

The Day We Started To Fight: A Timeline of the Little Rock Nine

June 7, 1892 - Plessy vs. Ferguson - "Separate but equal" was constitutional as long as it was equal.

May 17, 1954 - Brown vs. Board of Education - United States Supreme Court stated that people of all colors would now go to schools together.

1956 - Busses, parks, zoos, libraries and universities were integrated.

1957 - Central High School was selected to register nine black students for the first time.

Governor Orville Faubus of Arkansas was supportive of segregation. Governor Faubus called the Arkansas National Guard to go to Central High, enforcing segregation.

Thelma Mothershed, Melba Pattillo, Jefferson Thomas, Ernest Green, Minniejean Brown, Carlotta Walls, Terrence Roberts and Gloria Ray encountered the Arkansas National Guard and hundreds of white protestors refusing entrance to anyone that was not white.

Elizabeth Eckford did not have a telephone and was not notified that the teens were gathering in the morning, she was met by an angry white mob hurling insults and death threats at her.

The NAACP and the parents of these nine brave leaders took the issue to court.

Daisy Bates, a prominent black leader supported and assisted the nine.

Arkansas and Governor Faubus went against the Federal government concerning the issue of integration.

September 1957 - Faubus and Eisenhower meet to discuss the tension of integration in Arkansas.

Faubus stated that segregation was going to stay in Arkansas. He proceeded to remove the National Guard leaving only the local police at Central High.

September 23 - Little Rock Nine entered Central High through a side door.

Eisenhower sent the 101st Airborne Division to keep peace in Little Rock.

Governor Faubus was still resisting the change but could not refuse federal troops.

Little Rock Nine entered Central High safely - receiving their own soldier to escort them.

Ridicule and torment: physically, mentally and emotionally were a part of their daily lives.

December 1957 - Federal troops gradually left Central High - the Little Rock Nine were left on their own.

Melba Pattillo chose to dump a bowl of chili on a boy's head.

February 1958 - she was suspended for supposedly starting a fight.

After her suspension the students of the school made cards: "one down . . . eight to go!"

Eight young black leaders finished one unforgettable year at Central High School.

Graduation Day - 600 white students and Ernest Green graduated.

1958 - Governor Faubus shut down all the public schools in Little Rock.

Riots continued in the South, fighting for segregation.

1960 - Two of the students from the Little Rock Nine graduated from Central after the school reopened.

September 1997 - President Clinton presented Little Rock Nine with Congressional Gold Medals.

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