

About an Oath: The Mississippi National Guard at the Battle of Ole Miss

A Monograph

by

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Abstract

About an Oath: The Mississippi National Guard at the Battle of Ole Miss, by MAJ Bradley S Hollingsworth, US Army, 45 pages.

In 1962, the Mississippi political elite legislated citizenship thereby enabling a closed society that allowed a mob to act in open insurrection against the Federal Government. This society corrupted the minds of citizens using romanticism from the Reconstruction Era and the idea of a lost cause. After *Brown v. Board of Education*, idealism became action and Mississippi became defiant. Politicians from the former Confederate States authored the Southern Manifesto and declared massive resistance to integration. Mississippi was the extreme state in the group. The University of Mississippi was the training ground for white supremacy and a symbol of the Old South. This is why James Meredith chose to attend college at Ole Miss. He knew that Ole Miss was a moral center of gravity. Integrating Ole Miss forced the Federal Government to recognize African American citizenship and use federal troops against the state of Mississippi.

The Mississippi National Guard was part of the closed society and many thought they would fight with the governor and the State of Mississippi against the US Army. It is a fact; the soldiers of the Mississippi National Guard were loyal segregationists. However, they were also trained soldiers with an oath to a state and federal constitution. When President Kennedy activated the soldiers for the Battle of Ole Miss they were not happy, but they did their job because of an oath. The soldiers that served at the battle saved the university and opened the door to the closed society.

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Thank you to the “brick and bottle” veterans of the Battle of Ole Miss who are the inspiration for this paper. Many of these soldiers never served in a foreign war but received a baptism by fire in their own backyard. According to some of the soldiers, for a few weeks they were really in the Army. The Kennedy administration wanted their story to vanish and denied them any official recognition. William Doyle brought this to the attention of some in an editorial in the *New York Times*. He spoke of an official Army memo denying the soldiers any official recognition at the 40th anniversary of the event in Oxford, Mississippi. This is a piece of their story.

Abbreviations

| | |
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| ACR | Armored Cavalry Regiment |
| CBS | Columbia Broadcasting System |
| CIA | Central Intelligence Agency |
| DCSOPS | Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations for Civil Affairs |
| DSCA | Domestic Support to Civil Authority |
| FEMA | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| KKK | Klu Klux Klan |
| LTG | Lieutenant General |
| MEF | Marine Expeditionary Force |
| MG | Major General |
| MP | Military Police |
| MSSC | Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission |
| NAACP | National Association for the Advancement of Colored People |
| NUC | Navy Unit Commendation |
| ROTC | Reserve Officers Training Corps |
| UPI | United Press International |
| USAFOX | United States Armed Forces Oxford |

Introduction: Movement to Holly Spring Redux

The Mississippi National Guard faced a moral dilemma in 1962. The powerful social constraints of a closed society challenged its commitment to the United States. For the second time in one hundred years, federal troops occupied Mississippi.¹ In 1862, General Ulysses S. Grant's Army of Tennessee marched from Memphis, Tennessee to Holly Springs, Mississippi and established a headquarters in Oxford, Mississippi.² In 1962, President John F. Kennedy signed an executive order and presidential proclamation on President Grant's former desk deploying over 30,000 federal soldiers back to Oxford to fight the Battle of Ole Miss.³ This battle was an effort by the Governor of Mississippi to keep the University of Mississippi, commonly called Ole Miss, segregated.⁴ The government and people of Mississippi created a social and political climate where an insurrection placed a civilian mob against the XVIII Airborne Corps, units from the 2nd Infantry Division, and the entire Mississippi National Guard.⁵ After the battle, two men lay dead with over 245 casualties reported.⁶

¹ Russell H. Barrett and James W. Silver, *Integration at Ole Miss* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965), 7, 158; Dickson Preston, "Ole Miss Girl Editor Wages War on Mob," *The Knoxville News-Sentinel*, October 5, 1962, 3, accessed January 3, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/596521528/>.

² The following books provide information on Grants movement and headquarters in Oxford, Mississippi. Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-63* (New York: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 2006), 659; Ron Chernow, *Grant* (Waterville, ME: Thorndike Press, 2018), 321-322; Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant*, ed. E.B. Long (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2001), 219-237; David G. Sansing, *The University of Mississippi: A Sesquicentennial History* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999), 34, 106-124, 322; Stephen Enzweiler, *Oxford in the Civil War: Battle for a Vanquished Land* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2010).

³ Arthur M. Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy and His Times* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1978), 321.

⁴ Ole Miss was the name submitted for a yearbook naming competition at the University of Mississippi for the 1896-1897 class. Ole Miss was historically the title given to the mistress of a plantation. The yearbook and the school adopted the name. Nadine Cohodas, *The Band Played Dixie: Race and the Liberal Conscience at Ole Miss* (New York: Free Press, 1997), 20-21.

⁵ Don McCleod, "Troop Buildup Still Continues in Oxford," *The Jackson Sun (Jackson, TN)*, October 2, 1962, 1, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/282794785/?terms=troop+buildup+continues+in+oxford>.

⁶ Bob Carpenter, "Bloody Violence On Campus Leaves 2 Dead," *The Delta Democrat-Times (Greenville, MS)*, October 1, 1962, 1, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/24067438/?terms=Bloody+Violence+On+Campus+Leaves+2+Dead+greenville>; Paul J. Scheips, *The Role of the Army in the Oxford, Mississippi Incident, 1962-1963* (Washington, DC: Histories Division, Office of the Chief of Military History, Dept. of the Army, 1965), 134; "Federal Troops Take over at University," *The Conservative (Carrollton, MS)*, October 4, 1962, 1, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.news.papers.com/image/273046885/>.

Each soldier in the Mississippi National Guard encountered a test of loyalty while fulfilling his part of the Battle of Ole Miss on 30 September 1962. Before the battle, doubt lingered about the soldiers' loyalty until their actions proved their allegiance by supporting desegregation. Mississippi National Guard soldiers saved human lives and the University.⁷ The actions of the Guard in quelling the riot created new doctrine for domestic support of civil authorities (DSCA) and helped open the door to the closed society in terms of race.⁸

The role of the Mississippi National Guard at the Battle of Ole Miss demonstrates one aspect of a larger event full of famous characters and a fascinating plot that while interesting, is beyond the scope of this project. This research focuses on how the Mississippi National Guard overcame social constraints, enabling the organization's successful role at the Battle of Ole Miss. The lessons learned from the Mississippi National Guard's participation have significant contemporary implications for the National Guard, Army, and joint partners.

The military requires unity of command to eliminate divided loyalties.⁹ The structure of the National Guard creates a dual state and federal chain of command with the potential for conflict if lacking unity of effort. The National Defense Act of 1916 transformed the militia into the National Guard and made it part of the Federal Army. This created a requirement to swear an oath to a state governor and the President of the United States. In 1933, Congress mandated dual enlistment. This meant that joining the National Guard of an individual state also meant joining the US Army. Under this law, the Federal Government could activate the Guard for a national emergency only with the governor's consent. This

⁷ James Meredith and William Doyle, *Mission from God: A Memoir and Challenge for America* (New York: Atria Books, 2016), 222; John Faulkner, "How Much Hate There Is Now," *The Saturday Evening Post*, 10 November, 1962, 25.

⁸ James W. Silver, *Mississippi: The Closed Society* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1964), 3-10.

⁹ *Joint Publication 1* describes this relationship. "Unified action synchronizes, coordinates, and/or integrates joint, single-service, and multinational operations with the operations of other USG departments and agencies, nongovernmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and the private sector to achieve unity of effort. Unity of command within the military instrument of national power supports the national strategic direction through close coordination with the other instruments of national power." US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 1-0, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), xiii.

was a problem because governors used the states' rights argument to oppose any National Guard activation they opposed.¹⁰ In doing so, they pursued political interests that were sometimes contradictory to the national interest.

Military involvements in the Civil Rights movement demonstrate this conflict. At Ole Miss, individual rationality and collective consciousness were important factors in understanding how the battle occurred. These factors also show how the Mississippi National Guard overcame their racial and cultural biases to support the President's directives and the US Constitution. This understanding is no less important today as the National Guard continues to perform its dual role as a state and federal military organization. However, future implications are relevant to all components of the military.

Emotion runs high among the American population over presidential impeachment, gun control, racial injustice, and other domestic concerns. Any of these issues may require the military to perform domestic support to civil authorities. In these instances, the military must show proficiency in their obligation and commitment to the US Constitution. The military oath is the key bond placing military commitment and service over personal, social, and political interests.¹¹ Lieutenant General Bruce

¹⁰ Congressman Sonny Montgomery from Mississippi authored legislation resolving this issue in favor of national supremacy over state authority in 1996. "Eleven governors tried to keep their National Guard units from training in Honduras because they opposed a national policy of military involvement in Central America." The President ordered the National Guard units to duty under section 672 of title 10, United States Code. This amendment focused on overseas training but drifted into the domestic arena because it ultimately solved the state's rights issue in relation to the National Guard. Because governors pressed the issue until it landed on the docket of the Supreme Court. The Court ruled "under a 1933 federal law, those who enlist in their state National Guard are deemed to enlist simultaneously in the National Guard of the United States, which is part of the Army." The New York Times quoted Justice John Paul Stevens majority opinion as saying, "a guard member called into federal service is thereby relieved of his or her status in the state Guard for the entire period of federal service. Bernard E Trainor, "Rehearing Sought on Curb in Militia; Pentagon Ready to Appeal to Supreme Court on Using Guard Units Overseas," *The New York Times*, December 14, 1962, 22, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://nyti.ms/2vlybMw>; Associated Press, "States Lose Suit on the Guard's Latin Missions," *The New York Times*, August 5, 1987, 10, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://nyti.ms/3anuuV5>.

¹¹ "For the Army the seven Army values begin loyalty and are grounded in the Oath of Enlistment for enlisted personnel and the commissioning oath for commissioned officers." Wollom A. Jensen and James M. Childs, *Moral Warriors, Moral Wounds: The Ministry of the Christian Ethic* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2016), 32.

Crawford, the Army G6, recently said, “The oath empowers and obligates the soldier community to make a difference in the lives of others and remain accountable to all.”¹²

The Closed Society: Social Conditions for Civil War

James Silver wrote *The Closed Society* after the Battle of Ole Miss to explain the political and social perspectives from this period. Silver briefly mentioned the Mississippi National Guard in the book and in a speech he presented as president of the Southern Historical Society in 1963. He quoted George Fielding Eliot as saying, “In its ranks are men who, as citizens, share some of the views and even the prejudices of their fellow Mississippians. But when the call to duty came, they laid all else aside.”¹³ Two competing ideologies and an oath to a state and federal constitution placed the soldiers in a position to weigh morality and realism. The correct moral and legal decision remained constrained by the realism of a society where the soldiers worried about preservation of self, family, and community. This presented an important question in 1962 that is relevant today. Could rational thought based on moral and legal obligations prevail and allow the soldiers to overcome the strong cultural bonds that defined who they were?

The closed society’s bonds came from primary and secondary socialization, resulting from the feelings and memories from the American Civil War.¹⁴ Union victory increased discourse on southern whiteness. Economic and social decline among the aristocracy shaped a culture of collectivity around constructed memories of southern heritage and the lost cause.¹⁵ Media, southern white churches, and politicians pushed an agenda separating races and legislating citizenship. Romanticism of the Old South

¹² Devon L. Suits, “Why We Serve: Taking Care of People,” US Army Training and Doctrine Command, September 11, 2019, accessed February 29, 2020, <https://www.tradoc.army.mil/Publications-and-Resources/ArticleDisplay/Article/1957568/why-we-serve-taking-care-of-people/>.

¹³ George Fielding Eliot is a decorated World War I veteran. He was an on the ground reporter at the Battle of Ole Miss. His publishing company allowed a brief description of the Mississippi National Guards role in *The National Guardsman* magazine. George Fielding Eliot, “Salute to the Mississippi National Guard,” *The National Guardsman*, November 1962, 6, Archives and Special Collections, University of Mississippi Libraries; Silver, *Mississippi: The Closed Society*, 145.

¹⁴ Barrett, *Integration at Ole Miss*, 168.

¹⁵ Silver, “Mississippi: The Closed Society,” 4.

influenced culture and society. The Old South reflected nostalgia that created a cultural misunderstanding. Joshua Newton found that young white men growing up in the South experienced a “sense of social sovereignty which plagues the contemporary cultural politics of a place infected by ideologies of an importunate racial and gendered hierarchy.”¹⁶ These factors effected the mentality of the Mississippi National Guard in 1962, and the mob that tried to conduct an insurrection at the University of Mississippi.

In 1954, the Supreme Court’s decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* pulled partially hidden emotion further into the open.¹⁷ Ole Miss became an iconic symbol to the entire South of southern whiteness. Pulitzer Prize winner Willie Morris wrote, “Ole Miss is an institutional symbol, a pseudogenteel outpost of brainless young beauties, incipient drunks, and winning football teams.”¹⁸ Many considered Ole Miss as the training ground for white supremacy.¹⁹ *Time* wrote, “From its inception, the University of Mississippi had been an armature for the edification, proliferation, and advancement of a state-sponsored parochial white orthodoxy – the exclusive enterprise in what James Silver famously referred to as Mississippi’s closed society.”²⁰

Mississippi politicians responded by establishing the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission (MSSC) in 1956 to counter the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The MSSC was an official branch of the state government with the mission of protecting “state

¹⁶ Joshua I. Newton, *Dixie's Last Stand: Ole Miss, The Body, and The Spectacle of Whiteness*” (PhD diss., University of Maryland, College Park, MD, 2005), 9, Archives and Special Collections, University of Mississippi Libraries.

¹⁷ Jack Bass and Walter DeVries, *The Transformation of Southern Politics: Social Change and Political Consequence since 1945* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 186-217; Constance Baker Motley, *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s*, ed. Henry Hampton, Steve Fayer, and Sarah Flynn (London: Vintage, 1995), 122; Weill, *In a Madhouse's Din*, 57. Weill, *In a Madhouse's Din*, 57; Al Kuettner, “Seven Years Under 'Black Monday' Rule,” *The Clarion Ledger*, May 21, 1961, 10, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/180065105>; Michael J Klarman, *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights the Supreme Court and the Struggle for Racial Equality* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2006).

¹⁸ Paul Hendrickson, *Sons of Mississippi: A Story of Race and Its Legacy* (New York: Vintage books, 2004), 132; *Ghosts of Ole Miss - ESPN Films: 30 for 30* (ESPN, 2012); Willie Morris, *Shifting Interludes: Selected Essays*, ed. Jack Bales (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2017), 106; Cohodas, *The Band Played Dixie*, 57.

¹⁹ Cohodas, *The Band Played Dixie*, 2.

²⁰ “Mississippi: The Closed Society,” *Time*, November 15, 1963, 37; Newton, *Dixie's Last Stand*, 16.

sovereignty”. The MSSC was the “segregation watchdog” in Mississippi.²¹ It had a large budget, economic influence, and close ties to the political elite and the Citizens’ Council. A group of Mississippi delta businessmen created the Council in Indianola to confront “mongrelization” and control “federalizing of schools.”²² In its first few months in 1954, 110 chapters with 80,000 members formed in Mississippi.²³ The Council was politically strong and dangerous when combined with the MSSC and local law enforcement backed by the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). The Council had strong political influence. It was the most important political organization in Mississippi in the late 50s. The Council conducted investigations and handed down orders to local sheriffs and if need be, the KKK.²⁴

The formal structure designed to enforce segregation restricted the freedom to voice dissent in Mississippi. Political leadership censored professors and media members for attempting to bring attention to atrocities. When censorship failed, coercion increased until law enforcement or the Klan removed the violator, sometimes for eternity.²⁵ The Mississippi National Guard found itself as part of this society in 1962.²⁶ The Citizens’ Council had a card on file for every white citizen in Jackson where the Mississippi National Guard Headquarters was located.²⁷ The card contained their racial views, and recognized them as a member or non-member. Giving the wrong answer was not wise. Surveys conducted in Jackson, Greenwood, and McComb found that 98% of white Mississippi supported school segregation and would

²¹ Erle Johnston was the head of the MSSC after running the *Scott County Times* in Forrest Mississippi. He started the public relations branch of the MSSC. He writes about his experiences in Mississippi state government in his book that follows. Erle Johnston, *Mississippi’s Defiant Years, 1953-1973: An Interpretive Documentary with Personal Experiences* (Forest, MS: Lake Harbor Publishers, 1990); Jenny Irons, *Reconstituting Whiteness: the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt Univ. Press, 2010).

²² J. Lee Annis, *Big Jim Eastland: the Godfather of Mississippi* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2016), 130-131.

²³ Neil R. McMillen, *The Citizens Council: Organised Resistance to Second Reconstruction, 1954-64* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1971), 15-40.

²⁴ Johnston, *Mississippi’s Defiant Years*, 26.

²⁵ United Press International, “Teacher, Target of Attacks, Resigns Post in Mississippi,” *New York Times*, August 6, 1962, 22, <https://nyti.ms/1MMgKWx>; Silver, *Integration at Ole Miss*, 36, 39; Irons, *Reconstituting Whiteness*, 30; Neil R. McMillen, *The Citizens Council: Organised Resistance to Second Reconstruction, 1954-64* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1971), 63-65, 76.

²⁶ Barrett, *Integration at Ole Miss*, 11-13.

²⁷ Hendrickson, *Sons of Mississippi*, 125.

support the Citizens' Council in any crisis.²⁸ After 1959, the Citizens' Council had absolute control over Mississippi society, ensuring unified segregation was state policy.²⁹ All state employees signed an oath of allegiance to the state.

Mississippi Senator Jim Eastland was a national political leader and key figure in drafting the Southern Manifesto and a driving force behind massive resistance.³⁰ He led a charge for segregation in Mississippi when he said, "You are not required to obey any court which passes out such a ruling. In fact you are obligated to defy it."³¹ The social construct in Mississippi created a political climate where Ross Barnett rode a platform of segregation to his new position as Commander in Chief of the Mississippi National Guard in his third attempt. His qualifications remained unchanged, but his message on segregation resonated better in the political climate.³² He assured voters he would maintain segregation "now and forever."³³

The Precedent of Little Rock

US military involvement with domestic disorders connected to racial controversy unexpectedly blossomed in Little Rock, Arkansas in September of 1957. Pundits at the time believed Little Rock might restart the Civil War. The event did not explode as expected, but inflamed passion across the south and set

²⁸ Silver 41. C. Vann Woodward explains in his book *The Burden of Southern Society* how in the Civil War Era a judge of a person's southernness was based on their view of slavery in the Civil Rights era southernness was defined by views on integration. C. Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History* (Louisiana State University Press, 2008).

²⁹ Barrett, *Integration at Ole Miss*, 11.

³⁰ For a detailed account of the Southern Manifesto and massive resistance, see the following book. John Kyle, Day, *Southern Manifesto: Massive Resistance and the Fight to Preserve Segregation*. (Jackson, MS: Univ Press of Mississippi, 2014).

³¹ Big Jim Eastland; The Godfather of Southern Politics has a chapter, Massive Resistance, Bourbon Style, explaining how Eastland and other southern congressmen maneuvered politically to abolish Brown v. Board of Education. Annis, *Big Jim Eastland*, 130.

³² Walter Lord, *The Past That Would Not Die* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1965), 77; Curtis Wilkie, *Dixie* (New York: Scribner, 2001), 91-94.

³³ "On September 13, 1962, three days after Justice Hugo Black's order, Barnett went on statewide television and declared, 'We will not surrender to the evil and illegal forces of tyranny. We must wither submit to the unlawful dictates of the Federal Government or stand up like men and tell them 'NEVER!'" Ouida Barnett, Atkins, Interviewed by Chip Mitchell, 14 May, 2006, Open Doors Collection, Archives and Special Collections, University of Mississippi Libraries, accessed February 29, 2020, <http://purl.oclc.org/umarchives/MUM00346/>.

the stage for an insurrection in Mississippi. An article in the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* and other publications compared the two events and described Little Rock as a skirmish and Oxford as a war.³⁴ Little Rock gave segregationists the ability to weaponize a narrative to create fear and massive resistance to integration.

The Governor of Arkansas, Orval E. Faubus, was a moderate with a record of defeating a staunch segregationist in his run for governor. Under his leadership, “The NAACP considered Arkansas the bright spot of the south.”³⁵ However, moderation would not last in the south as the Citizens’ Council exerted relentless pressure. Despite several African American students attending high schools and universities across Arkansas, a showdown brewed as nine students enrolled at Central High in Little Rock.³⁶ This set the conditions for various political and social groups to make a stand for political purposes. It also caused the governor and other politicians to alter their stance on integration and claim states’ rights.³⁷ This presented an unwelcome policy issue for the Federal Government.

President Eisenhower was beholden to the political elite of the south and looked unfavorably on integration as a soldier. During his first term, he did not intervene when the Texas Governor used his Rangers to prevent integration at Mansfield, Texas.³⁸ This established a precedent that states’ rights trumped federal law. He recognized the potential for conflict between state and federal law as southern politicians talked of interposition, nullification, and succession.³⁹ This set a precedent other southern

³⁴ Relman Morin, “Situation in Mississippi Is Little Rock Magnified,” *The Times-Picayune*, October 2, 1962, sec. 1, 6, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12D677A0E469947A@2437940-12D52A76FAF24D91@5-12D52A76FAF24D91@>.

³⁵ Paul J. Scheips, *The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders, 1945-1992* (Center of Military History, US Army, 2005), 27.

³⁶ Tony Badger, “‘The Forerunner of Our Opposition’: Arkansas and the Southern Manifesto of 1956,” *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 56, no. 3 (1997): 354, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.2307/40023181>

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 355.

³⁸ For a detailed account of Texas desegregation and Eisenhower’s actions concerning the Crisis at Mansfield see the following. Robyn, Duff Ladino, *Desegregating Texas Schools: Eisenhower, Shivers, and the Crisis at Mansfield High* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1996).

³⁹ Neil R. McMillen, *The Citizens Council: Organised Resistance to Second Reconstruction, 1954-64* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1971), 74.

governors followed to pacify constituents.⁴⁰ Political discourse spiraled out of control and discussion of federal troops entered the conversation. Eisenhower opposed their use, “I can’t imagine any set of circumstances that would induce me to send federal troops into any area to enforce the orders of a federal court, because I believe that the common sense of America will prevail.”⁴¹ Eisenhower’s hope would soon fade. He understood the laws mandated by the nation’s highest court reigned supreme to states’ rights and it was his job to enforce the supremacy of federal law. The President had political flexibility at this point in his career because he was serving his second term.

In Arkansas, Governor Faubus made the first escalatory move in the political contest when he ordered the Arkansas National Guard to state duty under Title 32 of the US Code.⁴² The Governor’s orders directed the Guard to form a circle around Central High School to keep African American students out. Eisenhower directly asked the governor to change the Guard’s mission and allow the black students to attend Central High. Eisenhower and Faubus negotiated but the system broke down because Faubus’ political power came from the Citizens’ Council support network. The only solution was for the executive branch to enforce federal law with military might.⁴³ The President sent the 101st Airborne, commanded by Major General Edwin Walker.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Lord, *The Past That Would Not Die*, 73-74, 140, 157; Silver, *The Closed Society*, 111; Weill. *In a Madhouse's Din*, 76; James W. Silver, “Mississippi: The Closed Society,” *The Journal of Southern History* 30, no. 1 (February 1964): 3, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://www-jstor-org.lumen.cgsccarl.com/stable/2205371>; “South's Leaders Fought for State Sovereignty,” *Enterprise-Journal (McComb, MS)*, October 16, 1962, 2, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/318326294/?terms=South's+Leaders+Fought+for+State+Sovereignty>.

⁴¹ *Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1957* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1958).

⁴² Full-time National Guard duty means training or other duty, other than inactive duty, performed by a member of the Army National Guard of the United States or the Air National Guard of the United States in the member’s status as a member of the National Guard of a State or territory, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the District of Columbia under section 316, 502, 503, 504, or 505 of this title for which the member is entitled to pay from the United States or for which the member has waived pay from the United States.

⁴³ Benjamin Fine, “Troops Guard at School; Negroes Ready to Return,” *The New York Times*, September 25, 1957, 1, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://nyti.ms/2TsnyPL>.

⁴⁴ Paul J. Scheips, *The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders, 1945-1992* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, US Army, 2005), 47-42.

Self-Proclaimed General, James Meredith

“How to engage in this war without becoming a casualty was of prime importance once the decision had been made to invade the enemy’s most sacred and revered stronghold.”⁴⁵ This quote demonstrates that James Meredith understood Mississippi and the challenge he faced when submitting an application for attendance to Ole Miss. Unlike other civil rights leaders, James Meredith sought a strategic course as opposed to using tactical actions. He forced the Federal Government to take up guns on his behalf. Kennedy’s election inspired Meredith to apply for admission to the University.⁴⁶ He selected Ole Miss because it was a moral center of gravity for white supremacists and a major symbol of the Old South.⁴⁷ Meredith believed his revolution would place the US Army in a battle against the Mississippi Highway Patrol and the Mississippi National Guard.⁴⁸ The deeply ingrained racial and cultural biases in Mississippi ran so deep that armed conflict was necessary and inevitable.⁴⁹

Politics and Society Shape the National Guard

President Harry Truman desegregated the US military in 1948 through Executive Order 9981. This was a start, but integration did not happen overnight, requiring a change in attitudes as much as a change in law. The executive order did not apply to the National Guard as the organization was not part of the federal force. “In fact, the General Staff’s Committee on National Guard Policy specifically recommended against forced desegregation of the Guard, noting the tradition of local control and custom

⁴⁵ James Meredith, *Three Years in Mississippi* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1966), 78.

⁴⁶ J. Meredith, *Three Years in Mississippi*, 51-52.

⁴⁷ Nadine Cohodas, “James Meredith and the Integration of Ole Miss,” *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, no. 16 (1997): 112, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://doi.org/doi:10.2307/2962922>; Hendrickson, *Sons of Mississippi*, 133.

⁴⁸ *Rebels: James Meredith and the Integration of Ole Miss* (Vimeo, 2013), accessed March 1, 2020. <https://vimeo.com/72898413>.

⁴⁹ In the following book, the authors argue that the citizens’ council created a condition where a battle was the only solution. Barrett, *Integration at Ole Miss*.

over state units.”⁵⁰

National Defense concerns enabled segregation by providing a convenient excuse for southern politicians to justify their actions. The Cold War created a demand for soldiers. Troop strength in the reserve component of the military took priority over morals.⁵¹ Various groups studied the issue, and found that none of the former Confederate States had African American participation in the Guard despite having over 50% of the African American population.⁵² The studies found that “25.6% of the National Guard’s budget went to states that by law or custom denied Negroes the right to serve in the National Guard.”⁵³

In 1962, the Mississippi National Guard was an all-white organization. This was not outside of the norm for southern National Guard units. This received the attention of President Kennedy and the NAACP, causing the President to recommend a panel to look into the matter. In 1961, Gerhard Gesell led a Presidential Commission on Civil Rights issues.⁵⁴ This group quantitatively studied and reported hard numbers, finding that federal policy lacked a clear structure or focus.⁵⁵ States controlled their National Guard, but the Federal Government could coerce their actions using the power of the purse.⁵⁶ Pentagon

⁵⁰ Thomas P Honsa, “Doing the Job: The 1964 Desegregation of the Florida Army National Guard,” *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 87, no. 1 (2008): 51, accessed March 2, 2020, www.jstor.org/stable/20700195; Morris J MacGregor, *Integration of the Armed Forces: 1940-1965* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, US Army, 1985), Chapter 3; Isham G Newton, “The Negro and the National Guard,” *Phylon* 23, no. 1 (1962): 5, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://doi.org/doi:10.2307/274140>; Richard Joseph II Stillman, *Integration of the Negro in the U.S. Armed Forces* (New York: Praeger, 1969), 105.

⁵¹ Newton, “The Negro and the National Guard,” 25.

⁵² Associated Press, “Reserve Units Desegregated: Persuasion for Guard Integration Continues,” *The Times-Picayune*, June 21, 1963, sec. 1, 16, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12D820330DB50031@2438209-12D61C9FF337B7CE@15-12D61C9FF337B7CE@>.

⁵³ Newton, “The Negro and the National Guard,” 25.

⁵⁴ “The Gesell Report: All Military Segregation Ended by 1948,” *The Times-Picayune*, July 30, 1963, 11, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12D885FC73CF7A48@2438241-12D8852FEAE0FC4C@10>; Harris Wofford, *Of Kennedys and Kings: Making Sense of the Sixties* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992), 150.

⁵⁵ Harris, *Of Kennedys and Kings*, 150.

⁵⁶ “Herbert Attacks Gesell Report,” *The Times-Picayune (New Orleans)*, September 12, 1963, sec. 1, 16, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12D9C6AB2E5551BD@2438285-12D61CAE31BF7969@54-12D61CAE31BF7969@>.

leadership threatened to suspend funding to any state with a segregated National Guard.

The Segregated Mississippi National Guard

On September 30, 1962, trouble was brewing in Mississippi. Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) aired a thirty-minute episode showing how the State was preparing to confront the Federal Government. CBS suggested that Mississippi had pushed its challenge “close to its ultimate limits” and the situation would soon end because the opposing forces “stand face to face.”⁵⁷ The following morning Oxford was peaceful in preparation for a football game where Ole Miss continued its dominance on the path to an undefeated season.⁵⁸ Governor Barnett gave a fiery speech at halftime overshadowing the victory over Kentucky. Ole Miss and Kentucky fans both went wild causing many press outlets and students to compare the spectacle to a Nazi Nuremberg rally.⁵⁹ On Saturday and Sunday, negotiations to enroll Meredith broke down.⁶⁰ Retired Major General Edwin Walker began calling for troops or “good ole boys” from across the South to come to Oxford and fight for Mississippi.⁶¹

In Washington, the President met with Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Maxwell Taylor, and other senior military leaders. The meeting also included Robert Kennedy along with other senior members of the Justice Department.⁶² During this

⁵⁷ Charles W. Eagles, *Price of Defiance: James Meredith and the Integration of Ole Miss* (Chapel Hill, NC: Univ Of North Carolina Pr, 2014), 333; Roscoe Drummond, “There Could Be No Other Outcome At Ole Miss,” *The Delta Democrat-Times (Greenville, MS)*, October 3, 1962, 4, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/24067979/>.

⁵⁸ *Ghosts of Ole Miss - ESPN Films: 30 for 30* (ESPN, 2012)

⁵⁹ Walter Lord, *The Past That Would Not Die* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1965), 191.

⁶⁰ For a summary of the legal attempts and month long negotiations see the following. United Press International, “Chronology of Conflict,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 1, 1962, 6, accessed October 16, 2019, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/178688695/>.

⁶¹ Homer Bigart, “Walker Pressing March to Jackson,” *The New York Times*, September 29, 1962, 1, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://nyti.ms/32Hk54j>; Lord, *The Past That Would Not Die*, 180-182; Associated Press, “Volunteer Help Pours In,” *The Times-Picayune*, October 1, 1962, sec. 1, 10, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12D6317071F2534B@2437936-12D52A79A0F53E9C@35-12D52A79A0F53E9C@>; Relman Jordan, “Walker's Integration Role Reversed In 5 Years,” *The Gazette (Montreal, Canada)*, October 2, 1962, 4, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/420972099>; Cohodas, *The Band Played Dixie*, 83.

⁶² Harry Kelly, “Mississippi Operations: Whitehouse Plans for a Seige,” *The Austin America-Statesman*, October 1, 1962, 13, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/357745478/?terms=>

meeting, the leaders drafted Presidential Proclamation No. 3497 and Executive Order No. 11053.⁶³ This paperwork paved the way for military intervention in Mississippi, including the legal means to activate the Mississippi National Guard into the federal force.

Robert Schlesinger quotes Robert Kennedy as saying he “feared a mini-civil war with GIs and Mississippians shooting each other down.”⁶⁴ State Senator E. K. Collins said, “We must win this fight regardless of cost in time, effort, money, and human lives.”⁶⁵ On the same day that Governor Barnett gave his inflammatory speech, the *Clarion Ledger* carried a sensational headline that a “gun battle” was possible at the University.⁶⁶ State Representative Walter Hester of Adams County told a United Press International (UPI) reporter he believed that state, county, and local law enforcement officers would “forcibly attempt to fight off marshals if they tried to forcibly take Negro James Meredith into the school.”⁶⁷

A majority of people across the country knew the soldiers of the Mississippi National Guard were part of the closed society. Most of the organization supported segregation and any that opposed it knew the consequences of saying as much in public. Segregation was state law for the National Guard in some states. However, in Mississippi such a law was not required. Social norms were as binding as written law.⁶⁸ Mississippi National Guard soldiers stated in oral interviews and newspaper articles that the vast

mississippi+operations".

⁶³ Text of the Kennedy orders can be found in major newspapers from October 1st and are located online at the Kennedy Library website. Associated Press, “Text of Kennedy Orders on Mississippi Situation,” *The Times-Picayune*, October 1, 1962, sec. 1, 3, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12D677A01904F7AC@2437939-12D631798460EAC0@2-12D631798460EAC0@>; John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum. Ole Miss - John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum, n.d., accessed March 3, 2020, <https://microsites.jfklibrary.org/olemiss/confrontation/doc9.html>.

⁶⁴ Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy and His Times*, 318.

⁶⁵ Silver, *The Closed Society*, 118.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 119. United Press International, “Gunbattle 'Possible',” *The Clarion Ledger*, September 28, 1962, 12, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/180538467/?terms=Gunbattle+'Possible>; Paul Hendrickson, *Sons of Mississippi: A Story of Race and Its Legacy* (New York, NY: Vintage books, 2004), 136-137.

⁶⁷ United Press International, “Gunbattle 'Possible,’” 12; Hendrickson, *Sons of Mississippi*, 137.

⁶⁸ Irons, *Reconstituting Whiteness*, 12.

majority of the soldiers in the organization openly supported segregation or were indifferent before the Battle of Ole Miss.⁶⁹

During the Korean War, future Mississippi Governor William Winter served in the newly integrated 8th Infantry Division at Fort Jackson, South Carolina just after the Army integrated. The 8th Infantry Division was an active duty unit adjusting well to social change within the Army. However, Winter said his fellow Mississippians at Fort Jackson heckled him for serving in the “Checkerboard Division.”⁷⁰ The hecklers were in the other major unit located at Fort Jackson from 1951 to 1954. The 31st Infantry Division, the “Dixie Division”, from the Alabama and Mississippi National Guard. Unlike the 8th Infantry, the unit remained segregated and opposed to any fraternization with African Americans. They arranged to live in a separate compound on Fort Jackson where they flew a Confederate flag over the division headquarters.

The commander of the Dixie Division was Major General Alexander Paxton. Paxton had a mixed record on civil rights. A New Yorker assigned to Fort Dix complained to Congress about the Dixie Division’s segregation policies, but the findings were that the policy did not include National Guard units because states organized them before entering active duty.⁷¹ After retirement, Paxton was an advisor to Ross Barnett and other governors on a strategy to maintain a segregated National Guard.⁷² When President Kennedy activated the Mississippi National Guard, Paxton called it a “low blow.”⁷³ He went on

⁶⁹ See the various Open Doors Oral History interviews conducted by the Ole Miss Journalism School and store on the EGrove website. Open Doors Collection. Archives and Special Collections, University of Mississippi Libraries. <http://purl.oclc.org/umarchives/MUM00346/>

⁷⁰ Lord, *The Past That Would Not Die*, 87.

⁷¹ Andrew H Myers, *Black, White, & Olive Drab: Racial Integration at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, and the Civil Rights Movement* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 83-84.

⁷² Morris J. MacGregor, *Integration of the Armed Forces: 1940-1965* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, US Army, 1985), 321-322.

⁷³ “Guardsmen Called; Paxton Angry,” *The Delta Democrat-Times*, October 1, 1962, 1, accessed March 2, 2020, [https://www.newspapers.com/image/24067438/?terms=Guardsmen+Called;+Paxton+Army; Associated Press, “Paxton Scores Use of the Guard,” *The Times-Picayune*, October 1, 1962, sec. 1, 16, accessed March 3, 2020, https://nola.newsbank.com/doc /image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12D677A01904F7AC@2437939-12D52A76E212ABD5@15-12D52A76E212ABD5@.](https://www.newspapers.com/image/24067438/?terms=Guardsmen+Called;+Paxton+Army; Associated Press, “Paxton Scores Use of the Guard,” The Times-Picayune, October 1, 1962, sec. 1, 16, accessed March 3, 2020, https://nola.newsbank.com/doc /image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12D677A01904F7AC@2437939-12D52A76E212ABD5@15-12D52A76E212ABD5@.)

to on to say, “It may well be the most tragic military order given since Chief of Staff MacArthur under the President’s direction, ordered fire on the unarmed defenseless hunger marchers on the outskirts of Washington.”⁷⁴

Political Paradox

A soldier arrived at the National Guard armory in Greenville, Mississippi to support the President. Paradoxically, his car had a Dixie Division and “Win With Barnett” bumper sticker.⁷⁵ The Greenville newspaper had a photo of the car on the front page the day after the riot with the words “Federal Southerner.”⁷⁶ This is symbolic of many relationships during the fall of 1962 in Mississippi.⁷⁷ Two of the leading politicians and segregationists in Mississippi had close relatives federalized and ordered to duty with the Mississippi National Guard. Governor Ross Barnett had a son and son in law in the Guard and John Stennis had a nephew ordered to duty.⁷⁸ Barnett and Stennis were not the only politicians with conflicting interests created by the Mississippi National Guard’s new mission of integration.

Brigadier General and Judge Claude F. Clayton served as the Division’s artillery commander and went on to serve as the commander of the Dixie Division.⁷⁹ Clayton’s position in the Guard potentially created a conflict of interest.⁸⁰ Through the judicial process, rioters could appear before Judge Clayton.

⁷⁴ “Guardsmen Called; Paxton Angry,” 1.

⁷⁵ Staff Photo, “Federal Southerner,” *The Delta Democrat-Times (Greenville, MS)*, October 1, 1962, 1, accessed March 2, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/24067438/?terms=Federal+Southerner>.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.; United Press International, “Paradoxes In Integration Crisis,” *The Nashville Banner*, October 1, 1962, 12, accessed February 28, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/603328577/>.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ United Press International, “Clayton Is Chosen for Guard Post,” *The Clarion Ledger*, November 15, 1962, 1, accessed March 2, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/180496300/?terms=Clayton+Is+Chosen+For+Guard+Post>.

⁸⁰ Clayton relinquished command when the White House barred federal judges from holding command posts. Associated Press, “Clayton Rites Planned Today: Federal Judge’s Burial Set in Tupelo,” *The Times-Picayune*, July 7, 1969, sec. 1, 3, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12F1D1522F585FDC@2440410-12F1CE60C824DF60@2-12F1CE60C824DF60@>.

This conflict created a situation where Judge Clayton's civilian service was more vital than his military service. Clayton served as Major General Creighton Abrams special advisor until the Department of Defense decided how to handle the conflict of interest.⁸¹ Ironically, after Clayton's release from active duty, Edwin Walker appeared before him and received a court order for a mental evaluation.⁸² *Time* did a profile on Judge Clayton where they recognized his "Mississippi ways" that allowed him to rise to General in the Mississippi National Guard. The magazine quoted Clayton as saying, "As a realist, I've recognized my responsibility to adapt to changing times."⁸³

The *National Guardsman* magazine had a detailed summary of the Mississippi National Guard's action at Ole Miss in its November edition. The author wrote that over 80% of the soldiers reported immediately upon notification of the call to active duty. Major General William P. Wilson, commander of the Mississippi National Guard said, "There have been absolutely no incidents of any individual willfully refusing to report for mobilization."⁸⁴ The public affairs officer for the Mississippi National Guard reported that by Sunday evening almost 100% had reported, but is unrealistic to think that every soldier could report. Some were working offshore on oilrigs, some were first responders, and Ray Franklin and Eddie Khayat helped the Cleveland Browns and Washington Redskins win in the National Football

⁸¹ "Clayton Rites Planned Today: Federal Judge's Burial Set in Tupelo," 1,3.

⁸² Associated Press, Walker May be Freed," *Sunday Gazette-Mail (Clarleston-West Virginia)*, October 7, 1962, 1, 12, accessed March 4, 2020, [https://www.newspapers.com/image/42501390/?terms=edwin+walker+mental](https://www.newspapers.com/image/42501390/?terms=edwin+walker+mental;); Associated Press, "Psychiatric Exam May Be Given Gen. Walker Today," *The Abilene Reporter-News (Abilene, TX)*, October 2, 1962, 26, Accessed March 4, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/45381633/?terms=walker+may+get+psychiatric+exam>.

⁸³ "The Law: Judges, Change Down South," *Time*, November 24, 1967, 80.

⁸⁴ "Oxford! The Mississippi National Guard Stands Fast," *The National Guardsman*, November 1962, 4.

League.⁸⁵ *The Washington Post* confirmed that most of the Guard soldiers disagreed with the mission but they reported for duty as ordered and the Pentagon recognized their “prompt obedience.”⁸⁶

The Department of Defense did not activate Wilson due to his appointed political position as the Adjutant General of the Mississippi National Guard.⁸⁷ In this role, he served as Governor Barnett’s advisor on military matters. He proved his allegiance to the governor when he said the reason the soldiers reported as ordered was because, “they did not know the purpose for which they were being called, and therefore responded in the same manner as though they were being mobilized for a real -- and I say again a real -- National emergency.”⁸⁸

In the war room at the Pentagon, maps of Mississippi replaced maps of Cuba. It was hard for the Kennedys to decide if Cuba or Mississippi presented the greatest challenge. When the riot at Ole Miss was at its most critical point, the President remarked it was more interesting than the Bay of Pigs.⁸⁹ Later in the month, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) agents advised the President that Russia was shipping nuclear missiles to Cuba. Robert Kennedy joked, “I wonder if they can hit Oxford.”⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Bob Franklin was a graduate of the Ole Miss ROTC Program and officer in the Mississippi National Guard. After the Sunday game he received notification to report for duty. Associated Press, “Franklin Called for Guard Duty,” *The Times-Picayune*, October 1, 1962, sec. 1, 1, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12D677A01904F7AC@2437939-12D52A76DD079C8E@0>; “Staff Duty Log From the Headquarters, Mississippi National Guard,” Staff Duty Log From the Headquarters, Mississippi National Guard § (n.d.); Available at Mississippi National Guard website. “1962: ‘The Oxford Incident,’” Mississippi National Guard (Mississippi National Guard Historian, n.d.), accessed March 1, 2020, <https://ms.ng.mil/history/Pages/oxford.aspx>.

⁸⁶ John G Norris, “Oxford Influx Brings Army Call,” *The Washington Post*, October 2, 1962, 1.

⁸⁷ Paul J. Scheips, *The Role of the Army in the Oxford, Mississippi Incident, 1962-1963* (Washington, DC: Histories Division, Office of the Chief of Military History, Dept. of the Army, 1965) 73-74.

⁸⁸ “Oxford! The Mississippi National Guard Stands Fast,” 4.

⁸⁹ Robert F. Kennedy, *Robert Kennedy, In His Own Words: The Unpublished Recollections of the Kennedy Years*, ed. Edwin O. Guthman and Jeffrey Shulman (New York: Bantam Books, 1988), 165.

⁹⁰ The Kennedy Library contains records of the conversation and a map on file at the Harvard Kennedy School shows information the CIA prepared for the President with the major cities the missiles could hit. The list included the small town, Oxford. Central Intelligence Agency (Harvard Kennedy School, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs), accessed March 7, 2020, <http://www.cubanmissilecrisis.org/post/gallery/map-of-missile-range-in-cuba/>; <https://www.jfklibrary.org/events-and-awards/forums/past-forums/transcripts/jfk-a-vision-for-america>; Stephen Kennedy Smith, “JFK-A Vision For America,” JFK Library, May 15, 2007, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://www.jfklibrary.org/events-and-awards/forums/past-forums/transcripts/jfk-a-vision-for-america>; Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 673.

During the planning phase for the Ole Miss incident, all parties agreed to Meredith's arrival on Monday, 1 October. However, negotiations between Governor Barnett and President Kennedy broke down when Kennedy threatened to release secret voice recordings between the two.⁹¹ Barnett knew the recordings would destroy his political career and reputation so he frantically recommended moving Meredith to Ole Miss immediately.⁹² Kennedy agreed with the plan to move Meredith discreetly onto campus Sunday afternoon and prepared to address the nation on national television.⁹³

The plan turned into action but none of the politicians thought of notifying the Army Chief of Staff's representative, General Creighton Abrams, or the Pentagon. Abrams found out from his driver who saw the new plan unfolding on the television in a cafeteria. The entire Department of Defense thought the initial Monday plan was still in place. At 8pm central time, President Kennedy explained to the American people why he signed orders preparing for military intervention in Mississippi and asking Mississippians to resolve the issue peacefully; he did not know he was five minutes late.⁹⁴ The riot started just before he went on the air. As the violence escalated, Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach asked the President to send the Army, but the active component was not able to respond promptly.⁹⁵

⁹¹ The voice recordings between Governor Barnett and President Kennedy inspired William Doyle to write his book *An American Insurrection*. Doyle was working on a documentary for HBO about presidential voice recordings when he came across the recordings concerning Ole Miss. He knew he had to write a book, but had concern that no one would believe the unbelievable story that took place in Mississippi in 1962. All of the voice recordings are available online from the Kennedy Presidential Library and a detailed account of the story is located in the following book. Leonard, Harris, Wren, "How a Secret Deal Prevented a Massacre at Ole Miss," 671-701; "Kennedy, Barnett Held Three Dramatic Telephone Talks," *The Delta Democrat-Times (Greenville, MS)*, October 4, 1962, 8, accessed March 2, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/24068449/>.

⁹² Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy and His Times*, 321.

⁹³ United Press International, "U.S. Takes Over Mississippi National Guard," *The Knoxville News-Sentinel*, September 30, 1962, 1, 4, accessed October 31, 2019, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/596537248/>.

⁹⁴ Cohodas, *The Band Played Dixie*, 85.

⁹⁵ The Kennedys blamed the military. Schlesinger writes that they believed the plans were impressive but the action was not. The Kennedys believed the Army constantly lied about preparedness and were continuously giving false wrong and inaccurate information. An account of the event is in the following book. *Robert Kennedy, In His Own Words*, 162.

Brick and Bottle Veterans

Guard soldiers believed they were heading to Cuba or Berlin.⁹⁶ As they found out their actual mission, their demeanor changed as they weighed the consequences of a conflict reminiscent of the Civil War with brother against brother and son against son.⁹⁷ Charlie Troop, 108th Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR) went into battle as the main effort due to deteriorating circumstances on the campus of Ole Miss.⁹⁸ The initial plan called for riot control soldiers from the 503rd Military Police Battalion from Fort Bragg to respond, but the change in plans left them in Tennessee.⁹⁹ Captain Chooky Falkner and his troops were at the Oxford armory when he received orders through Katzenbach, on behalf of President Kennedy, to begin movement to the campus and protect the university.¹⁰⁰ Falkner was surprised to receive an order directly from the President. He called his Squadron Commander and advised him about the order. His commander said, “I expect you better go.”¹⁰¹

On campus, the US Marshalls ran low on tear gas and reached culmination.¹⁰² The Kennedy Administration restricted the use of their firearms.¹⁰³ The mob’s weapon array consisted of shotguns and

⁹⁶ Ibid.; Ohn Emmerich, “Pike Guardsmen Depart Armored During Night,” *Enterprise-Journal (McComb, MS)*, October 1, 1962, 1, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/318324627/?terms=Pike+Guardsmen+Depart>

⁹⁷ Jonathen Eig, “Reconstruction Makes Its Way to Ole Miss,” *The Times-Picayune*, September 27, 1987, sec. J, 3, accessed March 3, 2020, https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-133D48846FAD7C17_@2447066-13396A28C941E87F@152.

⁹⁸ Hassell Franklin is a prominent CEO. He is the founder of a national furniture company. He was born in Tupelo and was a sixth grade classmate of Elvis Presley. He graduated from Mississippi State and would have been considered a model Mississippian. However, on the night of the riot he was the enemy.

⁹⁹ Fred Villella, Interviewed by Brian Miller, 1 October, 2002, Open Doors Collection, Archives and Special Collections, University of Mississippi Libraries, accessed March 3, 2020, <http://purl.oclc.org/umarchives/MUM00346/>.

¹⁰⁰ Murry ‘Chooky’ Falkner was lifelong resident of Oxford and nephew of Oxford icon William Faulkner. The names are different because Chooky used the traditional spelling. He received a direct commission into the National Guard because of his Navy service in WWII. He retired from the Mississippi National Guard as a brigadier general and ran a insurance business in Oxford.

¹⁰¹ Murry C. ‘Chooky’ Falkner, Interviewed by Jennifer Stoilman and April Grayson, 1 October 2002, Open Doors Collection, Archives and Special Collections, University of Mississippi Libraries, accessed March 1, 2020, <http://purl.oclc.org/umarchives/MUM00346/>.

¹⁰² Silver, *The Closed Society*, 121; Leonard, Harris, Wren, “How a Secret Deal Prevented a Massacre at Ole Miss,” 693.

¹⁰³ A small detail of US marshals guarding Meredith in a dormitory on campus had weapons, ammo, and

rifles but their preferred weapon was bricks and anything else they could throw. The biology building was under construction and adjacent to the Grove where the rioters launched the assault on the Lyceum.¹⁰⁴ On Friday afternoon, the building contractor received 30,000 bricks required for the construction project. When the workers arrived on Monday morning, all of the bricks were gone.

Charlie Troop departed its armory and headed down University Avenue. As they came closer to the University, individuals started yelling racial and misogynistic slurs at the now federal soldiers.¹⁰⁵ As they entered the campus, the derogatory slurs transitioned to rocks and then bricks.¹⁰⁶ When they arrived in the Grove, a few hundred yards from the Lyceum, a rioter hurled a brick at Captain Falkner, breaking his arm in two places. Falkner did not have time to worry about his injuries, as his convoy was under small arms fire. When the convoy neared the circle leading directly to the Lyceum they encountered obstacles created by the mob using concrete benches. Falkner directed his driver to “put it in second gear and lets go” breeching the hasty obstacles.¹⁰⁷

The Marshals saw the soldiers arriving and fired a volley of tear-gas to suppress the rioters. When the soldiers arrived, one of the marshals said, “I never thought I would be so happy to see the god damn Mississippi National Guard.”¹⁰⁸ Captain Falkner placed his men in a hasty defense along with the marshals. The soldiers had a tool the marshals did not, and it proved to be very effective. The pointed

orders to use them if Meredith’s life was in danger. Meredith’s location was unknown to the MOB. The Lyceum, which served as the command and control center and aid station was a deception.

¹⁰⁴ The Lyceum is the main administrative building on campus where the University President is located. During the Civil War, the Confederate Army turned it into a hospital that the Union eventually controlled. It is named after the garden at Athens where Aristotle taught. Cohodas, *The Band Played Dixie*, 6.

¹⁰⁵ Malcolm T. Yawn, Interview by Brian Miller, October 1, 2002, Open Doors Collection. Archives and Special Collections, University of Mississippi Libraries, accessed March 3, 2020, <http://purl.oclc.org/umarchives/MUM00346/>.

¹⁰⁶ Leonard, Harris, Wren, “How a Secret Deal Prevented a Massacre at Ole Miss,” 698. A soldier from the 503rd MP Battalion explains the violence in the following article. Jim G Lucas, “Stone, Cursed, Spat On GI Can't Believe It,” *The Knoxville News-Sentinal*, October 5, 1962, 3, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/596522011/>.

¹⁰⁷ Murry C. ‘Chooky’ Falkner, Interviewed by Jennifer Stoilman and April Grayson, 1 October 2002, Open Doors Collection, Archives and Special Collections, University of Mississippi Libraries, accessed March 1, 2020, <http://purl.oclc.org/umarchives/MUM00346/>.

¹⁰⁸ Doyle, *An American Insurrection*, 205.

spear of a bayonet is intimidating. Not long after Falkner placed his men in position, two other companies arrived. Captain Hassel Franklin and his troops from Pontotoc and Captain Billy Ray Brown and his troops from Eupora arrived to the same reception. As Franklin's jeep drove on campus under fire, an attacker jumped on top of the vehicle where he fought with Franklin; eventually hitting the Captain in the face with a pipe. The blow removed the skin, and exposed his jawbone. A pipe struck Captain Brown in the head and the blow destroyed his steel helmet. Despite the altercations, the reinforcements held the rioters at bay. Falkner did not anticipate such a high level of violence and was worried that all of his men might die.¹⁰⁹

Some members of the unit conducted a quick battle damage assessment of their equipment. There was not a mirror, windshield, or headlight intact on any piece of equipment. The soldiers found rifle or pistol slugs in the majority of the radiators and sheet metal of the exterior of their jeeps and troop transports. The unit also found they were fortunate by choosing to drive with the canvas tarps down on the back of the troops transports. All of the tarps were full of holes from shotgun fire. Veterans of World War II, including Pearl Harbor survivors, said they were more terrified that they might die in Oxford.¹¹⁰

As the night went on the 108th ACR from the Mississippi National Guard and reinforcements from Alpha Company 503rd MP Battalion pushed the rioters off campus. The next morning, American people awoke to headlines reading "Airborne units reach Oxford; Paratroopers of the 82nd and 101st are landed."¹¹¹ Many Americans instantly recognized the two divisions of World War II folklore. Air Force transport planes rotated between Fort Bragg, Fort Campbell, and the Oxford airport as they shuttled the two divisions and the XVIII Airborne Corps Headquarters to Oxford. For a short duration on the 1st and

¹⁰⁹ Doyle, *An American Insurrection*, 205; Barrett, *Integration at Ole Miss*, 160.

¹¹⁰ William Doyle, James Meredith, and Chooky Falkner, "An American Insurrection," C-Span Book TV.org, September 29, 2001, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.c-span.org/video/?166510-1/an-american-insurrection>.

¹¹¹ Associated Press, "Airborne Units Reach Oxford; Paratroopers of 101st and 82nd Are Landed," *The Times-Picayune*, October 2, 1962, sec. 1, 1, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12D677A0E469947A@2437940-12D52A76F17D54BD@0-12D52A76F17D54BD@>.

2nd of October, the Oxford airport received more air traffic than LaGuardia Airport in New York. US Armed Forces Oxford, called USAFOX by soldiers, was a three star Army command with over 30,000 soldiers headquartered in the Oxford National Guard armory for a few weeks.¹¹²

The morning after the riot, the Ole Miss campus was quiet but showed signs of destruction; tear gas still drifted amongst the haze on campus. The civilian mob then moved to the town of Oxford. There they acted more like unruly teenagers than hard-core radicals did. This changed with the presence of soldiers. They still could not accept the federal presence and continued throwing projectiles. The Guard soldiers' patience waned and they fired over the heads of the agitators.¹¹³ This was the only gunfire by the military during the battle. This stopped the illegal behavior and allowed soldiers to detain belligerents. Guardsman detaining local citizens caught the attention of the national media in the area. When the guardsmen noticed reporters recording them, they demanded the press stop filming and taking pictures. The reporters protested and demanded to speak with the commanding officer, Captain Hale. Hale negotiated with the reporters. They assured him they would not publish photographs or videos showing a frontal shot of a Mississippi National Guard soldier. The reporters recognized it would not be a good idea to show federalized Guard soldiers arresting members of the society they would go back to after demobilization.¹¹⁴

Isn't This Hell

The soldiers in the Mississippi National Guard were part of an organization with a culture of segregation nested within the larger closed society. There is no proof that every soldier fell in this

¹¹² Paul J. Scheips, *The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders, 1945-1992* (Washington DC: Center of Military History, US Army, 2005), 129.

¹¹³ Charles M Hargroder, "Troops Restore Uneasy Calm," *The Times-Picayune*, October 2, 1962, sec. 1, 5, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12D677A0E469947A @2437940-12D63358754D0BB5@4-12D63358754D0BB5@>; Thomas Buckley, "Mobs Armed With Bottles and Bricks Terrorized Oxford From Dawn Until Noon," *The New York Times*, October 2, 1962, 24, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://nyti.ms/2TwKptp>; Associated Press, "Troops Fire Thier Guns," *The Austin Statesman*, October 1, 1962, <https://www.newspapers.com /image/357745280/>; Gavin Scott, "Firing Breaks Out in Streets As Mob Grows," *The Jackson Sun (Jackson, TN)*, October 1, 1963, 1, accessed October 16, 2019, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/282794629/?terms=firing+breaks+out+in+street>.

¹¹⁴ Hargroder, "Troops Restore Uneasy Calm," 5.

category. However, most white Mississippians were part of this culture in one of three ways: openly, discreetly, or passively. This culture is why the President, Department of Defense, and Department of Justice questioned the loyalties of the Mississippi National Guardsman.¹¹⁵ It is why active duty soldiers from the 82nd Airborne believed they would go to war with the Guard. *The Times-Picayune* quoted a soldier from the 82nd, Ted Cowart, as saying he was prepared to fight the Guard, the Mississippi Highway Patrol, and the rioters.¹¹⁶ It is why the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Maxwell Taylor, called the commanders of Guard units to gauge their loyalty.¹¹⁷

When Katzenbach asked Captain Falkner if his troops were ready, he meant were they mentally ready and willing to execute the orders of the President. Katzenbach asked several times and Falkner confirmed that his men were ready. Falkner realized as he drove to the campus that the question was not about readiness, but loyalty. In many oral interviews and secondary sources, authors recognize Falkner's honest assessment of his men. "Falkner knew they were segregationist to a man, but it had never occurred to him that they would not follow him."¹¹⁸ As they entered the campus, Falkner knew his men would follow him.¹¹⁹

Mississippians were unsure how the Guard might perform. The *Times-Picayune* published two reports of Mississippi congressional representatives with conflicting views. Senator Flavous Lambert of Belmont believed "the guard would resent being used and would not go" while Senator Frank Barber of Hattiesburg said, "I believe they will carry out any duly constituted order."¹²⁰ Ross Barnett Jr. addressed

¹¹⁵ Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 657.

¹¹⁶ Shelia Hardwell Byrd, "Ole Miss Remembers Integration," *The Times-Picayune*, October 2, 2002, sec. A, 11, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-170913DB9D86BB78@2452550-1708EBA6210406E5@10-1708EBA6210406E5@>.

¹¹⁷ Doyle, *An American Insurrection*, 114.

¹¹⁸ Scheips, *The Role of the Army in the Oxford, Mississippi Incident*, 98.

¹¹⁹ Murry C. 'Chooky' Falkner, Interviewed by Jennifer Stoilman and April Grayson, 1 October 2002, Open Doors Collection, Archives and Special Collections, University of Mississippi Libraries, accessed March 1, 2020, <http://purl.oclc.org/umarchives/MUM00346/>.

¹²⁰ W.F. Minor, "Two Are Killed, Troops Arrive; Barnett Apparently Yielding," *The Times-Picayune*, October 1, 1962, sec. 1, 1, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12D677A01904F7AC@2437939-12D52A76DD079C8E@0-12D52A76DD079C8E@>.

the issue in a rare interview where he said, “If they were forced to open fire, I’m afraid they would have. They took an oath to defend the Constitution.”¹²¹ When Adjutant General W.P. Wilson retired, Claude Clayton recognized his service and the Guard’s performance at the Battle of Ole Miss. Clayton was quoted in the *Clarion Ledger* as saying, “regardless of personal feelings, our troops gave a damn good account of themselves under the most adverse of circumstances.”¹²²

William Winter completed his service on active duty and eventually became Mississippi’s most progressive governor on civil rights, later joining the Dixie Division of the Mississippi National Guard. He was part of the organization that once called him the commander of the Checkerboard Division but the organization had changed. “Winter believed the successful integration of Ole Miss in the fall of 1962 signaled the beginning of the end of the old way of life.”¹²³ The *Miami News* commended the Mississippi National Guard, “who marched in among their own fellow citizens in the name of the law.”¹²⁴ Army Secretary Cyrus Vance verbally recognized the four units that went into the battle at its peak. He said these units had “the finest soldierly qualities of discipline, devotion to duty, and loyalty.”¹²⁵

The majority of the National Guard soldiers returned to civilian life on 6 October. They went home as if nothing happened. The Kennedy Administration wanted the Battle of Ole Miss to vanish from current headlines and history. A small group of officers received a verbal thank you from Robert Kennedy, and the XVIII Airborne Corps Commander on behalf of the Secretary of the Army. These leaders recognized the 108th ACR and the 155th Infantry for their collective performance but there were

¹²¹ Dick Gentry and Mason Kate, *Under Fire at Ole Miss: Tales of a Roving Mississippi Reporter in Far-Off America* (Clarksville, GA: Dick Gentry, 2016), 1937.

¹²² W.C. Shoemaker, “Mr. National Guard; General Wilson Honored,” *The Clarion Ledger*, April 12, 1964, 27, Accessed March 3, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/180072041/?terms=Mr.+National+Guard+General+Wilson+Honored>.

¹²³ Charles C Bolton, *William Winter and the New Mississippi* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2013), 7.

¹²⁴ Bill Baggs, “Ole Miss Game Switched,” *The Miami News*, October 1, 1962, 8, accessed March 1, 2020, [https://www.newspapers.com/image/299303188/?terms="he+has+acted"](https://www.newspapers.com/image/299303188/?terms=).

¹²⁵ Baggs, “Ole Miss Game Switched,” *The Miami News*, October 1, 1962, 8.

not any individual awards handed out.¹²⁶ The commander of the 503rd Military Police Battalion said the 82nd Airborne returned all the awards he submitted with no action taken.¹²⁷ William Doyle found an internal Army memo from 1963 worded: “The focus of additional attention on this incident would not be in the best interest of the US Army or Nation, decorations should not be awarded for actions involving conflict between US Army units and other Americans.”¹²⁸

Paul Hendrickson writes that the often forgotten Battle of Ole Miss was the culminating event of Civil Rights in Mississippi.¹²⁹ He goes on to say, “after Oxford, massive resistance was mostly finished in Mississippi.”¹³⁰ William Doyle elaborates on this in his book *An American Insurrection* and goes further in saying that the event opened the door to the Civil Rights movement that followed.¹³¹ The Battle of Ole Miss fractured the Citizens’ Councils. Doyle interviewed Bill Simmons about the Guard’s role at the Battle of Ole Miss. Simmons explained to Doyle how the Guard ended the Citizens’ Councils strategy. Simmons was the “prime minister of racial integrity” and Governor Barnett’s closest political advisor.¹³²

The leaders of the Citizens’ Council thought the people would rise up and “bloodshed would result, forcing the Federal Government to retreat in-definitely from the battlefield.”¹³³ Doyle said, “The

¹²⁶ Murry C. ‘Chooky’ Falkner, Interviewed by Jennifer Stoilman and April Grayson, 1 October 2002, Open Doors Collection, Archives and Special Collections, University of Mississippi Libraries, accessed March 1, 2020, <http://purl.oclc.org/umarchives/MUM00346/>; United Press International, “Four State Guard Units Commended,” *The Delta Democrat-Times (Greenville, MS)*, October 5, 1962, 2, accessed March 2, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/24068792/?terms=Four+State+Guard+Units+Commended>.

¹²⁷ Fred Villella, Interviewed by Brian Miller, 1 October 2002, Open Doors Collection, Archives and Special Collections, University of Mississippi Libraries, Accessed March 1, 2020, <http://purl.oclc.org/umarchives/MUM00346/>.

¹²⁸ William Doyle, “Forgotten Soldiers of the Integration Fight,” *The New York Times*, September 28, 2002, 17, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://nyti.ms/2vwb9Cn>; J H W, “Letter to the Editor: An Accolade for Mississippi Guard,” *The Boston Globe*, October 13, 1962, 6, accessed March 7, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/433726113/?terms=an+accolade+for+ mississippi>.

¹²⁹ Hendrickson, *Sons of Mississippi*, 173.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Doyle *An American Insurrection*, 295.

¹³² Cohodas, *The Band Played Dixie*, 60; Neil R. McMillen, *The Citizens Council: Organised Resistance to Second Reconstruction, 1954-64* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1971), 322-327.

¹³³ Doyle, *An American Insurrection*, 296.

messengers of peace were the eleven thousand National Guardsman of Mississippi, several hundred of whom risked their lives to help keep the peace in a forgotten battle.”¹³⁴ Simmons went on to admit that the Guard was the winner at the Battle of Ole Miss. He told the *New York Times*, that they prevented bloodshed and put an end to massive resistance.¹³⁵ “The segregationist gambled everything and got run over.”¹³⁶ Deputy Attorney General Katzenbach said there was other trouble but the “civil-rights struggle was symbolically settled with the full scale military invasion and recapture of Mississippi.”¹³⁷ A former member of the MSCC told Doyle, “It was the final battle.”¹³⁸

Conclusion and Contemporary Implications

After the Battle of Ole Miss, the Mississippi National Guard continued to demonstrate its value to the total force as a professional formation ready and able to answer the call of the Commander in Chief. Mississippi was slow to accept social change but individuals gradually walked through the door of the closed society. This change allowed more African Americans an opportunity to participate and serve in organizations and positions once restricted. Mississippi history is full of paradox and irony where meaning is not evident at first glance and expectation differs from reality. In 1962, no one could have perceived an African American graduate of Ole Miss leading the former President of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis’, unit in battle.¹³⁹

In 2005, the 155th Armored Brigade of the Mississippi National Guard deployed to the Sunni

¹³⁴ Doyle, *An American Insurrection*, 297.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 296.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 297.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ President Kennedy asked Mississippians to obey federal law by emphasizing Mississippi’s loyal and historic military tradition. He spoke of the valorous history of one of the Mississippi Guard’s units. Kennedy said, “The Guard unit federalized this morning is part of the 155th Infantry, one of the tenth oldest regiments in the Union and one of the most decorated for sacrifice and bravery in six wars.” When the President made this speech, he was trying to coerce the people of Mississippi and the Mississippi Guard to stand firm with the United States. The 155th and other units of the Mississippi Guard stood fast at Oxford just as 155th Infantry Regiment did under Jefferson Davis at the Battle of Buena Vista in the Mexican War.

Triangle in Iraq, better known as the Triangle of Death. The unit served as a battle space owner for the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF). The Department of the Navy recognized the unit's service by awarding it with the Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation (NUC). This award recognizes a unit that distinguishes itself either by valorous or meritorious achievement in comparison to other units performing similar missions. The commander of the unit was Brigadier General Augustus "Leon" Collins, the first African American general in the Mississippi National Guard and a graduate of Ole Miss where he received his ROTC commission. He went on to serve as the adjutant general and commander of the Mississippi National Guard. Today Collins serves as the International Alumni Association president for the University of Mississippi.¹⁴⁰

The Battle of Ole Miss was a pivotal moment when it opened the door to the closed society. It would be up to individuals in Mississippi to decide when they would walk through the door. After Ole Miss, other tragic events took place that may lead to a false assumption that nothing had changed. However, after the battle, dialogue started amongst white Mississippians. James Meredith was correct in believing Ole Miss was a center of gravity. The complex system designed to maintain white supremacy broke down and people could speak out without fearing reprisals.

A Mississippi National Guard soldier wrote a letter to the editor of the *Mississippian* asking fellow students to stop tagging along with the crowd and act in a civilized manner.¹⁴¹ He went on to say that, he sympathized with both sides, but law and order must prevail. Collectively people needed to move past the event and continue pursuing education. Business leaders also spoke out with the intent of improving public relations and the economy.¹⁴² "The tragedy is that the permanent leaders could not

¹⁴⁰ "Membership," Ole Miss Alumni Association, Accessed December 12, 2019, <https://www.olemissalumni.com/maj-gen-augustus-l-leon-collins/>; Associated Press, "Collins Becomes Miss. Guards First Black General," *The Clarion Ledger (Jackson, MS)*, May 17, 2005, 1, accessed March 8, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/319247970/?terms=augustus+leon+collins+promoted>; Terry L Jones, "Black Pioneers Honored at Shelby," *Hattiesburg American (Hattiesburg, MS)*, February 22, 2008, 3, accessed March 8, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/280173937/?terms=augustus+leon+collins+promoted>; Geoff Pender, "Gen. Collins Retiring; Bryant Appoints Boyles," *The Clarion Ledger (Jackson, MS)*, July 6, 2016, A3, accessed March 8, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/202730506/?terms=augustus+leon+collins+promoted>.

¹⁴¹ The *Mississippian* is the Ole Miss Campus newspaper.

¹⁴² "State's Leaders Bolster University," *The Yazoo City Herald*, October 4, 1962, 1, 4, accessed March 1,

“speak out before the riot.”¹⁴³

Reverend William Wilds, the First Presbyterian minister in Oxford spoke out against the people of Mississippi for not speaking out before the riot. He also defended the soldiers of the Guard saying, “There should be no resentment or bitterness toward those troops of the National Guard many of whom we know, who brought order out of the chaos and are maintaining that order.”¹⁴⁴ William Doyle had the same message as quoted in *USA Today* when the newspaper wrote an article on the 40th anniversary of what Kennedy aide Burke Marshall called “the night we had a little war.”¹⁴⁵ Doyle said, “Maybe you have to be an outsider to fully appreciate the Mississippi heroes – the white Mississippi Guard soldiers – who risked their lives to uphold the law, for a cause many of them totally disagreed with.”¹⁴⁶

Frank Villella commanded Alpha Company, 503rd Military Police Battalion at the Battle of Ole Miss. He went on to serve as a presidential advisor on mobilization for domestic support operations and then the deputy director of the Federal Emergency Management Authority (FEMA). He believed the riot at Ole Miss should serve as an example of how the United States deals with a mob mentality and groupthink. Villella believed the answer was in rigorous academic study. He said it is not if, but when the next incident occurs and the military must be trained and ready.¹⁴⁷ Training should focus on collective events remembering that individuals make decisions that have consequences.

2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/267827749/?terms=State's+Leaders+Bolster+University>; United Press International, “127 State Leaders Ask Peace,” *The Delta Democrat-Times (Greenville, MS)*, October 3, 1962, 1, accessed March 2, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/24067888/?terms=127+State+Leaders+Ask+Peace>.

¹⁴³ George B Leonard, T George Harris, and Christopher S Wren, “How a Secret Deal Prevented a Massacre at Ole Miss,” *Look*, December 31, 1962, 36.

¹⁴⁴ Kathleen W Wickman, *We Beleived We Were Immortal* (Oxford, MS: Yoknapatawpha Press, 2017), 155; Associated Press, “Rector Scores Barnett Stand,” *The Times-Picayune*, October 8, 1962, sec. 1, 16, accessed March 3, 2020, <https://nola.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2:1223BCE5B718A166@NGPA-NOLA-12D677A539B804AD@2437946-12D52A783A780AFE@15-12D52A783A780AFE@>.

¹⁴⁵ Bob Minzesheimer, “National Guard Paid Respect, 40 Years after Oxford,” *USA Today*, October 1, 2002, 2D, accessed November 31, 2019, <http://search.ebscohost.com.lumen.cgscarl.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=J0E400085812902&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

¹⁴⁶ Minzesheimer, “National Guard Paid Respect,” 2D.

¹⁴⁷ Fred Villella, Interviewed by Brian Miller, 1 October, 2002, Open Doors Collection. Archives and Special Collections, University of Mississippi Libraries, accessed March 1, 2020, <http://purl.oclc.org/umarchives/MUM00346/>.

Today, America still faces divisive issues. Any number of these could require military intervention by the National Guard or the active component of the Army. Over the previous ten years, the military has dealt with social problems arising from cultural issues inside the United States. Immigration issues require soldiers to guard the southern border with Mexico. Some soldiers guarding the border potentially have relatives living in Mexico. Racial strife continues to plague American cities and some civilians may perceive law enforcement as an enemy. Reflective of this reality, the National Guard deployed to Baltimore, Maryland and Ferguson, Missouri to assist with domestic issues involving race relations.¹⁴⁸

These scenarios are controversial and citizens are passionate about each. Society is divided along political, cultural, and racial lines. The military comes from all communities and may have multiple loyalties. However, when a person is part of the military they must have a moral and ethical foundation allowing them to understand their obligation to support and defend the US Constitution against all enemies foreign and domestic.¹⁴⁹ This oath is not to any single person or isolated group. Army leadership must enforce this by ensuring initial training and continuing education reinforces the oath soldiers take to defend the Constitution. This training should focus on the words of the document and their specific meaning.

¹⁴⁸ Several newspaper articles support this argument, see following. Ben Kesling, Pervaiz Shallwani, and Mark Peters, "Missouri Governor to Triple National Guard Presence in St. Louis Region," *The Wall Street Journal*, November 25, 2014, accessed March 7, 2020, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/ferguson-grand-jurys-decision-sparks-fresh-violence-unrest-1416916181>; Travis Smiley, "Protests and Riots Could Become the New Normal," *Time*, April 30, 2015, accessed March 7, 2020, <https://time.com/3841467/tavis-smiley-racism-poverty-new-america/>; Kevin Rector, Scott Dance, and Luke Broadwater, "Riots Erupt: Governor Activates National Guard, Mayor Imposes Citywide Curfew," *The Baltimore Sun*, April 28, 2015, pp. 1-10, accessed March 7, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/263975822/?terms=national+guard>.

¹⁴⁹ Richard Swain and Albert Pierce explain the oath and the Constitution in the book, *The Armed Forces Officer*. General Joseph Dunford, opens by writing the book articulates the ethical and moral underpinnings at the core of the military profession. Richard M Swain, Albert C Pierce, and Joseph F Dunford, *The Armed Forces Officer* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2017), accessed March 1, 2020, <https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Publications/Books/Armed-Forces-Officer/Article/1153505/chapter-1-the-commission-and-the-oath/>; Henry Gallagher was the commander of the 710th MP Company that served as Meredith's personal security detail and author of *James Meredith and the Ole Miss Riot*. In the book, he wrote that his soldiers trained to fight the Cold War but understood the word domestic was also in the oath they took. Henry T. Gallagher, *James Meredith and the Ole Miss Riot: A Soldiers Story* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2012), 196.

The initial phase of Army basic training, Red Phase, now includes detailed ethics and morality training.¹⁵⁰ This is a good beginning but the lessons of Ole Miss require a greater emphasis on the oath of service. Training at all levels should occur through the lens of the oath and incorporate the seven Army values. The role of the Mississippi National Guard at Battle of Ole Miss is the best case study available to make this point. It is time for the US Military to recognize the success of the Mississippi National Guard and other brick and bottle veterans.¹⁵¹ The best way to recognize and remember these men is to use their commitment to the oath and the US Constitution as an example for all military members to follow.

¹⁵⁰ Cory Dickstein, “Basic Training Overhaul Coming for the Army Will Focus on Discipline, Morale,” *Stars and Stripes*, February 9, 2018, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.stripes.com/news/basic-training-overhaul-coming-for-the-army-will-focus-on-discipline-morale-1.510957>.

¹⁵¹ Brick and bottle veterans is a term used by some to describe soldiers that participated at the battle of Ole Miss and in other domestic riots.

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