

9-30-1962

# Richard Starnes to Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance, 30 September 1962

Richard Starnes

Follow this and additional works at: [https://egrove.olemiss.edu/west\\_union\\_med](https://egrove.olemiss.edu/west_union_med)



Part of the [Journalism Studies Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Starnes, Richard, "Richard Starnes to Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance, 30 September 1962" (1962). *Telegrams to Media Outlets*. 67.

[https://egrove.olemiss.edu/west\\_union\\_med/67](https://egrove.olemiss.edu/west_union_med/67)

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Western Union Telegram Collection at eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in Telegrams to Media Outlets by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact [egrove@olemiss.edu](mailto:egrove@olemiss.edu).



1700

1962 SEP 30 PM 2 50

050  
31/28

dpr collect

scripps-howard newspaper alliance, washington dc

lede to kum starnes oxford--the president's speech came on the heels of a day of developments that could turn this little college town into a bloody shambles.

Oxford appears to be much more concerned at the prospect of an invasion by ~~groups of~~ die-hard segregationists from elsewhere in the south than over what may happen when federal and state forces clash at the gates of ole miss. the town is frightened at the violence that might result ~~subsequently~~ if a yahoo rabble does descend on the town, and by midday sunday rumors were rife that armed bands had <sup>already</sup> begun to drift into the oxford area.

lafayette county sheriff joe ford quickly rejected the proffered help of <sup>one</sup> A self-styled georgia ku klux klan leader, pointing out that the white-robed forces of darkness "won't solve any of our problems." the sheriff, soft-spoken, slow-moving and cordial, ~~has~~ promised he will disarm any would-be vigilantes who attempt to make common cause with the ~~500-man army~~ <sup>forces of</sup> of gov. ross barnett. by sunday evening, however, a search by one correspondent turned up only three out-of-towners who ~~and~~ would admit they were here to fight for the cause of ~~which~~ continued segregation at ole miss.

these three ~~were~~ did not appear to be formidable warriors. one said they had been taken drunk in their home town "down south" ~~and~~ saturday night and had decided it would be a splendid idea to come to oxford to join the battle that may be taking shape here. "we stopped a nigger just outside of town," this knight errant boasted, "and asked him where we could get some oil for our machine gun. we half scared him to death."

more



dpr collect

scripps-howard newspaper alliance, washington dc

add one lede to kum starnes oxford x x x to death."

but the possibilities of a third force joining the battle of ole miss cannot be entirely dismissed. former maj. gen. edwin a. walker, who resigned ~~from~~ from the army after a dispute over a troop-indoctrination program he instituted, reached oxford sunday. he called on sheriff ford, who immediately lectured ~~him~~ him on the necessity of avoiding violence. "i told him," the sheriff said, "that some of his followers might be the sort of people who tended toward violence, and he agreed that this was true, although he regretted it."

ex-gen. walker gave the sheriff a pledge that he would not encourage any violence, although in jackson (the state capital) saturday, the former army general warned that "thousands" of his followers were flocking into mississippi to join him. "gen. walker told me," sheriff ford said, "that he was here in ~~the~~ oxford solely for the purpose of making an oral noise."

although walker had registered under an assumed name at a motel about a mile from the ole miss campus, he freely made oral noises when this reporter and a colleague found him and brushed ~~past~~ past a pimply youth identified only as the ex-general's "aide" who had been attempting to keep the general's motel command post ~~inviolable~~ inviolate.

walker was pale and appeared tired, but he read a penciled statement in a voice which was clear, even if the statement was not.

"on to mississippi," the statement began. "as the forces of the new frontier assemble to the north, let history be the witness to the courage and determination that calls us to oxford to support a courageous governor.

~~"his lawful stand for state sovereignty is supported by~~

(more)



scripps-howard newspaper alliance, washington dc

add two lede to kum starnes oxford x x x governor.

"his lawful stand for state sovereignty is supported by thousands of people beyond the state's borders, now on the way to join you at oxford."

when he was pressed to clear up who the "you" in the second paragraph referred to, walker said, "why, the people of mississippi, of course."

wrong-headedness may be one of mississippi's principal natural resources, but stupidity is not, and there is no reason to believe state officials in jackson are encouraging vigilantism in the present crisis. gov. ross barnett's executive assistant, hugh boyd, has asked one group of alabama "volunteers" to stay home, and it seems a reasonable assumption that state officials are doing what they can to keep roving segregationist mobs from overrunning <sup>mississippi</sup> ~~the state~~. whether they can do it is moot, however. sheriff ford, for example, has only two deputies to help him patrol <sup>all of</sup> rural lafayette county.

"volunteers" aside, there will be no shortage of law enforcement officials in oxford when the federal government makes its next big push to win admission to the university of mississippi for james h. meredith, 29-year-old ~~man~~ negro air force veteran. by nightfall several hundred federalized national guardsmen had reported to the armory at oxford. some 700 u.s. marshals are encamped at holly springs national forest near oxford, and 700 members of the 503rd military police batallion from ft. bragg, n.c., are being held in readiness at the naval air station at millington, tenn., which is about 90 miles from oxford.

more



scripps-howard newspaper alliance, washington dc

add three lede to kum starnes oxford x x x from oxford.

the biggest question now is what gov. barnett's 500-man army of state troopers and sheriffs will do in the face of the overwhelming federal forces arrayed against them. although the battle to keep ole miss a segregated school has plainly been lost, it is still ~~likely~~ possible that the state will resist ~~integration~~ and if force is used, no one here in oxford can say where it will end. <sup>a few</sup> forehanded newsmen have ~~not~~ obtained war surplus gas masks against the possibility that one side or the other will resort to tear gas bombs. <sup>but</sup> iron hats, which gov. barnett's state troopers were wearing during thursday's false alarm, are more difficult to come by.

~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ in oxford, which stands to lose almost its sole reason for being if the university is closed by violent means or otherwise, more and more talk is heard of face-saving and compromise. <sup>but</sup> just what sort of face-saver could be worked out in this crisis of state vs. federal force no one seems to know.

students at the university in the last day or two have ~~been~~ become more outspoken in their plea that somehow the crisis be resolved short of disaster. they have been warned by ole miss authorities not to talk to newsmen, but many still do on a not-for-attribution basis. undergraduates still back gov. barnett-- but only to the point where the university is threatened with loss of accreditation or closing. the concensus of correspondents here, all of whom have <sup>conducted</sup> ~~done~~ some unscientific <sup>polls</sup> ~~polling~~ on the campus, is that most ole miss students would infinitely rather see meredith enrolled than to see their school closed or shorn of its academic standing.

more



scripps-howard newspaper alliance, washington dc

add four lede to kum starnes ~~summary~~ oxford x x x standing.

in the last day or so, as the storm clouds of insurrection and armed strife gather over this little mississippi town, the mood of the campus has come to be widely shared in oxford, if not in the rest of mississippi. even the statue of the brave confederate soldier which stands guard over the ole miss campus (legend has it that he gallantly tips his cap every time a lady whose virtue is intact passes) seems ~~to~~ now to be nothing but a forlorn anachronism, a memorial to another century and a relic of another cause lost beyond redemption. endit starnes.

Richard Starnes  
richard ~~starnes~~ starnes  
hotel colonial, #311  
oxford, miss.

+