



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF ATLANTA

EUGENE PICKETT, MINISTER

September 15, 1966

The Mayor of the City of Atlanta
City Hall
Atlanta, Georgia

My dear Mr. Mayor:

I wish to express, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Atlanta, our concern over the recent events which have seriously disturbed the interracial climate in Atlanta. We feel that the time is due, and past due, for some really constructive action to be taken in this area--action which only the City Government is in a position to implement.

At the same time, we want to commend the obvious solicitude with which you and other leaders in Atlanta have grappled with the immediate problems raised by the shooting incident, the personal bravery shown by yourself and the police force, and the rapidity with which the murder suspects were apprehended.

It is becoming daily more apparent that meaningful and constant communication among the various factions involved in our city's dilemma is a crucial ingredient to its solution. We believe that the most useful single action which could be taken at this time is the establishment of a Mayor's Aldermanic Council on Human Relations, which would be empowered to call to its meetings not only concerned citizens in the various private organizations, but also ranking officers in all branches of the City Government. Such a council should have quasi-official status, and should have the ear of the Mayor and the Aldermanic Board at all times. Of the essence in the usefulness of such a Council would be the fact that its recommendations would be taken seriously.

Members of this Congregation, and of our Denomination generally, have worked unceasingly since our beginnings in the field of civil rights and of human wellbeing generally. We have accepted both hard work and danger--as in the case of James Reeb in Selma. We are especially concerned, therefore, that outbreaks of violence and intransigence on both sides of the issues might jeopardize much that has been won in the cause of better understanding and equality of opportunity. We urge, with all vigor and earnestness, that a major step such as the Mayor's Council suggested, be established immediately, and that leaders of all factions give it their unqualified support.

Very truly yours,

Raphael B. Levine

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President

c/c Samuel Williams
Samuel Massell
Atlanta Constitution