

Department of Justice
Washington

July 23, 1969

Mr. Nat Welch
Executive Director
Community Relations Commission
1203 City Hall
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

*See your info
Nat*

Dear Mr. Welch:

The President and the Attorney General have asked me to reply to your letters of May 8 and May 12, 1969, in which you express the concern of the Atlanta Community Relations Commission that the Civil Rights Division is in need of additional resources. Please excuse my delay in responding.

Attorney General Mitchell has recognized the need for additional resources within the Civil Rights Division and has sought an increased budget from the Congress. In his testimony before the House Subcommittee on Appropriations, Attorney General Mitchell made the following statement with respect to the needs of the Civil Rights Division.


In the important field of civil rights, our commitment is to enforce all the civil rights laws, on behalf of all our people in all sections of the country. To fully carry out this responsibility in three priority areas--housing--education and employment--places an operational burden upon the Civil Rights Division that vastly exceeds its capacity, even with the modest increase in staff that has been requested above the revised 1969 levels. We seek for 1970, only 35 positions and \$1,073,000 above that asked for in 1969.. As you will recall, we asked for 55 positions and \$447,500 by way of a supplemental request primarily to implement Titles I, VIII and IX of the 1968 Civil Rights Act. We have not increased the request of the prior Administration for Fiscal Year 1970 primarily because it was

our judgment that a larger increment of additional manpower over that sought in the 1969 supplemental could not be effectively utilized by the Division as it is now constituted and operating. However, we can conceive of nothing more devastating to our concepts of equal justice than to have sectional, or piecemeal enforcement of civil rights statutes imposed upon us because we have failed to ask the Congress for the necessary resources. We cannot hope to reach, by our enforcement of these laws, all forms or shades of discrimination. But we are totally committed to removing on a priority basis the patent injustices in employment, housing and education that remain in one degree or another in all areas of the Nation. We shall in candor ask for all the manpower we believe can be effectively used to this end and we earnestly hope that you will provide it.

We deeply appreciate the position that the Atlanta Community Relations Commission has taken and the help which it has given in support of the budget for this Division and we hope you realize that the additional support which we have received, at least in part, will enable us to bring about greater compliance of the civil rights laws.

Best regards.

Sincerely,



Jerris Leonard
Assistant Attorney General
Civil Rights Division