



# ATLANTA TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COUNCIL

A Citizens' Organization Devoted to Traffic Improvement and Accident Prevention

SUITE 1130  
COMMERCE BUILDING  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303  
688-3411

July 7, 1967

Mr. Charles B. Fisher  
739 West Peachtree Street, N. E.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

Dear Mr. Fisher:

Mayor Allen referred to me your letter and the article from the American Legion magazine regarding private citizen policing activities. I am sorry I am so long replying, but it came while I was out of the city.

The idea of having citizen "observers" has been tried a number of times including here in Atlanta some years back. Although I agree with the advantages you point out that the system has, there are a number of disadvantages as well. The most obvious problem is that the citizens have no legal standing and their observations can be used only as advisory information. Each time this is tried a great deal of criticism arises from the public who invariably interpret this as "vigilante" action.

Weighing all of the pros and cons I find that I personally end up coming back to the conclusion that policing should be left to the police and that additional police should be added if we need to increase enforcement, rather than using citizens who are not able to follow through on the violation they observe and whose "semi-official" status could be a source of public irritation.

Sincerely,

Edmund W. Hughes  
Managing Director

BWH/sp

✓ cc: Mayor Ivan Allen, Jr.