

WHY? HE DOESN'T KNOW

Airman Unable To Figure It

By WRAY WEDDELL JR.

"I guess I'm guilty, but I just can't see me doing something like that."

Speaking was Bible-reading Jimmy N. Shaver, 31-year-old airman charged with the brutal rape-murder in San Antonio Sunday of a pretty little 3-year-old girl, Chere Jo Horton.

"I've always been a religious man. I've always tried to be good. I don't know what happened," said Shaver during an interview Wednesday with an Austin American reporter in his high security Travis County jail cell.

The Lackland Air Force Base airman, a native of San Antonio, was rushed here late Tuesday night from the Alamo City where mob violence was reported threatening.

The rape-slaying of the little girl is being called the most shocking crime in San Antonio in many years.

Perspiring heavily although his cell atop the county courthouse was not hot, Shaver said: "I'd give my life if it hadn't happened."

Describing his family as "very religious," Shaver, father of a 5-year-old boy, was reading a small pocket-size Bible when approached for the interview. He held it in his hand, marking a page with his finger, while answering questions.

Shaver said he could recall nothing of the slaying, adding—"But they've got a lot of evidence against me."

He said he had been drinking most of Sunday and was "terribly drunk" although "as a rule I don't drink."

Shaver repeated his statement to San Antonio police that he must have "blacked out."

Except for a speeding ticket in West Virginia, the airman said, he had never been in trouble.

"I've always tried to follow the law," he said.

Under heavy guard, Shaver was placed in the county jail here shortly before midnight Tuesday.

He was rushed out of the Bexar County jail following reported threats of mob violence. One threat

to dynamite the jail was reported by authorities.

Reports of a "lynching party" were heard by both San Antonio Police Captain W. A. Cain and Bexar County Sheriff Owen Kilday.

They attempted to keep Shaver's move to Austin a secret. But news of the hasty transfer soon leaked out both here and in San Antonio.

Travis County Sheriff T. O. Lang first refused to confirm Shaver's presence in his jail. But he reluctantly verified it when assured

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3 Top Guests Being Held In County Jail

Travis County Jail — considered by many to be the "safest" in the southwest—was doing a big business Wednesday.

Sheriff T. O. Lang had as his guests three top-priority out-of-county visitors — all either murderers or charged with murder.

The maximum security cell block was like a fortress.

"It's almost impossible for a prisoner to get out of here," said Chief Deputy George Pope. "And it's equally impossible for a man or group of men to get in."

It's maximum security — both ways — and there are three good reasons why.

In the Travis County Jail because their home-town bastille might not hold them are:

Airman Jimmy N. Shaver, 31, accused rape-slayer of a three-year-old San Antonio girl.

Leonard Lionel Bingham, 27, convicted slayer of a Sutton County grocerywoman sent to Travis County for "safekeeping." His case is on appeal. He received a death sentence.

Marion R. Palomera, accused of murder with malice of a San Marcos man, also sent to Travis County

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