

A Confusing Shootout In Phoenix

Phoenix, Ariz.

Narcotics detectives, raiding what the thought was a hippie hangout, exchanged shots early last night with residents of the house who had just moved in. The man of the house and one policeman were injured.

Police gave this account:

For several weeks, a house in the East Phoenix section had been under surveillance as a possible hangout where drugs were being used.

MOVE

The surveillance apparently ceased several days ago as officers prepared to make their move. Meantime, the hippies moved out and Mr. and Mr. Leslie West moved in.

At 1:30 a.m. yesterday, police went to the house, carrying a "no-knock" search warrant which would have permitted them to enter without warning.

But the plain-clothes detectives knocked anyway and told Mrs. West, who answered the door, they were policemen.

Sergeant Ken Strickland said the woman apparently did not believe the detectives, although they showed a badge, and shut the door on them, thinking they were returning hippies.

POLICE

When the police broke in, Mrs. West screamed and her husband grabbed a rifle and fired several shots. Detective Harry Burke, 31, fired back,

hitting West in the side. Mrs. West then took the rifle and fired at Burke, who was hit and lost two fingers.

Other officers finally convinced the Wests that intruders were police.

Strickland said, "It was a misunderstanding. The couple probably felt they were defending their home against some hippies and the officers thought they were fighting some criminals."

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