

Guns in Wilmington, N.C., Barred in Racial Unrest

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WILMINGTON, N. C., Oct. 5 (UPI) — Public possession of firearms was barred today in this port city, which has been beset by sniper fire against the police in black neighborhoods and rallies by armed whites.

Mayor B. D. Swartz and Meares Harris, chairman of the New Hanover County Commissioners, declared a state of emergency in a proclamation read without comment to newsmen.

The proclamation said that, beginning at 5 P.M. today and continuing through 5 P.M. next Sunday, all persons "shall refrain from transporting or possess off his own premises any dangerous weapon or substances in areas within the city or county."

Mayor Swartz and Mr. Harris acted after the chief of police warned that efforts to maintain law and order in the city were being undermined by armed whites holding rallies and following patrol cars.

5 Officers Wounded

Five law enforcement officers have been slightly wounded by shotgun fire from snipers in black neighborhoods here.

since last Friday, and another patrol car was fired at last night.

About 250 armed whites milled around in a park for several hours early today, and other whites have followed patrol cars through the city on night patrols.

Fire bombs slightly damaged a gasoline station and a power company warehouse last night or early today, and a school bus was set afire, but Police Chief H. E. Williamson said things appeared to be calming down.

Trouble erupted after a high school football game Friday when whites and blacks began fighting, and the turmoil spread

to a black housing area where rocks were thrown at cars passing through the area.

Three police officers received slight shotgun wounds early Sunday, and two others received slight wounds early yesterday in a battle with snipers in a black neighborhood.

During the weekends, Ku Klux Klan leaders offered aid to the police, and many of the whites driving around the city at night with guns said that they were members of the group called Rights of White People, which was formed to oppose busing of school children for desegregation.

White Man Killed

A white man was shot to death on the porch of his house on the fringe of a black neighborhood last night and a 30-year-old black man, William T. McGhee, was charged with murder. Chief Williamson called the incident a "neighborhood shooting," and said that the men had been arguing for a month. They lived a block apart.

Mayor Swartz attributed the problem to the busing of school children, which he said had increased racial tensions.

Last January, black youths began demonstrating here to back demands for a greater voice in student affairs at desegregated schools. Fire bombings broke out, and two men—one black and the other white—were killed.

The Rights of White People group held a rally Sunday at which a speaker said he was tired of whites being killed.

The police kept a close watch on the whites at the park last night and later stopped a car in which several whites were riding. The police confiscated two shotguns, a carbine and several pistols. Joseph M. Rogers, 25, was arrested and charged with discharging a firearm in the city.