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Annotated article by Cruttenden to San Francisco Examiner, 30 September 1962

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TO CITY EDITOR SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER, S.F. Calif. Press Collect

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OXFORD, MISS., Sept. 30 -- It was just an ordinary Sunday here on the sprawling campus at the University of Mississippi.

Crew cut, clean appearing college men were strolling hand in hand with ~~them~~ coeds, pausing now and then to exchange pleasantries with other students.

The sun filtered through the trees and reflected off the sturdy brick buildings that cover the campus. It was humid, but not too hot.

That was before 3 p.m.

The change came with dramatic suddenness. Helicopters appeared in the sky over head followed by military transport planes.

The students look up apprehensively. So did the citizens of Oxford. They knew what was happening and words spread through the state ~~in~~ rapidly.

The aircraft landed and ~~some~~ a detachment of U.S. Marshals in battle dress climbed off.

But by the time a sufficient number of them had been flown in from nearby Memphis, the Mississippi Highway Patrol, which doubles as a State Police force, had sealed off the campus.

Police cars roared into town ~~from~~ on every road.

~~When~~ By the time darkness arrived, Oxford was jammed with ~~some~~ spectators. They clustered around all five entrances to Ole Miss and set up a vigil.

(more)

(and register him)

"Hear they're going to try to move him in tonight," a tall man said to no one in particular.

His ~~statement~~ statement was answered by a heavy-set man with fat jowls.

"We're ready for 'em if they do," he said. "Guess they figured on ~~get~~ getting the campus, but we grabbed it first." The man later identified himself as a sheriff from a nearby Mississippi county. He said he had come to help out.

On Highway 7 north of town tents were ~~being~~ being put up on the same ground that was used as an assembly point for Civil War troops of the Confederacy a century ago.

All afternoon and evening helicopters have circled overhead poised for any trouble that might occur.

"Let's get the hell out of ~~here~~ ^{here}," one student said to his companion. "They're going to bomb us."

The people that gathered around the gates talked the situation over and seemed convinced that Negro James Mededith will eventually be allowed to register at Ole Miss, thus shattering a 114-year all-white tradition here.

Seven State Police cars with red lights ablaze roared past the back gate. ~~Then~~ Then word filtered out that the marshals had driven onto the campus and surrounded the administration building without any opposition from the State officers.

"That does it," a lady remarked. "They've made a deal. But what I want to know is how do they plan to keep him on the campus once they get him in?"

Later a faculty member came off campus and reported that students were jeering the marshals and waving rebel flags at them.

(more)

The ^{scene} ~~area~~ is one of unrest and anxiety.

All over town windows are dark. The population seems to be waiting for the other shoe to drop.

Every motel and hotel room in town and for 40 miles around has been rented and only one cafe and a drug store are open in town.

Telephone lines are at a premium as newsmen from all over the world are scratching for information, trying to sort out the fact from the rumor.

The officials who ^{could} be informative are close mouthed. They're polite but most of the reporters get that "Yankee go home" look.

There's no question about the feeling of the townfolk and most of the South. They'll provide Negro students with better schools than their own as long as they are segregated.

Many of the Negroes, too, have expressed a desire to leave things the way they are in the Deep South.

But it seems unlikely that anything ever will be the same around here after this. The spotlight is glaring too brightly.

end cruttenden