

Mrs. John P. Burnell Jr.  
600 Edgewood Drive  
Kent, Ohio 44240

May 9 '70

Dear M.L.,

Like everyone here, I feel I have been dragged through a Knothole. You can't believe the atmosphere in this town right now - pure, unadulterated HATE - mainly about the destruction of their goddamn property.

I don't know who or what started the window-smashing routine but I'm almost certain the ROTC bldg. was fired by the hard-core radical type who also terrorized officials and ~~merchants~~ <sup>after the downtown</sup> with threats by telephone. That's inexcusable but the reaction has hit anybody who feels sorry for the 4 dead kids. The general opinion is that they had it

2.

coming and it's too bad there were  
only 4. we're living under martial  
law and my neighbors were keeping  
loaded shot guns by their front doors  
(God knows why).

My own experience may illus-  
trate what panic can do. Edward called  
me Monday morning from the university  
airport - he'd just come in, and said  
to come on out and see the helicopters.  
This was about 9:00 a.m. and I hadn't  
seen him for a month or so, so I just  
dropped my housework and took off. Every-  
thing was very relaxed out there. He  
introduced me to 3 of his fellowpilots  
and we joked and talked and invited  
them all here for lunch. They'd been  
working at the Teamster's strike all  
week & were sick of McDonald's han-  
burgers. We got here about noon and  
while we were eating we heard serious.

3.

We'd left my phone number at the airport, so I figured it was the usual spring grass fires. We headed back to the airport about 1:00 and when we reached the intersection at Graham & Fishcreek, which is where Stow begins, there was a huge line-up of cars & 2 police-men directing people away from Kent. Ed said it must be an auto accident. When we got to the airport 2 armed N' Guardsmen stepped in front of my car and the guys piled out and asked what was going on. Now, dig this - the sheriff's deputy there told us that the students had turned a machine gun on the Guards on campus and had killed 2 of them. Then the deputy turned to the 2 guards and said, "Now if the snipers come they'll use this road" pointing to the one I'd just driven up on in my flowered VW with 4 uni-

formed men (the rads wear khaki, too.) I told the deputy I had to get back to Kent and he said, "Lady, you're not getting back into Kent today."

Ed & I were both frantic because we didn't know what was going on and I've got 4 children back there in schools. Ed got 2 guys to follow us and we drove into Kent through back roads to avoid traffic which was unbelievable. As soon as I got into the house I turned on the university radio and a voice boomed out "All pedestrian and vehicular traffic off the streets immediately. The ~~schools~~ schools have been closed and all children dismissed to their parents" Well, I didn't know how long this had been going on - none of my kids were home. I ran outside & saw 3 neigh-

Mrs. John P. Burnell Jr.  
600 Edgewood Drive  
Kent, Ohio 44240

bosses standing down the street listening to walkie-talkies (police band). I said "Are your kids home yet?" One of their husbands had walked over to school to escort a bunch of the neighbor kids home and they were waiting for them. In the meantime they're getting reports on the walkie-talkies like: "A brown Mustang loaded with ammunition is being pursued on Summit St. (2 blocks from here) A quantity of dynamite has been stolen from a construction site." Then I saw Polly & Sally coming up the street and I told them just to get into the house. I couldn't stand wondering about John and Emily so I said to one of the women

"Let's go over and get our kids before I crack up." Now all this time I'm going on the word of the deputy at the airport and those police calls they're picking up. So Jean and I took off through the woods and I noticed the highway patrol helicopter overhead and here we are running through the woods (which belong to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the University) and I'm thinking "What if he thinks we're bad guys?" Edward had shown me that helicopter that morning and I couldn't remember if it was just reconnaissance or armed. By the time we got to the school, which was being used as a Nat'l Guard base, all the kids were gone but we were told that Geo. Harrison (ahom you met) had come and taken all our kids home.

2

Jean and I were frantic with fear by this time so we stopped a man in a car and asked him if he could drive us home. He said, "Sure, you know they've cut all the phone wires. (I knew that was a lie because I'd used the phone when I got home and the dial tone was hard to get because so many people were using the phones - same thing happened the day JFK was shot) And next it'll be the electric!" (There were later rumors that "they" were going to put LSD in the water supply - I wish to hell they had; at least there'd have been some excuse for all the irrational behavior)

I didn't find out for about an hour that it was 4 students <sup>who</sup> were killed. I haven't talked to Ed since - talked to Joan and I guess down these people

an criticizing the poor National Guard. There's just so much hate and people talking about armed citizens groups to protect "our property". I was interviewed by a guy from the Miami Herald - he called me to get Ed's address because his paper is putting out a big Kent edition but he has not been able to get through to any of the Nat'l. Guard. I told him Ed was pretty much uninvolved - And what had happened to us on Monday. He said he'd use my story, too - there's more I'm too tired to write. It's been going on for days and days. It's horrible. People just won't think. Two of my friends had sons up there on campus who had friends blown apart by M-1 rifles. Many of my

8

Mrs. John P. Burnell Jr.  
600 Edgewood Drive  
Kent, Ohio 44240

faculty friends were there as marshals trying to get the kids to leave and saw it all - horrible. One man went to the aid of a kid who had just walked out of a class and was tear gassed and stunned and then was turned on and beaten by a guard (I saw that on TV) And when Harold ran up and said "Stop, Stop, he just came out of class!" they lobbed tear gas at Harold. He ducked behind Taylor Hall just in time to avoid being shot. It was panic and fear and fatigue from the N.G. who were very young men - some

of them KSV students themselves.

The kids at that rally were protesting non-violently until the N.G. moved in with the tear gas.

Anyway, it's as if nothing will ever be the same. The campus makes you want to cry. No one's allowed on it except people with passes - not even the faculty until Monday. One priest who's a grad student had a bayonet stuck at his throat Sunday (before the shootings) when he went up to get some books from an office. These are things told to me by the people involved.

As to those police raid things - never heard anything more about them.

The hunger march in Corning sounded great. Thanks for the chords only I can't play B<sup>b</sup> so I transposed it into another key which is what I had figured it was anyway but it doesn't sound as good as that piano on the record. I'm going to play it at Mass tomorrow we need it.

Polly & Sally wore black arm bands to school yesterday - their classmates did not approve. George Harrison called me today & said I'd

11.

believe warn them that there were  
today car loads of men with American  
flags all over them harassing and  
threatening anyone wearing black  
arm bands. A friend of his was  
walking down the street and people  
came out of their houses and called  
him a "dirty Communist" for wearing  
an arm band.

You can kill my kid in  
Viet Nam, burn whole villages full  
of women & children, but don't  
break my windows! The silent  
majority speaks - now!

Love,  
D.

P.S. Aunt Helen is not like the rest of  
these jerks - she thinks it's sad.  
P.P.S. But there are more of THEM than us.