

In 24 Hours: America's Gravest Crisis Since The Civil War

WASHINGTON (UPI)—The faint whisper of a pen rushing across paper broke the silence in the green-walled Treaty Room of the White House.

The President of the United States set aside the paper. He picked up another and signed it. He was alone in the room except for the man who had brought him the documents.

On the wall overlooking his desk hung a painting. It showed Lincoln and his generals discussing the Civil War, and it was called "The Peacemakers."

It was 12:02 a.m. in Washington, Sunday, Sept. 30. The paper before the President authorized the Secretary of Defense to use the United States Army, if necessary, to force the State of Mississippi to let a Negro attend its university at Oxford.

President Kennedy had taken the ultimate step to enforce the orders of a federal court in a defiant Southern state. The nation faces one of its gravest internal crisis since the War Between the States.

The crisis stemmed from May 1961, when James Meredith, a mild-mannered, 29-year-old Air Force veteran, filed a court action for admittance to the University of Mississippi. Meredith is a Negro, and a Negro has never been admitted to Ole Miss.

Gov. Ross Barnett vowed that one never would. Barnett told his cheering followers that he would go to jail before he would see his state's schools desegregated.

Courts issued order after order that Meredith be enrolled; but Barnett told state officials to resist to the last.

The drama that stretched from the campus to Washington began on Thursday, Sept. 24. Federal marshals brought Meredith to the campus to enroll. Barnett was there first, and he personally refused to admit Meredith.

On Monday, the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans told the trustees of the school that they were "willfully and intentionally disobeying a court order and told them once again to let Meredith in."

The trustees replied that Barnett had taken away their right to act in the matter. On the same day, Barnett issued an order that any federal official who attempted to interfere with a Mississippi official should be arrested.

The crisis deepened the next day, Tuesday. The federal government moved against Barnett. The 5th Circuit Court ordered Barnett to stop interfering.

In Jackson and when Meredith showed up with his marshals, the governor for the second time refused to enroll him.

But Barnett blocked the door.

Next day the court cited Johnson for contempt.

Saturday morning the White House announced that the President would go to Newport and stay there until Monday. Reporters packed their bags and boarded the plane that would take them to Newport in advance of the President.

Just as the plane's door was about to be closed, a White House official rushed up to say the trip was cancelled.

What had happened was that the President had called Barnett three times, and the attorney general had called the governor four times. They made three calls from the White House in a three-hour period in the early afternoon.

They asked Barnett if he was going to obey the court order, keep himself out of jail, and let Meredith into Ole Miss. The answers they got made the President cancel his trip.

The President summoned Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara to discuss the possible use of troops, and he talked with other military officials.

At 5:45 p.m., Kennedy sent Barnett a telegram asking him his intentions and requesting a reply that evening. He never got one.

Meantime, Kennedy directed act-

erizing the Mississippi National Guard press secretary Andrew Hatcher to contact the radio-television networks and seek air time for Sunday night. But around 8 p.m.—after a call from Barnett—Kennedy had Hatcher withdraw the request.

The cabinet officer passed the information from Barnett onto the President, and the President told his brother to prepare two documents.

One document was a legal maneuver. It was a proclamation calling upon Mississippi officials to stop "obstructions of justice."

It was necessary to issue this before issuing the second document.

The second document was an executive order to the defense secretary. It authorized him to put the Mississippi National Guard under federal orders and use it to enforce the court order. It also authorized McNamara to "use such of the armed forces of the United States as he deemed necessary."

At 10:45 p.m., before Kennedy signed the papers, the Defense Department announced "active Army units"—military police—were being sent to the staging area at Memphis.

Five minutes later Hatcher completed the reopened negotiations for air time.

At 12:01 a.m. Kennedy signed the proclamation against obstruction of justice. Then he immediately signed the executive order authorizing use of troops and fed-

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Murray Melvin
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Confident Yankees Practice, Then Fly To San Francisco

Yankees On Coast
NEW YORK (UPI) — The New York Yankees, 100 per cent hale and hearty for the World Series, raced through a fiery batting drill against front-line pitching in a simulated game Tuesday and then headed for San Francisco where they'll work out Wednesday in Candlestick Park.

The decision to fly to San Francisco instead of Los Angeles was made several hours before the Dodgers and Giants began their second pennant playoff game at Los Angeles.

"A workout at Candlestick Park will be valuable to us if the Giants should win," said Yankee manager Ralph Houk. "Only a few of our players have seen the place. If the Dodgers win—well, we're all familiar with Chavez Ravine."

"Live" Batting Practice Obviously worried about the delay in the series start caused by the National League playoff, Houk called for an all-out batting drill Tuesday with the pitchers throwing "for real" and catcher Yogi Berra signalling the pitches so the hitters wouldn't know what was coming.

Whitey Ford, Houk's probable choice to pitch the opener Thursday, and Ralph Terry were the only top hands who didn't pitch.

Bill Stafford, Jim Coates, Luis Arroyo, Bud Daley and Tex Cleyenger worked about 15 minutes each, all at high speed. Stafford was so effective against the Yankee sluggers that all the fields lay down on the ground and pretended to yawn—until Mickey Mantle clipped a couple of pitches.

Roger Maris, 1961 home run king, later put a pair of long drives off Daley into the right field seats.

—Legislature—

(Continued from Page 1)

Board or retry all the cases which came up before the Honor Council this summer will be taken up by the Student Legislature Thursday night.

Giving the summer school board retroactive approval would put the Legislature on record as having approved the summer school appointees last spring. The lack of this approval would mean that the board constitutionally and legally never existed.


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