

Integration Goes Forward at CHS

The Tiger was the student newspaper at Little Rock Central High School and was published every two weeks, starting on Thursday, September 19, 1957. The front page article which follows appeared in the October 3, 1957 issue.

Read the primary source document provided below to identify the following: author/date of the source, reactions to desegregation (favorable, unfavorable or indifferent) and the success or failure of integration.

Nine Negro students attended Little Rock Central High School last week for the first time in history. They arrived at the school Wednesday, September 25, accompanied by crack paratroopers of the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division. An Army station wagon carried the students to the front entrance of the building while an Army helicopter circled overhead and 350 armed paratroopers stood at parade rest around the building. Never before had Federal troops been used to enforce integration in a public school.

Third Attempt Made

This was the third attempt the Negro students had made to attend classes at Central. For three weeks the Arkansas National Guard had patrolled the school on orders of Governor Orval Faubus. Then on September 20 the troops were withdrawn by the Governor after the Federal Court had issued an injunction requiring him to withdraw the troops.

All was quiet over the week-end at CHS, but on Monday, September 23, eight of the Negro students enrolled at Central. Uncontrolled violence grew so swiftly in the area surrounding the school campus that city law enforcement officers decided it was wise to withdraw the Negro students shortly after noon on the same day.

Federal Troops Arrive

President Eisenhower took unprecedented action on September 24, when he called the Arkansas National Guard into active military service to deal with the Little Rock school integration crisis. President Eisenhower also authorized Secretary of Defense Wilson to use regular Army troops in addition to the National Guard Units.

Accordingly, about 1,000 paratroopers of the 101st Airborne division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, began arriving at the Little Rock Air Force Base on the evening of September 24. They immediately took up positions around the school.

General Advises Students

The Department of the Army designated Major General Edwin A. Walker chief of the Arkansas Military District.

As commander of the troops in the Little Rock area, Major General Walker addressed the student body and explained his position clearly.

All Quiet Within

Halls were quiet within the schools as the Negro students entered. They proceeded to their pre-arranged classes and school work went on just about as usual. At least two dozen soldiers without bayonets patrolled the halls.

Many Central students were absent; of the 2,000 enrolled, about 1,250 attended classes. On Friday, the attendance was back up to 1450. At press time it was almost normal.

http://www.centralhigh57.org/the_tiger.htm#Oct.%203