

NEWS RELEASE

STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE
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ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30314

For Immediate Release
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ATLANTA "OPEN CITY"
DRIVE BEGINS

ATLANTA, GEORGIA - High school and college students here are beginning an all-out drive to make Atlanta an "open city."

The drive began here two days after the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) announced an end to demonstrations at the Dobbs House outlets in Atlanta. SNCC workers and members of the Committee On Appeal For Human Rights (COAHR) with the help of comedian Dick Gregory successfully integrated more than 15 Dobbs and Toddle Houses locally.

The new demonstrations - some led by John Lewis, SNCC Chairman, and Gloria Richardson, Chairman of the Cambridge (Maryland) Nonviolent Action Committee - are aimed at integrating public and private eating places, hotels, and at securing more jobs for Negroes.

Students have staged stand-in and sit-in demonstrations at several eating places, and at the office of Atlanta Mayor Ivan Allen, Jr.

Special targets for the protests have been restaurants in the Krystals and Morrison's chains.

At the Mayor's office, the demonstrators said they were protesting overcrowding at Negro schools. The students said they were "playing hockey for freedom" and would learn "civics in the streets."

Several local civil rights groups met last Monday night, January 6, to adopt a battle plan for integration of Atlanta. A coalition of Negro groups, the Atlanta Summit Conference, has attempted to negotiate some integration but several members of the Negro community are dissatisfied with the slow pace of integration.

Despite its label as a "progressive" city, most gains won by Negroes here have come through court action or street demonstrations. The Summit group has felt pressure from the activists, however, and meets on Saturday, January 11 to discuss the "battle plan."

Schools and busses integrated here after Negroes filed suits. Lunch counters opened only after prolonged demonstrations and a boycott of downtown stores. Negroes have picketed some stores to win jobs for Negroes.

Mayor Allen told the city's Board Of Aldermen this week he will seek a public accommodations ordinance if "voluntary desegregation" does not occur soon.