



# COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED BY THE MAYOR AND THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN, NOVEMBER, 1966

1203 CITY HALL, ATLANTA GEORGIA 30303

TELEPHONE 522-4465 EXT. 433

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THE HONORABLE SAM MASSELL, JR., *Ex-Officio*  
*President, Board of Aldermen*

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MR. NAT WELCH  
*Executive Director*

TO: Commission Members

FROM: Nat Welch *NW*

SUBJECT: Report On Washington Trip on "Welfare Freeze"

DATE: March 24, 1969

On March 20, I took four very carefully selected welfare mothers to Washington so that they could tell their stories directly to their representatives. Here are the comments made by each:

### A. Senator Talmadge

1. "I don't think the Congress or the state is going to let people go hungry."
2. He said that he had voted last year to delay the "freeze" and "I see no reason why I should not do so this year."
3. Talmadge was disturbed that approximately 50% of welfare cases involved husbands who deserted their families. He strongly feels that State and Federal laws on this should be "tightened up."

### B. Senator Russell. He was ill. We talked with Charles Campbell a top aid who had these comments:

1. Russell had received more mail this year on the freeze than on practically any other subject.
2. Russell believes in:
  - a. Increasing Day-Care Center programs ("we have many good federal programs that are inadequately funded").
  - b. Extending aid to help people find jobs.
3. "Those who are able to work should work; those who are unable to work should receive welfare benefits. The difficulty is to separate those in need from those who should not be on the welfare rolls."
4. If it came up for a vote, Campbell predicted that Russell would vote to extend the freeze another year.

### C. Congressman Ben Blackburn

1. We talked with him for a solid hour. He described our visit as "helpful."





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*Executive Director*

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TO: Commission Members

FROM: Nat Welch

- C. Congressman Ben Blackburn
2. Although he is not prepared to vote "yes" now, he predicted that the freeze would be extended.
  3. He is concerned that the situation is getting worse and the present program is not working.
  4. Although he believes in a balanced budget, he said he advocates training programs strongly enough to go into debt to pay for them.
  5. He asked for detailed information about children on welfare in Fulton and DeKalb County.
    - a. Total number of children receiving benefits ages 0 to 5, 5 to 10, 10 to 15 and so forth.
    - b. Number of one child families, two child families, 5 and above, etc.
    - c. Families with fathers who have deserted them.
    - d. Percentage of illegitimate children involved.
    - e. Federal and State statues on fathers who desert.
- D. Congressman Fletcher Thompson
1. Concerned that the Federal Government is spending more money than it is taking in.
  2. "There is practically nothing I can do. This matter is in the hands of Wilbur Mills (Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee). He rules this Committee with an iron hand."
  3. Thompson did practically all the talking and we had a chance to say very little. He spent a great deal of time talking about the welfare situation in New York City. We told him, "We had come to discuss the hungry people in Fulton County, Georgia."
  4. "This is not just an Atlanta or Georgia problem but a national problem"
  5. "The tax payers are screaming about high taxes and reducing expenditures."
  6. I asked him was there anything else I should tell the press on our visit other than his concerns. Thompson said, "I can't think of anything else."

Our visit was well reported in the Journal, Consitution, WSB-TV, WAGA-TV, and five radio stations.