

Checks on explosives

No one could call political terrorism as American as apple pie. It has been transplanted and grafted onto this country; but it is on the increase.

Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Eugene T. Rossides testified to that point last week before the Senate subcommittee on investigations when he said that bombings have reached "menacing proportions." Treasury figures show that 40 lives were lost in 16 months ending in mid-April 1970, while 384 persons were injured and \$21 million worth of property damage was done.

The two-foot hole recently blasted in a building near Kansas University is probably not untypical of these bombings: police departments across the country report that more than half of them have been connected with student unrest.

In 16 months, 45,000 bombings and over 25,000 bomb scares have been in-

flicted on the nation. In tune with the rest of the country, the Philadelphia police Department records a significant increase from 259 bomb scares in 1969 to 305 such scares in the first five months of this year.

This nation cannot tolerate terrorism's wanton destruction or the panic it engenders or the repression panic could spawn. In these circumstances, the Nixon Administration proposal for legislation to expand federal authority in the storage, uses and the licensing of explosives makes timely common sense.

Many of the components in bombings, such as the black powder reportedly responsible for the Kansas blast, can be easily purchased. Dynamite, which is even more dangerous, has been used in about one out of five bombings so far recorded.

Stricter control over the supply, commerce and use of explosives is warranted: and in double-quick time.

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