

Atlanta Mayor Says SNCC Provoked Riot

By Jack Nelson

Los Angeles Times

ATLANTA, Sept. 7 — Mayor Ivan Allen Jr. today accused members of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee of deliberately provoking a

riot that injured 15 persons here Tuesday night.

The Mayor, who personally directed police in restoring order after a mob of Negroes attacked them with rocks and bottles, said, "Hundreds of normally good citizens were inflamed out of their normal good senses. They were victims of those who sought to incite violence."

Meanwhile, two SNCC members who harangued the Negro throng from a "Black Power" sound truck before the disturbances were charged with inciting to riot and held in lieu of \$5000 bonds. They were identified as William Ware, head of the local SNCC chapter, and Bobby Vance Walton, 20.

They were among 73 persons arrested during Tuesday's disorders. The first of those arrested were sentenced to terms of 15 to 27 days in the City Stockade today.

Police Chief Herbert Jenkins also blamed the SNCC for the riot. He said the organization "is now the nonstudent violent committee — and we must and will deal with it accordingly." He said that the group had fallen into the hands of "irresponsible . . . leaders."

[Stokely Carmichael, chairman of SNCC, today denied that his organization began Tuesday's riot, United Press International reported.

["The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee cannot start a rebellion just like that," Carmichael said in a

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taped interview with radio station WAOK.

["It is started by conditions of oppression," he said.]

Mayor Allen, pledging that the rioters and their instigators will face criminal charges, singled out Carmichael for criticism and said if he causes further trouble he "will be met wherever he comes under whatever conditions he seeks to impose."

Police continued to patrol the riot area just south of the new Atlanta Stadium today. During the afternoon they arrested 10 more Negroes in putting down another brief disturbance attributed to two SNCC members. Tonight, Negro police and moderate Negro leaders rushed into Vine City, one of the city's worst slums, when 400 Negroes crowded into the streets. Some were fighting each other. About 10 policemen restored order.

SNCC's increasing involvement in violence and its belligerence toward police authority have drawn criticism from civil rights leaders, but most of them still refrain from direct attacks or unequivocal breaks with the organization.

The six-year-old civil rights organization has pursued a more militant course since Carmichael was elected chairman last May to replace John Lewis. Carmichael recently has made statements about "tearing up the country," "burning down courthouses," and fighting violence with violence.

Top leaders of SNCC, which has purged most of its white members and lost most of its white supporters since embarking on belligerent policies marked by "Black Power" slogans, reportedly were

having a national meeting here before Tuesday's outbreak.

A city police source said SNCC members from New York, Philadelphia and the Watts community in Los Angeles were believed to be at the meeting and in the vicinity of Tuesday's riot.

The Atlanta summit leadership conference, made up of leaders of the city's top civil rights organizations, issued a statement declaring that while Atlanta is not perfect, "It is too good to be destroyed by simpleminded bigots."

The conference declared that the wounding of a Negro auto theft suspect by a white policeman was "unfortunate, but not sufficient grounds for anyone or any organization to go into a community and incite the people."

The shooting of the suspect, Robert Prather, triggered the SNCC-inspired demonstrations against "police brutality."

The summit conference, which discussed but decided against naming SNCC in its statement, noted that Prather was shot by "an officer in the pursuit of his duty."

Prather, shot in the hip and side, was reported in satisfactory condition at Grady Memorial Hospital today. Before Tuesday's outbreaks, SNCC members told Negro demonstrators Prather had been "murdered while handcuffed." Actually, he was shot while fleeing police.