

The Nation

Students: Turmoil For Peace In Tragic Week

WASHINGTON—They started arriving Friday by car, by bus, by train, by plane—thousands of students streaming into the nation's capital to protest their Government's policies. The anti-war rally this weekend, the largest mass demonstration in Washington since the Vietnam Moratorium last November, climaxed a week of campus strikes, riots and canceled classes at more than 400 colleges across the country.

It started with President Nixon's decision to send troops into Cambodia; it suddenly gained sharp impetus when National Guardsmen fatally shot four students at Kent State University in Ohio. It marked a quick revival of the so-called peace movement.

The Administration was both conciliatory and cautious. It granted the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, which coordinated the demonstration, a permit to hold a rally at the Ellipse, immediately south of the White House, an area previously declared out of bounds. At the same time, the Justice Department alerted 5,500 troops around Washington to help National Guardsmen and police.

Police barricaded roads leading into the White House area and parked buses bumper to bumper, almost like a solid fence, around the Executive Mansion itself.

The main event on yesterday's schedule was an afternoon mass rally at the Ellipse, followed by smaller "rap" session for the airing of student grievances.

Movement Revived

The peace movement, hun-

dreds had been writing, was dead, outmaneuvered by such Administration programs as "Vietnamization" and "withdrawal."

But the movement is not a set of organizations that often engage in fierce doctrinal disputes or cannot pay their bills. By now, it is something close to a generation that, in varying degrees of intensity, feels a revulsion toward the war and a bitterness and disillusionment toward the Government.

At Yale, a roomful of students watched the President's Cambodia speech and, after each phrase cited with an air of erudite cynicism the date of the Johnson speech from which it had been lifted. Then they began to skip ahead of Mr. Nixon, predicting the phrases to come. Each time, they were correct.

At Kent State University, in a little town in northeastern Ohio, the level of political sophistication is perhaps not so great and the reaction was one of betrayal. The night after the speech, students raced out of the collegiate bars, set a bonfire in the streets, then began breaking the windows—"thrashing," in the new campus argot—of the town's banks and stores. The next night they gathered around the R.O.T.C. building, first throwing rocks, then flares and finally setting the old wood building on fire.

When the firemen came, stu-

dents wrested the hose away and cut it in half and the building burned to the ground. Despite martial law the next night, at one point more than 2,000 young people were racing around the campus, with clenched fists in the air, chanting the Panther cry, "Power to the people—off the pig!" A few had long hair, others wore dungaree jackets that said on the back: "Future Farmers of America,"

On Monday, classes were just changing at a little past noon, and the Guardsmen had broken up a rally on the campus green with tear gas. The group of Guardsmen had chased some of the students over the hill, fired a few more canisters of gas and then began to move back. A few of the students were throwing rocks; many had gathered

around the corner of Taylor Hall to watch.

Suddenly, the Guardsmen spun and formed a skirmish line, the front row in the kneeling fire position, and began shooting. In that long, long, few seconds, students dived to the ground in terror or stood stunned and unbelieving. When it was over, four students were dead and nine wounded.

Campus in Turmoil

Within days, campuses across the country were in turmoil. There were strikes, closings, building seizures, demonstrations, street fighting, bombings. In some of the demonstrations, administrators and faculty joined with the students.

Over the teletype in the Washington office of the College Press Service, a student wire network, which by the week's end had tallied 426 struck campuses, came this message from the State University at Buffalo on Thursday night:

"... Another grouping of students were dispersed this time with birdshot and dogs. Gas is beginning to fill our offices although it is tolerable. Police have just broke into a nearby building. We can't figure out why. Police have—we are evacuating the third floor. We will call if we can. This is the—bibi—struggle."

It was happening at radical strongholds such as the University of Wisconsin, where students battled the police for several days, and at places that had been barely heard from, such as the University of Texas—where more than 10,000 people, the largest public demonstration in local history—marched peacefully through the streets of Austin. Students with widely varying life styles, ambitions and political gradations now felt themselves drawn close together.

Even as they began to move on Washington for a hastily planned rally, there were discussions and plans for other actions—students staying in Washington to lobby, intensive political work in the fall campaign, a drive to close down the home offices of Congressmen to force them to stay here and end the war, a general strike of young professionals. For to many it seemed that Cambodia and Kent were the last straw.

A few days after the shooting a young man at Kent was asked if he would again throw rocks at the Guard knowing that they

would shoot.

"If that's all I had, I would," he said. "I wasn't very political before, but now I'm dedicated."

And what, he was asked, if a girl standing beside him was killed?

"If she isn't ready, she shouldn't be standing there," he said. "Because she knows now, too."

—JOHN KIFNER