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Annotated article by John D. Harris to Record-American, Times-Union, Examiner, and Post-Intelligencer, 30 September 1962

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oxford, miss., sept. 30 --- uncle sam came to mississippi today.

With him came a "showdown" atmosphere that sent tension screaming through oxford's green and pleasant streets.

Tension it was a tension mirrored in the faces of silent men gathered around car radios.

you could see it in the faces of the hundreds of folks--white--who gathered at the tiny local airport to watch the unbelievable become reality.

Uncle sam--in the form of more than 200 U.S. marshals--had come and it was on the faces of the ranks of marshals themselves.

They stood in rows on the airstrip, silent and grim-faced, some hefting clubs.

No one smiled. No one had anything to say. It could have been just like any other pleasant sunday afternoon at a small town airport; instead, they were speculating about the equipment carried by the marshals.

Each marshal wore a white helmet liner. Some carried riot guns in their hands.
"What are those little containers the marshals are carrying in their pockets?" a freckle-faced kid asked his father.

"Tear gas shells, son," was the quiet reply.

The people, lined up in their cars for hundreds of feet on the black-top road leading in to the airport watched in almost incredulous disbelief as the marshals clambered aboard rows of GI trucks and roared away.

The trucks lumbered through the Sunday-quiet streets and headed for the Ole Miss campus.

There the five entrances had been guarded since early afternoon when the news came that Uncle Sam's forces were on their way to Oxford.

But the ranks of highway patrolman parted to let them through.

Uncle Sam was on Ole Miss.

But the big question remained:

Even if the federal government got James Meredith, a negro, into a classroom there, could it keep him there?

In all, it was quite a day in Mississippi, a day that will without doubt be marked in the nation's history.

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