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U. of Maine Dissent Channeled Through Student Government

By DOUGLAS E. KNEELAND

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ORONO, Me., May 9—The flag is back at the top of its tall steel pole today, catching sunlight in a gentle May breeze above the old iron cannon aimed impotently at the Stillwater River from the shady front lawns of the University of Maine's campus here.

Yesterday it drooped at half staff in memory of the four Kent State University students killed by a volley of shots from National Guardsmen at a demonstration Monday against the United States invasion of Cambodia.

But today the renewed protests in Washington against the Kent State killings and the war seemed far away from this drowsy town of 8,000 population in north-central Maine. University officials and student leaders said that only a handful of students had left to join the march in the Capital.

All the while, life continued almost apace on the sprawling campus here. Four Phi Delta brothers blinked bleary-eyed in the morning sun from the steps of their old frame house, the early risers from last night's party. Lanky trackmen strained through limb-loosening exercises at the athletic field, warming up for a meet.

And yesterday, during a one-day strike that was partly effective, it was much the same, even though nearly 3,000 of Maine's 7,800 students crowded the mall in front of the Fogler Library to hear speakers denounce the war and the deaths at Kent State.

Involvement Is Increasing

A short time later, while more than 500 students jammed the Hauck Auditorium, where the Arts and Sciences faculty was meeting, a voice crackled over the shortwave set in the campus police headquarters, interrupting the casual conversation of tour of the school's 11 policemen. It said:

"Will someone please go over to the Agricultural Experiment Station and see if those two soil samples I took in there yesterday are ready?"

In a way, that is the sort of week it has been here.

Not that more and more of Maine's students are not trou-

ble, concerned, involved. By all accounts, they are; certainly hundreds of them, deeply; perhaps 1,500 to 2,000, maybe more. It has been a week of marches and meetings, mimeographings and strike votes. But there have been no rocks thrown, no burnings, no calls to violence, no cries to "shut it down."

Disclaiming any credit for keeping the school calm, the president, Winthrop C. Libby, a craggy State of Mainer with reddish hair, said:

"Everything that has been done has been legal by whatever laws you want to examine. The one thing that I may have done is to encourage the student senate as the leadership. It's a strong group, who, Lord knows, don't agree with me a lot of the time."

'No Violent Element'

Most students and teachers here seem to agree. The senate leaders, under the insistent prodding of Stanley Cowan, a slim, blond 22-year-old political science major from Orono, who stepped down as president on Tuesday, have seized and held the reins in the antiwar movement, as in almost every other issue of moment on the campus.

"There's no violent element on this campus," Mr. Cowan said emphatically above the din of telephones and mimeograph machines in a suite of senate offices overrun by students working on weekend protest plans. "There's just no way in the world on this campus that anyone's going to burn an R.O.T.C. building or go into Orono and break things up—no way in the world. We deal very easily with the leftists—we co-opt people sometimes, rather than confront them."

Perhaps symbolic of the atmosphere here was an incident that occurred while the Arts and Sciences faculty was debating and passing a resolution condemning the Kent State deaths and extension of the war. Dean John J. Nolde occasionally had to caution the hundreds of students present, saying, "May I ask the observers to refrain from murmuring, please?"