

EDITORIALS



The Riot In Atlanta

America Bleeds Internally

The ordinary trouble-makers and the professional agitators stirred up the riot in Atlanta this week. Mayor Ivan Allen, Jr., and the city's Police Department kept it from spreading and becoming even worse than it was.

Several things stand out:

—One was the courage of Mayor Allen. He calmly insisted upon law and order. He acted at the actual scene of crisis, not from the remoteness of an office at City Hall. His cool head and great determination were examples for all to follow. The incident could easily have spread beyond control had it not been for Mayor Allen. The Griffin Daily News admires his calmness under fire, his physical as well as moral courage.

—Another was the restraint of the policemen. Taunted and insulted, they resisted the normal impulse to strike out violently, which would have been exactly what the agitators wanted them to do.

—A third is that known hate peddlers cold-bloodedly whipped up the demonstration in a professionally trained manner. They rode up and down the streets and used loudspeakers to encourage individuals to gather into what became a mob. Some method must be found to prevent the abuse of civil rights by such exhorters as these who prey upon suspicions and emotions. They exploit what they call their "black brothers." They are guilty of inciting to riot and should be punished for that crime.

—Also, all people must respect law and order. This begins with the individual citizen and the individual policeman. The policeman, for example, has no right to insult a citizen when he issues a traffic ticket. Nor has the citizen the right to insult the officer as one did and got away with it in Atlanta some few days ago. Take it from there and extend it from the traffic ticket to the felonious crimes. If policemen are to enforce the law as it is their obligation to do, the ordinary law-abiding citizens must accord them the tools with which to work. After all, a police officer represents all the great body of law-abiding people who make up a peaceful and orderly society. If an officer of the law abuses his position—which is rare indeed, these days—recourse may be had in an orderly manner but not by lawless riots.

—Finally, we have a severe problem which must be solved. Numerous long range proposals have been made, and a good many put in practice. Short term, we have a crisis which now amounts to riot, rebellion, insurrection and in some instances open revolution against duly constituted governmental authority. America can not tolerate this. Mayor Allen and his administration handled the situation there quite well. Other mayors and officials have done less well in other cities of the nation. America cannot continue indefinitely to bleed internally.



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