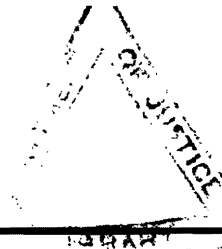




Department of Justice



P5
668
1A36

STATEMENT BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, ROBERT F. KENNEDY

SEPTEMBER 27, 1962

It has been clear from the time of the court's decision ordering the University of Mississippi to accept Mr. Meredith that there would be but one resolution to these difficulties. The orders of the federal courts can and will be enforced. It is important to our country, however, that if possible, that this be accomplished without force and without civil disorder.

Every American has the duty to obey the law and the right to expect that the law will be enforced.

It is fundamental in our system that there be respect for the law and compliance with all laws -- not just those with which we happen to agree. The course which Governor Barnett is following is, therefore, incompatible with the principles upon which this Union is based.

As the Legislature of the State of Mississippi stated in solemn resolve 129 years ago:

"This state owes a duty to the Union above all minor consideration . . . The doctrine of Nullification is contrary to the letter and spirit of the Constitution, and in direct conflict with the welfare, safety and independence of every State in the Union; and to no one of them would its consequences be more deeply disastrous, more ruinous, than to the State of Mississippi"

This matter will be before the court again tomorrow in New Orleans. At that time, Governor Barnett will have an opportunity to state his case before all the judges of the Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. I hope that this matter will be resolved peacefully and without violence or further action by the federal government.

However, if this is not to be, the federal government will see to it that the orders which are presently outstanding are maintained and enforced, whatever action that ultimately may require.