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STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RIGHTS WORKER SENTENCED TO TWO YEARS

AMERICUS, GEORGIA: An all white male jury deliberated four hours before returning a "guilty" verdict against white SNCC field secretary Ralph Allen.

Allen was charged with "assault with intent to murder" Patrolman John W. Alford, of Americus, during an anti-segregation demonstration here last summer. Judge T. L. Marshall sentenced Allen to two years in jail. Allen's attorney, C. B. King, of Albany, indicated that he would appeal.

Allen, SNCC field workers Donald Harris and John Perdew, and Thomas McDaniel, an Americus citizen, were indicted here last week by a Sumter County Grand Jury. They were all charged with "assault with intent to murder" and "resisting arrest."

All four were released from jail after 68 days behind bars in early November when a three-judge federal panel declared Georgia's insurrection and unlawful assembly laws unconstitutional. The four were held on various counts following an anti-segregation demonstration on August 8. Had they been convicted on the insurrection count, they might have received the death penalty.

Another youth, Zev Aleony, of CORE, also charged earlier with insurrection, was not named in last week's indictments. Instead, John L. Barnum, treasurer of the Sumter County Movement, the group that coordinated last summer's protest, was indicted for "perjuring" himself before a justice of the peace.

A hearing was set for February 14 when defense attorney King filed for a new trial. Allen was released on \$5,000 appeal bond.

During his trial, the state contended that Mr. Allen had thrown a bottle at Americus police officer, John W. Alford, during a protest demonstration. Allen denied this, and charged that Americus officers beat him before they arrested him.