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SENATE FLOOR STATEMENT
ON KENT UNIVERSITY TRAGEDY
May 5, 1970

Mr. President, we are all aware of the terrible tragedy yesterday at Kent State University in Ohio, in which four young people were killed.

Today is not the time and this is not the place to fix blame. Nor is this the place or time to judge the merits of the cause, or causes behind the riots.

I think, rather, it is time for Americans, young and old, to search their souls to determine if there are not better answers to our problems than violent dissent and to ask if the road to peace in America is not as essential as the road to peace in Vietnam.

Those who support the United States involvement in Vietnam do so in the name of freedom and justice. Those who support the President's strike at North Vietnamese sanctuaries in Cambodia do so in the belief that in the end it will save American lives, hasten the process of Vietnamization and permit withdrawal of American troops more quickly.

There are those who oppose these beliefs and the President's actions for their own good reasons. But surely all can agree that we oppose war and violence.

Mr. President, I wish to make a point which has not been made and which should be made.

When students attack members of the National Guard, they are not attacking the establishment; they are attacking, for the most part, young men, men of their own generation, some of whom also go to college or work and have wives and babies, young men serving out their obligations to their country or who feel a duty to serve their country.

I urge the young people on our campuses to take a second look at those they vent their protests on. They are black; they are white or brown. They have every degree of intelligence and education. The only thing separating them from their counterparts on campus is a uniform and the fact that they are present, not to create violence but to prevent it if possible.

I trust my colleagues and men of good will everywhere will join now to seek an end to violence, an end to arson and to shooting and an end to turmoil.

Surely, unless we join together to bring peace to Vietnam or to preserve the peace anywhere else in the world.