
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: FILE
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: TUPELO PUBLIC HEARING ON THE STATE FLAG
DATE 10/23/00
CC:

The Advisory Commission on the State Flag and the Coat of Arms held its second public hearing in Meridian on Thursday, October 26th. 285 citizens registered at the door, with 42 speaking in favor of maintaining the current flag and 11 speaking in favor of a new design.

The Meridian hearing was less negative towards Governor Musgrove's administration, but was more disrespectful of each other's opinions. The crowd shouted comments throughout the hearing, both when citizens spoke in favor of the traditional flag and when citizens spoke in favor of a new design.

John Cripps of Lumberton was the first to speak in support of the traditional flag and he announced his candidacy for Governor in the 2003 gubernatorial race. Greg Stewart lingered outside of the building and entered towards the end of the hearing, but did not register under his name. The following threatening and/or hostile comments were made:

Randy Hobson of Meridian, speaking in favor of a new design, said "let the war begin."

George Roberts, President of the Kemper County NAACP, speaking in favor of a new flag design, said, regarding potential escalation of this issue, that "Mississippi is going to make South Carolina look like a Sunday School."

Jim Giles said that "if you want to fight about it, we will fight all night long" and that the public's respect of the Commission ended when the Commission's disrespect of the public started.

William Faggert of Heidelberg, speaking in support of the traditional design, stated that "there will be retribution and retaliation" if the attacks against whites continue.

L.E. Mathews of Florence, speaking in support of the traditional design, stated “we will fight to the end to keep this flag.”