

WSB TELEVISION

WHITE COLUMNS ON PEACHTREE

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VIEWPOINT



AN EDITORIAL OPINION

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VIEWPOINT - An official expression of the editorial opinion of the management of WSB Television.

"Who is my neighbor?"

If you live in Atlanta, here's a modern day answer to that 2,000 year old question.

These are your neighbors.

Some live in these homes because they are lazy; some because they don't know any better; but most because there is simply no other place to live in this city of a million.

For too long, most of us have passed by our slum neighbors on the other side of the road.

But the good Samaritans are among us today, too.

In 1966, Mayor Allen set a goal - almost 17,000 new housing units in the next five years. It was a modest goal - actually aimed only at keeping us about even in the fight against rotten housing.

Since then, Atlanta architect Cecil Alexander has sacrificed much of his own profit-making time as a non-paid chairman of the Mayor's Housing Resources Committee. And Malcolm Jones, a retired Army Colonel, has been the full-time working head of the big housing push. At the end of the first two years, the program is amazingly "on schedule".

Except in one important area:

The city is 4,000 units behind in the goal for public housing.

Behind in the very area where the need is greatest, where this family must live -- in new units that can be rented or purchased at \$30 to \$50 per month.

Of all the units built or started since 1966, private enterprise has not been able to build anything to rent or sell for less than \$60 a month. That is not to say that private builders have not tried. They have done a fine job. But the high cost of land and labor and zoning problems have effectively prevented the building of truly low cost housing.

That means that our government, which is another way of saying you and I, is apparently the only Samaritan who can change the life of a boy like this.

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