

LOUISIANA 4 Oct 70

'The Creeping Erosion'

"Someone must have been telling lies about Joseph K, for without having done anything wrong he was arrested one fine morning."

Franz Kafka's opening lines of "The Trial" expressed the surrealistic dilemma of a symbolic man. But another man, Clay Shaw, believed that the passage described himself, as well.

The retired New Orleans businessman (merchandising) was arrested on March 1, 1967, charged by District Attorney Jim Garrison of taking part in a conspiracy to assassinate President John F. Kennedy. For exactly two years, Shaw was forced to fight down accusations of conspiracy, far-reaching plots, spies, counterespies, mystery, peril and secret corruption.

So Sorry

He suffered the harassment of witnesses who testified they had seen him in conference with Jack Ruby and Lee Harvey Oswald, and who two months later told the court that they had made a mistake — that "it wasn't (Shaw) they'd seen there after all, but rather former Secretary of State Edward Stettinius."

His personal fortune dwindled away in defense expenses and he was forced to sell his showplace home in New Orleans' French Quarter.

Then, on March 1, 1969, after just one hour's deliberation, Clay Shaw was acquitted.

Last week, Shaw was in the public eye again — but this time, he was the accuser rather than the accused.

"I was arrested and charged with what must



surely be the most shocking crime of the century, of which I had absolutely no knowledge whatsoever," Shaw told a group of several hundred students at American University. Lecturing to the sympathetic student groups had become his only source of income since the trial "tarnished" his reputation, the New York Times reported.

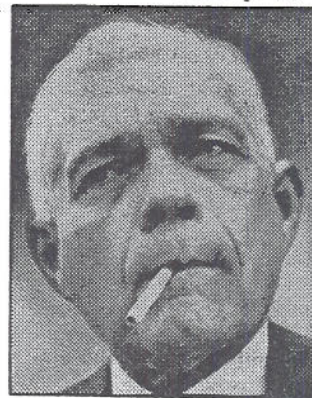
The theme of his lectures was "the creeping erosion of individual rights in this country," and Shaw considered himself to be an expert on the subject.

'Terrifying Power'

"It doesn't matter what happened to me personally, terrible things happen to everybody. But what I'm talking about tonight could happen to anybody within the sound of my voice."

Shaw had warned students from such widely scattered schools as the University of Wyoming, Memphis State University and the State University of New York of "the truly terrifying power which the state has over an individual."

"The importance of the Garrison case is not that he failed. He might have succeeded. Had I lacked the money to defend myself properly, I would be in jail now instead of talking to you."



AP Wirephoto
CLAY SHAW
'Terrifying power'

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