

**Advisory Commission on the Mississippi State Flag and the
Mississippi Coat-of-Arms
October 18, 2000, 1:30 p.m.
Room 216, New Capitol Building**

Members present: Representative Ed Blackmon
Senator Terry Burton
Senator Mike Chaney
Senator Hillman Frazier
Larry Fry
Representative Steve Holland
Fran Ivy
Representative Wanda Jennings
Don Kilgore
Vanessa Long
Lisa Milner
Jean Moore
Jack Reed
Dolphus Weary
William Winter

Members absent: J.L. Holloway
Johnny Tatum

Others present: Kelly Riley, Office of the Governor

Chairman William Winter called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. He welcomed the citizens who attended the meeting and reminded them that the Commission is striving to be responsive to the citizens of the state. He also stated that the meeting was a regular monthly meeting of the Commission and not a public hearing, so the Commission would not be taking verbal public comments at the meeting.

Upon motion of Jean Moore, seconded by Jack Reed, the Advisory Commission approved the minutes of its September 18th meeting with the corrected spelling of Fran Ivy's name.

Winter called on the chairman of each committee to report on the activities of his/her committee since the September 18th meeting.

Dolphus Weary reported that the Committee on History and Heritage had met that morning to continue its meetings with appropriate organizations and individuals with special interest in and knowledge of the state's history and the relationship and interpretation of that history through its flag and coat-of-arms. The Committee is working to obtain as much data and information as possible from these groups. Mr. Weary stated that the Committee is only gathering information related to the state flag and coat of arms and is not gathering information regarding any other confederate emblems or items. The Committee has extended an invitation to the United Daughters of the Confederacy, but has not received a response at this time. The Committee has met with Mr. Eugene Bryant, President of the Mississippi NAACP, and with Susan Glisson of the University of Mississippi's Institute for Racial Reconciliation. As reported at the Commission's September 18th meeting, the Committee has already met with the Sons of Confederate Veterans and the Sons and Daughters of U.S. Colored Troops. The Committee is working with the Department of Archives and History and Dr. David Sansing to produce a report on the history of the state flag for the Commission.

Don Kilgore reported that the Committee on Economic Impact met with the Executive Committee of the Mississippi Economic Council on October 5. The MEC is continuing to conduct focus groups around the state and that the flag is one of the issues addressed and discussed at each focus group. The Executive Committee is expected to bring the flag issue to the MEC membership in November for a vote. The Committee has also met with Hunter Howard, Executive Director of the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Howard discussed the economic impact of the flag issue on South Carolina's economy. Although it is difficult to determine an exact, total fiscal impact, Mr. Howard reported that 96 separate events were cancelled in South Carolina, resulting in an estimated \$20 million loss in revenue. Mr. Howard also reported to the Committee that it is estimated that the tourism industry lost approximately \$140 million as a result of South Carolina being taken off of convention planners' lists.

Fran Ivy reported that the Committee on Design has distributed information to all public, private and parochial high schools regarding the Commission's initiative to solicit input from high school students. The distributed information invited all high school students in the state to submit specific flag designs, essays and papers on what

the flag should symbolize and views as to whether the old flag should be changed. Each individual student, student organization or student body participating in this process will receive an official Certificate of Participation from the Advisory Commission. Entries should be postmarked by November 15th. Several students and schools have already submitted essays and designs. Mrs. Ivy also reported that is the recommendation of the Committee on Design that the Commission recommend in its final report to the Governor, Lt. Governor and Speaker of the House the Coat of Arms as adopted in 1894.

Upon motion of Senator Chaney, seconded by Vanessa Long, the Commission unanimously voted to recommend to the Governor, Lt. Governor and Speaker of the House, subject to approval by the Mississippi Supreme Court, adoption of the design of the Coat of Arms as adopted in 1894.

Chairman Winter then discussed the five public hearings to be held, one in each congressional district, in order to solicit public comments from the citizens of Mississippi. The hearings will be held as follows, with Commission members designating those hearings that they plan to attend:

Thursday, October 19th, 7:00 p.m.: Itawamba Community College, Tupelo Branch

Jack Reed, Moderator
Senator Mike Chaney
Representative Steve Holland
Representative Wanda Jennings

Thursday, October 26th, 7:00 p.m.: Meridian Community College, Meridian

Don Kilgore, Moderator
Senator Terry Burton
Lisa Milner

Thursday, November 2nd, 7:00 p.m.: Mississippi Delta Community College, Moorhead

William Winter, Moderator
Senator Terry Burton
Senator Mike Chaney
Senator Hillman Frazier
Vanessa Long

Thursday, November 9th, 7:00 p.m.: Gulf Coast Community College, Jefferson Davis Campus (Gulfport)

William Winter, Moderator
Senator Hillman Frazier
Lisa Milner
Johnny Tatum
Dolphus Weary

Monday, November 13th, 7:00 p.m.: Millsaps College, Jackson

William Winter, Moderator
Senator Terry Burton
Senator Mike Chaney
Senator Hillman Frazier
Fran Ivy
Lisa Milner
Jean Moore

Chairman Winter stressed to those citizens attending the meeting the importance of the hearings and the Commission's hope that the hearings will proceed in an orderly manner and that all present will present their points of view in a respectful and civil manner.

Lisa Milner called on Commission members to divorce themselves of their own beliefs or opinions on this matter during the hearings in order to do what is best for the state. She urged members to do this in order to hear the broader voice of Mississippi. She also encouraged the citizenry of the state to listen to others opinions as well.

Chairman Winter reemphasized that the Commission is advisory in nature and that it cannot require any action. These hearings will exemplify the benefits of our political system in that they will allow citizens to express their different opinions.

The Commission reviewed the guidelines for the hearings published in the press release and upon motion of Don Kilgore, seconded by Senator Burton, the Commission unanimously voted to ratify the guidelines and to distribute them to citizens attending the hearings.

The Commission set its next monthly meeting for Monday, November 20^h, in Room 216 of the capitol. Upon inquiry of Representative Holland, Chairman Winter stated that the

Commission will receive Committee reports at this meeting, as well as a summation of the public hearings and of the essays and designs submitted by students.

The Commission adjourned at approximately 2:20 p.m.

The above minutes were adopted by the Advisory Commission on the Mississippi State Flag and the Mississippi Coat-of-Arm at its November 20, 2000, meeting.