

October 20, 1966

Mayor Ivan Allen
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Mr. Allen:

Sometime ago, in regards to the outcome of the runoff between Ellis Arnall and Lester Maddox, you had some very unkind and unwarranted statements to make.

Since I am not a Republican it left me in a very limited category. I can choose one of the following according to your statement. 1- Ignorant, 2 - Prejudice, 3 - A reactionary. According to Webster I do not believe I can fit into either category. If I measure my-self with your "Half Bushel" I probably fit all three.

If being for Law and Order, insisting a man should be able to control and use property which he has worked for, and pay taxes on, if believing in the American system and Freedom, Real Freedom, puts me in one of the categories, then I am glad to be called either.

I simply cannot understand why you, Mr. Johnson, and many more of your kind cannot be satisfied with the progress and success of the United States. According to what I can find out, we are the greatest Nation in History. The most free, the most honorable, the most compassionate not to mention the most successful. It is too bad that the great men in our past have been so dumb and self centered.

It is a shame that we did not have men like you and Mr. Johnson to draw up our Constitution. I can just see it now. I know that you and Mr. Johnson are both great and compassionate that you are willing to share everything you have with everyone else. This is the reason you are both millionaires. If you had not have been so generous, understanding and so willing to help others, you, no doubt, would be able to enjoy working each day as I and many others are doing.

Yes Mr. Allen, I appreciate men like you who sit back and say nothing when Julian Bond says no one should go to fight in Viet Nam and people who do are murderers. He should have this right. It is one of the Freedoms but it is not right for Lester Maddox to protect his property and the right to say who uses that property. He should have let the negros use his property just like they used Leb's.

Mr. Allen, the most important Christian trait to me is "Compassion" "The Ability to put one's self in the other man's shoes." When you made statements in the paper, did you put yourself in my shoes? Can you not believe that Lester Maddox is an honest, sincere man just because he does not agree with you? Do you believe in your convictions enough to hurt yourself as badly financially as he did just to stand up for what you think is right? You and your kind have been accusing people like my-self of being ignorant, prejudice and full of hate for a long time. If you are really interested in right and finding out the truth why don't you spend as much money and effort to find out as Lester Maddox did.

Mr. Allen

Have you ever supervised a negro worker? Have you worked side by side with one? Have you been in school with one? Why don't you get out and really find out whose fault this mess is?

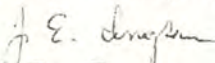
No Mr. Allen, you don't want to find out. Due to much noise and half truths put out by people of your kind, the average Southern person has been ridiculed, cursed, abused and mistreated because the real truth was not known. Thanks to increased Communication, working together and personally knowing a few decent Southern people. The Northern people are beginning to find out the truth. This is only the beginning. I have worked for Northern people for thirteen years. The South isn't changing but the North is. They are beginning to realize the propoganda you "Do Gooders" have been spraying these many years.

When I read of the excuses you and your kind put up for the various riots in different Cities I really became worried. I don't curse you and start making a bunch of untrue statements like you. I try to understand and tell my-self it is because you have not lived a life similar to these people. If poverty and hardship is justification for these riots, the South would have been under Military rule for the past 100 years. Even during the depression, crime did not approach the heights it has risen today. When School desegregation came about you and yours yelled, OBEY. Its the law of the land. Did you remind Mr. Carmichael of the law of the land? Did you remind Mrs. Arron of the Law of the land? Or did you compromise? Do you think Lester Maddox would have compromised?

No Mr. Allen, I do not think you have the right to call any Maddox supporter names of any kind. I think you should take a good long look at yourself and your beliefs.

Just a word in parting, I am sure you are well set whether the Ivan Allen Company stays in business or not. You could think of the people who are working in that Company to make a livelihood for themselves and their families when you start throwing wilful, hateful statements. These statements do not hurt you near as much as these loyal employees. I just hope all the Ivan Allen Customers are as understanding about this as we at Jasper Rubber Company.

Very truly yours,


J.E. Ingram
Gen.Mgr.