

Brutality Alleged

U.S. Won't Act on Isla Vista Riots

Santa Barbara

The U.S. Justice Department has declined to take any action against law enforcement officers accused of widespread brutality during the June 1970 riots in Isla Vista, the nearby residence community of the University of California at Santa Barbara.

James J. Sullivan, assistant professor of economics at UCSB and a member of a special faculty-clergy observer team during the disorders, said yesterday he had received a letter from Assistant U.S. Attorney General David L. Norman which he found "highly demoralizing."

The team had filed 441 affidavits alleging police beatings and deprivation of civil rights of students and other citizens.

"It is as if people do not believe it happened," Sullivan said. "It, in fact, happened as it was reported to have happened. This is a major disaster for the administration of justice."

In his letter to Sullivan from Washington, Norman said he felt the Justice Department had "met its responsibilities in this matter through its cooperation with local law enforcement officials."

He said he believed the cooperation had been "fruitful, as evidenced by recent newspaper accounts of the disciplinary action taken by the Sheriff's Department." This apparently referred to the firing of Sheriff's Captain Joel Honey on charges of misconduct.

Sullivan emphasized that no disciplinary action was taken against any officer as a result of the June 1970 riots. The misconduct charges against Honey stemmed from the April 1970 disturbances.

The faculty-clergy observer team was set up, Sullivan said, on the recommendation of the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury and a blue ribbon citizens' committee.

Sullivan said he will write Norman again, asking a clarification of the decision.

Our Correspondent