

Vulcan Society of Massachusetts, Inc.

P. O. Box 269 — Roxbury, Massachusetts 02119



AFFILIATIONS

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF BLACK PROFESSIONAL
FIREFIGHTERS
LIFE MEMBER
N.A.A.C.P.

PRESIDENT

Robert L. Powell

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Walter Porter 3rd

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Raymond E. Moss, Jr.

SECRETARY

William Kee, Jr.

RECORDING SECRETARY

Larry Trammell

TREASURER

Daniel Grant

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Stanley D. Moore

SARGEANT OF ARMS

Edgar Honeycutt

Telephone (617) 436-0019

September 17, 1981

Dear Commissioner Paul:

Since the Court's decision of August 7th, there have been racially motivated attacks against Black firefighters in firehouses across this City. If the leadership of our officers in the firehouses had been more effective, these problems would have never occurred.

I am extremely concerned about the racial problems which exist and its effect upon working conditions within the firehouses. As you know, firefighting is a teamwork effort and is usually performed under the most hazardous of environments. You well know that a man's personality can be altered under these conditions. When placed in this environment, the catalyst for violence can be created. When the elements of firefighting and racial hatred are mixed together, there can be only one end result, that being an explosion.

Hopefully, you can do something to neutralize the crisis situation which has developed within the firehouses. I feel that an Order, from you, to all Chiefs and Officers in the firehouses indicating that you will not tolerate any disruptive behavior by the men would be a first step towards remedying the problem. Secondly, I would like to suggest that you seriously consider the need to bring in expert personnel who could perform racial harmony sessions for officers and privates.

We understand fully the feelings of our White brothers concerning the decision of 1975, and more so since the Court's recent decision. It still does not give any member of the department the right to harass Black firefighters.

Because a volatile situation now exists, let's snuff out the fire, before we have an explosion. I would like to sit down with you, at your earliest convenience, to discuss this serious situation at hand.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Powell, President

/r/p
CC: Judy Bernstien, 294 Washington St., Boston
Police Commissioner Jordan
Justice Dept. Community Relations
Boston Commission/Frank Jones
NAACP