CHAPTER 3

FEDERALISM: MISSISSIPPI, ALABAMA, AND THE U.S.A.

By the summer of 1962, Clark Schooler had gone ABD at Johns Hopkins University. ABD stood for All But Dissertation. It meant that Clark had completed the course work for his Ph.D. degree in political science, but he had not yet written the approximately 500 page manuscript, called a dissertation, which was the final requirement for the degree.

Being ABD at Johns Hopkins put some free time into Clark's work schedule. He had plenty to do to write his dissertation. There were long hours doing research in the university library and even longer hours pecking away at the keys of his Underwood portable typewriter. But he could do the work whenever it was convenient for him. If he needed to leave Baltimore for a few days or a few weeks, he could do so without seriously interrupting his dissertation writing schedule.

Which was fortunate, because the Patriot Press newspaper chain, owner of the *Baltimore Banner*, had plans for Clark Schooler. In the early 1960s, the Patriot Press had developed a news gathering and marketing technique called the Patriot Press News Squadron. Promising reporters from throughout the Patriot Press newspaper empire were sent as a two or three person team to cover important and fast breaking national news stories. These stories were published in all the newspapers owned by the Patriot Press throughout the United States. And right under each reporter's name, or byline, ran the words: "Member, Patriot Press News Squadron."

The city editor at the *Baltimore Banner*, Terry Songman, looked at Clark Schooler and spoke with animation. "Get yourself down there. Get yourself down there as quick as you can. There's a black guy trying to get into the University of Mississippi, which has been a pillar of racial segregation for as long as anyone can remember. The story is hotter than a Balti-

more city row house on a hot August night."

"The Patriot Press is sending you down there with a reporter from the *New York Liberty* who is black himself," Terry Songman continued. "The black reporter is going to cover the black student and his efforts to get into the university. Your job will be to cover the response of the university officials and other government officials in Mississippi, particularly the governor. This is the first time the Patriot Press has sent out a racially integrated Patriot Press News Squadron."

The *New York Liberty* was the Patriot Press paper in New York City. Clark Schooler was excited that he was going to be a member of the Patriot Press's first integrated news team.

Then he thought about it for a second. The news team was going to be integrated, but the national executives of the Patriot Press were dividing up the assignment in a racially segregated fashion. The black reporter was going to cover the black student trying to get accepted to the University of Mississippi. The white reporter was going to cover the white university officials and the white Mississippi politicians. The news team may have been integrated, but the news assignments were handed out on the basis of strict racial segregation.

As he so often did, Terry Songman laid it on the line with Clark Schooler about the real purpose of his assignment. "Sending a black man as a reporter on a civil rights story is something new for the Patriot Press," Songman told Clark. "The big guys up in New York City are worried that a black reporter will only give them the civil rights supporters' side of the story. Your job is to make certain the white point of view gets reported."

Clark Schooler was not quite certain how to respond to being the "white reporter" assigned to cover "the white point of view." He solved the problem by not responding. He hurried home, packed some clothes, drove to Baltimore's Friendship Airport, and got on an airplane headed in the general direction of the University of Mississippi at Oxford, Mississippi.

The trip was time-consuming and required a change of planes in Washington, D.C. Although the early 1960s were the dawn of the jet age, the particular airplane Clark flew on for most of the trip was an older propeller driven job that flew low and slow. That gave Clark a great deal of time to chat with his seat mate on the flight. His seat mate was the black reporter from the *New York Liberty* who was the other half of this particular Patriot Press News Squadron.

The young African-American man had been covering a story in Washington, D.C., for the *New York Liberty*. He and Clark arranged to fly from Washington to Memphis, Tennessee, together. Memphis was the closest major city to Oxford, Mississippi, and the university there.

The black reporter's name was Bernard Martin. He had grown up in Washington, D.C., where his father had a Civil Service job with the U.S. Government. Bernard Martin was a graduate of Howard University, the predominantly black university in the nation's capital that had produced, over the years, a number of well-known African-American legal and political leaders. Bernard Martin had begun his career working as a reporter for a national magazine, published in Washington, D.C., that was written mainly for an African-American audience. The editors at the *New York Liberty* noticed his work there and hired him away to be the *Liberty's* first black newspaper reporter.

The airplane may have been old and slow, but the lunch served was a full meal and quite tasty. Clark Schooler and Bernard Martin were able to have a lengthy and lively luncheon conversation. Bernard Martin began by asking Clark if he had ever been to Mississippi before.

"No, I haven't," Clark replied. "I've spent time in Virginia. I've taken the railroad train through South Carolina and Georgia on my way to winter vacations in Florida. But I've never really spent any time in the Deep South, at least not long enough to get to know the people and the customs."

"It's different down there," Bernard Martin opined. "It's way different. The first thing you'll need to know about when you're down there is the willing suspension of law and order."

Clark's response was to immediately launch into a watered-down version of one of his political science lectures. "Equal protection of the laws and the right to live in domestic tranquility," Clark said, "are two of the most honored principles of the American democracy. Law and order exist in all places where the United States Constitution is the fundamental ruling authority."

"Somehow," Bernard Martin explained patiently, "that part of the Constitution never reached black people in the deepest parts of the American South. You are about to enter a world where blacks can be beaten and murdered and otherwise terrorized. And their white tormentors have no fear whatsoever of ever being caught, prosecuted, or punished for their criminal acts."

Clark Schooler was genuinely disturbed. He stammered: "But, how can that happen?" Clark was perplexed by even the thought that there could be a part of the United States where basic legal protections were not guaranteed to every citizen by the established state and local police authorities.

"As I said," Bernard Martin went on. "The key is the willing suspension of law and order. State and local police simply stop doing their jobs for a few minutes, or a few hours, or a few days. That allows private individuals who are white people to do whatever they want to black people. The whites,

often acting in disorganized mobs, can carry out beatings, commit murders, or do anything else they feel like as long as their victims are black. And that's just fine with the state police, or the city police, or the county sheriff, or whoever is the local police power. They just look the other way."

Clark Schooler searched for a reasonable response to Bernard Martin's statements. Clark fell back on the part of the universe he knew best, which was the United States Constitution. "But the Constitution guarantees fundamental civil rights," Clark blurted out, "such as the right to trial by jury. Every citizen is guaranteed that, if they are charged with a crime, guilt or innocence will be determined by a jury of their peers, a group of their fellow citizens. Every Southern black individual is protected by . . ."

Bernard Martin cut Clark Schooler off in mid-sentence. "Every Southern black individual is protected by essentially nothing," the young African-American said. "The jury trial actually functions to protect the white people who beat and murder blacks. Even if they are identified, arrested, and tried for harming or killing a black, white folks are judged by a white jury that always finds a way to find them innocent. It's called the free white jury that will never convict."

Clark continued to struggle to prove that the U.S. Constitution protected all Americans, including African-Americans, even in the Deep South. "After the Civil War," Clark said in his beginning-teacher voice, "the United States adopted the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. The 14th Amendment guaranteed the civil rights of the newly-freed slaves. They were to have equal protection of the laws, the idea that laws would apply to all citizens equally, no matter what their race, even if they were former slaves."

"There also was the requirement for due process of law," Clark continued pedantically. "That was the idea that anyone who was to be punished for a crime had to be arrested, charged with a specific crime, given reasonable bail, and tried by a jury of their peers. Under the 14th Amendment, if black people are denied equal protection of the laws or due process of law, the U.S. Government can intervene and guarantee those rights." Clark made that final point as if he were winding up a classroom lecture just at the moment the bell rang, signaling the end of the class.

Bernard Martin was not ready for this particular class to end. "Have you ever really read the text of the 14th Amendment?" Bernard Martin asked that question and then looked at Clark Schooler as if he were a naive freshman in an introductory American Government course rather than an ABD political science graduate student. "The wording is exactly this: 'No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States.' It goes on from there."

"The problem is the use of the words 'no state shall,'" Bernard Martin

continued. "The prohibitions against violating the rights of black persons are on the states but not on the citizens who live in those states. Therefore, if the state and local government officials are careful not to do anything, the 14th Amendment does not apply to whites who take the beating and murdering of blacks into their own hands. That's how the tradition grew up of Southern law enforcement officials looking the other way and letting private citizens do the threatening, beating, and, when deemed necessary, the murdering of uppity blacks."

"In this case," Bernard Martin concluded. "An uppity black is defined as one who joins the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, participates in civil rights demonstrations, tries to get Southern blacks registered to vote, sneaks in a drink of water from the white drinking fountain down at the court house, or otherwise publicly attempts to do something about racial segregation in the South. They are immediately punished by private individuals. During this time, state and local police officials are very careful to do absolutely nothing, one way or the other."

Clark Schooler did the graduate student thing and tried to sum up the discussion so far. "Your point," he said, "is that the threat of being beaten or being murdered prevents Southern blacks from really doing anything about racial segregation. That's because private citizens, acting as lawless Southern whites, will punish them. The punishment may take the form of bombing the black person's home, or his business if he owns one, or even stringing him up at the end of a rope. And, while all this is happening, Southern law enforcement officials just look the other way. And, furthermore, the U.S. Government in Washington can do nothing about it because the 14th Amendment prohibits the states from denying rights to blacks. The 14th Amendment does nothing to stop private individuals from denying rights to blacks."

Clark had summed up the discussion thoroughly and, without his realizing it, loudly. Two people seated in the row of seats ahead of Clark and Bernard Martin turned around and looked at Clark to see who was doing all the talking.

Both Clark and Bernard Martin laughed at this, and the laughing provided a little relief from the seriousness of the discussion. "I have one last point," Bernard Martin said. "One thing is different now. Thanks to the United States Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, the United States Government can intervene when the issue under discussion is the racial integration of educational institutions. If the president wants to send in troops to help integrate the University of Mississippi, he can do it, because public education is the issue."

In the fall of 1962, the president of the United States was John Fitzger-

ald Kennedy of Massachusetts. John F. Kennedy had succeeded President Dwight D. Eisenhower by winning the 1960 presidential election. Unlike Eisenhower, who was a Republican, Kennedy was a liberal Democrat who was serving as a United States senator from Massachusetts at the time he ran for president.

Dwight Eisenhower had served eight years as president. The two-term limit (two four-year terms and out) prevented Eisenhower from running for reelection in 1960. John F. Kennedy had been opposed by Eisenhower's vice-president, Richard M. Nixon, a Republican like Eisenhower. The presidential election contest between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon in 1960 had been very hard fought. John F. Kennedy defeated Richard M. Nixon by only a very narrow margin of votes. It was one of the closest presidential elections in United States history.

For the remainder of their airplane ride, Bernard Martin and Clark Schooler discussed whether President John F. Kennedy would end up deciding to enforce racial integration at the University of Mississippi by sending in U.S. Army troops. "The Southern white leadership in Mississippi will never give in voluntarily," Bernard Martin said. "They'll talk a lot, do nothing to maintain law and order, and in the end President Kennedy will have to send in the soldier boys. You can count on that."

"I don't know if I agree," Clark replied. "John Fitzgerald Kennedy is a Democrat, and no Democrat has ever been elected president of the United States without carrying the white South. The last thing in this world a Democratic president wants to do is send U.S. troops into a Southern state, because that Democratic president is probably going to want the white people in that Southern state to vote for him in the next presidential election. President Kennedy will try to find a peaceful way out of this situation at the University of Mississippi if he can."

Bernard Martin answered back by changing the subject slightly. He asked: "But what about the black vote in the North? Black voters in New York and Philadelphia and your own hometown of Baltimore supported John F. Kennedy strongly in 1960. He'll want their support again in the upcoming presidential election in 1964. President Kennedy could really nail down the black vote in 1964 by sending U.S. troops into the University of Mississippi and sending them in early."

Clark Schooler had a ready answer. "The white vote in the South is more important to a Democratic presidential candidate than is the black vote in the North. It all goes back to President Franklin D. Roosevelt. He fashioned a winning Democratic Party national majority by uniting the working class and minority voters of the North with the traditionally Democratic white voters of the South. The result was the Roosevelt Coalition, a winning

combination of voters that enabled the Democratic Party to dominate American national politics from the early 1930s to the present day. A Democratic president has to carry the white South to get elected, and he has to hold the white South to get reelected."

"I'm beginning to think you may be right," Bernard Martin replied. "After all, it is the Solid South. White folks in the South have been solidly Democratic since the end of the Civil War. I hate it, but I can understand why even a northern liberal like President Kennedy would not want to antagonize the white South by sending troops into the University of Mississippi."

Clark Schooler had enjoyed his airborne visit with Bernard Martin while flying down to Memphis, Tennessee. Clark noticed that he and Bernard Martin were similarly dressed. Both were in grey flannel suits with white button-down shirts and a necktie. Furthermore, Bernard Martin wore his hair in the current crewcut style and sported a pencil thin mustache. It occurred to Clark Schooler, as he and Bernard Martin were leaving the airplane, that Bernard Martin was every inch an organization man, someone who dressed and acted to please those who were in charge of the establishment business organization for which he worked.

Clark Schooler and Bernard Martin parted company at the airport in Memphis, Tennessee. Bernard Martin said it would be dangerous for a white man and a black man to be seen driving from Memphis to Oxford, Mississippi, together. They would be all right in Tennessee, Bernard Martin guessed, but really bad things might happen to them in Mississippi. Bernard Martin also believed it would be exceedingly dangerous for him to be seen wandering around gathering news stories on a Deep South university campus, such as the University of Mississippi, that was about to be racially integrated.

Bernard Martin therefore elected to stay in Memphis, which was the place where lawyers from the United States Department of Justice were waiting with James Meredith, the young African-American man who was trying to get admitted to the University of Mississippi. As soon as the Registrar at the University of Mississippi agreed to admit James Meredith to the school, James Meredith and the Justice Department lawyers would drive the 87 miles from Memphis to Oxford and Meredith's days as a university student could begin. The Patriot Press had sent Bernard Martin down to cover James Meredith, and for the time being James Meredith was going to be based in Memphis.

Clark Schooler rented a car and headed down the highway to Oxford, Mississippi. The drive only took about two hours. As the car neared Oxford, Clark saw that the town was surrounded by cotton fields, most of which

appeared to be farmed by African-American sharecroppers. Here and there were the small white shacks of the sharecroppers, most of them with the paint peeling off. Black adults and children were lounging and playing around outside the shacks in the comfortable warmth of a Mississippi September. They reminded Clark of the black adults and children he often saw lounging and playing around on the cement sidewalks in front of their red-brick row houses back in Baltimore.

Clark Schooler arrived at the University of Mississippi. It was the weekend, and the traditional Southern atmosphere of quietness and laziness seemed to dominate the campus. The university was best known, Clark was soon informed, by its historical nickname, Ole Miss. Clark stood in front of the school's signature building, the Lyceum, and admired its six white columns. Next he found, in the midst of the many beautiful trees on the campus, the university's monument to its Civil War veterans. It was a marble statue of a Confederate soldier.

That statue reminded Clark that the divisions between North and South in the United States were very real. He recalled his own alma mater, Williams College in western Massachusetts, where a bronze statue of a Union soldier graced the lawn in front of one of the major academic buildings, Griffin Hall. This statue soldier stood firmly, holding his long rifle, his resolute gaze pointed toward the South.

Clark later discovered that this particular bronze statue of a Union soldier had been mass-produced. He found additional copies of it on court house lawns and in municipal parks in cities and towns all over the Northern United States.

Clark Schooler returned his attention to the Confederate memorial at the University of Mississippi. The statue was striking in its similarity to the statue of the Union soldier at Williams College. A marble Confederate soldier stood looking outward, shading his eyes against the sun. With rifle in hand, he waited vigilantly for those invading Yankees. It occurred to Clark there probably were statues just like it, or something like it, all over the South.

Clark's final thought was that, although the Civil War was long over, there were two separate armies of bronze and marble monuments, one army in the North and the other in the South, that still stood and opposed each other.

But then it was time for Clark to do some work of a pleasant nature. It was a football weekend at Ole Miss. Many of the students were leaving the campus to go to the football game. The University of Mississippi was playing the University of Kentucky at the football stadium in Jackson, Mississippi, the state capital. Clark convinced himself he could better

understand and write about the people of Mississippi if he made the drive from Oxford to Jackson and watched the Ole Miss football team play Kentucky.

That somewhat self-serving decision enabled Clark Schooler to witness one of the most important events in United States civil rights history. At half time at the football game, Ross Barnett, the governor of Mississippi, walked out onto the field to address the more than 40,000 persons in the stands. Governor Barnett had strongly opposed the entrance of James Meredith into the University of Mississippi. It seemed that everyone at the football game knew it.

A lone microphone on a thin metal stand had been placed on the football field for Governor Barnett to use. The governor let the immense crowd quiet down, thereby increasing the crowd's anticipation for what he was about to say. Barnett then clenched his right fist, raised it high in the air, and held it there to symbolize struggle and determined opposition.

His first words reverberated throughout the packed stadium. "I love Mississippi."

The crowd responded with loud cheering and shouts of support.

"I love her people," the governor continued. There was even more cheering and shouting.

Then Barnett told the crowd what it really wanted to hear:

"I love our customs."

Clark Schooler was amazed by the frenzied celebration that ensued. The all-white audience rose almost as one person and yelled its support for Governor Ross Barnett. It was support bordering on love. Feet stamped, pennants waved, and many persons reflected Governor Barnett's spirit of defiance by shaking their clenched fists in the air.

Governor Barnett had used the words "our customs" as political codewords. Because his football half time speech was being covered by newspapers and television, Barnett had not wanted to openly and directly speak out in favor of racial segregation. Everyone in the stadium knew, however, that the codewords "our customs" meant the peculiar Southern custom of strict racial segregation.

The next day was Sunday. Clark Schooler traveled back to the University of Mississippi in Oxford, arriving on campus in mid-afternoon. He found the Mississippi state police on the scene and reasonably in control. The police officers were working hard to see that only students, and not non-student troublemakers, were getting on to the campus.

But even the students seemed to be in a rebellious mood. A large crowd of them began to gather in front of the Lyceum building. They were talking to each other about their collective opposition to James Meredith being

permitted to join the Ole Miss student body. Occasionally, the more boisterous among them would yell an anti-racial integration epithet or two.

Clark Schooler had been sent to Mississippi to cover the Southern white reaction, so Clark made it his business to mingle with the students and interview those who were willing to give their opinions. He quickly got an earful of deeply-felt opposition to racial integration at the University of Mississippi. Quite a few of the students had been at the football game in Jackson the night before and had been fired up by Governor Barnett's implied defense of "our customs." If the governor was against having Meredith on campus, one student pointed out, then "why shouldn't the student body join the governor in resisting racial integration by every means possible?"

Things livened up late in the afternoon when slightly less than 200 U.S. marshals arrived on the University of Mississippi campus and stationed themselves at the base of the white pillars on the Lyceum building. Their arrival was unexpected by the student crowd on the grassy area in front of the Lyceum. The word quickly spread among the students, erroneously, that the marshals were guarding the Lyceum because James Meredith was in the building. In reality, Clark Schooler learned later, the marshals had hidden James Meredith in Baxter Hall, a dormitory located at a far-distant corner of the campus.

When the U.S. marshals arrived at the Lyceum, the Mississippi state police quickly took up positions between the marshals and the student crowd. Now, when the students wanted to yell anti-integration curses and epithets at the marshals, they had to do so over the heads of Mississippi state police officers. However, the state police made no effort to quiet the crowd or to disperse it.

As evening came on, Clark Schooler could feel a palpable change in the mood and composition of the crowd massed outside the Lyceum building. The number of people present was well above 1,000 persons, and there were now many older adults, mainly males, mixed among the students. Clark could feel hatred beginning to emanate from the crowd. That hatred was directed at the U.S. marshals, the visible symbols of United State Government authority currently invading the University of Mississippi campus.

Technically speaking, U.S. marshals are officers of the United States Courts. Under normal conditions, they carry out routine functions such as serving court papers and escorting prisoners. But these particular U.S. marshals were anything but routine. They were dressed in riot vests which were dyed a highly-visible orange color. The vests had deep pockets that contained tear-gas canisters for crowd control. But the most distinguishing feature of these men was their white-painted helmets with the words "U.S.

Marshal" prominently displayed on them.

Some of these specially-trained U.S. marshals were a gift from the Eisenhower administration to the Kennedy administration. Following the disturbances at Little Rock, President Eisenhower had ordered that a group of U.S. marshals be specially trained to help enforce nationally-mandated school integration in the American South. It was the hope of the Eisenhower Administration that, by using these specially trained U.S. marshals, future presidents of the United States could avoid using military troops to desegregate Southern schools.

Somehow sensing that what they were doing would not make flattering television coverage for the Southern cause, the crowd began attacking the television cameramen who were present and shooting film. Because the television crews were working with bright lights, they were easy for the more combative members of the crowd to spot and assault.

The sound of shattering glass could be heard periodically as television lights were smashed on the ground and trampled to bits by the mob. Clark Schooler could see cameramen struggling with various members of the crowd, the more aggressive rioters trying to wrest the cameras away from the cameramen so as to then destroy the cameras. In one instance, a group of young men were rocking and smashing and trying to tip over an automobile containing a newsperson.

The crowd was yelling anti-integration slogans and epithets. But then Clark Schooler began to hear other, more disturbing sounds. Nearby voices were saying: "Stop the newsmen!" "Kill a reporter!" "Get those integration-lovin' press people."

Suddenly Clark experienced a sensation that was totally new to him. He realized that, for the first time in his life, he was experiencing overwhelming feelings of personal vulnerability. He was amazed to find that he was genuinely fearful for his life. He quickly moved back out of the crowd and stood beside a tree. He slowly took off his suit coat and necktie, hoping no one would notice what he was doing. In an intentionally casual manner, he neatly placed the suit coat and tie beneath the tree. By getting rid of his suit coat and tie, Clark hoped to make himself look more like a student rioter and less like a newspaper man.

Clark looked worriedly around himself in all directions. So far, at least, no one was paying any attention to what he was doing. He next took his newspaper reporter's notebook out of his rear pants pocket and placed it and his pencil on top of the suit coat. He took his press card out of his wallet and hid it under his suit coat. He did not want to be carrying anything that would suggest to the angry crowd that he was a member of the news media.

After another furtive look around, Clark began drifting slowly away

from his little pile of possessions under the tree. Then a very disturbing thought penetrated his consciousness. What if some of the students he had interviewed earlier recognized him and encouraged the crowd to attack him?

In an effort to effect an instant disguise, Clark did two things. He unbuttoned his top shirt button and opened the collar of his button-down shirt. This was a popular casual way of wearing a shirt in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Clark also rolled up his shirt sleeves to just below the elbow. That also was an au courant collegiate style of the time.

Then, in a final effort to alter his appearance and hide his identity, Clark took off his horn-rimmed eyeglasses and slipped them into his pocket. This was something of a calculated decision on Clark's part. He could see without his eyeglasses, and easily move around, but he could not see details very clearly. For the remainder of the evening, he would cover the riot at Ole Miss with his vision somewhat fuzzy.

Clark was so fearful of being identified and attacked by the mob that, in addition to changing his appearance, he changed his behavior. He occasionally shook his fist in the air as the more defiant students were doing. One time he passed a group chanting: "Two-four-six-eight; we ain't goin' to integrate!" Clark joined them in their pro-segregation yell. If a group of students went by Clark, running in a particular direction with some form of riot mischief in mind, Clark would run with them. Clark did not just fade into the mob. His disguise was to become an active part of the mob.

By this time, individuals in the crowd were attacking the U.S. marshals by throwing rocks and other convenient missiles at them. Items thrown included handfuls of gravel, empty beer bottles, and small pieces of asphalt and cement. Anything that could be picked up and hurled through the air at the marshals was being launched by the rioters. Clark made his contribution by throwing a handful of loose dirt. It made Clark appear to be as angry and rebellious as the other rioters, but Clark was confident that the small amount of Mother Earth that he threw at the marshals could not possibly have hurt anyone.

As Clark Schooler worked at effecting a good disguise and fading into the crowd, a disturbing thought occurred to him. A black person, caught in a similarly dangerous situation, would not have been able to "cast off" his or her skin color as readily as Clark had "cast off" the superficial indicators of being a newspaper reporter. It was easy enough for Clark to shed some of his clothing and hide his note pad and press card. It would have been impossible for a black to change or hide his or her skin pigmentation.

Suddenly the airborne attack on the U.S. marshals grew more serious and dangerous. Bricks began flying through the air. Some in the mob began throwing three-to-five-foot sections of metal pipe. One of the pipe sections

struck a U.S. Marshall in the head, leaving a giant dent in his helmet. Fortunately, thanks to the protection of the helmet, the U.S. marshall was not seriously hurt.

Molotov cocktails were being thrown. These were small glass bottles filled with gasoline. A piece of paper or cloth was crammed into the neck of the bottle and lighted with a match or cigarette lighter. When the bottle smashed against a wall or a pillar of the Lyceum, the gasoline ignited and the Molotov cocktail caused a hot explosion and fire.

At this time, with the battle getting brutally serious and physically dangerous, the Mississippi state police were ordered to leave the scene of the riot. Up to this point, the state patrol officers had watched the growing riot but had done nothing to restrain or control it. In fact, it seemed to Clark Schooler, the state police had observed the melee with an attitude of mild amusement and unspoken support.

Concerned for his own personal safety, Clark believed that uniformed police officers would always do their duty to maintain law and order. But Clark was horrified to see the state police leave their posts, get into their patrol cars, and drive away from the Old Miss campus. The demoralizing sight of a line of state police vehicles disappearing down the campus streets was permanently seared into Clark Schooler's memory. Once the state police were all gone, only the U.S. marshals remained to defend the Lyceum building and continue the battle to get James Meredith admitted to the University of Mississippi.

It was happening, Clark Schooler suddenly realized, exactly the way that Bernard Martin had said it would happen. It was: "The willing suspension of law and order." Clark's African-American newsman colleague had called the shot perfectly. As if on cue, the Mississippi state police were removing themselves from the scene and leaving the fate of the U.S. marshals in the hands of the lawless mob. From here on out, it would be up to the U.S. marshals to protect themselves.

Clark Schooler later came to attribute great significance to that moment when the Mississippi state police intentionally departed the riot-torn Ole Miss campus. That moment, Clark concluded, was one of the great failures of the United States federal system.

By this time, the assault on the Lyceum had become a real battle. Larger objects, such as trash cans and chairs and directional signs, were being thrown at the marshals. The rioters were scavenging the campus, picking up and ripping out any object that might be turned into a missile to be hurled at the marshals. In desperation to protect themselves, the marshals attempted to push the crowd back from the Lyceum building by firing tear gas into the mob. Such periodic assaults would shove the crowd back for

a moment. But, once the tear gas had cleared away, the mob would move in close again and resume pelting the marshals with any object that could be found and thrown.

Perhaps it was the tears in his eyes from an occasional whiff of tear gas. Perhaps it was the fact he did not have his eyeglasses on. For whatever reason, Clark had an academic mystical experience as he stood amidst the mob attacking the Lyceum building. Suddenly, it seemed to Clark, the U.S. marshals were Union soldiers of the Civil War era, dressed in the characteristic blue uniforms. They were lined up defending the Lyceum in the classic Civil War infantry maneuver of a straight line of troops directly facing the enemy. They were a small band, Clark saw, but nonetheless determined to hold their defensive perimeter at all costs.

The mob had turned into Confederate soldiers, some dressed in the classic Southern grey uniform and others in the butternut color that characterized Rebel uniforms in the later years of the Civil War. The Confederate troops were more numerous than the Yankees, but they were highly disorganized. The Southerners launched a skirmish here and a skirmish there but were never able to get all their troops together for one single, massive attack.

The vision lasted only for a minute or so, but from that vision developed one of Clark Schooler's most important insights. The civil rights movement was the renewal, both intellectually and physically, of the American Civil War. Once again, Northern troops (U.S. marshals) were having to come down South to enforce national values on recalcitrant Confederates (lawless Southern rioters). And the end result of the civil rights movement, Clark thought, would be the same as the end result of the Civil War. The South would be nationalized and coerced into following Northern values and Northern legal principals.

Clark Schooler was still moving about among the rioters. For protection, he continued to pretend he was one of them. But as he did so, Clark began to wonder where the U.S. troops were. It was now late in the evening, around 10 P.M., and the situation had been out-of-control for almost four hours. Where was President Kennedy? This was the moment when the script, first written by President Eisenhower at Little Rock, called for sending in the cavalry.

After all, those were President Kennedy's U.S. marshals under attack on the front porch of the Lyceum building. The president had ordered the marshals on to the Ole Miss campus. It was President Kennedy's job, now that it was clear a full-scale riot was in progress, to protect the marshals by sending in U.S. Army soldiers. Was President Kennedy so beholden to Southern white voters in the Democratic Party, Clark speculated, that he was

not going to order in the troops?

Military troops were appropriate, Clark concluded, because now many of the rioters were armed and firing live ammunition at the Lyceum building. The sharp crack of a rifle shot was frequently heard, followed by the ping or thunk of the bullet hitting the red brick walls or the white trim of the Lyceum. Occasionally there would be the blast-like sound of a shotgun being fired. The rioters were overturning parked automobiles and setting them on fire. Clark's fears of being attacked for being a news reporter were strongly reinforced when he saw that a truck belonging to a television station had been engulfed by the rioters, flipped over, and set ablaze.

Somehow the mob had gotten a hold of a fire truck. There was an attempt to drive the fire truck through the line of marshals and then smash the truck into the front door of the Lyceum. The marshals stopped this assault by drawing their pistols and shooting the fire truck's tires flat. Clark noted that gunnery had now been used by both sides in the conflict, although the U.S. marshals had never fired their guns directly at the rioters.

Clark later learned the reason there were no U.S. soldiers yet at Ole Miss. President Kennedy tried until the last minute to get Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett to maintain law and order on the University of Mississippi campus. But the president finally gave up on Governor Barnett and ordered U.S. troops to leave Memphis and occupy the University of Mississippi at Oxford.

Slowly, after midnight, U.S. soldiers began to filter on to the Ole Miss campus and take military control of the territory. As more soldiers appeared, the rioters progressively disappeared. Within 24 hours there were more than 10,000 U.S. military personnel maintaining tight control at the University of Mississippi. James Meredith then was officially registered at the university without incident.

Clark took an airplane flight back to Washington with Bernard Martin, the African-American reporter who worked for the *New York Liberty*. From his post in Memphis, Bernard Martin succeeded in filing some very important stories. He did a good in-depth interview with James Meredith as the young black man waited in Memphis to leave for Oxford and the university. Bernard Martin also was able to report on the military's progress getting to Ole Miss once President Kennedy finally ordered in the troops.

Clark Schooler spent the 1962-1963 academic year teaching entry-level American Government courses at Johns Hopkins University and Goucher College. At least that was how he spent his mornings. He spent his afternoons completing the writing, correcting, and rewriting of his doctoral dissertation. By early April of 1963, Clark was putting the final coats of polish on a document that had grown to more than 350 double-spaced

typewritten pages in length.

Also in April of 1963, a significant national event was taking place on Clark Schooler's television set. Every evening Clark, along with millions of other Americans, made it a point to sit down in front of his black-and-white TV set, watch the 6 P.M. news, and get the latest developments in civil rights events in Birmingham, Alabama.

Birmingham was a logical place for things to be happening. From 1957 to 1963, there were more than 15 racial bombings in the community, inspiring civil rights advocates to derisively call the city Bombingham. When a U.S. Court ordered Birmingham to desegregate the city parks, local political leaders closed the parks rather than allow black people to enter the parks and mix with white people. Even the local professional baseball team was disbanded rather than let racially-integrated opposition teams play ball in Birmingham.

In April of 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the civil rights organization he led, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), launched a series of protest demonstrations in Birmingham. The protests were aimed at ending racial segregation in almost every aspect of community life in Birmingham, but the immediate goal was to integrate lunch counters and restaurants in downtown Birmingham.

The political establishment in Birmingham responded forcefully to these civil rights demonstrations. When African-American school children marched through the city center to show their support for civil rights, they were met by burly white police officers armed with clubs and police dogs. Suddenly Clark Schooler was witnessing, in two-dimensional black-and-white, police dogs leaping through the air and biting young black men. In the background, Clark could see wildly flailing billy clubs as police officers attempted to beat back and chase away the African-American demonstrators.

Then it was the Birmingham Fire Department's turn. High pressure fire hoses, powerful enough to strip the bark off trees, were turned on the parading demonstrators. The force of the water knocked many of the protesters off their feet and began washing them down the street. A number of the demonstrators being smashed by the water from the fire hoses were young black women, some of them wearing their white Sunday dresses.

The TV image would shift back to the white policemen. They had armed themselves with electric cattle prods. These instruments of animal control delivered a sharp electrical shock. They were customarily used to force reluctant cattle from the holding pen into the slaughter house. The police used the cattle prods on the African-American protesters, seeking to drive them back into the black sections of the city from which they came.

When the violent action of the demonstrations was not taking center

screen on Clark's TV set, the face of Police Commissioner T. Eugene (Bull) Connor was. Bull Connor ordered his police officers to arrest the demonstrators for parading without a permit. When not supervising the arrest operation personally, Bull Connor was more than happy to give personal interviews to the national news media. His comments, delivered in a thick Southern accent, were laced with racial insults and determined insistence on the perpetuation of white supremacy. Slowly but surely, as his face and his ideas appeared day-after-day on the national network evening news, Bull Connor came to symbolize, to Clark Schooler and much of the rest of the nation, uncompromising Southern white opposition to racial integration.

Alternating with Bull Connor on Clark's TV set was the face of Martin Luther King, Jr. By the spring of 1963, Martin Luther King was known throughout the United States, and much of the rest of planet Earth, as the leading spokesperson for African-American civil rights. King projected an image of being just as determined to achieve racial integration in Birmingham as Bull Connor was committed to stopping it. "If we can crack Birmingham, I am convinced we can crack the South," King said confidently. "Birmingham is a symbol of segregation for the entire South." [2]

For days almost without end, it seemed to Clark Schooler, this continuing drama played on his television set. Just as interesting to Clark, however, was the accompanying drama in Washington, D.C. Despite the violent and compelling television images being generated in Birmingham, President Kennedy refused to allow the United States Government to intervene directly in the tense stand-off in that troubled city. The best John F. Kennedy would do was to send an assistant attorney general, Burke Marshall, to try to peacefully negotiate the dispute.

By mid-May considerable progress had been made in the negotiations, and it appeared that peace might be restored in Birmingham without the need for direct military intervention from Washington, D.C. On May 12, 1963, however, a bomb was hurled from a passing automobile into the home of the Reverend A. D. King, Martin Luther King's younger brother and a local civil rights leader in Birmingham. A. D. King, his wife, and their five children were fortunate to escape the dynamite blast that partially destroyed their home.

A short time later, a second bomb was hurled into the Gaston Motel. This was the motel where Martin Luther King, Jr., normally stayed when he was in Birmingham. Luckily, that particular night, he was visiting his family at his home in Atlanta. This dynamite bomb exploded in a downstairs motel room located just below a room previously occupied by Martin Luther King. "Bombingham" suddenly was living up to its nickname.

As word of the two bombings spread throughout the African-American

neighborhoods in Birmingham, angry blacks began gathering in the streets. When police sought to disperse these unruly crowds, the black people began throwing rocks and bottles at white police officers. All at once, the African-American response to racial segregation in Birmingham was something other than nonviolent. Instead of staging a nonviolent civil rights demonstration, Birmingham blacks were having a violent black riot.

Despite the efforts of civil rights leaders to calm the crowd, black mobs rampaged through the city for more than four hours. The television cameras were there, so Clark Schooler and the rest of the vast United States television audience looked on from afar as the riot grew in violence and intensity. Two grocery stores, both of them owned by whites, were set on fire. As so often happens during an incendiary riot, the flames quickly spread to nearby homes owned by black people. Clark's television screen now was filled with the eerie sight of an entire city block burning down, with groups of people running about looting stores. The sound of wailing police and fire sirens poured out of the speaker on Clark's TV, along with the voices of frantic police officers trying to bring a mob-gone-mad under control.

One television image particularly effected Clark. The fire from the riot ignited a telephone pole, which quickly turned into a flaming cross, the symbol of the Ku Klux Klan and its ideology of white supremacy. Clark thought a great deal about this ironic mental picture. But this time, he realized, it was blacks, not whites, who had set the symbolic cross of racial hatred afire.[3]

Although he only witnessed them on television, Clark Schooler learned much from the nonviolent civil rights demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama, that late one night turned into a violent black riot. Clark noted how the television camera tended to confine images to just a limited area of activity. This effect tended to make events appear larger and more significant. This confining effect was particularly pronounced when the TV cameras "zoomed in" and got "close-ups." Television viewers throughout the United States could see the fear on the faces of the African-American civil rights protesters. Seconds later, in sharp contrast, they could see the looks of determination on the faces of the white police officers.

Because there was plenty of action at a civil rights demonstration, or a riot, the television cameramen often turned their cameras rapidly from one event to another. This swift shifting of camera angles created a feeling of danger and instability for the television viewer. It occurred to Clark that jerky camera movements served to disorient the television viewer, thereby making the viewer feel somewhat threatened and insecure as a result of what he or she was seeing.

And, finally, Clark noted to himself, many of the television images

from Birmingham were fuzzy, unclear, and out-of-focus. The water spray from fire hoses, or shifting crowds of people getting in front of the television cameras, often made it difficult for viewers to see exactly what was taking place. In such a situation, the viewer filled in the images for himself or herself, usually concluding that what the viewer was not quite seeing was the Birmingham police badly mistreating civil rights demonstrators.

Clark was not alone in concluding that television coverage of the demonstrations and riots in Birmingham had influenced, and moved, and in most cases infuriated, TV watchers all over the United States. Clark delighted in a newspaper article by Eric Severeid, a well-known political commentator, who wrote: "A newspaper or television picture of a snarling police dog set upon a human being is recorded in the permanent photo-electric file of every human brain." [4]

But the real importance of Birmingham, Clark Schooler later learned, was the effect it had on the brain and political strategizing of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy. As the dramatic and upsetting events in Birmingham progressed, demands for legislative action, at the national level, poured into the president at the White House. Intense pressure, from the Northern and Western United States, came to bear on President Kennedy to introduce a major civil rights bill in Congress. Maintaining support in the North and West soon became as big a concern to the president as hanging on to segregationist white support in the South.

There also were constant demands for action from President Kennedy on civil rights in the national press. Walter Lippmann, a noted political thinker and commentator, put the case succinctly: "The cause of desegregation must cease to be a black people's movement, blessed by white politicians from the Northern states. It must become a national movement to enforce national laws, led and directed by the national government." [5]

Suddenly Clark Schooler began to detect the subtle signs that there was about to be a major policy change on civil rights at the White House. A group of civil rights leaders reported that, at a strategy meeting with John F. Kennedy, one of those present had spoken about Bull Connor in a derogatory fashion. President Kennedy was quick to make a correction, noting that "Bull Connor has done more for civil rights than anyone in this room." [6] The president was later heard to say: "The civil rights movement should thank God for Bull Connor. He's helped it as much as Abraham Lincoln." [7]

By the end of May of 1963, Clark Schooler had completed his doctoral dissertation and turned it in to his professors at Johns Hopkins University. This gave Clark six-weeks or so of time off while the dissertation was being read and evaluated. Clark returned to his job at the *Baltimore Banner*. Shortly thereafter, the Patriot Press once again sent Clark southward to be

a member of a Patriot Press News Squadron covering a major Southern civil rights story.

This time the scene of the action was the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The governor of Alabama, George Wallace, was an outspoken racial segregationist. He had based his campaign for governor on a platform of all-out opposition to civil rights. At the time of his gubernatorial inauguration, George Wallace defiantly challenged the U.S. Government to try to enforce racial integration in Alabama. Wallace said:

"From this very Cradle of the Confederacy, this very heart of the great Anglo-Saxon Southland, I draw the line in the Dixie dust. I toss the gauntlet before the feet of national tyranny. And I say: Segregation now! Segregation tomorrow! Segregation forever!" [8]

As for the University of Alabama, Wallace had pledged to "bar the school house door" rather than let any black students go to school with white students in Alabama. The time for Governor Wallace to keep that pledge came when two African-American students, Vivian Malone and James Hood, received an order from a United States Court admitting them to the University of Alabama.

One reason the Patriot Press selected Clark Schooler to go to Tuscaloosa was the experience he had gained reporting on the riot at Ole Miss. No one knew exactly what might happen if Wallace really did stand in the doorway and defy U.S. Government authority. Would there be another riot? Would President Kennedy once again, as he had done at the University of Mississippi some nine months earlier, have to send in the United States Army?

When he first arrived on the University of Alabama campus, Clark Schooler was surprised by the reception he and the other national news reporters received from university officials. An entire building had been designated the official press facility. University officials had thoughtfully provided the anticipated hordes of national press correspondents with desks, typewriters, and telephones. There even were teletype operators available so that, when the time came, the reporters could easily transmit their stories back to the newspapers and magazines that employed them.

It all symbolized to Clark Schooler just how much ground the civil rights movement had gained in just a few short years. The University of Alabama was acting as though it was doing the media puffery for a big football game, or perhaps a brand new fund-raising campaign. It made Clark suspicious that he was watching a rigged, made-for-the-media event rather than a real event. News reporters had taken to calling them pseudo-events.

Unwilling to risk another disaster such as the one at Ole Miss, President John F. Kennedy early on federalized the local National Guard troops.

In effect, this shifted the Alabama National Guard from Governor Wallace's control to President Kennedy's control. From the president's perspective, it was better to have federalized Alabama National Guardsmen forcefully integrate the University of Alabama rather than regular U.S. Army troops.

A whole set of other precautions made it virtually impossible for a riot to occur. The students were placed on a tightly-enforced curfew during the late evening and nighttime hours. Police roadblocks were set up at every entrance to the campus and only bona fide students were admitted to the university grounds. Soft drink bottles, which had proved to be dandy objects for throwing at U.S. marshals at Ole Miss, were quietly removed from soft drink machines and snack bars and replaced with paper cups. Contractors working on building projects at the university were ordered to temporarily haul away all bricks, stones, and pipes.

Despite all the pre-programming, the racial integration of the University of Alabama was a significant event when it finally occurred. Clark Schooler stood in a large clot of news personnel facing an open door in a major building at the university.

The scene in front of Clark was a media classic. Governor Wallace stood in the doorway, thereby fulfilling his pledge to "bar the school house door." He was standing behind a portable wooden podium. Facing him, and representing the United States Government, was Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, the man who had directed the U.S. marshals that defended the Lyceum building at Ole Miss. At that moment, a camera lens clicked. The Associated Press sent the resulting photograph to virtually every news outlet on the entire planet.

In the photograph, Wallace appeared to be short, which he was, but with a thick head of black hair. Nick Katzenbach, on the other hand, was tall with bare skin visible on the top of his balding head. The two men were looking straight at each other. The photograph perfectly symbolized state authority confronting national authority. The photo revealed clearly how the state of Alabama was defying the United States of America.

But the stand-off portrayed in the photograph did not last. Clark Schooler and the other reporters watched intently as a General Graham, the commander of the newly-federalized Alabama National Guard, approached the wooden podium. He was accompanied by four of his elite soldiers. General Graham came to attention. He then looked squarely at Governor Wallace and said softly, "It is my sad duty to ask you to step aside."

Wallace did not "step aside." He remained behind the wooden podium and began to read a short speech. The Southern governor remained defiant, even in the face of certain defeat. "The trend toward military dictatorship continues," he said. "But this is a constitutional fight, and we are winning.

God bless all the people of this state, white and black." [9]

Governor George Wallace then stepped aside, and the University of Alabama soon was officially racially integrated. The date was June 11, 1963. Wallace had given way to a National Guard general who, just a few hours earlier, had been under Governor Wallace's command rather than President Kennedy's command.

That evening President John F. Kennedy addressed the nation to defend his actions at the University of Alabama. Clark Schooler watched the speech on television in his hotel room in Tuscaloosa. President Kennedy used the speech to announce his intention to send a strong civil rights bill to the United States Congress and to use all his powers as president to get it passed.

To Clark Schooler, one of the most important roles of the U.S. president was to serve as a sort of Spokesperson for America. It was a big part of the president's job, Clark often said, to boldly express the common sentiments of the people of the United States. In so doing, the president would not only sum up the national mood but also help to lead the nation toward necessary actions.

"We are confronted primarily with a moral issue," President Kennedy told the nation. "It is as old as the scriptures and is as clear as the American Constitution. This nation, for all its hopes and all its boasts, will not be fully free until all its citizens are free."

"The fires of discord are burning in every city, North and South, where legal remedies are not at hand," the president concluded. "Next week I shall ask the Congress of the United States to act. I shall ask the Congress to make a commitment, [one that] it has not fully made in this century, to the proposition that race has no place in American life or law." [10]

In The Interim

The relationship of the United States Government to the fifty state governments has been a delicate one throughout American History. Debate continues to rage over exactly which functions should be carried out by the U.S. Government in Washington, D.C., and which should be executed only by the states.

When economic times are favorable in the United States and there is little disturbance in the social balance of the nation, most Americans prefer for state governments to become more active and to do more things. But during times of economic discord and social upheaval, pressure quickly mounts on the U.S. Government to step into the breach and try to solve problems from the nation's capital in Washington, D.C.

2. Congressional Quarterly Almanac 1963, p. 336.

3. Michael Dorman, We Shall Overcome (New York, NY: Dial Press, 1964), p.143.Dorman gives a journalistic account of major events in the civil rights movement in the early 1960s.

4. Washington Evening Star, May 14, 1963.

5. Washington Post, May 28, 1963.

6. Joseph L. Rauh, Jr., "The Role of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights in the Civil Rights Struggle of 1963-1964," in Robert D. Loevy, ed., The Civil Rights Act of 1964: The Passage of the Law That Ended Racial Segregation (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997), p.53.

7.Theodore C. Sorenson, Kennedy (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 489.

8. Charles and Barbara Whelan, The Longest Debate: A Legislative History of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (Cabin John, MD: Seven Locks Press, 1985), p. 33.

9. For a detailed description of U.S. Government efforts to integrate the University of Alabama, see Dorman, We Shall Overcome, ch. IX, "Tuscaloosa," pp. 270-334.

10. Congressional Quarterly Almanac 1963, p. 967.