June 15, 1861

*This Date in Missouri Senate History*

On *This Date in Missouri Senate History*, the date was June 15, 1861, the day federal troops overtook Jefferson City, in the early months of the Civil War.

To understand this day you need to go back to June 11 of the same year, when a meeting was held at the Planter’s House Hotel in St. Louis. It was there Gov. Claiborne Fox Jackson, Gen. Sterling Price, Union Gen. Nathaniel Lyon and Cong. Frank Blair, also a Union general, met — in the hopes of a peaceful conclusion to Missouri’s status in the war. It was Lyon who is quoted as first uttering the now-infamous statement, at the end of the four-hour gathering, “This means war.”

Such a settlement wouldn’t be reached.

The following day, the governor would issue a “war proclamation.” Then, on June 13, he and other pro-southern elected officials took every official paper and the state seal and headed for Boonville.

Generals Lyon and Blair brought 2,000 federal soldiers to the Capitol City by steamboat on June 15. State government would eventually move to Neosho, while Jefferson City remained occupied by federal occupiers for the remainder of the war.

June 15, 1861, the date marking the federal takeover of Jefferson City, on *This Date in Missouri Senate History*.

(Sources: Cole County Historical Society and the Historical Marker Database)