

NEWS RELEASE
STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NO NEGROES ON JURY, SO COURT FREES WHITE SNCC
WORKER

ATLANTA, GEORGIA - The Georgia Court of Appeals has overturned the conviction of a white Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) worker because of the "systematic exclusion of Negroes from service on juries".

In an opinion written by Judge Robert H. Hall, the court held on July 7 that a white defendant is entitled to a trial by a jury from which Negroes are not systematically excluded. The court said the Americus, Georgia trial judge who sentenced SNCC worker Ralph W. Allen, 23, of Melrose, Massachusetts, to two years in jail for assault during a demonstration last summer erred in refusing to allow evidence that Sumter County juries were excluding Negroes from service.

Allen was convicted for "assault with intent to murder" an Americus policeman on December 11, 1963. Allen, SNCC workers Donald Harris, 23, of New York and John Perdew, 21, of Denver, Colorado and Thomas McDaniel of Americus had been indicted by a county grand jury on the assault charge and a charge of "resisting arrest." The others have not yet been tried.

All were held in jail for 86 days following their arrest in Americus on August 8, 1963. They were charged with "attempting to incite insurrection" and faced the death penalty under the 1871 Georgia law, later ruled unconstitutional by a three-judge federal panel that set the youths free on November 1, 1963.

They were also charged with unlawful assembly, rioting, and obstructing a lawful arrest. Harris and Allen were charged with assault. All but McDaniel were denied bail, and his was set at \$12,000.

At Allen's trial, the state contended he had thrown a bottle at Americus policeman John Alford. Allen denied this, and charged police there beat him before they placed him under arrest.