

Excuse Disputed

Police Deny Kent Sniper

Examiner News Services

KENT (Ohio)—An official of the Ohio Highway Patrol today disputed reports from the Ohio National Guard that a sniper was spotted by police helicopter before Guardsmen shot four Kent State University students to death yesterday during an antiwar demonstration.

In seeking to explain why about 20 Guardsmen fired a three-second volley with M1 Semi-automatic rifles while retreating under a barrage of rocks, the head of the Ohio National Guard, State Adjutant General S. T. Del Corso said at his headquarters in Columbus, Ohio:

"These troops have been in many violent situations. They did not panic. I'm sure they felt their lives were in danger. They fired instinctively.

No Order

"There was no order to open fire. The firing by the troops was spontaneous and defensive. As soon as it began, the order was given to cease fire."

Del Corso earlier had re-

ported a rooftop sniper.

The university, ordered evacuated after the shooting, was virtually deserted today and under heavy police and military guard.

Earlier, fire destroyed a barn and several farm tractors in one corner of the campus, and fire officials said they believed the blaze was deliberately set.

Nothing In Log

Sgt. Michael Delaney of the National Guard public relations staff said after the shootings that, "At the approximate time of the firing on the campus, the Ohio Highway Patrol — via a helicopter — spotted a sniper on a nearby building."

Today, a patrol official, Maj. D. E. Manly, said, "There is nothing on the log on the sighting." Manly said if patrolmen in the helicopter circling the campus had seen a gunman it would have been recorded.

Guard officials claimed

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yesterday and again today that the Guardsmen were returning the fire of a small caliber weapon in defense of their lives. A student crowd had surrounded some 30 Guardsmen and were throwing rocks and chunks of concrete at them, they said.

The head of the National Guard said the troops "fired instinctively."

Separate Probes

The Justice Department and officials of the National Guard launched separate investigations of the gunfire outburst which took the lives of two girls and two young men.

One of the dead girls, a 19 year old brunette freshman, Allison Krause, was an innocent bystander who had telephoned her parents a short time before to express disapproval of the demonstration on the 20,000-student campus.

"She was completely disgusted with the whole thing," said her father, Arthur Krause of Pittsburgh. "And now she's dead. Why in hell couldn't they have fired blanks, or tear gas, or something besides live ammunition?"

In addition to Miss Krause, Sandra Lee Scheuer, 20, a junior of Youngstown, Ohio;

Jeffery Miller, 19, a freshman of Plainview, N.Y., and William K. Schroeder, 19, a sophomore of Lorain, Ohio, died in the gunfire.

Portage County Coroner Dr. Robert Sybert said all four had been shot from the side, "left to right." Each died of a single bullet wound, he said.

Miss Krause was hit in the left shoulder, Miss Scheuer in the neck, Schroeder in the left underside of the chest and Miller in the head.

Report Incomplete

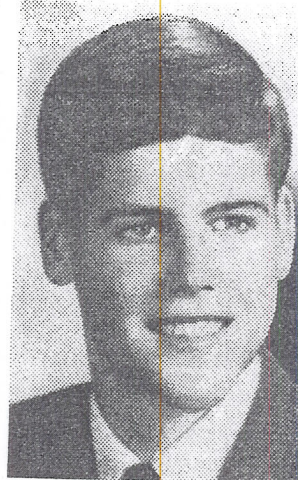
Three students remained in critical condition today. One of them, Dean Kahler, of East Canton, Ohio, was paralyzed from the waist down, according to Paul Jacobs, administrator at Robinson Memorial Hospital in Ravenna.

Hospital officials said John Cleary, 19, a freshman of Scotia, N.Y., and Joseph Lewis, 18, a freshman of Massillon, Ohio, were in critical condition.

'Saddest Day'

Eight other persons, including two Guardsmen, were hospitalized. One of the two Guardsmen was treated for shock and the other had collapsed from exhaustion.

Gov. James Rhodes called it "the saddest day I have



FOUR WHO DIED UNDER NATIONAL GUARD FIRE AT KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

Jeffrey G. Miller, 20, Allison Krause, 19, William K. Schroeder, 19, and Sandra Lee Scheuer, 20

AP and UPI Photos

known as governor."

It was the bloodiest confrontation yet in the nationwide three year old student crusade against the Vietnam war, a crusade that had waned into near silence until Nixon's announcement.

The President, learning of the tragedy at the White House, said it should convince educators and students alike that when "dissent turns to violence, it invites tragedy."

After the shooting, students screamed for ambulances, and in five minutes the dead and wounded were cleared. Students, enraged screamed "kill the pigs, kill the pigs." Many wept, and moments later the crowd dispersed.

Didn't Hear

Student eyewitnesses said they did not hear gunfire until the moment when about 20 of the retreating Guardsmen suddenly turned, faced their attackers, and opened fire.

The Guardsmen were in two ranks, according to the independent testimony of dozens of witnesses interviewed separately by newsmen. Those in the first rank

dropped to one knee and fired, while those in the second rank fired from a standing position.

"It was done with precision, as if on command," said Paul Schlemmer, sports information director of the university, who witnessed the

incident.

Many eyewitnesses reported about half the guardsmen fired their rifles into the air, well over the heads of the students, while others fired straight into the milling crowd of boys and girls.

This circumstance gave

rise to speculation that some of the guardsmen, in the noise and confusion, misunderstood a command to fire warning shots into the air, and instead shot to kill.

The campus and the city of Kent were sealed off after the shootings.