



The University of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

October 6, 2005

Dear OU Students, Faculty, and Staff,

I want to thank you again for your responsible and constructive reaction to the tragic event which occurred last Saturday evening. I appreciate the concern which many of you have expressed for the family and friends of the deceased.

Most of the news media, including our own *OU Daily*, and most citizens have responded very responsibly. Unfortunately, there are always a few who do not. Among the core beliefs which define us as Americans and which define us as members of the OU family from all backgrounds is a respect for others. We believe that we should not judge others or jump to conclusions about others on the basis of color, race, gender, economic status, or freely exercised religious beliefs. To rush to judge others or make assumptions about them on that basis is nothing short of prejudice. It has no place in America and it certainly has no place at the University of Oklahoma.

Unfortunately, we have seen examples of a rush to react in a manner not in keeping with our values in recent history. A reading of some media reports and comments from individuals made at the time of the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City is enlightening. Some quickly rushed to the conclusion that the bomber must have been a Middle Eastern terrorist. There were video shots of international students on Oklahoma campuses shown on news broadcasts as this speculation was reported. As we all now know, the person responsible was not someone from the Middle East but was Timothy McVeigh and at least one other American who assisted him. We can only hope that all of us, including some media outlets, would have learned from that recent rush to incorrect conclusions.

I have been assured that law enforcement officials including federal officers have found no evidence of a conspiracy involving others which creates an ongoing threat to our OU community. They have kept me informed of the steps being taken in their investigation. You can be assured that if I receive any information to the contrary, I will immediately inform you and take steps to protect our community.

In fact, national law enforcement statistics compiled confirm that we have a low per capita crime rate. OU has long been dedicated to the safety of our students.

Thank you again for your help and understanding. Thank you for reaching out to the members of our OU family who have come from nations all over the world to let them know that they are valued and respected on this campus.

Rushing to judgments on the basis of race, religion, gender, or ethnicity, is not the OU or American way.

Sincerely,

David L. Boren
OU President