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NATION (take 3, meredith): As the week wore on, it became increasingly clear that it would take federal troops to dislodge Barnett from his uphill position and get Meredith onto the Ole Miss campus.

Barnett left the state capitol in Jackson at 4:45 a.m., hurried to Oxford in his Blue Cadillac (lic. No. one) to await the next federal move. He had repulsed the federal government on Wednesday. Now he awaited the next move from the rest of the nation.

While about 200 law enforcement officers—gray-shirted state highway patrolmen and Mississippi sheriffs deployed about the campus, Barnett took his place in suite A of the low-slung, brick alumni house off to the right from the entrance, settled down with lt. gov. paul b. johnson, highway patrol director t.b. birdsong, W.T. (mustache bill) simmons and other advisors to wait out uncle sam.

Barnett lunched at noon in his room, the food was brought in by his patrolmen chauffeur on two cloth-covered trays, then down for a rest.

The cops, meanwhile, were digging in. They were deployed about 25 strong at each of the school’s entrances, had that morning been issued gas masks, big tan riot clubs and steel helmets at the national guard armory.

The biggest concentration was at the main entrance to the school—university avenue. At Hilgard bridge, the geographical entrance to the school, where the deepest cut of the Illinois Central between new orleans and chicago is located, some 50 patrolmen were posted, checking cars as they entered, keeping the traffic moving. Behind them on the campus, dozens of sheriffs lined the road, black-jacks on their hips and white cloth bands on their arms.
the armbands: the sheriffs didn't want to be mistaken for federal marshalls and clubbed when the fireworks started. Behind them, parked on the tree-shaded lawns in front of the county courthouse, police and patrol cars were strung out. At least three of them held yelping German police dogs. The cops dozed in their cars, drank coffee, read the papers, checked their khaki gas mask bags.

A boy and a girl sat on the hood of a green Jackson police department car, reading a blue-covered "anthology of children's literature" while a police dog yelped fiercely in the back seat.

"Everything's crazy," said a male student, "we don't know whether to study, buy books or what. Nobody knows what's going to happen." At about noon, with a bright sun pouring down, I counted 63 highway patrol cars on the campus.

At the head of it all—the site of the "grove" where a circular drive goes up to the white-columned Lyceum building, then circles back out again, stands a 40-foot statue of a Confederate rifleman, his gun at rest beside his right toe, his left hand shielding his eyes while he surveys the scene to the east—down the street where the state emplacements were arranged.

At the Fraternity row entrance to the campus, a big state cop stood munching an apple, his riot stick stuck in his belt, while another swatted a oak limb with his club.

At 1:30 p.m., the police suddenly mounted their cars, stremmed down to the national guard armory, where the sheriffs went to the county courthouse. There had been, apparently, a change in strategy issued from Barnett's field headquarters post at the alumni house.

But a few minutes later, they streamed back. Meredith had a few minutes before held a press conference in New Orleans and his
attorneys said he would not go back to Oxford again to register unless he had stronger protection. He had run the gauntlet three times, on each occasion with only token protection, and now that the chips were seriously down, the chance was too great unless he had a strong force.

Then Meredith boarded a plane, went to Memphis, while the Mississippi forces grouped up again, took their battle positions.

About 25 unarmed patrolmen, gas mask bags slung over their shoulders, helmets on their heads, clubs in their hands, took up position at University avenue and fifth street at about 3:30 p.m, the same spot where McShane had been turned away the day before. Hundreds of students poured off the campus, lined both sides of the street at the intersection. Neither the urgings of Dick Wilson, heavyset student president, or Burns Tatum, the campus police officer, could persuade them back to the campus.

Then, with patrol cars lining both sides of the streets, and while three little girls rolled happily on a soft green lawn at the intersection, Lt. Gov. Johnson came along in a cream-colored car, holding a bullhorn out the window, urging the students to return to the campus. "Will you students please go back to the campus, and you people who live around here, please go to your homes. Someone could very easily be killed, and it may be an innocent party. If you would like to have this nigra in ole miss, just stay where you are. all you are doing is making it harder for the law enforcement officers."

Shortly before five, barnett emerged from the alumni house, paused long enough to tell newsmen and cheering students: "I am glad to see you all here today. The people of mississippi have a wonderful reputation for keeping law and order. Let's let the world know we can still control our citizens so that we can have the admiration of all
of the people of the world."

Two minutes later, his blue cadillac appeared at the intersection and up went a roaring cheer from the crowd. Barnett, in his dark blue suit, black tie and black homburg, smiled broadly, clasped his hands together in a victory signal.

"Ross! Ross!" roared the students, many of whom had climbed telephone poles and elm trees to watch the anticipated confrontation. "We want Ross! We want Ross!" they cried, surging around the car. Patrolmen held them back, but Barnett grinned broadly for cameramen who pressed in.

"Barnett for president," someone shouted. Barnett turned toward one side of the street, grinned, doffed his hat several times, then turned back to confer with Johnson and birdsong.

Then the students began cheering: "Hoddy Totty, god almighty, who in the hell are we. whim - wham, bim-bam, ole miss, by damn!"

"Hey, governor," a student shouted, "you gonna be in new orleans tomorrow, or are you gonna stay here?"

Barnett grinned happily, shook his head, waved his hand in protest. Dozens of students threw up their hands, gave the old churchill "v" victory sign.

"Ross sure has aged, but he's still my hero," one screamed.

Barnett leaned forward to a state trooper, grinned, said in his raspy voice: "What kind of a crowd have you got?"

The patrolman's answer was lost in the cheers, but the crowd numbered about 2,500, most of them students. But many tough looking citizens, in overalls and work clothes, stood menacingly in the crowd, sullenly waiting for Meredith to arrive. This were the people Faulkner had referred to as "the boys from beat two," when he predicted where trouble would come from.

At 5:20, as an orange sunset lit up a scattering of wispy clouds, patrolmen forced a path through the crowd to a patrol car.
Barnett entered it, drove back to the alumni house with Johnson, cheering students following after them. Barnett apparently had gotten the word: Meredith wasn't coming after all, as had been indicated earlier in the day when the news leaked out that he was coming from Memphis, accompanied by a force of marshalls and military police from Ft. Bragg, N.C.

Finally, a little before six, with darkness fast approaching, a transistor radio in the mob relayed the news. Meredith, accompanied by a motorcade of twenty-five U.S. marshalls, had turned back between Memphis and Oxford, Memphis an hour plus drive north from Oxford. Word from Washington was that the marshalls, learning of the huge force awaiting, had decided the danger was too great. Thursday night, "several hundred" more marshalls were reported to be enroute to Memphis.

An aide close to Barnett indicated he would not go to New Orleans to answer the Fifth Circuit's contempt citation and the next logical step in the battle at Hilgard Bridge seemed this: the court would issue a bench warrant for Barnett's arrest, and a force of marshalls--or troops--would proceed to Oxford to arrest him. The aide said Barnett had no intention of leaving the campus, hinted that he might let Meredith and the marshalls onto the campus, then surround and arrest them. (Will update)

Fleming

Ole Miss Motel

Oxford, Miss.