

A Timetable Of Death

By Jack Nelson & Richard T. Cooper

KENT, Ohio (CDN)—It didn't take long—about 30 minutes at the most. A student rally started at 11:50 a.m. Monday, and by 12:20 p.m. four Kent State University students were dead and nine injured—all shot in a volley of National Guard fire.

Exactly what happened during those 30 fateful minutes? Governmental agencies, from the White House to the Portage County (Ohio) coroner's office, are now trying to find out.

Here is one reporter's chronology, as pieced together from interviews with dozens of witnesses, mostly students

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and reporters. The most important witnesses, National Guardsmen who did the shooting, were under orders not to talk to reporters.

As campus rallies go, it didn't look like much. There were only 200 "hard-core" participants, as student bystanders called them.

They clustered at one end of a grassy 10-acre patch called The Commons under clear skies and a warm sun. They stood around the Victory Bell, usually rung for football triumphs, but now they were ringing it to attract students to the rally.

No organized identifiable group called the rally. There were no leaflets, though the campus newspaper made mention of it, two days before.

"The word just got around," said Joanne Zimora, 20, a junior who describes herself as an "angry former liberal who turned radical."

A CBS-TV newsman came by, tried to joke with those by the bell and suggested a filmed interview—but he was turned down.

"They were angry and ready to fight," he said.

A campus reporter and Army veteran, Chuck Lally, 24, of Cleveland, saw it differently. From his vantage point on a hillside west of the bell, "It was more a springtime lark kind of thing.

"People just wanted a chance to show what they thought about the Army that was running their campus."

As classrooms emptied for the lunch break, growing numbers of bystanders, curious and sympathetic, lined the hillsides and watched. Lally estimated there were 2000 in all. About 100 yards northwest of the victory bell 100 National Guardsmen stood in a line facing the students.

They were armed with M-1 semiautomatic rifles or stubby M-79 grenade launchers. Each also wore a .45-caliber pistol in a belt holster. They wore all-purpose Army green uniforms and helmets and were donning their gas masks when an officer spoke through a loudspeaker unit:

"Students, disperse. Go back to your rooms, please. This is an illegal meeting. Any assembly on campus is illegal."

They were enforcing an emergency ban against rallies imposed by Ohio Gov. James Rhodes.

Students responded with raised voices and raised middle

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