

Senator on Kent

Guard Called 'Trigger Happy'

Washington

Senator Stephen M. Young (Dem.-Ohio) said yesterday that the first shot at Kent State University was fired accidentally by a National Guardsman who was hit by a tear gas canister thrown back by a student.

"There was no sniper," he said. The Guardsmen, he added, "just lost their heads."

Young gave no source for his information, which he relayed to the Senate in a statement and on which he elaborated later in an interview with the Washington Evening Star.

His office said Young asked his aides to check on the report after he had returned from a White House briefing. A spokesman said National Guard officials in Ohio were unable to confirm the report.

STORY

Of the incident Monday in which for Kent State students were killed and 10 were injured, Young said:

"Some young student hurled back a partially empty tear gas canister. It struck one of the guardsmen in the front line on the shoulder or arm and his gun discharged. Instantly the front rank kneeled and fired into the crowd."

Young called the guardsmen "trigger happy" and said he was amazed that they carried live ammunition in their weapons when they advanced on the students.

"I wanted to get the facts," he said. "I have them.

There should be a Congressional investigation of this."

"There was this accidental shot and almost instantly a volley. No order was given at all."

Young said many Ohio National Guardsmen are young high school graduates and "drop outs" who joined to avoid the draft and are unfamiliar with crowd control tactics.

He said adjutant general S. T. Del Corso, head of the Ohio guard, should be fired from what he called a "political job."

Meanwhile, in Kent, Ohio, National Guardsmen began leaving Kent State yesterday.

Brigadier General Robert Canterbury, commander of the on-campus troops, repeated at a news conference yesterday his claim that guardsmen were fired upon before they fired their semi-automatic M-1 rifles.

Kent State president Robert I. White, who said earlier he had never asked Governor James A. Rhodes to send troops, said that "death has hovered" over the campus since Friday when students began demonstrating against expansion of the war into Cambodia.

White, who said "I did not know (guardsmen) rifles were loaded," called for a Warren Commission type investigation of the shootings.

White said the university will be closed indefinitely.

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