9-30-1962

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

Charles Cruttenden

Follow this and additional works at: https://egrove.olemiss.edu/west_union_med

Part of the Journalism Studies Commons, and the United States History Commons

Recommended Citation


https://egrove.olemiss.edu/west_union_med/81

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Western Union Telegram Collection at eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in Telegrams to Media Outlets by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.
To city editor San Francisco Examiner, S.F. Calif. press collect...

1962 SEP 30 PM 10 40

OXFORD, MISS., SEPT. 30 — I bought my way onto the barricaded Ole Miss campus today for ten Yankee dollars.

That's what it cost to rent a student identification card and get by the State Police. Frightening.

And it was the price of a ticket to a riot.

I dodged tear gas shells with nearly 1,000 students and miscellaneous roughnecks. And I retreated before the onslaught with my vision blotted out by tears.

I saw a joking band of hecklers turn into a four-horse mad-dog, rock-throwing mob. And I heard a former United States Army General, Edwin A. Walker, incite further trouble with a shouted speech on campus. He got in for free.

The former candidate for governor of Texas told the mob:

"You can continue protesting as you are. There is no stopping point."

I heard him say the words. The mob responded with wild rebel yells and pleas to "Lead us, general!"

"There are thousands of people on their way to help you," Walker promised. The talk, about 100 yards from the cordon of marshals standing shoulder to shoulder around the admissions building, was broken up by a lobbed tear gas shell. The marshals wore gas masks and continued firing the shells about every 20 seconds to keep the mob back.

(more)
It's not fair to say it was a student mob because I heard several students say:

"I wouldn't want to go to that school anyway with that nigger there."

But there were students among the stone throwers who smashed windows in the campus YMCA and other nearby buildings, tore apart drinking fountains and smashed pop bottles all over the street.

Many members of the mob carried transistor radios to get information on the crisis. One radio station said there were three students shot by the marshals. The report was unconfirmed but it served to touch off a new rush on the marshals.

The charge was greeted by a new barrage of tear gas that resembled a Fourth of July fireworks display. The marshals also used a machine that flashed lights in a wild pattern and lobbed fake tear gas bombs like skyrockets far back into the mob. The shots contained no gas -- just terror. Scores of students stumbled and fell in the darkness as they retreated. The radio station said the rush was led by Gen. Walker, but I saw him leave the campus before it started. The station later reported that Walker had retreated temporarily to regroup before a new charge.

Walker left the campus amid some jeers of "Go on back to Texas," and "Hey, General, watch out. There's a Communist here."

Shortly after his departure the State police were ordered off the campus for some reason that was unknown to the mob. But it was a signal for the mob to double in size. It continued to build as the evening progressed. (more)
I counted 112 cars of the State Police drive out the University Ave. gate. Their departure left only the marshals to defend against further violence.

end Cruttenden