

STUDENT UNREST AND THE KANSAS PRESS:
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EDITORIAL REACTIONS TO VIOLENCE
IN LAWRENCE AND AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS IN 1970

by

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STUDENT UNREST AND THE KANSAS PRESS:

EDITORIAL REACTIONS TO VIOLENCE

IN LAWRENCE AND AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS IN 1970

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University of Kansas, 1982

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This thesis examines the editorials of selected Kansas newspapers in reaction to student unrest and violence at the University of Kansas and in the city of Lawrence, Kansas. It employs historical/descriptive method and considers the frequency of the editorials and four other indicators: cause, blame, praise, and solution.

The editorials are studied in three one-month periods when student unrest and protest erupted in violence and bloodshed: April, July, and December 1970.

The Kansas daily newspapers surveyed are the Hutchinson News, the Salina Journal, the Parsons Sun, the Topeka Capital/Topeka State Journal/Topeka Sunday Capital-Journal, and the Wichita Eagle/Wichita Beacon/Wichita Eagle and The Beacon.

The thesis provides a chapter examining the history and setting of student unrest in America, another chapter describing the entry of the University of Kansas and Lawrence into the spectrum of student unrest, and three chapters focusing on the three months of violence.

The thesis concludes that the newspapers sought to protect dissent and free expression at the University and in Lawrence, and they urged moderation in the middle of the chaos and social upheaval.

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For Betty,
for family,
for friends,
and for tomorrow.

"The storm shall dash thy face,
the murk of war and worse
then war shall cover Thee all over,

(Wert capable of war, its tug
and trials? be capable of
peace, its trials.

For the tug and mortal strain
of nations comes at last in
prosperous peace, not war;) . . .

But thou shalt face thy fortunes,
thy diseases and surmount them
all . . .

The Present holds Thee not --
for such vast growth as thine

For such unparallel'd flight as
thine, such brood as thine,

The future only holds Thee
and can hold Thee."

--Walt Whitman

from "The Future Holds Thee"

PREFACE

I admit that I cannot credit a single person or event for providing me with the subject of this thesis. After my arrival at the University of Kansas and the beginning of my graduate study in the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications, the colorful stories about the social upheaval of the 1960s and 1970s stimulated my interests. Indeed, it was quite difficult for me to imagine the turmoil and conflict of student unrest that threatened the KU academic community in the tumultuous year 1970.

Thus my curiosity took over, and I was soon on my way to producing a thesis that not only described the American student protest movement of that era but also examined its effects upon KU, the Kansas press, and the rest of the state.

For the members of my thesis committee, as well as the many others who lived through that period at the University, this thesis will undoubtedly stir memories. But because of my age and of the miles between my hometown and Lawrence, I was removed from KU's student unrest in 1970. Through the vehicle of the historical/descriptive method, I returned to the not-too-distant past to recapture the events and the animosities that nearly ripped this country apart. I hope that this thesis describes the relevant facts and opinions of the era -- with the highest degree of objectivity possible.

I wish to thank four members of the School of Journalism faculty for their assistance.

I am deeply grateful to Professors John Bremner and Dorothy Bowles, both members of my thesis committee, for their meticulous editing, their helpful suggestions, and their ongoing encouragement.

To Professor Jan Platt, I wish to express my gratitude for her abundance of enthusiasm and scholarly spirit during a rather difficult spring 1982 semester.

To Professor Calder M. Pickett, I am eternally grateful -- for his extensive files on student unrest and protest, for his guidance on valuable research sources, and for his kind words of support.

In addition, I am also indebted to numerous friends and family members; among them are Steve Menaugh, a classmate whose advice, encouragement, and assistance will never be forgotten; his wife, Karla Carney; and the staff of the KU Office of University Relations, whose friendship I will always treasure.

Most of all, I want to thank my wife, Betty -- for her concern, patience, perseverance, understanding, friendship, and, most of all, love.

Without these people, this thesis would not have been possible.

PROSPECTUS

Each spring, the Lawrence campus of the University of Kansas, the state's largest institution of higher learning, bursts into the colors of the season. The flowering trees and shrubs on Mount Oread, the hilltop home of KU, awaken in the newfound warmth and burst forth in hues of purple, red, yellow, and green. Matched against an occasionally blue prairie sky, the view is serene and picturesque. Except for when hundreds of students rush between classes, when heavy machinery rumbles at a construction site, or when the Campanile tolls the hour, the campus remains peaceful as it perches above the Kansas and Wakarusa river valleys.

This pastoral scene makes the KU campus renowned across the state and the country for its natural beauty. But life on Mount Oread became associated with a far different reputation as the 1960s ended. Continuing dissent against American military involvement in Southeast Asia, increased tension between blacks and whites, and a so-called "generation gap" made the United States a troubled nation. College campuses across the country were wracked with student protest -- sometimes in peaceful form, but occasionally inflicting injury and death. By 1970, the worldwide trend left an indelible mark upon the University of Kansas.

Through the course of American history, student protest rarely has been absent. But beginning in the late 1950s and continuing through the sixties and early seventies, the United States almost underwent a revolution. In an October 1969 article for Harper's

Magazine, John W. Aldridge, a University of Michigan English professor, traces the wave of student protest to the post-World War II baby boom.

"By the end of the Sixties this country will have been dominated by children for almost twenty-five years," writes Aldridge, author of After the Lost Generation. "Ever since World War II the needs, values, styles, and demands of the youth have been the major neurotic concern of very nearly the whole of our educated adult population."¹

In the sixties, however, the youth turned against the teaching of their elders. They repudiated their moral code, heightened awareness of man's environment, protested war in Vietnam and the rest of Southeast Asia, and experimented with drugs, rock music, and sexual permissiveness.

Kenneth Keniston, a professor of psychology at Yale University and author of several studies on higher education during this era, further divides student unrest of the 1960s and 1970s into two separate revolutions. The first involved a rather symbolic American demand:

Many who had traditionally been excluded from the mainstream of American social, political, and economic life now demanded to be included fully. The young, blacks, women, and various other interest groups demanded full legal rights and equal "psychocultural esteem." In a society becoming increasingly more affluent, the demand for inclusion became both clamorous and insistent.²

The second revolution entangled those who had found success within the American way of life. Many young people began to reject the human,

¹ John W. Aldridge, "In the Country of the Young," Harper's Magazine, October 1969, p. 45.

² "What's Bugging the Students," Perspectives on Campus Tension (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1970), in Michael P. Fisher, "The Turbulent Years: The University of Kansas, 1960-75, A History" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1979), p. 169.

bureaucratic, and ecological price paid by both nation and individual to attain the affluence and leisure enjoyed by so many Americans. The assassinations of political leaders such as John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, and Robert F. Kennedy did not improve the climate. But, even more importantly, the Selective Service System, a peacetime draft, made college education a practical alternative to military service. The escape from the armed forces "created moral and psychological conflicts for many of the young remaining in the universities and colleges for reasons other than educational," Keniston says.³

The rumblings of campus unrest in the early 1960s sounded first at places such as the University of California at Berkeley, San Francisco State University, and Harvard University. Student political organizations, including Students for a Democratic Society, the DuBois Clubs, Young Americans for Freedom, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, assumed leading roles in a variety of causes.

One movement that later symbolized the power of student unrest, the Free Speech Movement, started at Berkeley as a protest against the prohibition of "on-campus solicitation of funds and planning and recruitment of off-campus social and political action" on a strip of university property. According to Frederick W. O'bear in Protest! Student Activism in America, this 1964 conflict between students and administration at Berkeley led to a sit-in, the subsequent arrest of 800 students, a strike that nearly crippled the university, and the eventual dismissal of the university's chancellor. The Berkeley students, like thousands

³Ibid., p. 170.

of other students in their footsteps, interpreted administrative discipline as a threat to free speech. By the end of the year, the Berkeley Academic Senate and the Regents of the school voted to accept student demands.⁴

During the remainder of the sixties, many other colleges and universities felt the consequences of student activism and protest. Eventually, two controversies -- the war in Vietnam and racial prejudice and discrimination -- invoked the most student protest. Keniston and Michael Lerner examined "The Unholy Alliance Against the Campus" in New York Times Magazine and they said that American higher education was taking a beating from political extremists of both the right and the left. Americans were rather frustrated with the situation. "Polls show that Americans are fed up with the campus unrest, which they consider the nation's No. 2 problem," Keniston and Lerner write.⁵

The two had read hundreds of studies about student protesters, the institutions where protest occurred, the attitudes of students and faculty members toward protest issues, and the consequences involved. They conclude that the "overwhelming majority of campus protests in recent years have been peaceful, orderly and clearly within the bounds of dissent protected by the First Amendment."⁶ Between the factions on

⁴Frederick W. Obear, "Student Activism in the Sixties," in Julian Foster and Durward Long, eds., Protest! Student Activism in America (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1970), pp. 17-18.

⁵New York Times Magazine, November 8, 1970, p. 23.

⁶Ibid., p. 29.

the right and the left, however, a majority of American students were "constantly told they are or must be violent."⁷ Keniston and Lerner express concern that the public would be persuaded that universities were centers of sedition and causes of unrest.⁸

The American youth movement of the era was not limited to political activism. A "generation gap," as it came to be described, split the country, separating the young from the old through dress, attitude, and action. Protest overlapped into clothing, for to be different proved to be distinctive. Long hair became a symbol of youthful dissent, and the popular music of Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, and Janis Joplin, to name just a few, represented the power, intensity, and frustration of student unrest. One historic event, the August 1969 mass assembly in New York called Woodstock, shocked much of the country. It told the rest of the nation that America's youth -- university students included -- were not going to be passive or restrained in the battle against the "establishment."

In the heart of America, the wave of student protest made its presence felt at the University of Kansas and in the city of Lawrence. When journalist Bill Moyers left New York City in 1970 to travel the countryside and prepare for his book, Listening to America, he expected to enjoy the restful quiet of the Midwest when he reached Lawrence. Moyers found, however, that he had stepped into a rather intense conflict:

Lawrence, Kansas, is a microcosm. Lawrence, Kansas, is

⁷ Ibid., p. 56.

⁸ Ibid., p. 63.

the epitome of a troubled, spirited, inspired, frightened, complacent, industrious, selfish, magnanimous, confused, spiteful, bewitching country. Lawrence, Kansas, is a little world.⁹

The community Moyers visited had about 47,000 residents; a third of them were part of KU in some way.

"Without a university," Moyers concludes, "Lawrence would be in trouble. There are townspeople who think they are in worse trouble with it."

Like the rest of the country, the community of Lawrence was being forced to change, much to its own dislike.

"In more tranquil times young people came from farms and small towns from all over Kansas to prepare themselves for careers and citizenship," Moyers writes. "They still come, but with the rise of the University of Kansas to prominence as a major institution, Lawrence has lost its immunity from the world."¹⁰

Michael P. Fisher, in his dissertation on the history of KU at that time, said that the first student protests at KU in the sixties were civil rights activities.¹¹ But in spring 1969, demonstrators led by members of the Students for a Democratic Society forced the University's annual Reserve Officers Training Corps review to be canceled. As the decade ended, the war in Vietnam and racial tension in Lawrence were about to explode.

⁹ Listening to America (New York: Dell, 1971), p. 83.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 89-90.

¹¹ Fisher, p. 170.

"With the intensification of American military involvement in Southeast Asia in 1970," Fisher writes, "problems of student unrest atop Mount Oread reached a tragic crescendo."¹²

During three separate months -- April, July, and December 1970 -- tension between KU students, University officials, law enforcement officers, and other Lawrence residents erupted in violence. In early April 1970, students planned a general strike; national radical leader Abbie Hoffman made a visit to KU's Allen Field House; and the chairman of KU's Black Student Union, John Spearman, Jr., said black students would retaliate with violence if attacked or threatened. Then on April 20, 1970, a fire of unknown origin hit the Kansas Union building and inflicted 2 million dollars in damage. As every side tried to pin the blame on another faction, KU administrators and law enforcement officials placed the campus under curfew. The remainder of the academic year 1970 at KU was laced with anxiety and controversy.

By July 1970, the subject at issue in Lawrence was race. On July 16, 1970, a nineteen-year-old black and former KU student, Rick "Tiger" Dowdell, died in a purported gun battle with Lawrence police officers. During the following nights, a black neighborhood in East Lawrence became a battle zone. Law enforcement personnel from across the state came to the city; exchanges of gunfire were typical. On July 20, 1970, KU student Harry Nicholas Rice, an eighteen-year-old from Leawood, Kansas, became the next victim of violence as blacks and other young people clashed with police.

¹²Ibid., p. 171.

In December 1970, racial unrest and student protest festered again. This time a student outside KU's Watson Library was wounded, and on December 11, 1970, the University's computer center in Summerfield Hall was bombed. Fisher says that education at the University of Kansas took a subordinate role to student unrest.

"Increasingly, the social and political problems had pre-empted the normal educational and social pursuits of students," Fisher writes.¹³

For obvious reasons, the year 1970 was one of the darkest in the history of the University and the community of Lawrence.

By 1970, KU was the largest institution of higher learning in Kansas. Because the University received millions of dollars in state appropriations, the more than 2 million Kansans in 1970 had a vested interest in how their educational dollars were spent. Undoubtedly, student unrest and violence at KU caused great concern among the state -- not just among the residents of Kansas, but within the pages of the state's newspapers. In addition to reporting on KU student protest, the leading newspapers in the state responded with a variety of reactions on their editorial pages.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the editorials of five Kansas newspaper entities during April, July, and December 1970. The entities (henceforth called newspapers) selected, and reasons for their inclusion, are:

Wichita Eagle/Wichita Beacon/Wichita Eagle and The Beacon (J.H. Colburn, editor and publisher): These newspapers, serving Kansas' largest city, were Kansas newspaper circulation leaders in all categories.

¹³Ibid., p. 186.

Topeka Capital/Topeka State Journal/Topeka Sunday Capital-Journal (Oscar S. Stauffer, editor and publisher): These papers served the state capital, where student unrest and protest became a heated political issue.

Hutchinson News (Stuart Awbrey, editor): Like the Wichita newspapers, this publication was a circulation leader in south-central Kansas. Its editor was the father of KU's 1970 student body president.

Salina Journal (Whitley Austin, editor): Sometimes considered a sister publication of the Hutchinson News, it and the News were members of the Harris newspaper chain. The Journal was a circulation and editorial leader in central Kansas.

Parsons Sun (Clyde Reed, editor): When compared to the above newspapers, the Sun had a much smaller circulation. But it was edited by one of the great figures in Kansas journalism; Reed's newspaper was an editorial leader in southeast Kansas.¹⁴

Assuming that the state's press increased its coverage of student unrest in general during that time, the thesis will consider the frequency of the editorials and four other indicators: cause, blame, praise, and solution. In other words, the thesis will attempt to answer these questions: Did the editorials of these newspapers try to explain the causes of KU student unrest? Did they blame individuals or groups involved in the conflict? Did they praise any person or groups involved? Did they offer solutions to the problems at KU?

A number of works provide valuable background information on American student protest in the 1960s and 1970s. Among them, Protest! Student Activism in America, edited by Julian Foster and Durward Long, offers well-rounded insights into the history of the protest movement; the book's chapters by Clark Kerr, Frederick W. Obear, and Seymour Halleck were particularly helpful. In addition, Fisher's Ph.D. dissertation was

¹⁴ Circulation and management information on these newspapers was taken from the 1970 Ayer Directory of Newspapers, Magazines, and Trade Publications (Philadelphia: Ayerpress, 1970), pp. 416, 424, 426, and 428.

a useful source for study of the University of Kansas during this period, and other KU publications of the period provided details of student unrest and protest. None of these works, however, examines the editorials noted above. Those editorials are worthy of further investigation.

The scope of this study is limited to the newspapers listed above and their editorials in 1970. The following definitions apply to this thesis:

editorial -- an article that contains facts and information and an element of comment or opinion; advertising not included; usually on the newspaper's editorial/opinion page.

editorial cause -- an explanation given in an editorial offering the reasons for an issue, incident, or phenomenon.

editorial blame -- a group or an individual named in an editorial and charged with responsibility for an action or a situation.

editorial praise -- a group or an individual named in an editorial and commended for attitudes, opinions, or actions.

editorial solution -- a suggest course of action in an editorial to solve a conflict or a controversy.

The thesis employs historical/descriptive method. Data from many sources have been collected and examined. The information has been interpreted with particular attention paid to the above criteria.

Chapter 1 of this study examines the history and setting of student unrest in America. Its includes general background information on the subject and discusses the causes of student unrest in the 1960s and 1970s. Chapter 2 describes the entry of the University of Kansas and the city of Lawrence into the spectrum of student protest and unrest. Then Chapters 3, 4, and 5 examine the three months of violence at the University and in Lawrence during 1970. The chapters describe

and evaluate editorials immediately before and after specific events at KU. Chapter 6, the conclusion, provides a personal analysis of the editorials and events discussed in earlier chapters.

This study examines just a portion of the entire spectrum of student protest and unrest during the sixties and seventies. Its insight is limited to hindsight, and its analysis is restricted to a single institution of higher learning in one Midwestern state. Yet the editorial reactions of the Kansas newspapers represent a sample of public opinion during the era. The editorials are more than just opinions of a single author; they indicate a mood of the public during a time of controversy and conflict.

CHAPTER 1

STUDENT UNREST: AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES OF THE 1960s AND EARLY 1970s

One of man's greatest strengths -- or one of his worst weaknesses -- is his ability to view a current crisis as if such a crisis had never before occurred. Thus, when many Americans of the 1960s and early 1970s saw young people experiment with alternative ways of life, they considered themselves to be among the first people to suffer from such youthful rebellion. As American youths let their hair grow long and moved their hemlines upward, their elders complained as if no one had ever been so mistreated.

Student protest and unrest, however, cannot be considered as part of just the sixties and early seventies, though it reached climactic heights in the United States during that era. The phenomenon of youthful dissent can be traced to the days of Aristotle, whose students tested the patience of their instructor:

They are high-minded, for they have not yet been humbled by life nor have they experienced the force of necessity; further, there is a high-mindedness in thinking oneself worthy of great things, a feeling which belongs to one who is full of hope.

In their actions, they prefer the noble to the useful; their life is guided by their character rather than by calculation, for the latter aims at the useful, virtue at the noble. . . . All their errors are due to excess and vehemence . . . for they do everything to excess, love, hate, and everything else.¹

Aristotle's words accurately portray those expressed by older

¹Aristotle, The "Art" of Rhetoric (London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1959), in "Student Activism in the Sixties," Protest! Student Activism in America, p. 12.

Americans during the second half of the 20th century.

Student unrest of the 1960s and early 1970s was caused by more than just youthful waywardness. A complex entanglement of conditions and issues allowed student unrest to reach a peak never before witnessed in the world. In May 1968, for example, Time magazine said that students had demonstrated for change in twenty countries during the three previous months.

"For the first time in many years, students are marching and sitting-in not only in developing or unstable countries," Time said, "but also in the rich industrial democracies."

The article said that the movement in the United States had spread from the more elite schools to "many usually quiescent campuses."²

American youth have always held a prominent position within American society. But the post-World War II baby boom increased the number of young Americans and it made their influence upon their elders even more pervasive. Such a situation led John W. Aldridge to write in Harper's Magazine that his generation had always been under pressure:

Those of us who are now in our forties have scarcely known a moment in our mature lives when we have not been either changing diapers or under siege, when we have not been obliged to seek and shape our identities in the face of enormous moral and emotional pressure from the adolescent or preadolescent Establishment.³

At the same time, mass higher education in the United States enabled more students than ever before to attend college. Yet education

²"Why Those Students Are Protesting," Time, May 3, 1968, p. 24.

³Aldridge, "In the Country of the Young," p. 45.

spawned dissatisfaction among America's youth, who developed far-reaching social and political awareness. Space-Age man was under siege by pollution, racial discrimination, the horrors of war, and the threat of nuclear holocaust. Some students considered it time to bring about change through liberalized standards of sex, drugs, music, and morality -- possibly through violence.

These conditions increased the probability of student unrest and protest, and three glaring issues in this country -- educational reform, racial discrimination, and the controversial U.S. military presence in Southeast Asia -- sparked the flames of student protest. America's young people recognized that their country had achieved immense power and affluence. Their country was a shining example to a hungry, oppressed world. But the United States was not as great as it could be; discrimination against minority groups and the war in Vietnam symbolized inexcusable behavior that American students could not tolerate, especially since so many of them either faced the prejudices of discrimination or the perils of war.

Therefore, student unrest and protest reached new heights in this country during the sixties and early seventies.

"For the first time in American history, student dissent and the prospect of student power have become a source of nationwide interest and concern, and even, in some quarters, of fear," Clark Kerr, former president of the University of California, says in the April 1968 issue of Impact Magazine.

The new student attitudes contrasted strongly, he says, with that of the 1950s, when the general complaint was about the silence and

apathy of students.⁴ Before the fifties, the only decade to foreshadow the future was the 1930s.

During the Great Depression, activism among American college students was first linked to national politics.

According to Frederick W. Obear, provost at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan, "The Great Depression introduced a measure of seriousness into student disorders, and this was soon reinforced by the worsening international situation."⁵

The rise of Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, and other dictators seriously threatened world stability, even American democracy. American students recognized that they would be forced to pay the price in lives to defeat the dictators.

The City College of New York became the center of student protest in the thirties, Obear says. "Strikes were called to oppose the breakdown of disarmament and the approach of war," he says, but World War II soon brought student protest to a standstill.

"At the end of World War II, however, the returning veterans brought a new and business-like atmosphere to American campuses," Obear writes.

Veterans were interested in obtaining their education; political protest had very little appeal to them. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, U.S. college students remained quiet, Obear says -- "too quiet for many observers."⁶

⁴"Student Dissent and Confrontation Politics," Protest! Student Activism in America, p. 3.

⁵Obear, in Protest! Student Activism in America, p. 13.

⁶Ibid.

Elsewhere in the world, students took more active roles in political activism and protest.

"Latin American students, following a long tradition of political activism, played significant roles in bringing down such dictators as Peron (Argentina, 1955) and Perez Jimenez (Venezuela, 1958)," Obear says.

Behind Europe's Iron Curtain, young people had limited success, but they were prominent in uprisings against Communist regimes in Hungary, Poland, and East Germany. Japanese students in 1960 brought down their government after massive riots against the Security Treaty with the United States, and students were also partly responsible for overthrowing dictatorships in Korea and Turkey.⁷

The absence of student protest in the United States ended in 1960. On February 1, four black students from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College occupied a segregated lunch counter in Greensboro. They were arrested for trespassing. Later in the month, other students from black schools in the South participated in sit-ins (a soon-to-be-famous protest technique of the decade), marches, pickets, and boycotts; more than 300 students were arrested at Southern sit-ins during the first month of the movement. Thus the struggle for civil rights became the first focus of activism in the 1960s.

"It remained the most significant protest issue for the next four years, but events at Greensboro seemed to galvanize a variety of other

⁷ Ibid., pp. 13-14.

protests into being, Obear says.⁸

California students were the next to protest. One hundred of them marched to San Quentin in February to protest unsuccessfully the execution of Caryl Chessman, a convicted felon, self-taught lawyer, and folk hero to thousands of opponents of capital punishment. In May, thousands of students from the University of California at Berkeley and San Francisco State picketed the hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee in San Francisco: sixty-eight were arrested, and many others were cleared from the steps of city hall by fire hoses. Across the country, at Harvard University, thousands of students participated in a protest walk against U.S. nuclear arms policy.

Radical political groups formed on several campuses during 1960-61: VOICE at Michigan and PILOT at Chicago joined the pioneering SLATE at Berkeley. On the national scene, Students for a Democratic Society, the DuBois Clubs, and the Young Americans for Freedom were formed, but they were overshadowed by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which quickly assumed a leading role in the South.

During 1962, the first consequential demonstration on a campus in the Deep South, Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, resulted in the arrest of 250 black students. In Albany, Georgia, more than 1,000 blacks and whites were arrested in another racial demonstration, but a demonstration of another kind at the University of Mississippi, one against integration, failed to prevent the enrollment of James Meredith, a black student.

⁸Information for this paragraph and the next three paragraphs was condensed from Obear, pp. 14-16.

Indeed, it was no longer possible to speak of a Silent Generation of U.S. college students.

"The early part of the sixties was thus sharply distinguished from the fifties in the degree of activism," Obear says.

But most American college students remained politically inactive.

"The activists, while conspicuous, were a very small proportion of the total (student) population," Obear says, "and on the vast majority of campuses, they were barely in evidence."⁹

College faculty members and administrators largely approved of the new student activism, Obear says. They appreciated the interest of their students in social and political issues, "even if it was an occasional source of embarrassment when dealing with conservative donors or trustees," he says. Much of the protest to date had been aimed in favor of integration, "an ideal close to the hearts of Northern academic liberals, and to a lesser extent at peace, a barely less acceptable goal," Obear says.¹⁰

In 1964, students at the University of California at Berkeley expanded their reputation for activism and protest. Their Free Speech Movement, designed to change a university policy against political action in a certain part of the campus, successfully promoted boycotts of classes and a sit-in in the university's administration building. Eventually, in December 1964, the Berkeley Academic Senate passed resolutions supporting much of the movement's position, and the

⁹Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 17.

university's chancellor resigned under pressure.

"By the end of 1964, the students at Berkeley had proven that they had the power to initiate change, and that their direct action techniques would work outside the South," Obear says. "To some, the possibilities seemed limitless."¹¹

As the decade progressed and student protest achieved greater success and appeal among American students, the war in Vietnam killed more and more U.S. servicemen. Protest against it grew proportionately. Students at Haverford (Pennsylvania) College in 1964 organized the first drive to collect medical supplies for the Viet Cong, a faction of the Vietnamese enemy. At the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, students took part in a sit-in at the local draft board, and a faculty protest that became a threatened strike opposing the war resulted in America's first teach-in. On May 15, 1964, another televised teach-in, in Washington, D.C., generated additional student support for anti-war protest. About 50,000 students protested American involvement in Southeast Asia with an October march on Washington, and another march drew 40,000 people in December. Protests on such a scale were unusual, Obear says.¹²

The Vietnam war was not the only issue that created wrath among students.

"An increasing number of confrontations were based on the principle that students should govern their own affairs, and should participate

¹¹Ibid., p. 18.

¹²Information for this paragraph and the next two paragraphs was condensed from Obear, pp. 14-16.

in making the policies of the institution," Obear says.

Many schools, therefore, placed students on committees and other governing bodies.

But such action sometimes did not satisfy student demands. What began as a peaceful protest against the construction of a gymnasium and the institution's affiliation with the Institute of Defense Analyses ended in chaos, controversy, and violence in spring 1968 at Columbia University in New York. Students were dissatisfied with the school administration's supposed lack of concern for students, faculty, and the surrounding community; they occupied the office of the Columbia president, Grayson Kirk, for more than a week and held one administrator hostage for twenty-four hours. After a week-long sit-in, city police cleared the campus of protesters. The result was the suspension of classes for two weeks, the arrest of more than 600 persons, damage to five buildings seized by students, and the resignation of top Columbia administrators.

Black protest, instead of anti-war protest, dominated the nation's campuses in 1968-69. Students demanded the creation of ethnic studies departments, and opposition to such demands was met with student militancy. Bombings became routine at Berkeley and San Francisco State; college administrators nationwide encountered physical violence or threats of it; two Black Panthers were killed on the campus of the University of California at Los Angeles; and the president of Swarthmore, Courtney Smith, died of a heart attack while black students occupied the administration building.

By 1969, Obear says, it was unclear whether any constructive course

could be followed to meet black complaints: "Increasingly, the tendency was to counter force with force: the Tac Squad at San Francisco State, the highway patrol at U.C. Berkeley, and the National Guard at the University of Wisconsin and at Duke."¹³

The decade of the 1960s had begun with the peaceful replacement of the Silent Generation, but it ended with the sustained growth of violence among students and administrators and law enforcement personnel. O'bear emphasized the quickness of the growth of student protest:

This evolution of student protest during the decade of the sixties was extremely rapid. Beginning with an inheritance of quietism, students came awake politically to fight segregation and racial injustice in the South. The escalation of the war in Vietnam had the effect of broadening their concern; the resultant draft calls added self-interested motives for political action to the existing idealism. Events at Berkeley showed how activist techniques could be applied to campus reform. The three strands, race relations, peace and educational reform, became gradually fused together in a movement based largely on the campuses: a movement which has come to be called the New Left.¹⁴

The increase of black student activism was not only frustrating to whites but to some blacks as well.

"Americans of all races must feel a measure of both anguish and dismay over the campus eruptions led by black students," national columnist Carl Rowan wrote in the Kansas City Star of January 22, 1969.

He continued:

People who have spent their lifetimes trying to destroy

¹³ Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 24.

an iniquitous, demeaning system of racial segregation now see black students demanding separate dormitories, striving to force institutions to add other trappings of racial separation.

The situation was nearing a point of insanity, Rowan said.¹⁵

All of the student protests thus far described cannot be linked to a single, overriding issue, cause, or condition. Rather, each protest was both similar and dissimilar to those at other colleges and universities in America: national issues such as Vietnam and racial discrimination tied protest movements together, but issues of local interest made each movement distinctive. In a similar vein, sources on student unrest provide a variety of explanations for the troubled American youth of the sixties and early seventies.

Michael P. Fisher, in his historical dissertation on the University of Kansas during this period, offers several explanations for student unrest.

"The growing intensity of the war in Vietnam, the developing social awareness among the young concerning the nation's ills, and the unsolved racial problem pressed upon the University (of Kansas) as it did the nation," Fisher says.

Science and technology were in abundance, he says, but students felt unable to control the events around them. Fisher says:

In a time of peace, thousands of the nation's sons fought in a distant land. In a country of great abundance, pockets of desperate poverty existed. In a period of unlimited opportunity, many of the young chose to reject society. The nation's problems grew as national dissent grew.¹⁶

¹⁵"How Black Militants Win Recruits," p. 10E.

¹⁶Fisher, p. 110.

In his explanation for American student protest, Clark Kerr lists six conditions causing such increased political activism among students:

1. Mass higher education: Fifty percent of college-age students now enter college. It was more nearly five percent a half-century ago. Students are now drawn from nearly all segments of the population, not just the middle and upper classes.

2. Concentration in the mass university: The large and often quite impersonal campus has become the standard habitat for many of these students. There is little sense of a united community of scholars. The recent neglect of the undergraduate in favor of graduate students, research, and external service intensifies the impact of greater size.

3. The permissive environment: The family has become more permissive and so has the church. The college no longer stands so much in loco parentis. The student relies more on himself or his peer group for morality and behavior.

4. The student culture: By now students have been associated long enough in large, cohesive, relatively autonomous groups so that an independent student "culture" can develop with its own style of dress and behavior, its own ethics and orientation.

5. The explosive issues: The 1960's have seen the United States torn by some explosive issues -- particularly Civil Rights and the Vietnam War. Internal justice and worldwide peace are especially compelling issues for idealistic youth, and coming together, they have abetted each other. Beyond these lie other issues of great concern: the quality of education, control of the bomb, adjustment to the computer, the quality of work and leisure in an age of automation, mass corporations, government bureaucracies, and spectator sports.

6. The anomalous dependence of students: Students are better educated than ever before; they are encouraged to question established beliefs, to seek meaningful occupations, to make fresh contributions. Yet society, through the operation of seniority in large-scale organizations, postpones longer than ever before their chance to really participate. Lacking financial independence, and with little influence at the ballot box or in the existing centers of power, they seek other means to assert their positions on the crucial issues that so deeply concern them.¹⁷

¹⁷Kerr, pp. 4-5.

This list of conditions also indicates that no particular issue or situation created the national outbreak of student activism and unrest. Indeed, nearly every aspect of a student's background or previous activities related to his eventual involvement in protest during the sixties and early seventies.

A rather popular scapegoat for confrontations between students and their parents, university officials, and law enforcement personnel was a so-called "generation gap," some deep abyss separating young and old from fundamental communication. Joseph Adelson, professor of psychology at the University of Michigan and co-author of The Adolescent Experience, notes in a January 18, 1970, article in New York Times Magazine, "What Generation Gap?," that in spite of the popularity of the term "generation gap," the idea of such a gap had not been thoroughly examined.

"Is there a generation gap?" he asks. "Yes, no, maybe. Quite clearly, the answer depends upon the specific issues we are talking about."¹⁸

On definition of generational conflict is rebellion against parental authority.

After citing several studies to support his conclusion, Adelson says, "On this particular issue, there is, as it happens, abundant evidence, and all suggests strongly that there is no extensive degree of alienation between parents and their children."¹⁹

¹⁸ Adelson, p. 35.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 10.

People who are convinced there is a "generation gap," Adelson says, also tend to identify youth with radical or militantly liberal beliefs. He concludes that a generational element exists in politics, but the majority of young Americans do not identify with liberal or left militancy.

The term "generation gap" also invokes connotations of a value revolution, a sexual revolution, and a drug revolution. Adelson disputes the concept of a value revolution, using Fortune magazine research data indicating that 80 percent of young people tended to be "traditionalistic in values." Furthermore, on the basis of a study by the Institute for Sex Research at Indiana University, he states that the sexual revolution was yet to take place, even though quasi-marital pairings were much more likely and there was a small national trend of extremely casual sexuality. As to drugs, specifically marijuana, Adelson states that 90 percent of youth had no experience with marijuana.

"We might say that the generation gap is an illusion," Adelson says. "There is something going on among the young, but we have misunderstood it."²⁰

Although Adelson does not link student unrest specifically to a "generation gap," Joseph A. Califano, a top adviser in the administration of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson (and later Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare under President Jimmy Carter), says the real cause of unrest both in America and abroad was "the crisis

²⁰ Ibid., p. 35.

belief." After a study sponsored by the Ford Foundation on student unrest in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the United States, Califano refused to blame Vietnam, the fight for civil rights, the lack of "relevance" in the curriculum, or the obsolescence of the university governing structure. Instead, he defined four ingredients of the "crisis of belief":

1. Traditionally and properly, the universities have functioned as tough critics of existing ideals, doctrines, theories and institutions. But while this process has made students cynical about traditional power, concepts and faiths, it has not been nearly as successful in assisting the search for new ideas and arrangements.

2. In the process of radical students' attacks on the present campus establishment and the curriculum, the adolescent ways of the youth have deeply affected and infected many faculty members -- with the result that they themselves adopt adolescent judgment and behavior.

.....
 3. The off-campus world which increasingly represents the backlash to the rebellion also reverts to the ways of adolescence.

Legislatures react with drives for revenge.

Alumni threaten to withhold funds from institutions which they consider disloyal to their own nostalgic concept of what the campus used to be.

4. At the same time, youth suffers from the "psychology of being powerless." Despite the newly found power to disrupt the campus, young people have a sense of being caught in the machine of society and government, with little power over their own lives and the issues that affect their lives.²¹

In other words, Califano implied that young Americans distrusted their elders, otherwise known as the "establishment."

By the end of the 1960s, student protest and unrest had captured the attention of the entire nation. Such a phenomenon suggests that a wide majority of America's youth were in an uproar about one issue

²¹Fred H. Hechinger, "'Crisis of Belief' Is Behind the Unrest," Kansas City Times, October 31, 1969, p. 15B.

or another. Clark Kerr, however, says that although a new student political tone had emerged, only a minority of college students had responded politically.

"But this small minority can set the tone of a campus and even of the national student body," Kerr writes, "just as small numbers in other generations of students have established other tones."²²

Kerr says it was remarkable that so few students could set the tone for so many others. Yet the dominance of the minority hid two other important segments of student life: a small number of college dropouts, called Bohemians, and a group that Kerr calls "the Peace Corps public-service types, who are the most neglected of all items of public attention." Kerr says this group had the greatest potential to gain social significance in the long run.²³

Kerr further divides student political activists into three groups: the issue-by-issue protesters, the liberal-radicals, and the radical-radicals. The first type of protester "accepts the existing system but seeks to correct its deficiencies of operation at specific points," Kerr says, "sometimes through orderly protest, sometimes through stronger confrontation tactics." The liberal-radicals went a step further; they were convinced that the only answer to specific problems was to restructure the entire society along different lines through the techniques of organization, discussion, and persuasion.

²²Kerr, pp. 5-6.

²³Ibid., p. 6.

"They are radical as to ends but most liberal as to means," Kerr says.²⁴

Of Kerr's three groups of student political activists, the radical-radicals were the most uncompromising group.

"These students comprise the most dissident group on the student scene today," Kerr says. "They believe they can eradicate current evils only by restructuring the entire society, and they are willing to use violent tactics if necessary to reach this goal."

In other words, these students were radical as to both ends and means.²⁵

A professor of psychiatry at the University of Wisconsin Medical School, Seymour L. Halleck, agrees with Kerr that a determined minority were asserting their influence upon the entire student population.

"It does not matter that a great majority of students remain largely content, conservative, and apathetic," Halleck says.

On the basis of his research, Halleck concludes that both activists and alienated students were often from affluent, upper-middle, or upper-class homes. He describes them as sensitive, perceptive, highly intelligent, articulate, irreverent, humorless, and relentless in their contempt for adult hypocrisy.²⁶

Halleck confirms that there was no shortage of explanations

²⁴Ibid., pp. 8-9.

²⁵Ibid., p. 9.

²⁶"Hypotheses of Student Unrest," Protest! Student Activism in America, pp. 105-106.

for the phenomenon of student unrest. Some of the explanations were based on opinions that support prejudices, he says, and others had greater objectivity.

"But no hypothesis thus far advanced can be considered a sufficient explanation of student unrest," Halleck says. "At best, each is only a partial explanation which sheds only a small light upon a highly complex phenomenon."²⁷

Kerr and Halleck agree that the student protest and unrest of the 1960s was a new combination of old ingredients. But the essence of the movement, according to Kerr, was confrontation politics -- "confrontation with the power structure on Main Street, on the campus, and in Washington." Kerr lists eight characteristics of such confrontation politics among American youth:

1. A concern for power. The constant refrain is the acquisition of power. It is assumed that, with power, evil can be eradicated; without it, nothing can be accomplished.

2. The university as a power base. The campus is chosen as the focal point for activity. It is the place to arouse interest, recruit members, raise money, and organize action, and from which to launch attacks on chosen targets.

3. Distaste for the "establishment." There is almost total rejection of the organizations that administer the status quo, which is viewed as under the domination of the "military-industrial complex." The university is seen as a handmaiden to this complex.

4. Orientation to specific issues. Ideology is suspect, and, given the variety of viewpoints among participants, potentially divisive. The choice, rather, is for individual issues, especially those with a high moral content involving equality, freedom, and peace.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 106.

5. Participatory democracy. All bureaucracies are distasteful, including their own. The ideal is the Town Meeting, or the Quaker community meeting. . . . Legitimacy depends on group participation and ratification -- not on passive acquiescence to the decision of a central body.

6. Tactics for the short run. Students of earlier generations have used the petition, the picket line, and the strike to call public attention to their views. The new student generation has added new weapons: the sit-in, the teach-in, the mill-in, the mass demonstration or march covered by the press and TV. . . . The emphasis is on the event and not the process.

7. The importance of style. The new reformation starts by nailing bold theses to the classroom door -- with flash bulbs and cameras ready to record the scene. Demands are made suddenly, dramatically, publicly. The appeal is directly to the mass public, and so it is necessary to get the attention of the press and TV. Violation of rules and the law is one quick way of doing this. The student activist is the new PR expert.

8. Allies and allied enemies. The new activists can look for support within the campus from the few Bohemians and often from the Peace Corps and academic types. . . . Essentially, however, they stand by themselves, asking for little help, as the slogan "don't trust anyone over 30" implies.²⁸

These confrontation tactics did provide student protesters with limited success in achieving their goals. Such conduct was even more successful at grabbing the attention of older Americans, who reacted to student unrest and protest with a wide range of emotions -- from mild approval to a strong sense of fear. All sides, however, were consistent in blaming higher education for the ongoing conflict.

Two Yale University faculty members, Kenneth Keniston, psychology, and Michael Lerner, political science, say Americans were fed up with campus unrest, which polls showed as the nation's No. 2 problem in 1970. In a New York Times Magazine article in November 1970, "The Unholy

²⁸Kerr, pp. 7-8.

Alliance Against the Campus," Keniston and Lerner say American higher education was "taking a beating from political extremists of both the right and the left." On the right, politicians found that attacking "'violent students'" and "'lax faculty members'" was an excellent way to win votes. On the left, Students for a Democratic Society, for example, said, "'American universities are absolutely central components of the social system of technological warfare-welfare capitalism.'"²⁹

Keniston and Lerner say that, in spite of the different types of declamation between right and left, both types of extremists were in astonishing agreement about higher education. Both sides agreed that campus discipline was unjust and politically motivated; that universities "systematically indoctrinate their students with abhorrent political ideas"; and that American higher education was "politicized -- for the rightists, into a launching pad for revolution, and for the leftists, into a tool of the military-industrial Establishment."³⁰

After examining hundreds of studies of student protesters, of institutions where protest occurred, of attitudes of students and faculty members, and of the consequences of protest, Keniston and Lerner conclude that the overwhelming majority of campus protests during the period were "peaceful, orderly, and clearly within the bounds of dissent protected by the First Amendment."³¹ They also conclude that in the middle of the squabble were an overwhelming majority of American

²⁹ Keniston and Lerner, p. 28.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 29.

³¹ Ibid.

students "constantly told they are or must be violent."³² The greatest danger of the conflict, they say, came from a "public rapidly being persuaded that universities are centers of sedition and causes of unrest."³³ They suggest that higher education should be reformed to serve society better, "not destroyed as a scapegoat for national problems."³⁴

Because student unrest and protest was just one of the problems facing this country in 1970, and to better understand what America was and who its people were, Bill Moyers, then publisher of Newsday, traveled 13,000 miles across the United States in the summer of 1970. Americans "seemed more raucous than ever, and no one could any longer be sure who spoke for whom," Moyers writes in the introduction to his book, Listening to America.³⁵

After examining the texture of the American fabric, Moyers concludes that people were more anxious and bewildered than alarmed by the situation in their country in 1970:

They don't know what to make of it all: of long hair and endless war, of their children deserting their country, of congestion on their highways and overflowing crowds in their national parks, of art that does not uplift and movies that do not reach conclusions; of intransigence in government and violence; of politicians who come and go while problems plague

³² Ibid., p. 56.

³³ Ibid., p. 68.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 83.

³⁵ Moyers, Listening to America, p. vii.

and persist; of being lonely surrounded by people and of being bored with so many possessions; of being poor; of the failure of organizations to keep the air breathable, the water drinkable, and man peaceable.³⁶

Such were the conditions and issues feeding student unrest and protest in the United States in the sixties and early seventies. Older Americans could not understand how such problems could persist, and young Americans were uncertain of the results of their dissent. America was ripping apart at the seams -- and a dominating minority of students at colleges and universities were clamoring for immediate change.

³⁶Ibid., p. 342.

CHAPTER 2

STUDENT UNREST: LAWRENCE, THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS, AND GROWING TENSION

As student unrest and protest mushroomed on other college and university campuses across the United States, so did the movement arrive at the University of Kansas, the state's largest public university. At one point in 1965, W. Clarke Wescoe, then chancellor of the University, denied that KU students were violating long-accepted codes of behavior or questioning the fundamental tenets of American society. In 1966, however, KU students, like those at other American universities, increased their efforts to gain greater power in university governance; during 1967 and 1968, the KU student body grew even more restless. When Wescoe's resignation took effect in 1969, it signaled the coming of the storm. Lawrence and the University of Kansas would soon embody many of the elements of the national student protest movement.

Unrest and violence were no strangers to the Lawrence vicinity. Before Kansas achieved statehood on January 29, 1861, a border war in eastern sections of the territory earned the title "Bleeding Kansas"; anti-slavery and pro-slavery forces each were determined to gain the new state for their side. Guerrilla bands roved the Kansas-Missouri border at will, and Lawrence became the headquarters of free-state settlers arriving from the northern states.¹

¹Information for this paragraph and the next two paragraphs was gathered from William Frank Zornow, Kansas: A History of the Jayhawk State (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), pp. 67-117.

In 1855, for example, nearly a thousand pro-slavers entered the city, armed with guns, rifles, pistols, bowie knives, and two pieces of loaded artillery. They cast their votes in the territorial election, and the result was a clean sweep for slavery. Although the Lawrence free-staters protested, the federal government refused to override the election results, so the anti-slavery settlers in the area protested the fraudulent territorial legislature. Lawrence citizens became a law unto themselves.

Under threat of attack from pro-slavery forces, members of the Lawrence community armed themselves. But a pro-slavery band sacked the city in 1856; notorious free-stater John Brown retaliated by massacring five alleged slave owners at nearby Osawatomie, Kansas. Even after the territory became a state, the Civil War raged between North and South. In one of the bloodiest massacres during the war, an outlaw band led by William Clarke Quantrill entered Lawrence on August 21, 1863. After four hours of plundering and killing, nearly 150 innocent people were murdered by raiders who moved from house to house.

After Quantrill's 1863 massacre, money proved to be exceedingly scarce in the young state, according to Michael P. Fisher in his historical dissertation on the University of Kansas. But a variety of negotiations raised the necessary seed money for financing a state university, and by March 1, 1864, the Kansas Legislature enacted a structure of organization for the University of Kansas.

"The definition of the university's purpose remained vague,"

Fisher says, "the legislature stating only that the university's mission included providing Kansans with the means of acquiring a 'thorough knowledge of the various branches of the literature, science, and the arts.'"²

KU opened the doors of its lone building on September 12, 1866.

After a humble beginning, the University grew and expanded its programs. Fisher notes that "optimism abounded in the new state where adversity often proved the rule rather than the exception."³ Through the remainder of the 1800s and the first half of the 20th Century, the University struggled with budgets and the Kansas Legislature to establish a high quality institution of higher learning. Eventually, "the massive infusion of funds into higher education, the increased birth rate in the years following World War II, the weak position of youth in the job market, and the threat of military service" contributed to the rapid growth of KU.⁴

Therefore, to meet the demands of mass higher education, the University expanded both its programs and its resources. By 1970, there were seventy-five principal buildings on the 930-acre Lawrence campus of the University. KU had museums of art, natural history, and entomology, and a 51,500-seat football stadium, a 17,000-seat indoor sports arena, several auditoriums and theaters, and a self-supporting student union building with dining and recreation areas,

²Fisher, pp. 17-18.

³Ibid., p. 18.

⁴Ibid., p. 89.

meeting rooms, and a book store. The Kansas University Endowment Association had an estimated value of 30 million dollars, and the 1970 general budget of the University totaled more than 30 million dollars. KU offered not only bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in numerous disciplines, but it also received grants and contracts for more than 17 million dollars in research projects.⁵

Indeed, the University of Kansas had become a prominent educational and research institution in the Midwest. In similar fashion, the city of Lawrence had grown from a quiet college community to a city of 47,000 people by 1970. When Bill Moyers made his summer 1970 visit to Lawrence in preparation for his book, Listening to America, he soon observed the strong links between the city and KU. He concludes that about a third of the city was part of the University in one way or another.

"Without a university Lawrence would be in economic trouble," he says. But because of it, "Lawrence has lost its immunity from the world."⁶

E. Laurence Chalmers, who became KU chancellor after Wescoe in 1969, confirmed Moyers' conclusions when Moyers interviewed him in 1970. Even in the midst of violent student unrest -- in one of the University's darkest hours -- Chalmers described the KU-Lawrence relationship as "symbiotic."

"If one catches a cold they both take a pill," Chalmers said.

⁵University of Kansas Facts, 1970-71 (University of Kansas brochure).

⁶Moyers, Listening to America, pp. 89-90.

"Each suffers the repercussions of whatever happens in the other."⁷

When unrest reached a peak in 1970, Chalmers resented the representation of Lawrence violence as KU violence. He conceded, however, that "when one hurts, they both hurt."⁸

The University of Kansas had followed the trend of other American colleges and universities after World War II -- a larger student body, expanded curricula, and improved resources. But in the middle of the sixties, the majority of KU students were a far cry from their counterparts at the University of California at Berkeley, for example, where student unrest and protest were exerting their influence. A typical KU student gathering in the fall of 1966 did not concern any controversial national issue; the young men and women assembled between two residence halls for a panty raid.

The 450 students involved in this display of KU student life were housed in Oliver and Ellsworth halls, for they were part of a KU academic experiment, Centennial College, funded by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation and designed to link teaching, living, advising, and counseling through a "college-within-a-college" approach.⁹ The students began the September evening by flashing lights across Daisy Field, the meadow separating the two residence halls.

"When counselors ended the display," Fisher says, "residents first threw undergarments out the dormitories' windows; followed by

⁷ Ibid., p. 101.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Fisher, p. 91.

fireworks; roman candles; and cherry bombs."

One female student, identified by a KU official later as an underclassman, started a strip tease on a two-foot ledge outside Oliver Hall's tenth floor. Balanced on a narrow projection, she dropped her clothing piece by piece to a growing crowd below," according to Fisher. "Fun, not suicide, was on the woman's mind," the KU dean of women later told reporters.¹⁰

During the mid-1960s, much of the attention of KU students focused on fun. The taverns and clubs close to the Lawrence campus did a thriving business; at places like the Jayhawk Cafe, the Wagon Wheel, the Southern Pit, the Stables, and the Rock Chalk, KU students drank 3.2 beer, danced to rock 'n' roll music, and escaped from their academic pressures. Fisher says that the world seemed "pleasantly distant" to most KU students in 1966.

"They still might enjoy an afternoon walk down the sun-dappled path to Potter Lake (the campus pond), just as other students had a century before, enjoying the beauty and tranquility of Mount Oread and the University," Fisher says.¹¹

The revolution of student unrest that was sweeping other campuses in the United States had left KU untouched.

"Insulated geographically from many of the national issues already setting campuses such as Berkeley ablaze, The University of Kansas remained in 1967 relatively untouched by the winds of change,"

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 109.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 110.

according to Fisher.

Following the fashion of the era, skirt lengths of women rose above the knees. But as psychedelic fashions swept much of the nation, blue jeans, loafers, and short hair remained common among KU men. Linda Simpson, named KU's "best dressed woman in 1967," observed that one of the biggest crazes on campus during the time was "to get your boy friend's fraternity sweater."¹²

Signs of an approaching storm of student unrest, however, were already appearing. In 1967, the Kansas Bureau of Drug Abuse Control investigated the illegal sale of drugs on and near the KU Lawrence campus. The student newspaper, the University Daily Kansan, reported that at least four incidents of illegal drug sales had been reported to the bureau between September 1966 and March 1967.¹³ By later standards, such drug activity was only minimal; in the next few years, numerous drug raids would give area young people a reputation for strong drug use.

During 1967, the drug traffic in Lawrence and at the University grew dramatically. The Kansas City Star, a leading daily newspaper in a metropolitan area only forty miles east of Lawrence, reported that the city attorney in Lawrence, Wesley Norwood, said much of the KU drug traffic was undercover. Casual bystanders, however, might watch drug purchases being made on streets and in taverns daily,

¹²Ibid., p. 114.

¹³Ibid.

Norwood said.¹⁴

Increased drug activity signaled changing times, and an increase in student political activism at KU represented growing awareness among KU students of the political and social issues surrounding them. By 1966, Fisher says, students expanded their efforts to gain greater power in University governance. A delegation representing four student organizations met with KU administrators that year, asking for clarification of University rules regarding subjects such as drinking and sex.¹⁵ And, as a sign of the times, the University's largest residence hall, McCollum, became the first KU dormitory to become coeducational.¹⁶

The KU student body of spring 1967 was even more restless. In April 1967, showing their dissatisfaction with the size and "impersonality" of the University of Kansas, about 400 students demonstrated through nonviolent action. By 1968, student rights was a hot issue at KU; that year, 1,500 students gathered on the lawn in front of Strong Hall, KU's administration building, to discuss student rights. A campus activist group, Student Voice, organized the assembly, during which KU students demanded increased student voting rights on the University Senate and Senate Council.¹⁷

Fisher says that Student Voice "galvanized a periphery of student

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 114-15.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 118.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 117.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 118.

support." In other words, the goals of the KU student activists became more acceptable to other KU students.

"Most students at the university, like their counterparts throughout the nation, remained apathetic toward student governance, characteristically staying outside the mainstream of social change," Fisher says.¹⁸

A change in the KU student power structure contributed to the success of Student Voice. During much of the history of the University of Kansas, fraternities and sororities had controlled student politics. But during the sixties, the Greek organizations enjoyed only limited success in politics, and KU campus activists stepped into the power vacuum. Moreover, many of the issues and conditions that had fostered the growth of student unrest and protest elsewhere in the country grew to affect students at the University of Kansas. Student complaints concerned faculty apathy, "irrelevance" of some courses, and administrative indifference to student needs. In December 1968, the Kansas City Star reported that one KU official, William Balfour, dean of students, admitted publicly that KU student complaints were partially justified.¹⁹

The KU administration was aware of growing dissent among students and younger faculty members during the late 1960s. With innovations such as the college-within-a-college, coeducational residence halls, and relaxation of closing hours in women's dormitories, KU officials

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 119.

sought to appease the growing student demands. In addition, some academic concessions were granted, including a pass-no pass option and new courses. But on one important issue -- KU's Reserve Officers Training Corps -- the University administration and KU students split sharply.

Widespread military training on U.S. campuses had its origins in the Civil War. The Morrill Act of 1862, which provided to states grants of public land for colleges, required that each land-grant college offer a course in military tactics. The law did not make such courses compulsory, but many schools did require mandatory enrollment for patriotic reasons.

The national defense act of 1916 created the Army Reserve Officers Training Corps to standardize the military training courses at American colleges and universities. The U.S. Navy established a similar program in 1926, and the U.S. Air Force formed its program in 1946. By the 1960s, the military was dependent upon ROTC programs for 50 percent of its Army officers, 35 percent of its Navy officers, and 30 percent of the Air Force's commissioned officers. On 300 campuses across the nation, more than 270,000 men were enrolled in ROTC programs in 1969.²⁰

When the United States increased its military involvement in Vietnam and Southeast Asia, the controversy of the action fed the flames of student unrest and protest. The nation's ROTC programs

²⁰David E. Rosenbaum, "R.O.T.C. Being Challenged on Campuses Across the Country," New York Times, January 5, 1969, p. 64.

became the targets of protest; the place of the military training programs within the college curriculum became a much-debated academic issue. At the University of Kansas in 1967 and 1968, the ROTC controversy solidified the KU student protest movement. Fisher says that dissent grew in direct proportion to the intensity of the fighting in the Republic of South Vietnam:

There, young men very similar to their brothers at The University of Kansas found themselves in a war few understood. No sun-dappled paths led down the red clay hills in the undulating countryside of the scarred demilitarized zone. There, each hillock held only a special tactical value rather than peace and tranquility for the men and boys facing one another across the no man's land. The names of those tragic bench marks: Con Tien, the Rockpile, Hill 881, came to symbolize a sense of either pride or distaste for a nation neither totally committed nor fully decided regarding the undeclared war. For those who fought there, the battlefield characteristically became a world of final simplicity.²¹

For a growing number of students at KU, the Vietnam War proved difficult either to understand or accept.

Uncertainty about the value of the conflict in Southeast Asia was not limited to students. During the first week of his tenure as KU chancellor in September 1969, Chalmers himself, in a highly publicized speech in Kansas City, condemned U.S. military involvement in Vietnam.

"There have always been people who objected to every war this country fought," Chalmers said, "but the war in Vietnam is perceived by our students as politically unjustifiable and morally indefensible,

²¹David Douglas Duncan, War Without Heroes (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), in Fisher, p. 111.

and I agree with them on both counts."²²

The following May, Chalmers redefined his position in regard to Vietnam. In an open letter to the editor of the University Daily Kansan, he said that KU must remain neutral on the issue, and on all "similar contemporary social, religious, and political issues or forfeit its claim to objectivity." He stressed that a university must remain a marketplace of ideas. Fisher says that Chalmers had been criticized by nonuniversity groups for permitting anti-war demonstrations on campus, but Chalmers justified them as giving credence to academic freedom.²³

Other KU administrators and faculty members also had reservations about the Vietnam conflict. In September 1969, the United States enforced the first draft lottery since World War II; men between nineteen and twenty-six years of age went to the top of the eligible lists at their draft boards. The Kansas City Times, the sister publication of the Star, reported on December 2, 1969, that many students saw the increased needs for U.S. military manpower as destroying the sanctuary that universities had formerly provided.²⁴ Fisher summarized the effects of the draft:

The lottery put increasing pressure on the male university student to perform academically. The need to stay above the academic standards set by the draft boards contributed to the gradual grade inflation (at KU).²⁵

²²Fisher, p. 153.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid., p. 154.

²⁵Ibid.

As if U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia were not enough of a controversy for Lawrence and the University of Kansas, still another immense issue brewed in the vicinity during the 1960s -- race relations. In Listening to America, Bill Moyers estimates that about 4,500 blacks lived in Lawrence in 1970, and "for a long time," Moyers says, "they were quiet." But as blacks and other minorities heard the call to assert their rights during the sixties, so did KU black students and others in Lawrence consider it time to stand up and be counted.

While he was in Lawrence in 1970, Moyers interviewed John Spearman, 42, a black leader in the city, who assessed the conflict between blacks and whites during the era. In 1969, Spearman became the only black on the Lawrence school board, and his son, John, was an influential leader of the Black Student Union at the University of Kansas.

"I think the young blacks are more willing to consider the alternative of violence today than a year ago or two years ago," Spearman told Moyers. "They kept hearing us say that one day, we were going to be free, actually. The freedom was on the books."

Suddenly, violence broke out between the races, Spearman said, and it seemed to achieve more than all those years of patience and striving.²⁶

Spearman said that when he was growing up in Lawrence, "everything was segregated except the schools." And even in 1970, he said,

²⁶Moyers, p. 102.

changes must be made.

"I mean must. There are only four black teachers at the high school and there are no blacks on the administrative staff. Black people aren't blind," he told Moyers.²⁷

Blacks at the University of Kansas and in Lawrence were not the only unsatisfied social group. Another social force, usually called the "street people" by other Lawrence residents, was composed of "a motley crew of rebels, freaks, drug heads, runaways, serious radicals, flower children, and just plain thrill seekers," Moyers says.

"They were young people in search of a kick, roaming like nomads from one oasis of titillation to another, moving on when boredom comes," Moyers says.²⁸

Lawrence street people were estimated at between 200 and 400. Some of them lived in small apartments above Massachusetts Street, the city's main street, while others lived on the edge of Mount Oread, the hill on which KU's Lawrence campus is situated.²⁹ Some of the street people were KU students; some were not. But as tension grew among the various factions during the late 1960s and early 1970s, the street people could usually be counted on as participants in the battle against the "establishment."

Therefore, because of the street people, the blacks, the KU political activists, and the uncertain administrators and faculty members at the University, and because of Vietnam, race relations,

²⁷ Ibid., p. 103.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 90.

²⁹ Ibid.

and other controversies, the time was ripe in the late 1960s for student unrest and protest. Of all the issues and conditions, the debate over KU's Reserve Officers Training Corps was the spark that lit the flame.

In early 1967, the Wichita Beacon indicated that KU students overwhelmingly favored heightening the conflict in Southeast Asia, and in spring 1967, Fisher says, Chancellor Wescoe's annual military review in KU's Memorial Stadium drew only a few anti-war protesters.³⁰ The efforts of KU student activists, however, would soon bear fruit.

During the spring 1968 semester, a committee of KU students and faculty members sought to gain a greater voice for students in university governance, and during the summer a group of KU faculty members called for the removal of all military research and training programs at KU. A faculty review of the subject concluded with a vote in February 1969 supporting KU's military science programs, even though the faculty still debated the application of military science credit to a liberal arts degree.³¹

Later that month, violence hit the University of Kansas. The Kansas City Star reported that four fire bombs were thrown at the KU Military Science Building, causing about \$500 damage. Within five days, KU provost James R. Surface announced that only personnel authorized by Chancellor Wescoe could lawfully carry firearms on campus. Students responded with a student council resolution demanding

³⁰Fisher, pp. 123-24.

³¹Ibid., pp. 124-25.

that the University likewise disarm the campus police, but Wescoe refused to change his position.³²

March 1969 was a relatively quiet month at KU, but in April, protest festered again. About fifty KU students, some dressed in Army clothing and with blackened faces, marched across the Lawrence campus, protesting U.S. involvement in Vietnam. They roamed through three buildings, disrupting classes. They then went to the Kansas Union and banged sticks in the room where law enforcement personnel were meeting.

Four days later, on April 29, 1969, about 100 protesters disrupted the ROTC awards review at Allen Field House. To ensure that the annual chancellor's review of the ROTC in Memorial Stadium would be peaceful, KU administrators planned to allow only ROTC participants on the playing field or surrounding track during the review. State officials also prepared for the worst, placing Kansas National Guard units on alert, having them stand by in full battle gear.

KU's chapter of Students for a Democratic Society, however, promised a disruption of the review. The day of the review, student protesters gathered in front of Strong Hall, where they read aloud 2,000 of the 33,000 names of men killed in the Vietnam War. They then walked down Mount Oread to Memorial Stadium to await the arrival of the ROTC cadets.

In spite of pleas from both faculty and student leaders, the

³²Information for this paragraph and the next five paragraphs was condensed from Fisher, pp. 125-28.

protesters pushed onto the playing field. Before a confrontation could take place, the review was canceled. Chancellor Wescoe met with reporters soon afterward and called the affair "'the most disappointing thing that has ever happened to me in my eighteen years' experience with the university.'"³³

During the ensuing controversy, two KU student leaders, David Awbrey, Hutchinson, Kansas, junior, and student body president, and Marilyn Bowman, Merriam, Kansas, graduate student and student body vice president, sought to represent their student constituency. Bowman, who participated in the ROTC disruption, fought successfully against impeachment proceedings before the KU student senate for her participation in the disruption. Awbrey, son of Stuart Awbrey, editor and publisher of the Hutchinson News, argued that Kansans should let the University handle protesters without outside interference. By June 1969, all but fifteen of the seventy-one students charged with participation in the May 9 ROTC disruption had received penalties, from suspension downward.

When the University of Kansas opened for another academic year in the fall of 1969, KU had a new chancellor, E. Laurence Chalmers, the eleventh man to take the helm of the University. Ahead of Chalmers and other KU officials was no easy task; student unrest at KU had become the concern of the entire state. Chalmers found himself trying to balance the interests of Kansas citizens, Kansas legislators, Lawrence citizens, and KU students -- and all factions sought to

³³Ibid., p. 129-30.

protect their own interests.

Chalmers assumed the duties as KU chancellor on July 1, 1969. He had been vice president for academic affairs at Florida State University, Tallahassee, and he won acclaim in the mid-sixties for his work with Florida State's cluster college plan.

"Ironically, the new chancellor believed dissent to be a healthy sign on campus," Fisher says, "contrasting positively to the student apathy of the 1950s."

Chalmers said he decided to accept the KU chancellorship because "it was the only vacancy KU had at the time." With more seriousness, he said, "All my life I have enjoyed being where the action is."³⁴

Other people, particularly State Senator Reynolds Schultz, a Republican from Lawrence, did not agree with Chalmers about the positive effect of student unrest. Schultz, a decorated World War II Marine veteran, "criticized strongly university interference with the school's military science programs," Fisher says.³⁵ The University Daily Kansan reported during fall 1969 that Schultz had subpoenaed KU's disciplinary committee overseeing action against the spring's ROTC protesters. As head of the Kansas Senate's Federal and State Affairs Committee, Schultz wanted to find out just what had been done to punish the protesters.

Later, in 1970, the views of Schultz and others regarding the role of the University of Kansas as an institution of higher education

³⁴Ibid., p. 136.

³⁵Ibid., p. 155.

appeared in the 1970 Jayhawker, the student yearbook. Schultz wrote these statements:

I have said, and still say, that the great majority of students and faculty members at KU, as well as the other institutions of higher education in Kansas, are the "cream of the crop" of this state and nation. The taxpayers of this state have provided some of the finest facilities for our young men and women to further their educations. What I cannot understand is why such a small handful of students and faculty members could and would destroy it.

.....
 Our state tax-supported colleges and universities should be run by their administrations and by the State Board of Regents but when they fail to do this, as they have by lack of courage since May 9, 1969, then changes need to be made and, if necessary, through legislation.³⁶

On the following page of the 1970 Jayhawker, Rick Von Ende, then a political science graduate student and later a KU administrator, expressed an opposing viewpoint. Von Ende spent part of 1970 commuting to the nation's capital as a member of the Special Committee on Campus Tensions, participating with other members such as Bill Moyers. Von Ende said through the Jayhawker that the University must be "a center of free inquiry, a place for the debating of sensitive questions without fear of intimidation or reprisal.

"So long as there is a continued political interference in, and witless editorializing about, the university's activities," Von Ende said, "the university will be unable to achieve its goal of promoting a better, more just society."³⁷

These two opinions represented just part of a wide spectrum of

³⁶"Two Sides," 1970 Jayhawker, p. 156.

³⁷Ibid., p. 157.

attitudes about Kansas higher education, the role of students in it, and the role of nonstudents working outside it. And as these attitudes came to play upon events during the climactic year of 1970, the future of the University of Kansas was threatened. The conditions and issues that had fostered student unrest and protest elsewhere in the United States during the 1960s had finally made an appearance in the heart of the nation. The results were three months of violence in Lawrence and at the University of Kansas.

CHAPTER 3

APRIL 1970: INCIDENTS AND EDITORIALS

In the early days of April 1970, just before student unrest and protest at the University of Kansas were to erupt in violence, the Topeka Sunday Capital-Journal tried to pinpoint where the United States was going in the 1970s. "At the start of a new decade, attempts are made to look forward to what the future might hold, what challenges must be met," an April 5, 1970, editorial, "Challenges of the 1970s must be met," said (p. 4).

The editorial redefined the newspaper's dedication to objectivity within its news columns and it expressed a combination of fear and optimism about the future. Of the decade ahead, the editorial concluded, "The challenges are great -- but so are the possibilities."

For all parties involved, however, April 1970 at the University of Kansas and in the city of Lawrence proved to be a challenge-compounding challenge. Early in the month, KU students threatened to strike, namely in opposition to decisions of the Kansas Board of Regents, the governing body of Kansas higher education, and by the time April ended, parts of the Kansas Union had been burned during a spree of racial unrest. The very existence of the University was threatened.

During the course of the month, the Kansas newspapers in this study -- the Hutchinson News, the Salina Journal, the Parsons Sun, the Topeka Daily Capital/Topeka State Journal/Topeka Sunday Capital-Journal, and the Wichita Eagle/Wichita Beacon/Wichita Eagle and The Beacon --

reacted with a wide spectrum of editorials. They extolled the virtues of free speech and law and order; they urged moderation on all sides; they suggested that rightists and leftists had selfish motivations; and they applauded the efforts of KU Chancellor E. Laurence Chalmers and Kansas Governor Robert Docking.

Events and issues in early 1970 suggested that the year would be one of challenges. Urged onward by the efforts of State Senator Reynolds Schultz, the Kansas Legislature decided to react to the wave of KU student unrest by disregarding the efforts of the Regents and the KU administration and taking matters into its own hands. In February 1970, KU students had to plead with a legislative committee not to pass three bills governing student behavior, disciplinary action, and access to student records. Michael P. Fisher, in his dissertation on KU history during this period, says the KU student body president, David Awbrey, contended that the legislation would undo the work already done to improve the relative calm on campus during the fall semester.¹

The next month, the KU Student Senate tried to countermand the threat to University autonomy with the adoption of KU's first code of rights and responsibilities. Fisher says that the code granted all students the right to free expression and prohibited unreasonable search.

"Students could be disciplined by the university only for academic reasons or violation of the Student Senate Code," Fisher says.

¹Fisher, p. 157.

Furthermore, a student, when charged by the University, was to receive due process.²

The first months of 1970 were a time of dissatisfaction also among KU black students. They had demanded their own homecoming queen during the fall 1969 semester, and Chancellor Chalmers had refused their demands; the University's homecoming committee did allow the black students pre-game time for their own ceremony, according to fall editions of the University Daily Kansan, the KU student newspaper.

The next racial crisis blossomed in February 1970, however, when employees at the KU Printing Service refused to print the Black Student Union newspaper, Harambee, because of alleged obscene content and heavy use of profanity. On February 23, after a meeting between BSU leaders and Chalmers, members of the organization confiscated several thousand issues of the University Daily Kansan at various distribution points on the Lawrence campus and dumped them into Potter Lake, the campus pond. During the following days, Chalmers and BSU leaders continued to meet, and Kansas Attorney General Kent Frizzell ruled that materials in Harambee were not obscene -- thus the printing service could publish the papers without liability.³

Members of the Black Student Union continued to put pressure on the KU administration during March. They presented the chancellor a five-page list of demands on March 5, 1970; members wanted 10 percent of the

²Ibid.

³Information for this paragraph and the next two paragraphs was gathered from issues of the University Daily Kansan and from Fisher, pp. 154-55 and 160.

entering class of fall 1970 to be black, more black faculty members in all KU departments and schools, and five black deans -- all by fall 1970. Chalmers said such demands would place hundreds of white faculty and staff members out of their positions, and he rejected the demands.

American military involvement in Southeast Asia continued to generate considerable protest and unrest at KU, and students were not the only protesters. Several KU faculty members admitted that they would give a male student a higher grade to help him escape the draft, and Chancellor Chalmers himself was on record against the war. In January 1970, the U.S. Supreme Court denied a plea by Laurence R. Velvel, member of the KU law faculty, demanding that the Vietnam war be declared illegal. Because of their anti-war efforts, Velvel and other members of the KU faculty became targets of criticism among Regents, legislators, and Kansas citizens in general. After their outspoken protests against the war, Velvel and another KU faculty member, Fredric Litto, assistant professor of speech, were denied tenure and promotions by the Board of Regents. The action triggered loud student protests -- and subsequent editorials in Kansas newspapers.

To express opposition to the Regents decision, a group of KU students publicized a student strike to draw support for Velvel and Litto. According to the May 16, 1970, issue of Kansas Alumni, a KU alumni publication, strikers stood at entrances to buildings to discourage attendance at classes, but their success was limited. Awbrey sent the Regents a protest letter, demanding approval of the faculty promotions.

Awbrey also sent a copy of the letter to a friend, editor Whitley

Austin of the Salina Journal. Austin responded with an April 11, 1970, editorial (p. 4) criticizing Awbrey for this vulgarity.

"Because I am one of David Awbrey's oldest friends, he may forgive me that I find his rhetoric vulgar," Austin wrote. "Not that he uses four-letter words; he doesn't. It is that he attempts the rudeness of the street if not its argument."

Awbrey's letter was full of phrases such as "'we demand,'" "'it is imperative,'" and "'we expect,'" Austin said.

"This is the way bullies speak and unlettered toughs and charlatans," the Journal editor wrote. "They use rudeness against what they do not understand and because they know no other way."

Austin said Awbrey had the chance to make a point, but "he lost it by the vulgarity of the street."

Awbrey did have other connections in the Kansas newspaper industry; his father, Stuart, was editor of the Hutchinson News. The Hutchinson paper, unlike the Salina Journal, reacted to the faculty promotion issue with an editorial criticizing the Regents. The editorial (April 4, 1970, p. 4) said that "no one ever got hurt by keeping his mouth shut."

The Parsons Sun also published an editorial about KU faculty promotions, but the Sun, rather than pointing the finger of blame at the Regents, severely criticized the "anti-KU" platform of State Senator Schultz. The Sun's April 7, 1970, editorial (p. 6) said Schultz, bitten with gubernatorial ambitions, "openly accuses KU's chancellor of 'mismanaging the affairs of the university,' presumably for failing to debar all students and declare a state of siege on campus."

KU grew into "an institution of national standing because the state has maintained a tolerant, calm and mature attitude through the years and kept meddling hands away," the Sun editorial said. It gave this advice to the Regents:

Regents who unanimously chose E. Laurence Chalmers, Jr., the chancellor, as the best man for the job from a large field of candidates, should not want to submit fewer than nine months later to crude suggestions that he is not up to the task.

Rather they should indicate their prompt and full support, including approval of all his faculty recommendations. The failure to do less will but speed the arrival of a sorry day for higher education in Kansas and constitute a serious setback to what, everything considered, is the state's most valued institution.

In the midst of the debate over KU faculty promotions, the student strike and an unsuccessful "nude-in" on the KU campus to call attention to the student cause, the visit of notorious radical Abbie Hoffman further stirred the passion of Kansas editorial writers. Hoffman was a member of the Chicago Seven, acquitted on February 18, 1970, of charges that they conspired to incite a riot at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. Five of them, Hoffman included, had been found guilty of crossing state lines with intent to incite a riot and giving inflammatory speeches to further their purpose. Hoffman was scheduled to speak at KU's Allen Field House on April 7 and at Kansas Wesleyan University in Salina on April 8.⁴

For several weeks before Hoffman's scheduled appearance, readers of the Salina Journal responded with a barrage of letters to the editor,

⁴Facts on File: Weekly World News Digest with Cumulative Index, 1970 (New York: Facts on File, 1970), Vol. 30, pp. 107-108.

either condemning Hoffman for his outspoken, controversial mannerisms or criticizing Kansas Wesleyan and the Journal itself for allowing such a radical to visit Salina. In an April 2, 1970, editorial (p. 6) titled "Whipping Boy," the Journal defended its right to report the news:

"That an event is reported on the front page certainly does not mean that the Journal advocates it; we do not advocate the disasters and political shenanigans that also are reported on Page One. . . . But perhaps the public does need a whipping boy, some person or institution to blame for events that the public cannot control."

On the day Hoffman spoke in Salina, Journal editor Austin wrote, "Few events seem to have stirred Salinans so much, or at least stirred them to take pen in hand so vigorously."

But Austin decided that enough was enough. He told the letter writers to choose another topic.

In the same editorial of April 8, 1970, (p. 4) Austin also reported on the advice given from the pulpit of the Rev. Bernard R. Hawley of Salina's First Presbyterian Church on April 5, 1970:

Now what, I ask you, would we do better to further his (Hoffman's) cause than to vent our wrath on Kansas Wesleyan University, to will the destruction of that institution? I personally cannot think of anything that would make Abbie Hoffman happier than to drive a destructive wedge between the university and the community by his presence here.

.
If, by our unyielding anger and in our fear we push the young into his arms, who will have succeeded? But he will not have beaten us. We will have beaten ourselves.

A crowd of about 7,000 listened to Hoffman in KU's Allen Field House. The May 16, 1970, issue of Kansas Alumni says that Hoffman "obscenely rambled through a variety of topics ranging from love and

violence, courts and judges, to capitalism and (Cuba's Fidel) Castro." When Hoffman finished, he received no applause.

"Kansas U. is a drag," Hoffman said. "I'm going to Dallas."⁵

After Hoffman left Kansas, other Kansas newspapers printed editorials on his visit.

"Abbie Hoffman hammed it up at KU Wednesday and was scheduled at staid Kansas Wesleyan University in Salina, of all places, the following day," the Parsons Sun said in an April 10, 1970, editorial (p. 6). "Except for a bit of predictable apoplexy on the part of a state senator (Schultz) and a few other local citizens particularly sensitive to untoward events, Lawrence took Hoffman in stride. But not Salina."

The Sun then quoted heavily from the remarks of the Rev. Mr. Hawley in Salina, describing him as one of "a few clear and strong voices speaking during the uproar."

Three days later, the Sun editorialized that the state had survived Hoffman's visit, "its sanity challenged but intact." The editorial (p. 4) called Hoffman a "raving maniac, a man obsessed by his own delirious rhetoric and one whose own excesses surely will destroy him."

Elsewhere in the state, the Wichita Eagle and The Beacon, in an April 11, 1970, editorial (p. 18A), said that Hoffman "desecrated the flag, he attacked the establishment, he used a lot of language that cannot appear in this family journal, he denigrated much of the American

⁵"Campus Orderly Prior to Union Fire," Kansas Alumni, May 16, 1970, p. 6.

system, he spoke approvingly of Communism, and he even worked in a kind word for Castro." The editorial continued by noting, however, that Hoffman did not typify the rest of his generation, and it also included excerpts of the Hawley sermon.

The Hutchinson News even went so far as to say that Hoffman's visit was good for the state.

"He tests our will, our good taste and our ability to face wild-eyed challenge," an April 11, 1970, editorial (p. 4) said. "The Abbie Hoffmans in this country can't do any real harm unless 'the establishment' takes them so seriously it tries to repress them by illegal means or overreacts to their goading."

One week after Hoffman and Schultz had spoken at KU, the Topeka Daily Capital noted in an April 13, 1970, editorial (p. 4) that KU Chancellor Chalmers had successfully allowed two opposites to speak in the same forum. The editorial said:

Chalmers obviously feels strongly about the importance of academic freedom as an instrument of free thought. To him a university is a place where ideas compete and the individual can choose the one he or she prefers.

It was in this process two of Chalmers' critics -- Abbie Hoffman and State Sen. Reynolds Schultz -- both spoke to student audiences in a week's time. The ideas of the visitors were allowed to compete.

.
 . . . which is what a university is all about.

Such an editorial represented a turnabout from a position put forward in an April 12, 1970, Daily Capital editorial (p. 4). It quoted heavily from the philosophy of K. Ross Toole, a University of Montana history teacher, who argued that expulsion from the university would cure the problems of campus rioters.

The Topeka State Journal's April 20, 1970, editorial (p. 4) considered the situation at KU to be volatile, however, after Hoffman left the state. A seminar of journalists and educators sponsored by the Pennsylvania Society of Newspaper Editors had put forth some "interesting ideas" about student revolt, it said, including causes such as lengthened formal education, increased student dependency, and the staggering number of college students.

"As the seminar could plainly see," the editorial said, "that's a lot of explosive material."

When debate over Hoffman and Schultz subsided, student unrest did not subside. KU black students were still on edge; the Black Student Union president, John Spearman, Jr., said that KU blacks would retaliate with violence if they were threatened with it. On April 16, 1970, the Gambles hardware store in downtown Lawrence was destroyed by fire; arson was suspected. Earlier in the week, the Kappa Sigma fraternity house caught fire, but the fire was attributed to faulty wiring.⁶

Racial tension was not limited to the KU campus; the Lawrence community, the local high school in particular, experienced considerable racial tension. The April tumult caught the attention of Time magazine, which reported on May 4, 1970, that black students at Lawrence High School, with the help of KU black students, seized administration offices of the school district. They demanded the election of two black cheerleaders, the hiring of more black teachers and aides, the election

⁶Ibid.

of a black homecoming queen, and the addition of black studies courses. Their fellow students at Lawrence High later elected not to accept the demands -- and resentment turned into violence.⁷

On the evening of the student vote, April 20, 1970, the Lawrence School Board also decided to reject the demands. At 9:13 p.m., three fire bombs were tossed into the school district's administration building. About one hour later, disaster struck the University of Kansas.

In the midst of the racial conflict, fire hit the Kansas Union, flashing through the top two floors of the six-level building and causing the collapse of the central roof. After Lawrence firefighters thought the blaze to be under control, flames burst through the union's roof in a blaze that was visible for miles.⁸ State fire inspectors officially ruled the fire arson, but no suspects were arrested. Damage was estimated at 2 million dollars.

After the smoke had cleared, and Lawrence was under a three-day curfew, none of the Kansas newspapers in this study specifically blamed KU students for the fire. The Wichita Eagle, on April 23, 1970, editorialized (p. 4A) that the foremost job of the state was to provide order in the city of Lawrence:

No matter who set the fire that burned part of the Student Union on the KU campus, no matter who is behind the guns reported to be sniping, no matter who is at the

⁷"Bleeding Kansas," Time, May 4, 1970, p. 25.

⁸"UNION BURNS," Kansas Alumni, p. 1.

center of the trouble or for what reasons, no community has to stand by and see violence go unchecked.

The Eagle complimented Governor Docking for sending the Kansas Highway Patrol and the National Guard to Lawrence:

It's a shame to see a town have to go to a curfew and be filled with armed law officers. But when violence appears, the sensible person has to choose the least ugly faction. Right now, the important thing is to restore order to the town and university, so the peace-abiding majority can get on about its business.

The Salina Journal, on April 23, 1970 (p. 4), said that the union fire was not just a campus issue: "It is for the police and the courts to handle. Arson is a crime for which the Kansas statutes provide punishment."

The Journal said:

If the anarchists are a present danger, so equally are those they are provoking to repressive force. The fear here is not that the radicals of the Left will gain sympathy; they have forfeited it. Rather it is that the radicals of the Right will be given a free hand to suppress liberty in the name of order. It is the old reading of world history that dictatorship follows anarchy.

The wise way, the legal way, the American way to handle the arson on Mt. Oread is by the machinery of law enforcement, by the application of impartial justice -- unimpaired by the emotion so greatly stirred by such outrages.

The Parsons Sun, instead of attacking any unknown arsonists, chose to praise KU students whom Kansas Union Director Frank Burge credited with saving about \$50,000 in artwork from the burning union and helping firefighters extinguish the blaze.⁹ An April 24, 1970,

⁹"Student Helpers Are Praised for Courage and Discipline," Kansas Alumni, p. 2.

editorial (p. 6) in the Sun said of the students:

Hundreds of them aided firemen, hauling hoses to the building's roof at considerable risk to their own lives and limbs, removed valuable art objects and furniture from the blazing building, and generally gave help wherever it was needed. Coeds provided coffee and donuts for firemen and volunteers battling the fire.

The majority of college students, the editorial said, "should be distinguished in the public mind from the small minority and its heedless acts."

The Hutchinson News did not comment on the union fire, except to point out that because of it KU faced an insurance problem (April 30, 1970, p. 4). The 2 million dollars in damages would be covered by insurance this time, but KU was put on notice that future damage might go uninsured.

"The result is everyone will pay, either in higher taxes or in increased prices for goods and services," the News said.

During April 1970, Lawrence was not the only Kansas community to be hit with student violence. In Topeka, tensions between black and white high school students erupted with a fire at Highland Park High School and disruption of classes. In Wichita a battle between five black students and policemen at Wichita South High School nearly closed the school. In Kansas City, Missouri, police and high school students clashed, bomb threats were frequent, and tear gas and clubs were employed to disperse students.¹⁰

¹⁰"Area Unrest," Kansas Alumni, p. 6.

In the wake of the massive student unrest and protest in Kansas -- at KU in particular -- Kansas newspapers offered several causes, blames, and solutions on their editorial pages before the end of April 1970.

The Wichita Eagle and The Beacon, in an April 25, 1970, editorial (p. 6B), reported that a study of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education indicated that college faculty members nationwide were turning to the conservative in academic issues.

"It is generally conceded that many of the early student disruptions came about for good reason," the editorial said. "But when protest becomes a way of life . . . the danger to academic freedom looms."

It concluded:

If faculty members and students want a voice in how their schools are operated, and they should have a voice, they should be wise to try to "cool" the campus disruptions, at least until there is a genuine issue that is worth the risk of losing academic freedom.

The Salina Journal, on April 26, 1970 (p. 4), posed the question, "What has prompted the burnings and the violence on the high school and college campuses of Kansas this past week?" It then offered answers such as pyromania, societal permissiveness, poverty and discrimination, the spring's rising sap, and imitation of earlier violence. Then it gave its own explanation of the cause:

As for imagination, many youngsters seem to lack it. They can't place themselves and their actions in the context of history; if they did, they certainly would behave more wisely.

Impatience -- we are all ruled by it. We have instant coffee, instant television, instant travel, so why can't we each have an instant personal utopia? Why wait to grind the bean? Give us a sudden dawning

or we'll throw a tantrum!

And that's what some of these sad, sick youngsters have done.

Fortunately, they are few.

As it looked beyond the clouds of dissent for a more promising future in its own city, the editorial of the April 26, 1970, Topeka Sunday Capital-Journal (p. 4) said:

With hesitant optimism is the way we seek currently to view a troubled city, whose social ailments are symptomatic of a nation's, and the onset of recovery. It will only be by striving for understanding and sparing no effort to remove causes of animosity, real or fancied, that any restoration of amity, between neighbors, will be gained.

The Hutchinson News on April 28, 1970, and the Salina Journal on April 30, in nearly identical editorials, offered perhaps the greatest condemnation of right-wing demands for law and order, even at the expense of freedom. The News titled its editorial "Something to Think About" (p. 4):

"The streets of our country are in turmoil. The universities are filled with students rebelling and rioting. Communists are seeking to destroy our country. Russia is threatening us with her might and the Republic is in danger.

"Yes, danger from within and without. We need law and order. Yes, without law and order our nation cannot survive. Elect us and we shall restore law and order."

Noble words that could have come from any of several responsible and well-meaning American politicians. But they didn't. They are from a 1932 electioneering speech by Adolf Hitler.

It's a little scary, isn't it?

An earlier editorial of the Parsons Sun, on the other hand, espoused what it called "A Rational View." An April 24, 1970, editorial (p. 6) consisted largely of the words of Irvin E. Youngberg, then

executive secretary of the Kansas University Endowment Association:

While much has been said and written about "student unrest," on college and university campuses, it seems to be that 'public unrest' is a more apt term and more descriptive of circumstances that give all of us concern.

While young people may be more vocal and demonstrative regarding the war, poverty, racial tensions and the threat of pollution and over population to our planet, the adult world is equally aware of the problems which exist. Differences lie in the manner in which concerns are expressed, and perhaps in the depth of such feelings of concern.

We who are associated with colleges and universities have been at fault in that we have promised too much -- if not directly then by implication, the cure of cancer and heart disease, advances in technology which will make man's lot an ever easier one, and good and full life for everyone. These things higher education cannot achieve -- rather, it can only point the way and motivate our young people to continue to search and strive for truth and a better world.

Youngberg expressed confidence in the current crop of college students.

"I suspect that their ultimate achievement will equal and likely exceed the records of those who came before them," he said.

The Sun's only concluding comment was: "Youngberg has said it all and said it admirably well in our opinion."

April 1970 had been a month that many Kansans -- newspaper editors included -- would rather have forgotten. Student unrest and protest, and the factors influencing it, had grown to tragic dimensions. The editorials recognized the dangers of student unrest but, more important, they said that free speech at the University of Kansas should be paramount. Only one exception was mentioned -- when lives or property was threatened.

The editorials of April 1970 suggested plausible causes for student unrest and gave endorsement for KU officials as they tried to keep the University in operation. In essence, they took a position of moderation, shunning the leftists or the rightists and promoting the University of Kansas as a forum for all opinions.

CHAPTER 4

JULY 1970: INCIDENTS AND EDITORIALS

Kansas weather, like that of neighboring states, is predictably unpredictable. But some elements of Midwestern meteorology are certain. July, for example, usually brings temperatures well above 90 degrees Fahrenheit, occasionally more than 100.

Both in temperature and in public behavior, July 1970 was a hot summer in Lawrence.

After a near-disastrous April, the University of Kansas made it through the spring 1970 semester. When President Richard M. Nixon announced the expansion of American military involvement into Cambodia, anti-war forces on the nation's campuses went into an uproar. Administrators on several campuses sanctioned student strikes in protest to Nixon's announcement. Some of the protests were peaceful, but others were violent.

The worst outbreak of violence occurred at Kent State University in Ohio, where four students, two of them women, were killed by National Guardsmen. Eleven other students were wounded; three were in critical condition.¹

The deaths at Kent State -- combined with the Cambodian invasion -- provided strength to the national student strike movement. In California, Governor Ronald Reagan ordered the nine campuses of the state university system closed for five days; similarly, campuses in

¹Facts on File, Vol. 30, April 30-May 6, 1970, pp. 299-300.

Pennsylvania and Georgia closed.

At the University of Kentucky, Governor Louie B. Hunn dispersed student protesters with armed National Guardsmen, and Illinois Governor Richard Ogilvy ordered 5,000 Guardsmen to patrol troubled campuses in his state. At the University of Wisconsin, Guardsmen kept campus buildings open with bayonet-tipped rifles. When they broke up protests with tear gas, twenty persons were injured.²

The University of Kansas, like other universities, suffered more sporadic vandalism and protest. And as the academic year neared an end, KU Chancellor E. Laurence Chalmers found himself battling radicals who wanted the University to take a position on the war -- and strike.

In a move that raised the anger of Kansas politicians, Chalmers and students worked out a plan to keep KU open. The KU community, including students, faculty members, and administrators numbering 15,000, met in mass convocation on May 8, 1970, at Memorial Stadium; the chancellor put forward a plan allowing students either to finish the semester in classes or to complete the semester early and take part in some political activity of their choice. The recommendation passed on voice vote of the students.³

In the May 30, 1970, issue of Kansas Alumni, Chalmers expressed his views on what happened during April and May 1970. He wrote that the lessons of the period were many and complex:

There are roving groups of young men and women who

²Ibid., May 7-13, 1970, pp. 322-23.

³Moyers, p. 90.

are prepared to exploit any campus where serious tensions develop. There are ways to minimize the effects of their handiwork. There are few, if any, ways to prevent them from trying. Their greatest enemy is human trust and belief in one's fellow man.

There are two ways you can put a campus back together after arson, suspicions, and distrust rend it asunder, one is by force, the other by consensus.⁴

Chalmers had taken the heat during the spring semester; his May 8 actions, moreover, would cause him greater problems in July.

The student population during KU's summer session is considerably lower than that of fall or spring semesters. Thus student activism went to the back burner; but other problems moved to the forefront.

When Bill Moyers visited Lawrence in July 1970, he noted two social forces "stripping Lawrence of its immunity" from the outside world: the street community and rising black activism. The two elements, when they combined later in the month, proved to be deadly.⁵

During the first half of the month, editorial writers devoted more space to national problems of student unrest and protest than to local incidents. The Topeka Sunday Capital-Journal, in an apparent attempt to commend the positive aspects of America's youth, predicted in a July 5, 1970, editorial (p. 4) that America's young people would help make the decade of the seventies the best in the nation's history. The editorial quoted the words of Thomas R. Shepard, Jr., then publisher of Look magazine:

The youth of America -- not the handful of pitiful freaks we keep seeing in newspapers and on TV and I admit,

⁴"19 Days and Nights," Kansas Alumni, May 30, 1970, p. 3.

⁵Moyers, pp. 90-91.

in magazines, but the millions upon millions of great kids who know right from wrong because we taught it to them, just as our parents taught it to us -- this youth of America will make the 1970s better. They will do it by joining the establishment in its continuing war against poverty and ignorance and disease and bigotry. This youth of America is overwhelmingly the youth of America.

"Perhaps Shepard glosses over things a little too much," the editorial concluded. "But doesn't what he says revive your faith in the United States and its future?"

In a July 8, 1970, editorial (p. 6), the Parsons Sun congratulated the Nixon administration for taking a softer line against America's youth:

"It is possible and altogether likely that the White House saw pitfalls ahead in mass alienation of the country's young people."

Such approach differs from that of Kansas Republicans, it said, "who have been sounding off against youthful views and activities in the hope of striking a vein of political gold."

The July 16, 1970, Topeka State Journal (p. 4), however, took a different approach, lauding the efforts of the Kansas Board of Regents as it laid down new rules of conduct for state colleges and universities. July 1970 additions to prescribed procedures for students, faculty members, and employees, an editorial in the issue said, "should go a long way toward heading off any misunderstandings when the throngs troop back to campus this fall." The Regents ruled that no one could obstruct teaching, research, and learning; no one could block access to buildings or damage them; and no one could express profane and vulgar language or display "rude and challenging behavior." The editorial did not detail the consequences.

The same day as the State Journal editorial, yet another spree of violence and unrest began in Lawrence. Sometime after 10 o'clock that night, Lawrence police received reports of a shooting in East Lawrence, three blocks from the center of town, in the vicinity of Afro House, a student-supported organization designed to promote black culture and solidarity. Mrs. Mildred J. Johnson, a white woman, was wounded as she stood in her back yard, and police began surveillance of Afro House.⁶

A few minutes later, Rick D. "Tiger" Dowdell, a nineteen-year-old black who had attended KU in spring 1969, and KU student Franki Lyn Cole, a nineteen-year-old black female, left Afro House in a Volkswagen, and police pursued them to an alley less than two blocks away. According to police reports and later testimony, Dowdell got out of the vehicle with a gun in his hand and ran down the alley. Patrolman William Garrett, 27, fired a warning shot for Dowdell to stop. Garrett later said Dowdell fired at him, and he, in turn, fired at Dowdell, killing him instantly.

Cole, on the other hand, reported a different series of events. She said she did not observe Dowdell with a gun, and he only "walked hurriedly or trotted" down the alley. Word spread quickly through East Lawrence and the rest of the community. Dowdell's death signaled the beginning of four days of shooting and firebombings. Lawrence

⁶ Information for this paragraph and the next five paragraphs was gathered from these sources: Moyers, pp. 94-96; "Two deaths mar Lawrence summer," Kansas Alumni, September 1970, p. 3; "Death in Lawrence," Newsweek, August 3, 1970, p. 41; and the tabloid newspaper section of the 1971 Jayhawker yearbook, pp. 1 and 4-5.

became a battleground, with blacks and street people on one side and Lawrence law enforcement personnel on the other.

During the ensuing days and nights of tension and turmoil, police officer Eugene Williams was wounded in East Lawrence; numerous arson attempts were reported to police; two patrol cars were hit by slugs; and a sniper fired upon residents outside the Douglas County Courthouse. KU security officers manned road blocks at entrances to the KU campus. Large gatherings took place each night near the Rock Chalk Cafe, a tavern just east of the University. Youths opened fire hydrants and impaired fire trucks and police answering calls.

Harry Nicholas Rice, 18, a KU student from Leawood, Kansas, became the second victim in five nights. On July 21, 1970, in yet another confrontation between police and young people in the Oread neighborhood, just east and north of the KU campus, another student was wounded and a police officer was injured by a rock. A small fire was started, a fire hydrant was opened, and a vehicle was turned over. Police used tear gas to disperse the crowds, and when young people fled, police opened fire for an unknown reason. Rice was hit. He died shortly thereafter in the Gaslight Tavern.

After the second death, Governor Docking and Lawrence city commissioners declared a state of emergency, and twenty-five Kansas highway patrolmen were sent to the city. Lawrence city officials blamed the "street people" for taking advantage of the racial unrest, but the street people said the police did not have to open fire on Rice and others.

In the wake of the unrest, four of the five newspaper entities

in this study printed immediate editorial reactions. The editorials urged moderation, sound law enforcement, and swift punishment for perpetrators of violence.

The first editorial from the Parsons Sun on the July violence in Lawrence quickly noted that the latest incidents involved a community, not a university.

"These were not organized or even informal student protests, but clashes off the campus in which overreaction prevailed on opposing sides," a July 23, 1970, editorial (p. 6) said. "To suggest the time is at hand for 'cooling it' is to engage in gross misstatement, but that is easier said than done."

The editorial continued:

In such a volatile situation, barbed words become as much a polarizing factor as jagged rocks, and words have been as numerous as rocks in thoughtless exchanges the past weeks.

The past reaction is to call for force, and more force. There are no easy answers but repression is the least likely of them all.

The burden to end the unrest was upon the entire state, the Sun said.

Also on July 23, the Wichita Eagle (p. 4A) offered editorial solutions, including the presence of state troopers and further encouragement from KU Chancellor Chalmers.

"It needs to be emphasized, too, that the majority of the persons who seem to be the main troublemakers are not students," the Eagle said. "Certainly lawlessness and violence are not to be tolerated. Dissent is one thing, but wanton vandalism and mischief are something else." The Eagle said that the "force of the state

and the brains of the university" should be applied to the situation.

The Salina Journal, in a July 24, 1970, editorial (p. 6), attempted to explain the motivations of the Lawrence street people. They go out of their way to display unkempt hair, unwashed bodies, peculiar clothes, vulgar language, and uninhibited appetites, and "they speak often of peace and love but their actions belie their words," the editorial said. The Journal noted other characteristics of the street people:

But -- and this is not often realized -- they are not poor or stupid. They are mostly from middle class homes, they are well-schooled if not, perhaps, well-educated, and they are determined anarchists, a few are along for the ride.

What seems to bug most of them, consciously or not, drug induced or not, is a desire to escape from a bitter world. Escapism and the death wish are closely allied. They are in flight from reality.

The Lawrence street people are sick, the Journal concluded.

"Do they belong in jail or in a looney-bin? Perhaps the Doctors Menninger have the answer," the Journal said.

On July 25, 1970, the Parsons Sun (p. 6) again editorialized on Lawrence, this time demanding a "Full, Fair Probe" of official actions:

It is obvious, from events following the week of the slayings, that the investigation must be moved from the local level. There is a feeling that the whole story of past days hasn't been told. . . . The people of Kansas deserve the facts.

Three days later, the Wichita Eagle reprinted the editorial.

The Topeka Daily Capital commented on July 23, 1970 (p. 4), that campus demonstrations and student riots could put a real crimp on college education the next fall and winter.

"In Kansas, sad to say, quite a few people are wondering if the current disturbances in Lawrence will subside before the fall semester begins and are withholding permission for their children to attend the university until peace returns," the Capital said.

In other words, the editorial linked the July unrest in Lawrence directly to KU.

As it did every Monday, the Capital, in its July 27, 1970, editorial (p. 4), described the reactions of other Kansas editors. The Lawrence Daily Journal-World, the daily newspaper in the midst of the turmoil, said Lawrence police were understaffed, the Capital editorial said. It quoted Emporia Gazette Editor W.L. White as saying the problem arose from failure to get "'a lot tougher much earlier.'" A July 26, 1970, editorial (p. 4) of the Topeka Sunday Capital-Journal had agreed with White: "In Lawrence and in Kansas -- as elsewhere -- people of all ages must be held accountable for their own acts. When they perform criminal acts, they must be treated as criminals."

Editorial praise was also included in Kansas editorials during July 1970. The Wichita Eagle and The Beacon (July 26, 1970, p. 2B) said a great deal of the credit for the relative calm in Lawrence should go to Colonel William Abbott, superintendent of the Kansas Highway Patrol. Abbott, although he represented the enemy, the Eagle and Beacon said, "strolled into the habitat of the street people, talked with them, joked with them, and won their respect." Lawrence was fortunate to have Abbott in charge, the editorial said, "rather than some headstrong hippie-hater, who could have turned disorder into riot."

In contrast to the other Kansas newspapers, the Hutchinson News published no general editorial comments about the July uproar in Lawrence. Instead, both it and the Salina Journal printed the opinions of two staff reporters with ties to KU. On July 23, 1970 (p. 4), News reporter Vicki Hysten, a 1970 KU black graduate, described what she considered to be the causes of the trouble in Lawrence -- racism. These are excerpts from her commentary:

There is a racism in Lawrence that won't wait. As a student at KU for two years my friends and I were often the object of it.

True, they never moved us to the back of the bus and never refused to serve us at the lunch counters. It was a quiet type, almost invisible. Sneaky, I'd say.

When you get several bomb threats and report it to the police and they refuse to help you and later deny that you even called at all, and you know six of you did not imagine it, I'd call it racism.

It makes me wonder who is telling the truth about the circumstances of young Dowdell's death at the hands of police last week.

.....

And when I can rush down to the store
 where they advertised for a sales clerk
 and be there before it opens
 and the management can tell me the job is taken
 and I say okay
 and go around the corner to a pay phone
 and call him about the job
 and tell him my name is Susie Jones
 and he can tell me to come right down
 for an interview because the job is still available
 I'll call it racism. This is why Lawrence.

The comments of reporter Robert Entriken, a white KU graduate, in the July 24 Salina Journal (p. 4) were somewhat different. Entriken appeared ready to mourn the death of the Jayhawk, KU's mascot:

It appears they're not even going to wait for school to start this year. The weirdos in Lawrence have become the first kids on the block to foment student disorder for the 1970-71 school year.

Here in the middle of Kansas we tend to find the national impact of such things obscured by their proximity, but I have the distasteful feeling KU will be the Kent State of next fall. Two KU students have been shot dead.

.....
 I don't believe KU is at fault, it is merely the victim.

The victim not only of the immediate disorders, but of the effect it has on persons reading and hearing about them.

.....
 Now I tend to equate KU with a great woolly mammoth being hunted down by a tribe of cavemen. The behemoth, which would have little trouble dealing with one attacker, is powerless to act when beset from all sides.

Ah, the mighty Jayhawk, the legendary booted bird, will you be the victim of the seed of your own nest?

Therefore, at least indirectly, several Kansas newspapers equated the July disturbance at Lawrence with the University of Kansas.

Chancellor Chalmers, in an interview with Bill Moyers, said, "All of this is straining higher education as it hasn't been strained in a long time."

He commented further:

How does a university resist the radicals on the one hand and the politicians on the other? The tragedy is they're fighting each other and the university is their battlefield. When it's all over they leave and what do you have left? A charred, crippled, shellshocked institution.

The media tells just enough to be misleading. There was a newspaper headline that said "KU killings." Rick Dowdell's death was not a "KU killing."⁷

The Kansas Board of Regents, the governing body of higher education in the state, begged to disagree with Chalmers. In fact, for his actions during the chaos in Lawrence and at KU, the chancellor nearly lost his job. At a special closed session July 26, 1970, the Regents

⁷Moyers, pp. 100-101.

narrowly defeated a motion to fire Chalmers, 4-3. The chancellor's principal opponent was Regents Chairman Henry Bubb, a former KU student and chairman of the board of Capitol Federal Savings and Loan Association in Topeka. Through press interviews, Bubb made known his opposition to Chalmers and confirmed that he had made the motion to fire him. He even predicted that he would have enough votes to fire the chancellor by the time of the Regents meeting in September.⁸

The attempt to fire Chalmers generated nearly as many editorials in the Kansas newspapers as did the deaths of Dowdell and Rice. And with the exception of the Topeka newspapers, all severely criticized Bubb and the Regents.

On July 26, 1970, in an editorial titled "Kansas should support wise and brave leadership" (p. 4), the Salina Journal said it was wrong and destructive to use Chalmers as a scapegoat for problems in Lawrence. Editor Whitley Austin said he had talked to other people "those who have the knowledge, who are in a position to view all the facts with calmness and authority." They mostly agreed, he said, that the embattled chancellor had done a "courageous, intelligent, indeed excellent job." Austin said, "He inherited an impossible situation and has labored mightily to cope with it."

Difficult times are yet ahead, Austin said, and wise, brave leadership is needed.

"For the university I think and pray we have it in Dr. Chalmers.

⁸"Will Chalmers Remain as KU Chancellor?," Kansas Alumni, September 1970, p. 4.

Let us support him," he said. On July 29, the Hutchinson News reprinted the Journal editorial.

The Parsons Sun issued a "Call to Reason" in a July 28, 1970, editorial (p. 6). Student unrest, racial problems, and aspiring politicians had combined to form three votes for dismissal of Chalmers, the Sun editorial said.

"Reason has taken a holiday. Mad, angry forces have lost all sense of balance and perspective," the Sun said.

Here are additional portions of the Sun editorial:

But then Larry Chalmers is not a "strong" man. So they say. Neither is he a hell for leather man. He is a quiet, soft-spoken man who prefers persuasion to force, who believes in the young people entrusted to his charge and whose faith has been returned by them in him.

He has made mistakes. He has zigged when he should have zagged. But the most serious charges against him are based on distorted facts or half truths. . . .

.....
 Whatever imagined fate faces the University of Kansas, the greater tragedy it and for the state will be the firing of its chancellor as a sacrificial offering for the heedless at his heels.

.....
 The call is to reason, before it is too late, before a proud institution is reduced to impotence by irrational schemes hatched in small minds. The time is late. Kansas must hope the hour of disaster will not strike.

On July 30, a Sun editorial (p. 6) equated the Regents meeting with political ambition and personal vanity: the ambition of Governor Docking and the vanity of Bubb.

"If the firing proved popular," the editorial said, "the governor's political goals would be advanced."

It then ventured to predict the results of Chalmer's dismissal:

Here would be Bubb, basking in the cheers and tumult after the fashion of the triumphant knight, once the

chancellor had been felled. The editorial praise from downtown Lawrence would be fulsome, nominating Bubb as ambassador to Bulgaria or as the second assistant secretary of the treasury.

At least he would become Henry I, the mighty ruler of higher education in Kansas. He would be no shrinking sovereign, insisting instead on the full trappings of the office, from jeweled crown to lush velvet robe. Kansans would arise each morning to bow to the east in praise and thanks for his wisdom.

.....
But instead of emeralds shining from his robe, the Hon. Bubb has pie on his face. He has provided fresh and compelling evidence that what's wrong with the colleges doesn't necessarily start on the campuses.

.....
Sanity certainly will prevail in Kansas. God help us all if it doesn't. Let us proceed as before and if there are to be resignations or dismissals, perhaps the governor should be eyeing Henry I as a prime possibility. Politicians often find it necessary to protect themselves from their appointees. This is a case in point.

The Wichita Eagle, like the Salina Journal and the Parsons Sun, defended Chalmers.

"There many steps that could be taken by the Kansas Board of Regents to assure more calm on the campus of the University of Kansas," an Eagle editorial (p. 4A) on July 29, 1970, said. "Firing the chancellor is not one of them."

Even considering such an action implies that the trouble in Lawrence "originates on and is confined to the campus, which is far from the whole truth," it said.

The only one of the Kansas newspapers to defend Henry Bubb on any issue was the Topeka Daily Capital. A July 29, 1970, editorial (p. 4) of the Capital, moreover, made only a limited defense for Chancellor Chalmers, while it discredited the Regents for closing the doors of its July 26 meeting. Bubb, the editorial said, "should

be credited with an attempt to open the regents' meeting to the press representing the people of Kansas at the meeting." It gave the following lukewarm assessment of Chalmers:

The chancellor, who has been in office for approximately a year, has a good mind and has made many friends in the student body, among alumni and over the state.

But he also has made some unfortunate remarks which have alienated a large segment of the people of Kansas, including many students who want to attend classes uninterrupted by campus discord, their parents and alumni and taxpayers who hold the same beliefs.

Chancellor Chalmers is a man on the spot -- and has been ever since he has been in his present position.

That the board of regents would attempt to act secretly in voting to retain or fire him is a travesty.

In a July 30 editorial (p. 4), the Hutchinson News criticized the Regents for their timing: "It reveals callous indifference of these board members to the deep emotional upheaval in the community of Lawrence, a crisis stemming primarily from long-term, ingrained racism."

The News even went so far as to say that KU was involved in the racial upheaval because its black students were involved in it, but "the forced departure" of Chalmers would not solve the problem. The editorial compared the anti-Chalmers Regents with California Governor Ronald Reagan and his assault on California's educational problems:

Unfortunately, these more radical regents take their cues from Gov. Ronald Reagan, forgetting that the troubles in the University of California system escalated rapidly under Reagan's rambunctious invasions.

We don't need that in Kansas. We easily could get it, if Chalmers caves in or if these minority regents work their will.

On July 31, 1970, the Wichita Eagle made another editorial comment on the battle between the Regents and Chalmers, this time with a guest

editorial from the Iola Register, an eastern Kansas daily newspaper. The editorial (p. 4A) said Chalmers had shown "incredible 'control'" of the University. On the other hand, "Bubb wants a warden for the university, not a chancellor; a disciplinarian, not an educator," the Register editorial said. "His vision sees students as inmates and the administration and faculty as their keepers. This formula is a sure-fire prescription for putting out the creative fire which makes a university function," the Register said.

When the heated month of July 1970 ended, the basic conflicts afflicting Lawrence and the University of Kansas were yet to be resolved. To the writers of these Kansas newspaper editorials, solutions to the problems were as complex as the situation itself. As in April, the editorials proposed law and order -- applied in moderation -- as a possible answer. At the same time, the majority of the newspapers condemned the political aspects of the situation, namely the unsuccessful attempt to fire E. Laurence Chalmers.

The month demonstrated that death could result from chaotic conflict. And none of the editorials examined in this chapter forecast an immediate end to student unrest and protest. Before the fall semester at KU was over, Kansans would see that violence caused by racial tension would return for yet another visit.

CHAPTER 5

DECEMBER 1970: INCIDENTS AND EDITORIALS

The Kansas summer of 1970 had been long and hot. Similarly, the issues of racial discrimination, student activism, and public unrest had left their marks -- rather, their scars -- on the University of Kansas and the city of Lawrence. Two former KU students were dead; others were recovering from wounds; fire damage was being repaired; and dissent was still very much alive.

Summer 1970 finally cooled, and autumn became winter; another academic year was under way at KU. Chancellor E. Laurence Chalmers had been battered from both right and left, yet he remained intact in his position at the helm of the University. Student protests and unrest during the fall semester were somewhat less frequent in comparison to April or July, and several sources say it was because the moderate student majority at KU had developed a dislike for violent protest. All the same, when the issues of 1970 returned to Mount Oread in December, they would do so with fury -- in the form of racial protests, vandalism, political pressure, and a bombing.

In response to the KU incidents of violence in December 1970, the Kansas newspapers of this study, however, wrote less frequently about specifics and more often about general issues affecting Kansas and the rest of the country. At the same time, perhaps like the majority of KU students, the editorials displayed little patience with the groups they criticized, namely the Kansas Board of Regents

and black activists at KU.

Even after the spree of bloodshed in July, the issue of racism was a hot one in Lawrence and at the University during December. And the matter that kept the fire of black dissent in the area burning involved Gary Dean Jackson.¹

Back in July 1970, when Lawrence was a battleground of blacks, street people, and law enforcement officers, several Lawrence blacks had purchased quantities of ammunitions in Topeka. One of them was Jackson, then a KU graduate assistant and a part-time worker in the office of the KU dean of men. On July 26, 1970, when the Kansas Board of Regents narrowly failed to fire Chalmers, they ordered the chancellor to dismiss Jackson from KU because of his ammunition purchase and the circumstances surrounding it.

On August 1, Jackson argued at a news conference that he had done nothing to justify his dismissal; his purchases were within the limits of the law. Therefore, he said, he demanded a list of the University's grievances against him and he indicated that he wanted a hearing before the Regents and a review of their decision to fire him. After attorneys for both Jackson and the Regents skirmished for several weeks, Jackson eventually filed suit against KU, charging that the University had violated his constitutional rights by dismissing him from two positions.

Elsewhere on campus, many students were ignoring pleas for strikes

¹Information for the following paragraphs was gathered from two sources: "Few take part in strike," Kansas Alumni Report, January 4, 1971, p. 2, and Fisher, pp. 178-79.

or other disruptions -- a trend markedly different from April.

The Kansas Alumni Report of January 4, 1971, said, "KU students have shown that problems can be settled in orderly, democratic procedures." During one fall incident, a planned student protest to support KU decathlon athlete Sam Goldberg, who had been dismissed from the track team after disagreements with the coach over academic eligibility, failed to materialize; the KU athletic department would not open the stadium for the protest, and students did not show up. Goldberg was later found to be ineligible because of deficiencies in his previous college attendance.²

In stark contrast, black activists at KU heard the call to make the most of the Gary Jackson incident. The Black Student Union raised the question: would Jackson have been fired, or would the ammunition purchase even have been questioned, if he had been forty years old and white? During a Kansas City Star interview, BSU chairman Ron Washington said his organization considered Jackson's dismissal to be overt racism.

"This summer there was a bloodthirsty law and order environment in Lawrence and at KU which called for some heads to roll -- Gary's was available," Washington said.³

By the end of November, BSU had issued an ultimatum to the Regents demanding Jackson's reinstatement or a full explanation.

²"Students ignore three incidents," Kansas Alumni Report, January 4, 1971, p. 4.

³"Few take part in strike," p. 2.

The Regents, however, had a different viewpoint concerning Jackson. They said his July actions "evidenced a lack of maturity and responsibility on his part that was incompatible with his duties involving counseling of students . . . in light of the events transpiring in Lawrence."⁴ The explanation failed to satisfy BSU members, and protest on Mount Oread was again alive.

On the first day of December 1970, a bomb threat at Allen Field House delayed the KU-Long Beach State University basketball game. A search brought forth no bomb. Several days later, however, two homemade bombs were found by construction workers at the site of the new Nunemaker Center. Both failed to ignite.

The greatest attention of the state and its mass media in early December focused on the general strike called by BSU and KU black staff members. To promote their cause, BSU members spray-painted campus buildings, sidewalks, and trees; their petitions for the rehiring of Jackson had largely been ignored. When black students attempted to paint "strike" on KU's Watson Library on December 7, and a twenty-two-year-old student from Topeka tried to stop them, violence resurfaced at KU.

The white student, Harry K. Snyder, was wounded by a .32 caliber bullet at 8:30 a.m. He was later listed in good condition at Lawrence Memorial Hospital. The Douglas County Court issued a warrant for the arrest of Keith Gardenhire, a KU freshman from Wichita, in connection with the Snyder shooting. (He voluntarily surrendered to Douglas

⁴Ibid.

County sheriff's officers two days later.) The violence continued later in the day when a group of blacks attacked a white KU secretary walking to her parked car.

The next day, black unrest continued at KU. More buildings were spray-painted, and a group of young people marched along Jayhawk Boulevard in the heart of KU's Lawrence campus. Arson was suspected in a \$3,000 fire at the University Extension Building, the old Pi Beta Phi sorority house. Another fire in a Strong Hall restroom caused \$150 damage. The next day, December 9, 1970, the KU Student Senate endorsed the black student strike, a bomb threat forced evacuation of Templin residence hall, and demonstrators caused \$150 damage at the chancellor's suite in Strong Hall.

Kansas editorial reaction to the student strike was less than favorable to the cause of the Black Student Union. The Parsons Sun, for example, on December 9, 1970 (p. 6), listed a number of reasons why the strike had not gained widespread support among KU students. Taking note of the return of the Silent Generation, the Sun said that perhaps KU students were not so far behind the times. Furthermore, "it is difficult to get much mileage from an issue which was hot six months ago but has cooled in the meantime," the editorial said. Also, "it is doubly difficult to warm students to nearly any cause when the bleakness of winter is at hand rather than the balmy, restless days of spring."

The Salina Journal, like the Parsons Sun, displayed little enthusiasm for the strike.

"The reasons for the strike . . . seem somewhat suspicious,"

a December 10, 1970, editorial (p. 4) said.

The strike issue "involves mistakes all around," it said, such as lowered hiring standards at KU and an error on the part of the Board of Regents to fire Jackson. The Journal said:

Uptight because of campus disorder, belabored by the country club set, inspired by politicians, the Regents slipped on their prejudices, fell off their noble perch and meddled where they shouldn't. Despite a long, sound tradition that Regents do not concern themselves with purely administrative matters, they ordered the Chancellor to fire a part-time worker more on the basis of suspicion than of fact. The facts involved seem only two: he is black and did buy ammunition.

Striking students who cut classes and fail exams should accept the consequences, the Journal concluded.

The Topeka State Journal was the third newspaper to express disapproval of the strike. According to a December 11, 1970, editorial (p. 4), Jackson had had the opportunity to appear before the Regents in early August 1970 but had chosen not to do so. As for the December strike, the small number of participants indicated that "the whole matter is being blown out of proportion."

In spite of the numerous incidents of vandalism, BSU failed to generate student and faculty support for its cause. So on Thursday, December 10, the group called a halt to its strike activities. BSU chairman Washington said part of the reason for ending it was "the recent acts of violence in Lawrence perpetrated by persons other than members of BSU."⁵

The strike moratorium, however, did not mean the end of violent

⁵ Ibid.

acts at KU. Just one day later, on December 11 at 11 p.m., an explosion damaged parts of Summerfield Hall, headquarters of KU's computer center, and slightly injured three students. The incident was preceded by a telephoned bomb threat; the blast blew a hole in a cinder block wall but did not damage the University's \$3.5 million GE-Honeywell computer. Glass and debris were sprayed about eighty feet, and official damage estimates totaled \$28,900.

At the scene of the explosion, Chalmers said it was "tragic to be exposed to this kind of psychopathic behavior.

"However," he said, "the campus police have anticipated this possibility."

The efforts of the U.S. Treasury Department, the Kansas Highway Patrol, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, county officials, and city police, even after laboratory analyses, brought no arrests.⁶ The incident did lead Governor Docking to make a second request for additional police protection for the state's universities.

After the Summerfield bombing, the Kansas newspapers did not publish related editorials with the frequency displayed in either April or July. Moreover, the editorials that were published tended to refer to KU student unrest in general, rather than to any specific incident on Mount Oread.

The Salina Journal, for instance, brought to the attention of its readers a cause of unrest that, it said, KU officials did not care to face: "It is the illusion that everyone born in Kansas is entitled to

⁶ Ibid.

a university education, the longer the better, the more the better."

Higher education, the Journal said in a December 15, 1970, editorial (p. 4), should be provided "only to those capable of it and prepared for it." A number of students were "not capable or amenable and hence do not belong there."

The KU racial unrest and Summerfield bombing produced the most editorials from the Topeka newspapers. The strongest condemnation of the events at KU came in a December 19, 1970, Topeka Daily Capital editorial (p. 4), "KU Crimes Must Stop": "Lawlessness on the University of Kansas campus is a challenge which must be met."

The Capital recommended that a reward be offered for information about the bombing, and it said that Governor Docking's request for greater police protection was a step in the right direction.

As is its custom, the Capital used editorial space to describe what other Kansas editors had to say. On December 18, 1970 (p. 4), the Capital quoted a lighthearted suggestion from the Emporia Gazette for college public relations offices, an all-purpose form for news releases:

"Quaker University President ----- (regrets to inform you, is pleased to announce) that ----- has (burned down the gymnasium, graduated with honors, made the football team, been named cheerleader) for the (spring, fall, winter, summer) quarter. (Miss, Mrs., Mr.) ----- is a (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior) at Quaker U., majoring in (science, English, journalism, education, business, theology, philosophy). (He, she, it) will be (honored, sentenced) during a (ceremony, hearing) to be held in the (gymnasium, courthouse) on ----- . The (ceremony, hearing) (will, will not) be open to the public."

On December 14 (p. 4) and 21 (p. 6), the Capital published short

comments from editors across the state: they endorsed stronger admission standards, condemned public interference in higher education, and rejected KU's black militants as representative of other KU black students.

The Capital's sister publication, the Topeka State Journal, did not specifically comment on the recent activities at KU. Instead, in a December 28, 1970, editorial (p. 4), the State Journal said that time was running out on campus rebels across the country. Kenneth McFarland, a former Kansas educator and then a guest lecturer for General Motors, had viewed a turnabout in the destructive influences on the nation's campuses, the State Journal editorial said. "'Sincere majorities'" were beginning to stand up and be counted, according to McFarland; "rebel strategists on campus would do well to heed the handwriting on the wall," the State Journal said.

On December 29 (p. 4), the State Journal reprinted an editorial comment from the Wall Street Journal that said disruption by America's college students had "deep roots in the attitudes of professors" and that it was just a matter of an academic fringe advocating anarchy. The Wall Street Journal said:

Nor is it merely a matter of the typical faculty lacking the courage and cohesion to discipline unruly students. For a faculty could hardly be expected to expel students for an excess of zeal in expressing the very attitudes the faculty is so proud to have instilled in them.

.....
 For many students, university experience during this decade amounted to a force-feeding in these doctrines: That intellectual prescriptions can solve all problems (even those that have resisted solution for a millennium), that failure to adopt these "obvious" prescriptions must

mean political leaders are stupid or venal (never that they are sensitive to a broader range of society or a broader range of reality).

The reprinted editorial was a strong attack upon the nation's professors.

The Hutchinson News, on December 19 (p. 4), reprinted a December 16, 1970, editorial of the Kansas City Star; in essence, the comment praised Governor Docking for seeking more guards at state campuses, criticized the Regents for holding Chancellor Chalmers responsible throughout the year, and condemned Kansas politicians for taking advantage of the political situation. Chalmers received extensive praise.

"It is not clear what Chalmers could be doing outside the structure of what the regents, the governor, and the law allow him to do," the Star editorial said.

The challenge of the situation was, it said, "to handle a difficult situation that is a worldwide phenomenon, not to put heads on platters if you don't happen to have easy answers."

The Wichita Eagle had only one editorial in December relating to Lawrence. On December 14, 1970 (p. 4A), the Eagle applauded the city's efforts to promote local good will through proposed encounter groups in which all races, colors, and political persuasions would be represented.

"Other cities would do well to follow the lead of Lawrence," the Eagle said. "All it takes is the will, and some intelligent selection of the people who will participate."

While the Kansas newspapers were reacting to the most recent turn

of events at the University of Kansas, the Board of Regents also decided to express its disapproval at its December 14, 1970, meeting. Once again, Chancellor E. Laurence Chalmers received the brunt of their words.

In addition to hearing representatives from the University Senate discuss the case of Gary Jackson, the Regents heard the opinions of Governor Docking, who had made a surprise visit. He declared that he was "fed up" with the violence at KU and the "tactics of intimidation" made by radicals determined to disrupt KU.

Exchanges of words between Chalmers and the Regents during the meeting were sometimes heated. The chancellor strongly objected to accusations that KU administrators had been permissive during the recent events on campus. He said he had become increasingly upset with the coverage of KU by the news media, which, he said, had blown the events out of proportion.

"When a person has the choice of bombing KU or some other campus, he is sure to pick the one which will ensure him coast-to-coast coverage," Chalmers said.⁷

After the meeting, both the Parsons Sun and the Hutchinson News again rose to defend the KU chancellor.

"The sad charade at the Board of Regents office Monday mirrored the disorders this autumn and earlier at the University of Kansas," the News said in a December 20, 1970, editorial (p. 4).

⁷"Regents query Chalmers," Kansas Alumni Report, January 4, 1971, p. 1.

Those attending the meeting, from the governor downward, "reacted emotionally and politically to problems that seem to demand judicial calm and quiet wisdom," it said. The editorial then offered these comments:

In their defense, it may be admitted that all of them have been hot-boxed by violent events and the hysteria those events have evoked. It also may be admitted that the political animal, by his nature, reacts with historians when given the opportunity of microphone, camera and press. Further, it is possible that the emotional bath may be somewhat cleansing.

Nevertheless, we deserve better from the bright lights that should illuminate our state. Law and order should be exemplified at the top.

In a long editorial, the Parsons Sun (December 18, 1970, p. 6) continued its harsh criticism of the Regents and its staunch defense of the chancellor. With an eloquence that typified Sun editorials throughout the year, the newspaper considered the Regents meeting in December just another attempt to fire Chalmers as a scapegoat for the problems of an entire nation. The Sun editorial said:

Again there was to be a sacrificial offering and again reason for the day prevailed over emotion generated by campus incidents, most of which were blown well out of proportion and compounded anew by persistent political ambitions and consuming personal vanity.

It would have been convenient if responsibility for everything which has happened at the University of Kansas could be placed on the slender shoulders of the chancellor, E. Laurence Chalmers, Jr.

A lot of people might be given reason to feel better with a scalp dangling from Strong Hall to show that yesterday indeed has returned to the campus. That could be satisfying, but fleeting. Nothing could have been solved and truly grave problems would be the dubious harvest of irrational actions.

Slaked appetites would bring an awful case of indigestion. The state could only learn to its perpetual grief the chief answers to spurious questions will be far worse than all of its troubles to date and together.

The Sun gave what it considered to be solutions to the problems at KU:

Can it be that only one man, call him permissive or whatever, is solely responsible instead of developments which not only are national scope but extend to distant parts of the world as well?

If this be true, his influence can be said to truly stretch far. But really Kansas' problems are not all that monumental. Give this man more security officers as the governor promised in early September in the interest of campus peace and has repromised in mid-December because he hasn't yet delivered, and his sleep might be sounder and subject to fewer interruptions. The state's pulse would be slowed at the same time.

.....
 This is no clandestine plot born in dank cellars lighted but by flickering candles and which at the drop of a handkerchief will topple a revered institution through the concerted actions of 17,000 students and countless professors dedicated to its overthrow. Students, en masse, are not out of hand; adult imaginations at large are more open to criticism.

This in truth is a protest movement which for the moment involves a mere handful, say one-tenth of one per cent or two-tenths at the most, who are black and feel they have definable grievances. Their expressions, if misguided, are no more so than the frenzy boiling up off the campus as a move of clumsy retribution.

The Sun questioned how one man, in the person of E. Laurence Chalmers, could be expected to control the actions of "demented minds." The state cannot expect miracles, it said. The Sun continued:

So it narrows to an honest attempt, though at times not sure-handed, to move an institution through difficult times, adjusting to change as it is advisable, prudent or wise, against a vocal clique whose course, if permitted to prevail, could paradoxically produce the exact result it professes to avoid in the name of order achieved by the heavy hand.

The editorial then suggested the following course of action:

Let Kansas examine carefully and soberly, in full balance, the throbbing questions of the day. Let it not, in reckless haste, fall prey to fallacy which, to paraphrase

the current saying, can destroy a valued, venerable institution in order to save it.

The Sun's colorful rhetoric projected a convincing persuasion to retain Chalmers.

Before the end of December, KU students packed their bags and returned home for the winter holidays; student protest and unrest took a leave of absence from the University. Another month of controversy and chaos had ended at the University and in Lawrence, and editorial writers could rest their pens and typewriters on the subject until the new year, 1971, brought its own special concerns and problems.

In some ways, December 1970 was unlike either of the two separate months of bloodshed before it. For the most part, the foremost issue on the minds of KU student activists was race, and the foremost issue on the minds of the Kansas Board of Regents was replacing Chalmers and asserting its own brand of control.

In other ways, the three separate months of climactic unrest had their similarities. The editorials of the Kansas newspapers, for example, tied them together with thoughtful comment on a complex situation at the state's largest institution of higher learning. With the help of whatever facts were available, and the hindsight of each editorial writer, the Kansas newspapers, as in April and July 1970, attempted to translate the crises at KU and in Lawrence -- and provide ridicule when needed, praise when warranted, and suggestions for a lasting solution.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

When a journalist sits in front of a lettered keyboard, collects his thoughts, and transforms them into printed words, he cannot help wondering about the effects of his creation. Just who will read the words? Will they be understood? More important, what effect will they have upon readers?

Judging the effect of the printed word, however, is a scientific impossibility. Pollsters can judge public opinion at a given time and a given place, and sometimes they can predict how a voter, for example, will react in an election. But determination of long-term effects of events or editorials is outside the grasp of any pollster, or any journalist, for that matter.

Such is the case when one tries to calculate the effect of the three months' editorials from the Kansas newspapers in this study. No statistics are available on what the majority of Kansas newspaper readers thought or said about the incidents of unrest and violence at Lawrence and at the University of Kansas. And there is no guarantee that the readers of those newspapers spent a considerable amount of reading time examining the content of the editorials described in this thesis.

Therefore, with the benefit of hindsight, one can only study the words within the editorials and attempt to comprehend their intensity in the midst of the conflicts of 1970. The editorial writers had much to say about the events and activities in Lawrence

and at KU. They tried to define the causes of the unrest, blame certain persons or groups for their action or inaction, praise other persons or groups for their leadership, and propose long-lasting solutions to the confrontations. Many of the editorials showed striking similarities -- they sought to protect dissent and free expression and they argued for moderation in the middle of the chaos and social upheaval.

Among the publications, the Wichita newspapers -- the Wichita Eagle/Wichita Beacon/Wichita Eagle and The Beacon -- were the strongest supporters of moderation during April, July, and December 1970. As the year concluded, the Wichita papers eventually editorialized less frequently about specific events at KU. Yet from the beginning of the violence -- specifically after the Kansas Union burned -- the Wichita newspapers called for order, no matter who was responsible for the conflict. The Wichita Eagle and The Beacon (April 25, 1970, p. 6B) said that students and faculty members should "cool" the disruptions, lest they lose their academic freedom.

As a solution to the unrest at KU, the Wichita Eagle (July 23, 1970, p. 4A) said that two things should be applied to the situation -- "the force of the state and the brains of the university." It said lawlessness and violence could not be tolerated.

At the Hutchinson News, the father-son relationship between the editor, Stuart Awbrey, and his son, David, KU student body president, could have had some effect upon the content of the News editorials. But such an effect is impossible to determine.

All the same, News editorials during April, July, and December

1970 were hardly critical of KU students. Instead, the newspaper severely criticized the Kansas Board of Regents for trying to fire KU Chancellor E. Laurence Chalmers as a scapegoat for the problems in Lawrence and at the University. On December 20, 1970, the News (p. 4) sympathized with the Regents and state politicians on the trail of Chalmers; "all of them have been hot-boxed by violent events and the hysteria those events have evoked," it said. But the News said that Kansans deserved better performance on the part of their political leaders.

On other issues, the News went so far as to say that the Kansas visit of radical leader Abbie Hoffman had actually been good for the state. "He tests our will, our good taste and our ability to face wild-eyed challenge," an April 21, 1970, editorial (p. 4) said. Furthermore, by printing the comments of black reporter Vicki Hysten (July 23, 1970, p. 4), the newspaper shed light upon the viewpoint of angry blacks in Lawrence.

The Salina Journal was the only one of the newspapers in this study to point out that KU students had faults. Editor Whitley Austin, in an April 11, 1970, editorial (p. 4), criticized Student Body President Awbrey for the "vulgarity" in his letter to the Regents protesting the denial of two faculty promotions. And, on April 26, 1970, a Journal editorial (p. 4) offered its own cause for student unrest in Kansas and in the rest of the nation:

Impatience -- we are all ruled by it. We have instant coffee, instant television, instant travel, so why can't we each have an instant personal utopia? Why wait to grind the bean? Give us a sudden dawning or we'll throw a tantrum!

And that's what some of these sad, sick youngsters have done.

Fortunately, they are few.

In July 1970, the Journal also printed harsh criticism of the Lawrence street people for "their flight from reality" (July 24, 1970, p. 6).

During the three months in 1970, the Kansas newspapers only rarely switched positions in their arguments or their support for persons or groups involved in the conflict. Such was not the case with the Topeka newspapers -- the Topeka Daily Capital/Topeka State Journal/Topeka Sunday Capital-Journal. The newspapers of editor-publisher Oscar S. Stauffer first applauded the efforts of KU Chancellor Chalmers. On April 13, 1970, a Daily Capital editorial (p. 4) said that the chancellor had successfully allowed two opposites, Abbie Hoffman and State Senator Reynolds Schultz, to speak in the same forum, the University.

Later in the year, however, as they capsulized the opinions of other Kansas editors, the Topeka newspapers became the only ones to praise Regents Chairman Henry Bubb. On July 29, 1970, a Daily Capital editorial (p. 4) made only a limited defense for keeping Chalmers, but it credited Bubb for his unsuccessful attempts to keep the controversial July 26, 1970, meeting of the Regents open to the public.

Back in April 1970, the Topeka newspapers had foreseen the turmoil in the months ahead. On April 20, 1970, the day of the Kansas Union fire, an editorial in the State Journal (p. 4) said "a lot of explosive material" in the phenomenon of student unrest could go off at any

moment. Furthermore, in July, the Daily Capital commented that the KU campus demonstrations could create a decrease in enrollment in the following semesters (July 23, 1970, p. 4).

Even though the circulation of the other newspapers dwarfed it in size, the Parsons Sun, edited by Clyde Reed, towered above the others in several aspects: it was the most harsh in its criticism of the Regents and Senator Schultz; it was the most staunch in its defense of Chalmers; and it was the most eloquent in its editorials on student unrest and protest.

Two Sun editorials, printed within three days of each other, demonstrated each of these characteristics. The July 28, 1970, editorial (p. 6) gave this assessment of Chalmers:

But then Larry Chalmers is not a "strong" man. So they say. Neither is he a hell for leather man. He is a quiet, soft-spoken man who prefers persuasion to force, who believes in the young people entrusted to his charge and whose faith has been returned by them in him.

The July 30, 1970, editorial (p. 6) then reproved Bubb, describing the Regents chairman if Chalmers had been defeated:

Here would be Bubb, basking in the cheers and tumult after the fashion of the triumphant knight, once the chancellor had been felled. The editorial praise from downtown Lawrence would be fulsome, nominating Bubb as ambassador to Bulgaria or as the second assistant secretary of the treasury.

.
But instead of emeralds shining from his robe, the Hon. Bubb has pie on his face. He has provided fresh and compelling evidence that what's wrong with the colleges doesn't necessarily start on the campuses.

The closing words of the July 28 editorial made an urgent appeal, one that stands today with persuasive freshness:

The call is to reason, before it is too late, before

a proud institution is reduced to impotence by irrational schemes hatched in small minds. The time is late. Kansas must hope the disaster will not strike.

The words of the Parsons Sun, like those of the other Kansas newspapers during April, July, and December 1970, imply that the very existence of the University of Kansas as an academic institution was under attack. From a 1982 perspective, when the pastoral beauty described in the prospectus of this thesis still characterizes KU's physical campus, it is rather difficult to imagine the turmoil, the demonstrations, and the violence that plagued the University. Does 1970 qualify as the darkest year in KU history?

As did many other faculty members, Calder M. Pickett, professor of journalism, considered that the student protest and unrest of 1970 threatened the survival of the University. In the 1970 Jayhawker (p. 411), the KU student yearbook, Pickett said, "Much that is happening in American education is not all good." He gave this appraisal of the situation:

As one who loves university life, and the beauty of the campus, and the general atmosphere of things I have been appalled this past year, and have hated much of what has happened. I would guess that I am not by any means the only faculty member who thought the last few weeks of spring semester (1970) were, instead of an inspiring and uplifting experience (as some were quoted as saying), sheer hell.

.....
 It seems unlikely to me that the university of the future, if it is to become one dedicated to being an agent for community change, or if it is to lose its somewhat structured character, will be the only university, however. The barbarians have been here before, and they helped to destroy the great ancient civilizations, and the only learning that then took place was in the isolated cloisters of the pre-Renaissance time. In 1990 there will still be people, somewhere, working and learning and striving to hold part of the past. These people may not be

the ones you'll be meeting here at the University of Kansas, but they can't be put down entirely. Scholarship, history, art, and literature that are not attuned to the present generation's kicks will somehow survive. That's the reason some of us can remain optimistic even as we see the university system that we have long loved changing in this fearful year of 1970.

Pickett's hopes for a bright academic future were fulfilled. After the tumultuous year of 1970, the University of Kansas continued to grow, asserting its academic prominence in education, research, and public service. The immense pressure and continuous turmoil did take their toll on Chancellor E. Laurence Chalmers; on August 14, 1972, he resigned after an emergency divorce from his wife, Mary Ann. Yet the University survived the student unrest and violence of 1970. Now, as KU's fourteenth chancellor, Gene A. Budig, completes his first year at the helm, he urges the University to become one of the foremost centers of learning in the United States.

Although the effect cannot be determined statistically, the editorials of the Kansas newspapers during the three months of 1970 represent portions of public opinion during the period. They attempted to explain the causes of unrest at KU and in Lawrence; they blamed the Regents and politicians for meddling in the University's affairs; they praised Governor Docking, Highway Patrol Superintendent Abbott, KU Chancellor Chalmers, and the moderate KU student majority; they feared the effects of repression upon free expression; and they urged moderation on all sides.

The Kansas newspaper entities, at least to some extent, molded the attitudes of the public toward the city of Lawrence, the University of Kansas, the student protest movement, and higher education in

general. Even more important, they were optimistic about a bright future. The Wichita Eagle, for example, in its July 24, 1970, editorial (p. 4A), gave such a message in "Let's Hope Student Dissent Doesn't End With the War." It quoted Dr. Gerald Paske, a Wichita State University professor:

"One of the best products of the Sixties was the new, concerned young people. Their great service is acting as fresh eyes to the older people who hold power in society and are not about to give it up."

The Eagle concluded the editorial with this statement:

The dissent that burgeoned in the Sixties is needed in the Seventies, the Eighties, and farther on. Every society needs to renew itself continually, or it dies. That's what our young people can continue to do for us -- if they'll recognize reform for what it is, a never-ending job, not one that's accomplished by arrogance or blind anarchism.

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A number of sources were used extensively in research of student unrest, protest, and violence in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s. Each of them provided relevant information about the protest movement, its origins, its history, the causes for its development, and the issues enveloping it.

For a well-rounded anthology on the topic, see Julian Foster and Durward Long, eds., Protest! Student Activism in America (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1970). The book contains articles encompassing the student protest movement; they were written by a variety of authorities. Among the most helpful were Clark Kerr in the chapter "Student Dissent and Confrontation" for a thorough discussion of American student activists and their tactics; Frederick W. Obear in "Student Activism in the Sixties" for a detailed examination of the historical periods of student unrest in this country; and Seymour L. Halleck in "Hypotheses of Student Unrest" for additional background on student activists. More information on this area is available in Philip G. Altbach's Student Politics in America: A Historical Analysis (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974).

In addition to these books, two articles from the New York Times Magazine were extremely helpful: Joseph Adelson's "What Generation Gap?," January 18, 1970; and Kenneth Keniston and Michael Lerner's "The Unholy Alliance Against the Campus," November 8, 1970.

For a detailed history of the University of Kansas during this period, see the Ph.D. dissertation of Michael P. Fisher, "The Turbulent

Years: The University of Kansas, 1960-75, A History" (University of Kansas, 1979). Fisher provides a wide variety of information about the University and the Lawrence community. For excellent synopses about the crises at KU and in Lawrence during 1970, see the 1970 and 1971 issues of Kansas Alumni and Kansas Alumni Report, official publications of the University of Kansas Alumni Association. These newspapers, unlike alumni publications at some colleges and universities, are very reputable, unbiased sources of information.

The KU student newspaper, the University Daily Kansan, is a useful source to verify the important dates and information given in Fisher and the KU Alumni Association publications. The Kansan provides excellent day-by-day coverage of the University and Lawrence during this period.

One source in particular, Bill Moyers' Listening to America (New York: Dell, 1971), bridges the gap between sources of national scope and those focusing upon KU and Lawrence. The book is an excellent reference on the texture of the American public and its opinions during the traumatic year 1970. In addition, his chapter describing his visit to Lawrence in July 1970 is a valuable source on the specifics of the University and the surrounding community.

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