



Associated Press

Kent President Robert I. White deplors "frightening misunderstanding" of higher education's mission.

Kent Chief Brands Report Inaccurate

By Eric Wentworth

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11/10/70

President Robert I. White of Kent State University charged here yesterday that the special grand jury report on events at his campus last May was inaccurate and potentially destructive.

White, in his first public statement on the Oct. 16 report that harshly criticized Kent State administrators, said it "reflects a frightening misunderstanding of the role and mission of higher education."

He declined, during his press conference at a higher-education convention, to comment on whether the state grand jury was unfair in failing to indict any Ohio National Guardsmen whose bullets killed four students and wounded nine others at a May 4 campus demonstration.

But, he said in his prepared statement, "In my opinion, the grand jury report was inaccurate, disregarded clear evidence, and, if pursued in all its nuances, would eventually destroy not only Kent State but all major universities in America."

Asked later whether National Guardsmen should ever carry loaded weapons onto a campus, White called such a move "a very, very last resort." He said he has made it clear that if Kent State needs outside help again, it would ask for the Ohio Highway Pa-

trol, which he termed well-trained and more respected even among campus groups.

The special panel indicted 25 persons — students, other young people, and at least one professor — and criticized the university administration for fostering permissiveness and dissent.

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Kent Chief Calls Report By Jury Inaccurate

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Its assessments of blame differed from those of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest and, reportedly, the FBI.

White broke his silence six days after a federal judge in Cleveland threw out a local court's ban against public comment by those involved in the grand jury's investigation. He himself was a witness.

In picking a national forum for his comments, the Kent State president called the panel's report "a local manifestation of a national problem."

The grand jury's criticisms of Kent State, he said, have "been made generally over the nation" despite conclusions of the President's commission and others that "factors far beyond any control of the universities" contribute to campus unrest.

At the same time, White conceded, "We know full well that the grand jury report was well received among the general public."

Lamenting the polarization of views over campus problems, he said he viewed the panel's analysis as "a prime example of a brewing national disaster."

The Kent State president asserted that academic communities cannot be sanctuaries for lawbreakers. But, he added, "neither is the academic community a place where

ideas—no matter how offensive—are to be suppressed."

He called the grand jury's comments about permissiveness toward campus speakers "judicially naive as well as fundamentally unworkable and ultimately undesirable . . . In a real sense the report leads into a censorship of points of view going quite beyond constitutional limits."

Despite his attack on the grand jury report itself, however, White said he believed the jurors "made every effort to review testimony, to study evidence, and to report honestly their findings."

Asked whether he thought a federal grand jury should investigate the case, White expressed some concern about a new study that might add to tensions on the Kent State campus. But if needed to eliminate confusion, he said, "I could not oppose it."

Later, he added, "I think a federal grand jury would help to answer some questions remaining in the general public's mind" about roles of various parties involved in the May incidents.

In a related development, the American Civil Liberties Union announced in Cleveland yesterday that Ramsey Clark, former U.S. attorney general, would help defend Craig Morgan, the Kent State student body president, indicted by the grand jury on a second-degree rioting charge.