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The Atlanta Riot Unmasked SNCC

The recent riots in Atlanta offer convincing evidence that most, if not all, of the racial violence in our large cities has been organized and led by a small minority bent upon the destruction of our society.

My authority for this statement is Ralph McGill, publisher of the Atlanta Constitution, long a moving and militant force for equal treatment of the Negro citizen as provided by law and the Constitution of the United States.

McGill places responsibility for the Atlanta disturbances squarely upon the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC, or SNICK) and its leader, Stokely Carmichael. SNICK, according to McGill,

has no more than 300 members. These have been the agents of anarchy in Watts, New York, Chicago and other major cities.

SNICK'S beginnings were more auspicious. Its early student leaders were motivated by high dedication to the civil rights cause. Now the John Lewises and other responsables are out. Control of SNICK is held by the extreme radicals, of whom Carmichael is the dominating figure.

As McGill says, SNICK is no longer a civil rights organization but an anarchistic group which is openly and officially committed to the destruction of existing institutions.

Though small in membership, SNICK appeals to all haters of the white man. Its slogans of defiance intrigue the very young, as was shown in Atlanta, where the mob was largely composed of youngsters in the 12- to 18-age range.

THERE APPEARS to be no question but that SNICK'S funds are supplied from abroad. One of its lawyers is a registered Castro agent. Its agitators shout Havana slogans to the effect that we must live through violence. "Black Power" is but the rallying cry.

Fortunately for Atlanta, it has a mayor who confronted the mob with rare courage. Though physically manhandled and taunted with shouts of "white devil," Mayor Ivan Allen Jr., remained upon the scene until the crowd had been dispersed.

Mayor Allen gave short shrift to charges of police brutality. "I saw plenty of brutality," he said, "but it was all directed against police officers." At his press conference, Mayor Allen stated that "if Stokely Carmichael is looking for a battleground, he has created one, and he will be met in whatever situation he chooses."

Atlanta's Negro community leaders were quick to decry the rioting and violence. The Atlanta Summit Leadership

Conference, a Negro organization, denounced both SNICK and Carmichael, while calling for constructive measures designed to alleviate problems which directly concern the Negro.

Dr. Martin Luther King, president Roy Wilkins of the NAACP and Whitney Young who heads the Urban League have all repudiated Stokely Carmichael and his tactics.

ATLANTA has long enjoyed an enviable reputation for racial amity. Ironically, it was Atlanta's splendid image that the destroyers sought to tarnish.

And yet, unwittingly, Stokely Carmichael and his followers performed a useful service not only for Atlanta but for the entire nation.

For here was stripped away the myth that Negroes are always incited to riot over poor living conditions, lack of employment and denial of civil rights.

Carmichael has now revealed himself for what he is—a scheming fomenter of disorder, a mad dog who attacks all whites indiscriminately, a revolutionist who seeks to burn and destroy, a terrorist who defies law and spits upon our flag.

THE RIGHT peaceably to assemble is guaranteed by the Bill of Rights, as is the freedom to demonstrate and to seek redress of grievances.

Together and in a spirit of constructive co-operation, the Negro and white communities must find solutions and answers to the problems which beset our cities. For they are both numerous and difficult.

A major start has been made in many areas. Where failures have occurred, the Negro is usually as much at fault as his white brother.

But the effort must go ahead if we are to enjoy the fruits of a compatible society in which there is mutuality of purpose and respect for all.

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