

LOUISIANA HINTS ERROR IN KILLINGS

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Governor Says a Policeman at Southern U. May Have Used Buckshot Shell

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BATON ROUGE, Nov. 17 —

Two young black men slain in a campus confrontation yesterday were "possibly" shot by a policeman who mistakenly loaded a buckshot shell instead of a tear-gas shell, Gov. Edwin W. Edwards said today.

The remark came at a news conference on the fourth floor of Louisiana's skyscraper state capitol.

Last night the Governor said that neither the state police nor county sheriff's deputies had fired anything but tear gas in the melee on the campus of Southern University here.

"From this distance," the Governor said, gesturing toward a row of seats 10 feet away, "you can't tell one of the shotgun shells from a tear-gas shell."

The local coroner, Dr. Hypo-

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lite Landry, said that each of the two black men had been killed by three lead pellets that struck him in the left side of the head.

The pellets were "not inconsistent" with being from No. 3 or No. 4 buckshot, Dr. Landry said. He said that a buckshot pellet of this size would be about the same weight as a .22-caliber slug.

The Justice Department announced in Washington today that it was beginning an investigation of the confrontation between Southern University students and the police. Deputy Attorney General Ralph E. Erickson said that the Federal Bureau of Investigation had been asked to determine if there had been any violation of Federal law in the melee, which began when the police ordered the students to vacate the administration building at

Southern, the nation's largest black college.

Governor Edwards said that he "welcomed" the Federal investigation and added that the state would cooperate. At the same time, he said, the state will undertake its own inquiry.

State Aides Accused

The state investigation will be headed by State Attorney General William Guste, the Governor said.

Governor Edwards said he was not "speculating" that the fatal shots had been accidentally fired by deputy sheriffs but he said it was "possible" and could not be discounted.

Sheriff Al Amiss was present at the Governor's news conference but left by a back door of the conference room when reporters asked if they could question him.

While the investigations were being ordered, some Southern students were accusing state officials of plotting to murder student leaders at the state-supported university.

The students have been demanding a bigger voice in the administration of Southern, which has a main campus at Baton Rouge and dbranch campuses at New Orleans and Shreveport.

Fred Prejean, the main spokesman for dissident students, said at a news conference in Baton Rouge, "The incident which took place yesterday we believe was a conspiracy on the part of the president of Southern University, Leon Netterville; the sheriff, Al Amiss, and the Governor of this state."

Calls Educator 'Concerned'

Mr. Prejean, who was in jail at the time of the confrontation, said there appeared to be a pattern.

"There was the Kent State murder, a Jackson State murder and a Texas State murder, and yesterday there was a murder of Southern University students," Mr. Prejean said.

Charlene Hardnett, another student, said that student leaders had viewed television film of the confrontation on the sprawling campus north of Baton Rouge.

"Two students that were standing around were shot down, were murdered," Miss Hardnett said. "We are aware of the fact that Dr. Netterville sets students up for mass slaughter."

Dr. Netterville was not available for comment today.

Governor Edwards said that he did not blame the univer-

sity president for "maintaining a low profile."

"He's very concerned," the Governor said, "about reports they're out to get him."

The sheriff's office said tonight that it still had not learned the identity of one of the two slain men. A spokesman said that the man's fingerprints had been sent to the state police and to the F.B.I. in Washington.

Governor Edwards said that the state police had been unable to identify the body and that no report had yet been received from the Federal agency.

The Governor said the fact that no one at the university had been able to identify the man indicated, but did not prove, that he was not a student.

The coroner said that the dead man had no identification on his person.

"He was approximately 20 years old," the coroner said. "He was a black male, and he had his hair in pigtails, 20 or 30 of them."

Reports About Militants

"He had three or four keys in his pocket, one of them a car key, perhaps; four or five \$1 bills in his pocket and a wrist watch."

Governor Edwards said there had been reports that "outsiders" had been on the campus at Southern in recent days.

He said that state intelligence units also had received "unverified reports" that militants from "out of state" were on the way to Baton Rouge.

Two black men from Chicago were stopped while trying to enter the campus last night after airline officials reported to the police that the two had checked long boxes as luggage.

Governor Edwards said that the man had rifles when stopped at a railroad overpass leading onto the campus. Both said they were graduates of the school returning to Baton Rouge for the scheduled football game between Grambling College and Southern that was to have been played tomorrow but has now been canceled.

Most Leave Campus

The men told the police that they had brought the rifles to go hunting while on vacation in Louisiana, the authorities said. Neither man was charged because it is not a violation of Louisiana law to carry rifles. The weapons, the Governor said, were taken by Federal agents.

Most students had left the campus today in line with an order from Governor Edwards.



United Press International

Gov. Edwin W. Edwards, rubbing eye, after inspecting the administration building of Southern University at Baton Rouge. Building, held by students, had been tear gassed.

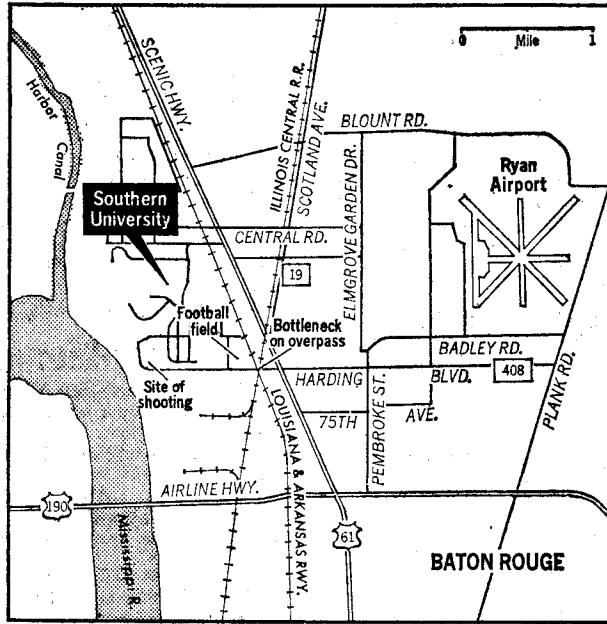
that the school be closed until after Thanksgiving Day. A few foreign students and several from out of the state, however, were allowed to remain in a freshman dormitory.

Apprehensive parents who flocked to Baton Rouge today to pick up their children at the campus were halted by a state police and National Guard roadblock set up on the railroad overpass that leads from U. S. Highway 61 to the college grounds.

Guards searched every automobile, and most of the parents were refused admittance to the campus. A huge traffic jam developed at the roadblock as the parents waited for their children to walk to them.

Governor Edwards toured the campus again today, holding an impromptu news conference beside a large pool of blood that marked the spot where the two men died.

A Negro workman had tried to brush up the blood without



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success, and the crimson-stained broom he used was lying on the grass.

A smell of tear gas still hung over the campus. Many of the newsmen talking to the Governor began to weep from effects of the gas, but the Governor seemed to be immune.

The mother of Denver A. Smith, the 20-year-old student whose body was identified yesterday, described her son as one who believed "in the right things." He was not "a militant," she said.

The television film taken on campus yesterday showed Mr. Smith and the other man who was killed running away from the front of the administration building as the police fired volleys of tear gas toward them. Both fell about the same time, about six feet apart.

Mr. Smith's sister Josephine, 19, also a student at Southern, said that many of the students could not hear what the police were saying when the students

were ordered to disperse yesterday. Helicopters flying overhead drowned out the words, she said.

Miss Smith said that, as the police started to advance, many students ran into the administration building "to avoid any trouble."

Before the fatal confrontation yesterday, there were several weeks of protests on both the campus here and in New Orleans. Students seized buildings, staged mass marches and boycotted classes to support their demands for improved living conditions, better food, broader programs of black studies, and the resignation of Dr. Netterville, the school president, and of Dr. Emmett W. Bashful, the vice president in charge of the New Orleans campus. Both men are black.

A number of students have contended that Dr. Netterville yesterday gave them permission to occupy the administration building here.