

CITY OF ATLANTA



October 11, 1967

CITY HALL ATLANTA, GA. 30303

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IVAN ALLEN, JR., MAYOR

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MRS. ANN M. MOSES, Executive Secretary
DAN E. SWEAT, JR., Director of Governmental Liaison

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Ivan Allen, Jr.

From: Dan Sweat

Subject: Organization of Local Urban Coalitions

A priority goal of the Steering Committee of the National Urban Coalition is the establishment of strong local coalitions in the 50 largest urban cities of the nation. This is, of course, essential to the very life blood of any sustained effort to develop a meaningful coalition which can speak for urban America as a whole.

The direction taken by these local coalitions will depend upon the individual city or urban area and the wishes of the local leadership. We can safely predict they will take on a wide variety of shapes and forms from city to city.

The more I analyze the alternatives to organization of a coalition in Atlanta, the more I am convinced we already have several single-purpose groups functioning in this very capacity. I believe the identification of these groups as our coalition might reduce or negate the requirement for establishment of any other body, although I believe at some point a leadership meeting should be held to explain the Urban Coalition.

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Probably the best example of a local coalition organized to attack a particular problem area is the Board of Directors of Economic Opportunity Atlanta, Inc. This group, originally appointed by the governing authorities of the City of Atlanta and Fulton County, and now operating under a non-profit charter, clearly represents the six broad areas of Business, Labor, Civil Rights, Education, Religion and Local Government, which make up the national coalition. (A copy of the EOA Board is attached.)

A second group organized around a single-purpose is the Housing Resources Committee. (Copy of Committee Structure attached.)

Other groups which would fall in this category would be the Community Relations Commission, Atlanta Youth Council, and the Citizens Advisory Committee on Urban Renewal. (Copies of CRC, AYC and CACUR Board members attached.)

Each of these groups is organized to perform in an area of primary concern to the national coalition; EOA - Poverty; Housing Resources Committee - Low Income Housing; Community Relations Commission - Civil Rights; CACUR - Urban Redevelopment.

The final Model Cities Executive Board - Technical Advisory Committee - Citizens Advisory Committee structure will provide for another coalition of individuals and groups designed to produce cooperative action in planning and implementing the Model Cities Program. (Copies of proposed Board and Committee Structure attached.)

It is readily apparent that no recognized local group is established for the specific purpose of developing employment opportunities for the poor. While a large part of EOA's program is designed to reduce unemployment and

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underemployment, no broadly-based organization currently exists which can function in a capacity which will bear the local responsibility for meeting the national Urban Coalition goal of one million jobs for the poor. (This was the first announced goal of the Urban Coalition.)

I believe, however, that a project in the works during the last eighteen months by the City of Atlanta, EOA, the Community Council, Atlanta Chamber of Commerce and the Sears-Roebuck Foundation might have produced the mechanism for creation of a coalition on employment opportunities.

This group has met informally at least once a month during this time in an effort to produce a color slide presentation on problems and opportunities for employment of the poor. The Sears-Roebuck Foundation financed the employment of a top advertising agency to assemble the materials and design the presentation under the supervision of the informal group.

The presentation is now completed and Mr. Lucien Oliver of Sears will, in the next three or four weeks, invite a select group of key business executives to a luncheon to be exposed to this production. He is expected to ask each of these executives to sponsor luncheons for a wider group of businessmen in an effort to disseminate the information to as many firms as possible.

The businessmen will also be encouraged to direct their personnel management to become better informed on the problems of unemployment and underemployment among the poor and to investigate all possibilities for providing entry level jobs for additional employees who lack skills and training.

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This will fit perfectly into the scheme of the national coalition, which is encouraging the top executives of the large national firms to direct their plants throughout the country to do essentially the same thing. (There has already been some definite response to this program. I have had an indication from Sears and Ford offices here that the word has already come from the top.)

In view of the impending National Steering Committee Conference on Employment here in November, I am encouraging the meeting of the first group by Mr. Oliver be held in advance of the Coalition. I believe this initial group should be considered as the local coalition and worked into the National Conference.

I recommend that you ask Mr. Oliver to attend or send Dan Garies or Bob Wood to the October 17 all-day meeting on local coalitions in Chicago. I would also recommend that I attend as your representative and that you ask Vernon Jordan to represent us in the area of Civil Rights. Vernon is on loan to the Urban Coalition staff and will be in attendance and is more aware of what is going on than any other individual from Atlanta.

I also would hope that at a very early date we can show you the employment presentation and get your ideas on how we can provide follow-up.

DS:fy