

EDITORIALS: Allen Showed Deep And Abiding Sense Of Responsibility

Cobb Countians who have held a dim regard for Atlanta's Mayor Ivan Allen for several reasons, including a possible land grab across the river into Cobb, did some second-guessing last week and must have come to the conclusion that "Ivan ain't that Terrible."

The forthright, scrappy, Atlanta-building Mayor Allen proved his mettle twice in a row against formidable foes and earned nationwide recognition of his civic and political courage.

Ivan Allen demonstrated a deep and abiding sense of responsibility that reflected the heritage from Ivan Allen, Sr., a Whitfield County lad who came to Atlanta around the turn of the century and built one of the city's leading businesses, became a civic and political leader,

and now has retired to an honored and respected senior citizenship.

There were two phases of this "Horatius at the Bridge" stand by Ivan Allen, Jr. The first came when the mayor met head-on the angry challenge of a firefighters' union associated with the dreaded Jimmy Hoffa of the Teamsters, an outfit that plays rough.

Allen and his City of Atlanta associates banned from the Fire Department those who would not work unless granted an immediate pay raise which Allen was unable to give legally, and the city began recruiting new personnel to fill the gap.

Then, stalking impassively into the midst of an excited crowd of Negroes incited by Snick agents, Ivan Allen proved that bravery

and dauntless courage form the most effective shield against danger. Into the teeth of the mob, the Mayor threw back the challenge to civic responsibility that must be met if first-class citizenship is to be claimed. And he won. The promoters of the riot, leaders of Snick (SNCC), face serious charges and their organization has been abandoned and repudiated by calmer members of the Negro community.

Only one more big fight needs to be won by Mayor Allen for a clean sweep of the civic honors, and in this one he is somewhat stymied by two obstinate forces--the contractors on one hand and the carpenters' union on the other hand. He has no effective control over either side--only peaceful persuasion and

sound argument.

For nearly four months Atlanta building has been halted by the stubborn dispute, and such projects as the new auditorium are peopled only by lone and tired pickets. Meanwhile, the economic-financial tight-money crisis has cut off the arteries feeding new money into the building field, and carpenters who eventually may go to work under a new agreement possibly can find that there will be no work after the current projects are finished, simply because inflation and tight-money have combined to cut off many new jobs.

When and if the mayor wins this one by causing work to be resumed, he indeed will have rivaled the feat of mighty Bobby Jones in effecting a "grand slam."

P. S. -- HOLD THE PRESSES! There was a slight backset over the week-end, to the Ivan Allen triumph in the racial unrest, when Negro rioting flared up in the Georgia Baptist Hospital area on Boulevard.

This mob scene occurred in the heart of the Great Atlanta Fire disaster section of five decades ago, an area razed by flames. The area was rebuilt into an apartment-dominated residential region that in time passed through the usual phases of decline and decadence, until it became filled to overflowing with the colored population pushed by Urban Renewal and other factors, and now it rates as a new ghetto or slum area.

Whether the Allen-brought peace will endure remains to be determined, as calls go up for fresh demonstrations.