

Maddox
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801 Woodland Avenue
Rossville, Georgia 30741
October 12, 1966

The Honorable Ivan Allen, Jr.
Mayor of Atlanta
Georgia

Sir:

You would have done well to have remembered and heeded these words of M. Henry, "Wise anger is like the fire from the flint; there is a great ado to bring it out; and when it does come, it is out again immediately."

As far as we are concerned you lost the dignity and respect of your office and the above title, but were afraid that if we didn't use the proper letter form that you might consider us one of those ignorant Georgians. And we're referring to your quote in an AP article appearing in the Chattanooga Times on Friday, September 30, 1966 and we quote, "It is deplorable that the combined forces of ignorance, prejudice, reactionism and the duplicity of many Republican voters have thrust upon the State of Georgia Lester Maddox, a totally unqualified individual as the Democratic nominee for governor." "We cannot permit our state's progress to be stopped and reversed by yesterday's mistake." Unquote.

As taxpaying citizens of Georgia, although not of Atlanta, we strongly resent your statement and implication. From the terms you used all of us could be classed under one of them. We are not taking issue with the qualifications of Mr. Maddox but we think that if you would stop and ponder for a moment you would realize that voters weren't voting so much "for" Mr. Maddox as they were in voting "against" existing conditions. Whether we voted for or against Mr. Maddox is unimportant but of great importance is the fact that we are guaranteed the right to go to the polls (at least at the present time) and vote for whom we please. We should be allowed this right without criticism from anyone. And we will continue to exercise this right until such time that it will be taken from us.

We would like to submit a question to you, "If the election had been reversed, would you have made the same statement or was it because your candidate lost? After all, we would have been the same peoples going to the polls."

Charron once wrote, "Despair is like forward children, who, when you take away one of their playthings, throw the rest into the fire for madness. It grows angry with itself, turns its own executioner, and revenges its misfortunes on its own head." You must have been in deepest despair or most angry to have made such a statement, attributed to you, against the peoples of Georgia. We believe it did accomplish one thing, it started many citizens to thinking, who before, had been in complete apathy and indifference.

We should like to state in closing that we do not belong to either the Democratic or Republican Party but have always had enough interest in our nation and

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the great State of Georgia to go to the polls and vote for the individual of our choice and the one we considered to be the best qualified and who would represent all peoples, not from a political standpoint but for their welfare and betterment.

If you have read this letter through, thank you.

Yours very truly,

Thurman Clarkson

Mr. & Mrs. Thurman B. Clarkson

TBC:mvc