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—Photo by The Associated Press.

HIS LAWYER'S DEN was the scene of this convivial press conference held last night by a smiling CLAY L. SHAW (seated, second from right), defendant in District Attorney Jim Garrison's investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Shaw and his attorneys hosted about 30 members of the press at the home of EDWARD WEGMANN (seated left of Shaw), 350 Broadway. Also attending the session were WILLIAM WEGMANN (seated on arm of sofa at left) and IRVIN DYMOND (on sofa at far right).

POISED, WITTY AT PRESS MEET

Shaw Relaxed, Confident, Looking Forward to Trial

By WILLIAM U. MADDEN

Clay Shaw met the press last night in a three-hour session that was more of a reception than a press conference.

It was the second time that the debonair Shaw has faced newsmen since he was accused of conspiring to kill President John F. Kennedy. And his attorneys decided to give out-of-town reporters and cameramen who'd never met Shaw a chance to chat with him — about anything other than the pending trial.

Under court orders not to discuss the case, Shaw invited the newsmen to the home of one of his attorneys, Edward Wegmann, and confidently faced a barrage of cameras and questions that ranged from his philosophy of life to the names of his maternal and paternal grandmothers.

IT WAS all very friendly and very casual.

All of the guests seemed to have a wonderful time. The cameraman got an excellent opportunity to build a file of pictures on Shaw for future use, and if the reporters could not talk about the case, they at least learned that:

1. Shaw looks well, feels fine after his recent operation for a back injury, and is still the witty, articulate man he was before that case they couldn't discuss.

2. He is "technically" a Baptist, has lost no weight (still 220) since he was indicted, drinks martinis on the rocks, likes to read, write and listen to music, and is taller than any reporter covering the story.

3. He still smokes heavily (about two and a half packs a day) "particularly in a courtroom," is knowledgeable about a great many subjects, and considers himself an "old-fashioned liberal of the Wilson-Roosevelt persuasion.

And for those reporters who missed anything else, or left early, the attorneys distributed a biographical sketch of Shaw that was complete and certainly within the guidelines established by the court.

If the press conference was restrictive, it was a field day for the photographers, for Shaw is a cameraman's delight. Totally at ease, he and his attorneys, Edward Wegmann; his brother, William, and F. Irvin Dymond, alternated between the handsome living room to the large den. They remained carefully alert, though outwardly relaxed and breezy.

They indicated they very much want to go to trial and hinted they may have a great deal to say after it is over.

Shaw made only one, real reference to the indictment against him. Flanked by his attorneys, he said:

"God willing, I'm looking forward to the trial.

"I expect to win (here he corrected himself, explaining that "win" was a term used more appropriately in a civil court case) to be proved innocent."

Aside from that, and his denial that he had ever worked actively on behalf of anti-Castroites, the "press conference" was more like a game of hopscotch.

Newsmen, desperate for something to write, jumped from one subject to another. What they learned, in rapid-fire order, was:

1. Shaw greatly loves the French Quarter and is proud of his work in restoring approximately 15 buildings.

2. Shaw is working on a play and he hopes his talent is "as great as the play I envision." (It's about the first Spanish governor of Louisiana.)

3. He was greatly influenced by Gen. Charles Thrasher (under whom he served as an aide during World War II) and by a number of authors he has read, particularly Tennessee Williams, Thornton Wilder, Christophre Frye, Philip Barry and Robert E. Sherwood.

4. That he believes the United States is reaching a "modus vivendi" with Russia and he hopes this country has the wisdom to cope with it."

5. That he has "tried insofar as possible to live a normal life as I can under the circumstances" since the indictment.

6. That he considers himself religious, "but not within the framework of any religion.

7. That he cannot comment on rumors about him, because "I have enough difficulty dealing with reality."

8. That he is keeping a diary on a day-to-day basis since the indictment.

9. That he does not know Gen. Anatasio Somoza (the Nicaraguan president-elect who recently visited New Orleans), but had met his wife.

In between, the butler kept serving drinks and the whole atmosphere seemed more like something out of the Spring Fiesta.

Shaw was dignity throughout, frequently smiling and quick to engage in brief, private exchanges with newsmen he recognized.

He was especially effective in explaining his philosophy of life. A successful man, Shaw said, is one who "develops his

potentials to the fullest and not try to harm anybody."

"How do you rate yourself?" he was asked.

"I do my best," he said simply.

By 10 p. m., three hours after the conference got under way, some newsmen were still there. Shaw was still talking; his lawyers were still standing by; and the Wegmanns' black bulldog, Snuffy, looked bored. But then, he's getting old.

DA Aide Raps Shaw Press Statements

Assistant District Attorney James Alcock today criticized Clay Shaw and his attorneys for making statements last night at a press conference which Alcock says he believes were contrary to the order of Judge Edward A. Haggerty Jr. barring any comments about the case from either the defense or the prosecution.

Alcock said: "I'm really surprised that (defense attorney) Irvin Dymond would allow his client to say things like that."

Alcock referred specifically to statements by Shaw that he believed he would be proven innocent of the charge of conspiring to murder President John F. Kennedy and Shaw's favorable comments about Kennedy.

"This seems to me to be a statement reflecting on his (Shaw's) guilt or innocence," said Alcock.

But Judge Haggerty shortly before noon today said that as far as he was aware, Shaw and his attorneys followed his orders issued to both the defense and prosecution.