

STATEMENT BY IVAN ALLEN, JR.
MAYOR OF ATLANTA

On Civil Disorder in Atlanta, Tuesday, September 6, 1966

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The disorders in the Sommerhill neighborhood in Southeast Atlanta last evening were the result of a deliberate attempt by certain members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (Snick) to create an incident of this very nature.

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The spark of violence ignited by a few reckless and irresponsible individuals touched off an explosion of civil disorder that shattered Atlanta's long record of racial amity.

Only through the courageous and forceful action of our police officers was this shameful outbreak contained and law and order restored.

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Atlanta's only consolation is that although property damage was ~~heavy~~ light, the explosion was snuffed out without any loss of life.

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I am not taking from hearsay when I say that every citizen of Atlanta owes a debt of whole hearted gratitude to our dedicated police officers, for I was personally in the thick of the disturbance throughout those frightful hours of mob hysteria.

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No one need make charges to me about police brutality during this disorder, I saw plenty of brutality, but it was being used against the police officers, not by them.

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From what I heard with my own ears and saw with my own eyes in the center of this melee, I feel certain that hundreds of normally good citizens were inflamed out of their normal senses. They were victimized by those who sought

to incite violence.

16 It is a tragedy that a few irresponsible and misdirected youths have such utter disregard and contempt for their fellow man that they place the lives and property of innocent citizens in serious jeopardy.