

INQUIRY AFFIRMS SHOTGUN DEATHS

NYTimes

Pellets Cited in Slaying of
2 Blacks on Campus

BATON ROUGE, Dec. 1 (UPI)—A state commission conducting secret hearings on the slaying of two black students at Southern University here Nov. 16 has concluded that the youths were killed by blasts from shotguns.

A statement last night by William Guste Jr., the Attorney General of Louisiana, who is chairman of the commission, was the first official confirmation that gunshots caused the deaths of Denver A. Smith and Leonard Brown Jr., both 20, during a clash between students and sheriff's deputies.

Mr. Guste said that while the decision should not be considered a "final finding of fact, it is clearly established by the coroner's report that the two deaths were caused by a shotgun. The pellets were found in the bodies of the two students that were killed."

"Our commission is doing an in-depth and careful investigation," Mr. Guste said, "and before we release any conclusions we want them to be properly documented."

Statement by Governor

The coroner's report said that the wounds were caused by pellets the size of No. 3 or No. 4 buckshot, but Gov. Edwin Edwards said that the report did not prove that the pellets came from a shotgun. They might have been fired, he said, by an explosive device.

An unofficial all-black committee of inquiry held two days of hearings on the slayings this week and concluded Wednesday that buckshot fired from the shotgun of "a sheriff's deputy or deputies" had killed the two students. The Black People's Committee of Inquiry called for criminal prosecution of law enforcement personnel.

Fewer than a dozen persons have testified before the state commission in three days of secret hearings. A spokesman

emphasized this indicated the thoroughness of the state investigation.

Mr. Guste said that the commission hoped to question students about the shootings soon.

Protest in Arkansas

FINE BLUFF, Ark., Dec. 1 (UPI)—More than 1,300 students boycotted classes at the predominantly black University of Arkansas campus here today protesting the refusal of four administration officials to resign.

There were no incidents, no picketing and no attempts made by boycotting students to keep other students from attending classes.

The students are demanding more scholarships, more repairs and heating in buildings and a greater voice in university policy.