

April 30, 1956
Lexington, Virginia

Subject: Mock Democratic Convention
Washington and Lee University
Statement from John Gilbert

At approximately 5:15PM, I had returned from the Washington and Lee dark rooms across campus when I learned that Senator Alben Barkley had collapsed. I immediately contacted my news director, Joe Moffatt, who gave me orders to make some film of Barkley lying on the floor.

I then proceeded to the front of the auditorium, and standing just off the edge of the podium I attempted to shoot a few feet of film of Barkley on the floor, when a number of students, who I believe to be assistant press students said, "No pictures". To keep from creating a scene, I then moved behind the American flag which was to the right of the podium and shot about two feet of film of Barkley on the floor.

I then remained close by and on several occasions I was told not to make any pictures of Barkley. These orders, I understand, came from Dr. Gaines, President of Washington and Lee University. Rather than create another scene, I moved to another advantage point on the outside where the ambulance was waiting for Senator Barkley. I moved to the right of the steps and was standing on the step abutments when Mrs. Barkley arrived at the door. I attempted to raise my camera, when one of the students said, "No pictures". I then told the student that I was very sorry, but I was under orders from news director, Joe Moffatt, to make some footage. He ^{the student} said then, "No pictures, no pictures at all".

I then proceeded to make some footage of Barkley being carried out on the stretcher but just as I began to trigger my camera, two or three students proceeded to block my lens.

When I raised the camera over their heads, they proceeded to pull my arms down. At that moment, Senator Barkley had been moved half way down the steps. I then struggled with the students to free my camera. But my efforts were unavailed, as between four and five students were piled on my back. They had my camera pinned between my legs.

After Senator Barkley had been put in an ambulance, they freed me and I attempted again to shoot a picture of the ambulance leaving in somewhat of a jostle. The ambulance had turned the corner of the building and I proceeded to cross thru the building to get another shot of the ambulance turning the corner on the opposite side, when I was assaulted again while leaning out of the window of the gym. And there one student attempted to pull me back. His remark, as I remember correct, was "Oh, no you don't."

My equipment was not damaged, nor was I injured, but I was prevented from photographing the event.