

July 27, 1963

The Honorable Ivan Allen,
Mayor of the City of Atlanta;

Dear Sir;

In my opinion, most of our political leaders here in the South are either completely lacking in foresight or are too concerned with their careers and personal security to care what unfortunate results our racial problems will create if they are not solved.

Therefore I was happily surprised to read of your endorsement of the public accommodations bill.

In doing so, you have displayed courage and intelligence. (traits sadly lacking in southern leadership today) As a citizen I respectfully offer my sincere thanks.

In talking to my friends (truck-drivers, mechanics, our pastor, etc.) about the racial situation, I am dismayed to learn these good, hardworking,

sincere people are lacking in logic and clear thought on this subject. They unquestionably accept an old philosophy that has been handed down from generation to generation. It is impossible for them to believe the Negro is equal to the white man. This philosophy is so prevalent I have come to the conclusion that it is remarkable that any of us born southerners have escaped it. We cannot expect the "man in the street" to change his views when the men he looks to for leadership share those views. Therefore, it seems clear to me that colored people cannot progress with any rapidity without new laws. He must force his way "in" and perhaps association will finally destroy discrimination.

I am sure your action will make you unpopular with many people. I am equally

sure you are aware of this.
But ~~for~~^{to} some of us you have
given a sharp and beautiful
reminder that our American
ideals are not old-fashioned
or corny. They are as meaningful
as ever and well worth
defending. You have done
so admirably.

Sincerely yours,
Jo Ann Clower