A SPECIAL
Investigation of November Incidents
REPORT

On November 17 and early morning of the 18th, a series of violent acts caused extensive property damage and personal injury to 27 persons at the University of Oklahoma. The most serious of the acts was a firebombing on the fourth floor of Walker Tower, a 12-story dormitory. The floor of the tower had been unoccupied most of the year; on the evening of the 17th, however, a group of Continuing Education students were staying in the rooms and were among the 27 injured.

Fire alarm systems in Walker Tower were functioning, and the building was quickly evacuated. The majority of injuries were smoke inhalation, and the majority of injured required more than one night of hospitalization.

The first incident was a shotgun through a black People's Union, the home of the Black Students' Union. This occurred at 1:55 a.m. on November 18th. Subsequent acts occurred in the early morning hours of November 18th:

- A firebombing incident at the University of Oklahoma Police Department
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2:30 a.m. - Vandalism at Bizzell Memorial Library: The three major fires at Walker Tower, Wilcox Center, and Building 8 on the South Campus.

The investigation process began immediately. President Sharp emphasized in a press conference that the university had all appropriate law enforcement support available. He also announced the establishment of a $1,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person or persons who perpetrated or conspired to perpetrate any of the recent acts of violence.

PROGRESS REPORTED

At press time, the investigation had involved the checking of over 6 major leads with as many as 60 investigators working in a coordinated effort at one time. A total of 252 individuals had been interviewed in relation to the crimes, and many of these had been contacted a second time. The efforts were conducted in order to enlarge our pool of sources of information. Over 4,000 man hours had been expended in the investigation.

Investigative agencies in addition to the University's Police Department include the Cleveland County Sheriff's Office, Norman Police Department, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has been assigned a liaison role.

In reporting the initial progress of the investigation, Chief Jones noted that 62 separate items of physical evidence had been obtained and forwarded to the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation. The FBI has laboratories for analysis. The items included the expended bullet found at the Wazuri House, samples of volatile substances used in igniting the major fires and numerous latent fingerprints which had been lifted from damaged items.

The physical and circumstantial evidence and the time sequences of the three major fires and library vandalism indicate a probable conspiracy involving approximately six persons, said Jones.

Because all of the acts of violence occurred during early morning hours, he said, it has not been possible for members of the investigative teams to gather the evidence necessary to present the case to the Cleveland County District Attorney for his action in issuing warrants for arrest. It is the consensus of the investigative teams that no information and evidence must be uncovered before charges can be brought.

Because there was no apparent attempt to ignite the incendiary device placed near the OU Police Department headquarters, investigators feel this was merely an attempt to harass campus enforcement officials.

MAXIMUM PENALTIES

The crimes involved could result in charges of arson in the first degree with maximum penalties of 20 years in prison and a $25,000 fine, and in the second degree, with maximum penalties of 15 years in prison and a $20,000 fine (in the case of the south base building fire). The investigation is continuing, and investigative agencies are meeting periodically to review the case while seeking additional leads from persons who may have information or any type pertaining to the crimes. A break in the investigation is most likely to occur in this form.