

Kent Legal Defense Fund

Box 116,
Kent, Ohio 44240

Dear Friends:

The crunch of repression has hit Kent again in May of this year. One year after four students were slain by the Ohio National Guard, local law enforcement officials (following the tactics advocated by Attorney General John Mitchell) rounded up 93 people during two days of mass arrests. Without warning, hundreds of riot-gearred police moved into a crowd of people gathered in downtown Kent. The club-swinging mob of policemen beat and arrested dozens of people, including reporters, faculty peace marshalls, and many students who just happened to be standing on the sidewalk. A crowd of people had gathered to protest the conviction of a local student leader on flag desecration charges, but apparently the local officials have decided there will be no demonstrations in Kent this year. The police, after cleaning up the downtown area, then moved on to the campus and arrested students who were walking to their dorms. The same pattern was used again on the following night. The high points of the two days of police activity were:

The beating of math professor, Dr. Donald Dykes, as he attempted to show his faculty I.D. Dr. Dykes, a faculty peace marshall, was hospitalized after four officers clubbed him for several minutes. He was then charged with disorderly conduct.

The handing out of summary punishment by revoking the bail schedule and detaining 30 people for more than 3 days. Many of the people were arrested under charges that involved no jail sentence, yet they were held in jail for 3 days.

The arrest of student body president Craig Morgan for unlawful assembly, after he walked from his office to observe what was happening on the campus. Craig is one of the 25 people indicted by last year's State Grand Jury.

While most of the charges involve only \$50 fines (although some involve up to 7 years in the penitentiary) we are faced with the problem of what to do in the face of these repressive tactics. Because of the expenses of litigation, many people may have to plead guilty and pay their fines. The result of this course of action is to allow these police state tactics to go unchallenged. Most people arrested have expressed a desire to fight these charges by waging an aggressive defense in the courts to challenge this new national policy of stamping out dissent. This can not be done without your support.

The Kent Legal Defense Fund, in conjunction with its lawyers, is considering false arrest suits, civil suits in regards to the beatings, and lengthy individual trials and appeals to fight the unconstitutional arrests. There are no funds available for this fight and it can only be undertaken if money is raised.

Whether or not Mitchell's avowed policy of stamping out dissent goes unchecked depends on you. We can and will fight this new wave of national repression with your support.

In Peace,

The Kent Legal Defense Fund