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**KENT STATE CASE
REOPENED BY U.S.**

**Justice Agency Will Direct
Investigation of Shooting
Deaths of 4 Students**

By **CHRISTOPHER LYDON**
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 3—The Justice Department reopened today its investigation of the shootings at Kent State University on May 4, 1970, in which Ohio National Guardsmen killed four students and wounded nine others during a campus protest against expansion of the Vietnam war into Cambodia.

Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson announced the new inquiry—one that his predecessor, John N. Mitchell, rejected two years ago and that the White House said only three months ago was unwarranted.

Mr. Richardson was carefully vague, in a written statement today, about the direction and scope of the new investigation. He said he had concluded from a review of department files that "there are some areas where an additional inquiry is desirable."

He continued: "This does not mean that we have reason to believe that the prior decision to discontinue active investigation was wrong or made for improper reasons, nor does it mean that we think the additional inquiry is likely to lead to a different prosecutive judgment."

In his first major initiative in his two-month tenure in the Attorney General's office, Mr. Richardson said: "Our purpose is simply to make sure that the department knows as much as can possibly be learned as to whether there were violations of Federal law in this matter."

J. Stanley Pottinger, the chief of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, said he would direct the investigation and spoke of using a grand jury to weigh criminal charges as "a possibility."

Parents of the Kent State

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**U.S. Is Reopening Investigation
Into Kent State Student Deaths**

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victims, the new university president and a number of liberals in Congress applauded the announcement, although some of those who had been pressing for a new investigation regretted that Mr. Richardson had not moved immediately to a grand jury.

Sylvester Del Corso, adjutant general commanding the Ohio National Guard when the shooting occurred, said today he saw no reason for the new study.

"I assume it's been brought about by the Watergate investigation," he commented.

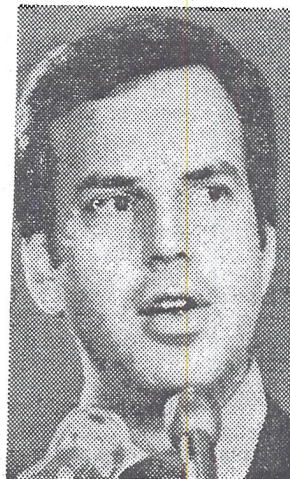
Jury Exonerated Guard

An Ohio grand jury exonerated the National Guard in October, 1970, but indicted 25 persons on riot charges. Two defendants pleaded guilty, one was convicted, one was acquitted and charges against the 21 others were dismissed.

It was subsequently disclosed, however, that the state's grand jury had never been shown a Justice Department summary of reports by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which found that ill-trained young guardsmen had fired in a disorganized fashion, perhaps in panic, but without warning to the students and before the guardsmen were in any danger themselves.

The original Justice Department summary, written in July, 1970, found, among other things, that none of the Kent State victims had been associated with the three-day disturbance that brought the Guard to the campus; that there had been no sniper fire, as Guard spokesmen originally asserted, to warrant a counter-attack, and that none of the students—some of whom had been throwing rocks—were within 60 feet of the guardsmen when their volley of 61 rifle shots rang out under the noonday sun on the sloping campus common.

The Justice Department sum-



Associated Press

**J. Stanley Pottinger of
Justice Department dis-
cusses inquiry into the
Kent State deaths.**

mary also suggested that there might have been an organized effort among the guardsmen to obstruct official investigations of the event.