

October 20, 1967

Reverend Samuel Williams
Co-Chairman
Summit Leadership Conference
Friendship Baptist Church
437 Mitchell Street, S. W.
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Sam:

I am sure that you are aware of the movement at the national level to develop a strong coalition of urban interests in an effort to exert more influence in national programs and priorities for the benefit of our cities.

Representatives of business, labor, civil rights, religion, education and Mayors of urban cities have joined together in an Urban Coalition to provide coordinated machinery for getting the story of our big city problems across to the nation.

I am attaching some information materials on the Urban Coalition. These will explain the background and goals of the national steering committee.

It has been recognized from the beginning that in order to be effective, local counter-part coalitions must be developed in all parts of the country to support these goals. It is my belief that for years Atlanta has been able to grow and prosper through an effective and informal coalition relationship of business and government and with the support of the other areas of interest which are a part of the national coalition effort. I believe, however, that we need to recognize a little more formally the coalitions which keep our city moving and also to develop a local coalition relationship with the national Urban Coalition.

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It is my thinking that an initial step would be for us to get together the top representatives of these key interest groups to form a local coalition steering committee and invite the participation by other organized groups. The initial steering committee could be composed of the Mayor, as chief elected official of the city, the President of the Chamber of Commerce, the President of the Atlanta Labor Council, the President of the Atlanta Christian Council, the Co-Chairman of the Summit Leadership Conference, the Superintendent of public education, and the Chairman of the Citizens Central Advisory Council, who is the elected representative of participants in the Economic Opportunity program.

I have drafted a statement which might be considered by this group which recognizes the need for a local coalition and endorses the declaration of principles of the national coalition. A copy of the principles of the national coalition is also attached for your consideration.

By recognizing the existence of a coalition we will be able to better communicate urban problems and focus maximum resources upon their solutions.

In order that we might consider this proposal I have invited the following people to meet with me at my office at City Hall on Wednesday, October 25, at 10:00 a. m. :

Mr. A. H. Sterne, President
Atlanta Chamber of Commerce

Rev. Samuel Williams
Co-Chairman
Summit Leadership Conference

Mr. Robert J. Butler, President
Atlanta Labor Council

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Rev. Bevel Jones, President
Christian Council of Metropolitan
Atlanta, Inc.

Dr. John W. Letson
Superintendent
Atlanta Public Schools

Mr. Erwin Stevens, President
Citizens Central Advisory Council
Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc.

Sincerely yours,

Ivan Allen, Jr.
Mayor

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