand the police budget of New Orleans," said Connick.

Maryland National is seeking in Federal District Court an injunction restraining the district attorney's office from seizure of its assets, after the DA's office moved to collect \$629,000 in bond forfeitures.

SINCE THE money was never collected, Connick said, "that million dollars is surplus and the unused surplus would have reverted to the city general fund and could have been applied to hire more policemen."

Judge Mitchell yesterday postponed a hearing on Maryland National's suit. The district attorney's office has requested dismissal of the suit on grounds that the federal court lacks jurisdiction and on grounds Maryland National failed to state a claim on which relief can be granted.

Connick said Judge Mitchell was a member of Deutsch, Kerrigan and Stiles "as recently as 1966."

He made the comments before a neighborhood gathering at 1498 Madrid.