

(DRAFT)

1970 PROGRAM PLAN
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

SECTION I - LEGISLATION

The Community Relations Commission has been operating for almost three years under the initial ordinance creating the Commission. The Commission has been able in many cases to implement successfully its duties and functions "to foster mutual understanding, tolerance, and respect among all economic, social, religious, and ethnic groups in the City." The Board of Aldermen also charged the Commission with the responsibility "to investigate, discourage and seek to prevent discriminatory practices against any individual because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin or ancestry." Here the Commission has found that the only tool it has is that of persuasion. In light of the nature of the discriminatory practices still existing in Atlanta, the Commission has found this tool to be inadequate. To do the job the Commission believes must be done in eliminating discriminatory practices, local legislative action is needed in the following areas:

1. Public Accommodations. Although the 1964 Civil Rights Act has been an effective tool in eliminating discrimination in most businesses serving the public, the law is applicable only to firms engaged in interstate commerce. Some Atlanta businesses not in interstate commerce, such as trailer parks, skating rinks, health spas and barber shops, discriminate because of race. In the opinion of the Commission, it is unjust for this small number of businesses to enjoy the prosperity of this great City while the vast majority of businesses are abiding by the letter and spirit of the Federal law. The Federal remedial process is slow, cumbersome and expensive. A local public accommodations ordinance with enforcement powers through the municipal courts of Atlanta is needed.
2. Contract Compliance. In 1967 the Board of Aldermen enacted Ordinance #31-41.1 making it necessary for firms contracting with the City to have a non-discriminatory hiring policy. Each supplier certifies he does not discriminate but nothing else is done to enforce the ordinance. The ordinance contains no investigatory or enforcement powers. In 1969, the budget of the City of Atlanta was \$207,000,000. The full implementation of this ordinance would be an important lever in ending employment discrimination in Atlanta.

3. Fair Employment. The 1964 Civil Rights Act covers firms with 25 or more employees. This leaves thousands of Atlanta citizens without fair employment protection. Furthermore, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's backlog of cases in the Southeast is proof that more action is needed on a local level. Other Southern cities such as Miami and Nashville have found their local fair employment ordinances to be highly useful in combating discrimination. The Commission believes that Atlanta needs an ordinance with enforcement powers to cover firms with ten or more employees.

In order to enforce effectively ordinances on public accommodations, contract compliance and fair employment the Commission needs subpoena, cease and desist, and other powers which may be necessary to implement these ordinances.

The Commission recommends that the number of Commission members be increased from 20 to 22, with the additional two positions being designated for young persons age 22 or under. The Commission asks that the terms for these two youth positions be rotated yearly for increased youth involvement. The youth Commissioners are to have full voting rights and powers. They are to serve on an equal basis with the other Commission members.

SECTION II - TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Immediately after its creation three years ago, CRC instituted a series of Town Hall meetings in disadvantaged areas. These meetings gave citizens an opportunity to express their grievances and City Hall a chance to take remedial action. CRC benefited from this program because it gave the Commission a direct involvement with the people in their neighborhoods. The citizens benefited because they had a direct line to City Hall.

Concurrently the office of Community Development Coordinator was created to deal with City services in disadvantaged areas. Although the CRC has had an effective working relationship with Johnny Robinson's office, duplication of effort exists. CRC's main goals are to improve human relations and to eliminate discrimination. The Town Hall meetings deal primarily with improving City services. The Commission recommends that the staff of the Community Development Coordinator be expanded with more City coordinators being placed in disadvantaged areas on a year round basis and that the Community Development Coordinator's office assume the responsibility for the Town Hall meeting program.

SECTION III - PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Ordinance creating the Community Relations Commission states in Sec. 3.8.5.:

"Pursuant to the named functions and duties of the Community Relations Commission, it is empowered to hold hearings and take the testimony of any person under oath. The Commission, after the completion of any hearing, shall make a report in writing to the Mayor setting forth the facts found by it and its recommendations. At any hearing before the Commission a witness shall have the right to be advised by counsel present during such hearings."

The Commission has made very little use of this section of its charter. In an effort to get to the root cause of discrimination, CRC will institute public hearings in such areas as public accommodations, employment discrimination, school segregation, housing discrimination and other vital areas affecting improved human relations in Atlanta.

SECTION IV - EMPLOYMENT

1. Starting in September CRC will undertake a systematic study of minority employment and promotion in each City Hall department, the Atlanta Housing Authority, and non-professional positions in the Atlanta School System. Upon completion of this study, the Commission will make a public report of its findings with recommendations.

2. Jobs Creation-Atlanta, a joint project of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and CRC, has been refunded for another year. Maurice Mitchell has been employed to direct this project during 1969-70. During the last 12 months CRC has worked with 25 companies on their hiring and recruiting practices of minority persons. The plan for the forthcoming year is to continue working with these 25 firms and to add 15 new companies.

3. The Commission will work for the elimination of discrimination in Atlanta labor unions, trade associations, and professional organizations.

4. CRC will continue its efforts with an ad hoc committee to make a study of anticipated job openings in Atlanta during the next five years and how vocational and other training can be geared to meet these needs.

5. CRC will consider having another workshop on minority economic development in mid-winter.

SECTION V -- EDUCATION

1. CRC will work with the new school board to improve the quality of education for minorities and the disadvantaged and to accelerate desegregation.

2. The CRC plans to work with the Atlanta School System and the City Planning Department in determining how locations for new schools can assist in solving the desegregation problem.

3. The Commission will make personal calls on each college president in Atlanta to urge his institution to accelerate student and faculty recruitment across racial lines.

SECTION VI - POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1. The Commission will work with the Police Department and the Urban Laboratory in developing training programs in police-community relations for senior officers, patrolment and new recruits. Efforts will be made to utilize outstanding sociologists, criminologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, law enforcement officers and consultants in Atlanta and elsewhere.

2. The CRC will offer its services to the Police Department in initiating more training in human relations for the police/community services officers.

3. CRC will monitor Municipal Courts and make recommendations to judges on how human relations can be improved.

SECTION VII - HOUSING

1. In the last nine years 22 Atlanta schools have gone from all white to virtually all Negro. The City of Atlanta Planning Department estimates that in 1967 and 1968 490 City blocks changed from white to non-white.

After identifying one or two target areas for transition the Commission will seek to marshall total community support..... businesses, churches, the Atlanta School Board, human relations organizations, real estate brokers, and the press.....to stabilize these areas. The Commission will seek to develop ways and means to report and halt block-busting.

2. The CRC plans to send out teams of black and white staff members to various apartment buildings and housing developments and ask for housing. In doing so discriminatory practices will be identified and dealt with.

3. The Commission will contact The Advertising Council and the Department of Housing and Urban Development to find out the availability of public service TV spots, ads and car-cards. The staff will then urge local media to use these public service ads on open housing.

4. CRC will continue to participate actively as a member of the Metropolitan Atlanta Housing Conference which seeks to further open housing and the dispersal of low-income housing to all quadrants of the City and suburbs.

5. There is a tremendous need in Atlanta for a centralized agency which lists available housing at all income levels. CRC plans to talk to representatives of the American Friends Service

Committee, Metropolitan Fair Housing Conference and the Mayor's Housing Resources Committee to see if such a function can be assumed.

SECTION VIII - PUBLIC INFORMATION

1. CRC will strive to further its public information role by working closely with all news media and having members and staff speak to church and civic groups. It is the wish of the staff to involve more intensively Commission members in public speaking roles.

The staff will make personal calls on television stations and service clubs offering a list of panelists and speakers who reflect a wide range of experience and view points in the human relations field.

2. Special effort will be made to concentrate on the human relations education of white and blue collar workers in Atlanta. The staff will prepare two or three stories for the 25 largest company house organs in the City. Personal calls will be made by the staff at high cooperate levels to urge the use of these materials.

SECTION IX - INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

1. The Commission will invite all Atlanta professional organizations concerned with the human relations to a one day meeting at City Hall in December so each organization can outline its program plan for 1970.

2. Throughout the year the staff will concentrate on improving communications with other human relations organizations.....working

directly with them and through the Atlanta Chapter of the National Association of Inter-Group Relations Officials (NAIRO).

SECTION X - WORKSHOPS IN HUMAN RELATIONS

1. In mid-1970 the CRC staff plans to repeat several sessions of the Workshop in Human Relations for new City Hall employees.
2. As a follow up to the Workshops in Human Relations, CRC plans an on-going program on human relations for City of Atlanta personnel. Each department will be asked to designate a person through which the Commission can work.

SECTION XI - REACTION TO CRISIS

CRC's foremost function is to identify and eliminate discrimination in Atlanta. If this job is done, civil disorders will be minimized. However a master plan needs to be developed outlining what CRC should do in event of a racial crisis. For example:

1. The operation of Rumor Control.
2. The organization of "Interfaith Mobilization", a group of Atlanta ministers trained to act as observers and reporters at hospitals and police stations.
3. The identification of a list of community leaders who can be called on for specific assignments.

SECTION XII - RESEARCH

The Board of Aldermen charged the Commission with several responsibilities including....."To make studies, and to have

studies made, in the field of human relations, and to prepare and disseminate reports of such studies." Due to lack of staff, the Commission has not adequately discharged this responsibility. The Commission requires a full time staff member to initiate specific studies in the field of human relations in 1970. This staff member will work closely with the Community Council, the Urban Laboratory, and colleges and universities to avoid duplication of efforts.

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SECTION XII - HIPPIES

CRC will endeavor to serve as a communications link between the growing hippie community and the City of Atlanta. CRC plans to hold periodic meetings in the near Northside neighborhood with residents, business proprietors and landlords and to make recommendations to City officials.