All quiet on the K.S.U. campus front

By Bill Timmons

All quiet on the campus front is perhaps the only way to describe, sadly enough, the present status of the shady green campus of Kent State University, scene of the tragic events of May 4 when four students were killed and nine injured by the Ohio National Guard amid anti-war protests.

On that fateful spring day, the school was closed and all students left the campus in an attempt to restore order. Order was restored, but all is not well in spite of it.

The police had already searched the rooms for weapons in an attempt to corroborate the National Guard's theory of a sniper. So far only a shotgun, a damaged pistol and an assortment of hunting, fishing and kitchen knives have been found, along with some “firebomb” materials.

Meanwhile, in the center of sleepy little Kent, a town whose tragic news shook the nation, few visible signs remain of the disorders. Shop windows, still boarded up after the four days of violence, are the most obvious signs. And the American flag, perhaps, in support of the National Guard, is seen fluttering on every corner.

Riots discussed during student senate meeting

The Student Senate and the PiT Improvement Committee members held a meeting Saturday, May 9, with Branch Director Richard Q. King to discuss the tragic events on the main campus and the manner in which those events may affect the branch.

Mr. King read a statement from KSU President Robert L. White, which told of the Portage County injunction, which described the university as "a threat and a danger to the town's people and the county."

Consequently, Mr. White's statement read, "No one is sure when the campus will reopen." Although the injunction is still in effect, however, classes have since been scheduled to open June 26 for the summer quarter.

Mr. White said that the turmoil on the campus will mean that "financially, the campus will suffer extremely. No new buildings will be started, nor will buildings already started be completed for some time."

He also felt that the riots and deaths had hurt the school's reputation. "If the school does open this fall," he said, "many parents may not send their children to KSU for obvious reasons." He also pointed out that with a smaller enrollment the school would receive less money.

Meanwhile, it was learned that departments on the main campus were considering several options for seniors and graduate students who wanted to complete the spring quarter. One option was proposed to allow seniors to take open-book final examinations. Another option was for seniors to do extra work on their own and submit it for evaluation. Some departments are considering letting their students receive partial credit for the spring quarter, which could be completed at a later date.

Mr. King spoke about the "tremendous responsibility" he was taking on himself by opening the doors Monday, May 11. He stressed that "students here at the branch, must take a positive position in relation to the branch and their home."

When asked about the work students had missed during the week the branch was closed, Mr. King said that it would have to be discussed between the student and his instructors. He added that classes won't be extended to make up for the time lost.

The Senate and others present decided that all extracurricular activities would be held as planned, following a formal endorsement that Mr. King go ahead and re-open the Branch as he had tentatively proposed to do.

"Kent State U. authorized personnel only". Signs like this are seen all over the main campus now. They were posted there May 4 and will remain until the Portage County injunction is lifted.
Two of the many aftermaths of the tragic deaths at Kent State University were the passing of the two main campus faculty resolutions and the penning of "A Mandate for Action" by Joel Finley, professor of Speech here at the branch.

In their first resolution the faculty condemned the killing of the four KSU students and the wounding of 10 others by the National Guardsmen on May 4. In condemning the killing, they stated that they "hold the Guardsmen, acting under orders and under severe psychological pressures, less responsible than Governor Rhodes and Adjutant General Del Corso, whose inflammatory indoctrination produced those pressures. We deplore the prolonged and unduly provocative military presence on the campus, not only because we regard the use of massive military force against unarmed students as inappropriate in itself, but because it symbolizes the rule of force in our society and international life."

In concluding their first resolution the faculty pledged "that in the future we shall not teach in circumstances which are likely to lead to the death and wounding of our students. We cannot keep the civil authorities from assuming control of our campus. But we can--and do--refuse to teach in a climate that is inimical to the safety of our students and to the principles of academic freedom."

"Student freedom carries with it student responsibility for mature action and to this end the faculty encourages an expression of cooperation and constructive effort on the part of all students to improve the total university."

"We attempt to reject emotionalism in the face of crisis or we will be faced with even more violence of the sort that wrecked our university last week."

"Because of the present national focus on Kent State, whatever we do not can have a tremendous effect upon the rest of this nation. To react out of emotion can only feed the fires of emotionalism across the country. To act intelligently and sensitively towards a better future can, perhaps, lead others to such action, rather than reaction."

In his paper Mr. Finley devised a three-part general plan for action: "First, identify the problems which lead to the extreme emotionalism of last week's demonstrations. Second, we should attempt to identify the possible solutions to each of these problems. Finally, we should present the possible solutions, in the most favorable package available, to those persons who can implement needed changes in personnel, policy and attitudes."

Ending his statement he appeals, "to you as responsible and educated citizens, to act, not react, to the tragedy which has befallen our university. I trust that you will follow a plan such as this or one of better design, created by persons more gifted than myself, so that our tragedy will not be remembered in history as the beginning of a greater tragedy, but as the beginning of a period of greater enlightenment. This can be accomplished through responsibility offered and accepted, as students, faculty members, and administrators of this university."