

THE STATES-ITEM

WALTER G. COWAN
Editor

CHARLES A. FERGUSON
Associate Editor

ASHTON PHELPS, *President and Publisher*

The States-Item prints the news impartially. It supports what it believes to be right. It opposes what it believes to be wrong, without regard to party politics.

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Rault fire report

The preliminary report on the city's investigation of the tragic Rault Center fire raises some very serious questions. They are questions which must be thoroughly pursued to prevent similar disasters in other high-rise buildings.

Fire Supt. Louis J. San Salvador and Ed Robin, the city's chief building inspector, reported to the mayor that laboratory reports "probably will prove that the fire was started intentionally." They also reported that the 15th and 16th floors had undergone unapproved additional construction after fire inspection.

It was from the 15th floor, which contained a beauty parlor, that five

women leaped to escape the on-rushing fire. Four of the women, plus a fifth person died.

The investigation into the probability of arson, of course, must be pursued to its limits. Possibly of more long-range concern is the report of unauthorized construction. If such is the case, who is responsible?

Another question concerns other local high-rise buildings. Is there unauthorized construction in any of these?

The final report on the Rault Center tragedy should either answer such questions or initiate a further investigation.