

Race Fights Flare Up In Cities

BY UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

Racial tension flared into fighting in Savannah, Ga., and St. Augustine, Fla., Thursday but police swinging night sticks and armed with tear gas acted swiftly to prevent widespread trouble.

In St. Augustine, Police Chief Virgil Stewart and a squad of patrolmen rushed in to halt the fighting between a group of white men and eight Negro student demonstrators outside a dime store, scene of lunch counter sitdown demonstrations the past three days.

A crowd of about 100 white men had gathered outside the store during the demonstration which began at 10 a.m. The Negroes were struck with fists in the face when they left the store about 2 p.m. Stewart ordered the Negroes to leave the scene and they rode away in a taxicab.

Between 25 and 30 Negro high school students were arrested during a lunch counter demonstration in New Bern, N.C., Thursday and marched to the police station to be booked on trespass charges.

The Negroes shouted and sang hymns in the courtroom while being booked and released on \$25 bonds. Officers quieted them by warning of additional charges of disorderly conduct. Lunch counters at two New Bern stores were closed when the demonstrators arrived. When they refused to leave police were called and

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marched them two abreast to the police station.

Groups of whites and Negroes gathered in downtown Savannah and fighting broke out until police reinforced by 24 state troopers and tear gas guns quelled it.

Police and troopers patrolled Savannah's downtown business districts, dispersing crowds and whisking troublemakers to jail. Savannah experienced its first lunch counter "sitdown" demonstrations Wednesday and the incidents heightened racial feeling.

Thursday's incidents included scattered fist fights and rock throwing. Crowds of whites and Negroes exchanged taunts and threats on the streets following a big St. Patrick's Day parade.