

Local paper paints Summerhill as murder nest; residents demand retraction for story

Summerhill residents feel their community has problems enough without the local daily newspapers trying to make the community south of the Atlanta Stadium look like a murderous jungle.

About a dozen persons gathered at the Sum-Mec Center, 65 Georgia Ave. Monday afternoon to protest the refusal of the Atlanta Journal and Constitution Sunday magazine to retract parts of a March 26 article, "On Duty with Death."

SHOT IN "SUMMERHILL"

The story, written by Phil Garner, stated that Atlanta Police Officer James R. Green was shot and killed in his paddy wagon in "down there in Summerville (sic), past the liquor store where the toughs hang out until the dawn."

The article also said the community beats up "at the first of the month when the welfare checks are arriving (when) the neighborhood's going to jump with liquor-sparked violence."

Residents pointed out that the slaying of the patrolman actually took place several miles to the east, but that the local news media is out to make Summerhill seem a hot-

bed of violence, "revolutionaries, snipers and executions."

"We feel this story is a contract for police to come here and do what they want, including murder, because they think the community is going to shoot first," said Summerhill community leader (Booker) Price.

"Here we are trying to improve ourselves, but Summerhill is being used to show all the wrongs

"There's been a hell of a heap of nasty things said about us"

that are happening elsewhere," said Mrs. Mattie Ansley Jackson, who works at the Sum-Mec Center.

And an elderly Summerhill resident said at the meeting with the Atlanta Voice: "They're deliberately trying to low-rate this community, drive the property values down so they can but it up and tear it down for parking lots to use for the



Alvin (Booker) Price

stadium. I think people are being paid to do it."

NO RETRACTION

Price said he contacted the reporter Garner about the story last week, but that there probably wouldn't be any retraction.

The March 26 article, which was basically about the dangers faced by city patrolmen, began: "The streets are forbidding at 1 a.m. just south of the stadium where rows of flimsy public housing porches stretch out in a lamp-lit haze."

"On a Friday night or Saturday night, policemen knew, especially at the first of the month when the welfare checks are arriving, the neighborhood's going to jump with liquor-sparked violence," the Page 10 article continued.

"Down there in Summerville (misspelled), past the liquor store where the toughs hang out until the dawn, was where officer James R. Green was killed."

Price said the story is part of a pattern, to make the historic Atlanta community look lawless. "People not familiar with Summerhill would think it's all bad," he told the Voice.

"And when any of them serve on a grand jury on a police brutality case in the community, they would let the officer go because stories like this would make it look violent."

WELFARE DRUNKS?

Mrs. Jackson criticized

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Young To Announce For Congress On April 10

Rev. Andrew Young will announce as a candidate for the U. S. House of Representatives from Georgia's 5th Congressional District at a campaign Kick-Off Dinner on Monday April 10, 7:30 p.m. At The Royal Coach Motor Hotel.

Young, chairman of the Community Relations Commission for the City of Atlanta, is one of the nation's leading advocates of the just society in which conflicts are resolved coalitions of black and white, rich and poor young and old that reflect the cooperating society which he encourages.

Young will outline his platform for the campaign and begin the discussion of issues that the voters will confront in the election.

Dr. Joseph E. Lowery, pastor of Central United Methodist Church, will be the master of ceremonies for the \$10-a-plate fund-raising dinner.



Mrs. Coretta Scott King and Ivan Allen, Jr., former Mayor of Atlanta, will be among the guests responding to Young's announcement for his candidacy.

Young's office is located on the ninth floor of Citizens Trust Bank Building; telephone number 659-1230. The dinner and the campaign will be coordinated out of his office.

Local Paper Paints Summerhill

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ed the story's implication that people who receive welfare checks spend it on liquor. "We have some decent people down there," she said.

"... even if they're on welfare," added Booker Price.

And the street-corner "toughs" are the ones who cooperate most with the community relations officers of the police department, Mrs. Jackson said.

"Summerhill is almost a ghost town now but with all this crap (she points to the Journal Constitution magazine), people would be scared to come here."

Another resident said much of the trouble in the community comes from two sources: people who come from outside Summerhill, and residents driven to fury by the near-total disruption of the neighborhood when ball games are held at the nearby stadium.

Many streets are converted from two-day to one-day traffic, parking

is banned on many narrower streets and ball game mobs park anywhere they please, the resident said, causing much resident-stadium hostility.

A young resident said any acts of violence in Summerhill are magnified by police and the white press.

"We're trying to build this community up, not tear it down," Mrs. Jackson told the Voice. "There's been a hell of a heap of nasty things said about us."

POVERTY VIOLENCE

Price said the violence that takes place in the poverty stricken Black neighborhood "is, to a certain extent, in certain ways, when folks don't have the finances for food or for decent housing. You can become violent that way."

Even the Black broadcast media neglects Summerhill, Mrs. Jackson added. "Right now, I think I'll call Vann Dunn (WIGO newsman) and tell him that I'm ready to cut another woman's throat over my husband, and see how quick he'll be over."

quor stores and groceries in the area get speedy police reaction to calls, but not the people.

"Easter Sunday night, I got a call saying a man had locked some children out of this house and was beating their mother," Mrs. Jackson said. "We called the police. They were 35 to 40 minutes getting there, but rolled down the street and just parked. The kids screamed come on, come down this way, but the police car just pulled off and down the other direction while this man was whipping the woman behind the locked door."

"The people don't get any protection down here," she said.

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