
Defense Report

AUSA



Campus Attitudes

In May, 1970 a tragic incident occurred on the campus of Kent State University which heightened public resistance to the war in Vietnam and spawned the anti-war rallying cry of, "Remember Kent State!" The students at the university became understandably more anti-military.

More than six years have passed since the "Kent State Massacre" but public memory of the event was kept alive by a series of legal actions growing out of the incident. It is notable, then, that a recent survey of students on the Kent State campus has shown a surprising degree of trust for the armed services.

In answer to the question, "What degree of trust and confidence do you have in the following institutions in our society?" the students ranked the armed services second only to banks as institutions of "high trust." Churches shared the second spot with the military.

The middle ranks of the high trust category were occupied by doctors, the federal courts, the news media, colleges and lawyers. Close to the bottom of the trust scale were labor unions, the Presidency and Congress. City governments and big business got no high trust votes.

College attitudes toward the military can be measured in an even-more precise manner—by tabulating the enrollment in Reserve Officer Training Corps programs on the campuses. The number of ROTC cadets is almost universally higher than it was two years ago and several colleges which dropped military courses during the peak of the Vietnam backlash are now petitioning the Pentagon to reestablish the curriculum.

With well-over half of the career officers in the military coming from ROTC units at colleges throughout the nation, the improved image of the military will insure a steady flow of highly qualified and well motivated young people into the officer ranks.