

MEMORANDUM

To : IAJR

From : AD

This is an effort to fill you in on what happen in the Peyton harlan Road situation since you left Wednesday evening.

1. As a result of the "All Citizens "meeting the Atlanta Con stitution carried a story Thursday morning that there was a split in the Negro leadership and that Leage and Empire would not send a repøesentative to your committee but just let the "All Citizens" represent them.
2. Apparently someone was floating a baloon, because C. A. Scott was at the meeting and carried the same story as the Consti.
3. Col. Walden called me Thursday morning and wanted to let us know the story was "erroneous" and that he was issuing a statement to correct it. The "corrected" story came out Thursday evening. . . stating that the League and Empire would elect their own representatives, but would "support the main objectives of the All Citizens Comìmittee." . . . They were to have a joint meeting of the three Negro groups Friday afternoon, after which Col. Walden would advise me of the representatives' names.
4. Col. Walden, Dr. Borders both told me prior to the meeting that they thought things were shaping up as you would want, and they felt sure the negotiations could go ahead in spite of the barricade. . . the papers carried this same feeling. After the meeting Friday afternoon, that feeling did not prevail, and the only thing they have volunteered to me is that the joint group voted 26 - 6 to ask you to their next meeting so they could "hear your side." They are planning to have their next meeting on Wednesday, probably at 3:00 p. m.

I am attaching the newspapers to which I refer in case you haven't seen them, and I call your particular attention to Saturday's Consti and Gene Pattersons editorial.
5. To continue on the Southwest Citizens side. . . as I told you previously, Virgil Copeland stated to me that they wanted to help remove the pressure on you and would do anything necessary to help the situation. . even to asking you to take down the "wall".
6. When he came in, this was still the case, but they do not intend (at this point) to recommend the re9pening of the road itself. . . and had plhrsued the course suggested by our Law Department of getting the individual property owners who acquired the abandoned road to erect a fence.

Let me stop here for a few additional points:

a. First of all, the barricade is sitting on city property as we do not have the legal right to barricade private property. . .

b. There are signs at both end of both streets stating "Dead End"

c. It is the feeling of Newell ~~Edenfor~~ Edenfield that our case in Fulton Superior Court will be sustained, but that the City has no right to block off private property (the abandoned portion) with a barricade.

d. The residents in that section seem willing to remove the wall, but want in some way to visually close the street, since they say white people won't buy if it is closed and neither ~~with~~ will the colored people.

e. I personally feel that the removal of the barricade would satisfy the Negroes as it would ~~re~~open the street, at least temporarily until the property owners decided to either plow it up and plant it in cotton, or put up their own fence. . .

7. The Southwest citizens and expressed by Virgil Copeland and Charles Edwards (and by the way, Edwards seems to be extremely competent) are buried in their own individual problem of the protection of their houses and the necessity to close or keep closed the road. . . they do not realize the terrific impact this has had from the stand point of National publicity.

8. In talking to both Copeland and Edwards (and Bill Howland sat with us) I pointed out this publicity and the fact that we had two problems. . . (1) the emotional one which makes news because of the barricade, and (2) the problem of actually working out a mutually satisfactory solution. . . and said ~~the~~ to them that we should remove the first problem in order to solve the second. . . they ~~realize~~ realize this and will ~~probably~~ probably recommend the 4 points which I have mentioned to you:

1. Removal of barricade
2. Support of rezoning for housing
3. Request ending to blockbusting tactics
4. Rerouting of street to form the original idea of the double horseshoe.

9. I received the names of four groups, which is attached, but have not heard from Dr. M. L. Kingsr. as to the "elected" representatives of the All Citizens Committee (which Col. Walden told me they would have.) I left a call for him

Saturday ~~toix~~ but he never returned it. Therefore I addressed the attached letter to just the four groups.

10. The Southwest Citizens Association is having their meeting Saturday night to decide what course of action they ~~coux~~ would take and what they will recommend. . . we will know ~~Sunday morning~~ Monday morning. . .

11. Copeland will still wait to hear from this office as to when the meeting should be called. . . . and Col. Walden and /or M. L. King Sr. will contact you probably Monday to state the willingness of the All Citizens Comm. to "hear your side. . .

After seeing what Copeland has to present to the bi racial group, we should let him know whether to call the meeting as originally discussed for Wednesday. . .

or wait until you have met with the All Citizens group.

One thing important to remember is that the suit comes up in Fulton Superior Court on Thursday morning. . . and should the bi racial group meet Wednesday and the white folk recommend the removal of the barricade, then the court case would be easier. . . .

Another thought. . . if somewhere the decision to reopen the road is mutually agreed, it would probably take a month to six weeks to do it. . . as the Land Department will have to buy back the land (if they will sell it back) or condemn it, it will have to go before the PW#1 Committee and the Board of Aldermen. . .

Of course, this would be admitting a mistake, and a rerouting of streets upon mutual agreement seems better to my meager-thinking mind.

Oh well, all of this is minor and will be satisfactorily resolved. . . what worries me is the swimming pool situation which faces us shortly. . . every national news media with whom I have seen is "just waiting" that should be the big story of the year, they say. . . .