

A Kent Mystery: Armed Student

By Leonard Katz

Did a 19-year-old Kent State University junior, who says he was hired to take pictures of the campus disturbances by the FBI and campus police, inadvertently trigger the incident which resulted in the death of four students?

FBI investigators are attempting to determine the role played in the tragedy by Terrence B. Norman of Akron, Ohio, whose story of what occurred differs from student eyewitnesses.

According to Norman immediately following the campus shootings he was attacked by students who took him for a police photographer. To protect himself, he says, he drew a .38-caliber pistol and struck one of his attackers.

But according to Kent sophomore Harriet Wolin, 19, of East Rockaway, L. I., the incident occurred just before the National Guardsmen opened fire.

"He pulled the gun out of his jacket pocket and struck a friend of mine on the side of the head," she said. "Shortly after that the Guardsmen opened fire."

Still another version published in the local press, has it that Norman ran from the attacking students with the gun in his hand right at the Guardsmen—just 10 yards away. The Guardsmen, thinking they were being attacked, opened fire.

The question of what Norman was doing with a gun in the first place is a mystery. According to Ohio law carrying firearms is illegal unless you are a peace officer or are bonded. At this point it is not known whether the student was bonded by anyone.

Kent Chief of Police Roy Thompson said that the gun was turned over to the FBI and that they were investigating the incident. Thompson said his own investigation showed evidence that the gun wasn't fired.

A University spokesman conceded that Norman had been hired to take pictures on past occasions. The spokesman refused to comment when asked if he had been hired to take pictures of the campus disorders.