

Executive Committee  
→ T.H.

September 15, 1966

MEMORANDUM RE: FIREMEN'S STRIKE

To get the facts on the firemen's situation (because many of us are receiving letters, and it's a matter of public interest), I called Earl Landers, assistant to Ivan Allen, and talked with him by phone yesterday. Briefly the story is as follows:

The City at the first of this year employed the Public Administrative Society (an independent Chicago organization which makes surveys of municipalities and specializes in personnel, positions, salaries, and so on) to make a survey of the Atlanta City government, its personnel, wage scales, etc., and to bring in a complete report in September of this year.

Second fact: For many years the firemen in Atlanta have been members of the International Firefighters Association, a branch of the AF of L.

In the early spring of this year (about April) the members of the Firefighters Association came to the Mayor's office and asked for an increase in salary. At the time, the budget for 1966 had been adopted and the City was advised that they could neither legally nor financially grant any overall wage increase during the year 1966; but they promised to grant an increase in 1967 based on the recommendations of the Public Administrative Society.

Many of the younger firemen were unhappy with this decision and left the union. Spurred on by the Teamsters, they formed an independent union called the Atlanta Firefighters Union Independent. This is still called an independent, but the Teamsters are behind the scene.

In June of this year they walked out, but approximately 200 senior firemen remained with their own union affiliation and would not leave. The City holds a contract with the AF of L, and this contract contains a "no strike" clause.

When the firemen walked out, they were immediately enjoined to return to their jobs, but the City and the union agreed to arbitration, and accepted Dr. Ed Harrison, President of Tech, as arbitrator. Their request had been for a decrease in working hours (they had been working 60 hours a week) and an increase in salary. Dr. Harrison's recommendation was either a 7.2% increase in salary or the equivalent reduction in the work-week, which would be a reduction from a 60 to a 56-hour work-week.

The union refused to accept the recommendation of the arbitrator, demanding a 10% increase effective September 1, plus whatever P.A.S. recommended beginning January 1.