

DATA SET SEVEN

"Kent State Incident"



...On April 30, 1970, President Richard M. Nixon appeared on national television to announce the invasion of Cambodia by the United States and the need to draft 150,000 more soldiers for an expansion of the Vietnam War effort. This provoked massive protests on campuses throughout the country. At Kent State University in Ohio, protesters launched a demonstration that included setting fire to the ROTC building, prompting the governor of Ohio to dispatch 900 National Guardsmen to the campus...

...During an altercation on May 4, twenty-eight guardsmen opened fire on a crowd, killing four students and wounding nine. Following the killings, the unrest across the country escalated even further. Almost five hundred colleges were shut down or disrupted by protests. Despite the public outcry, the Justice Department initially declined to conduct a grand jury investigation. A report by the President's Commission on Campus Unrest did acknowledge, however, that the action of the guardsmen had been "unnecessary, unwarranted, and inexcusable." Eventually, a grand jury indicted eight of the guardsmen, but the charges were dismissed for lack of evidence.