

February 20, 1950

641 Boas Street

Governor James Duff Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Dear Governor Duff:

I know you are interested in the "Average Guy", and I am one of them. I received a letter from the Capitol Park Extension stating that the entire row of houses where I live is being taken over by the State for the erection of an office building to house the Department of Labor and Industry. The houses in this row are among the best homes for Negroes in Harrisburg. The home owners who live in them have had great pride in keeping the properties up. They are all modern and are occupied by our only Negro druggist in Central Pennsylvania, a practicing physician, a mortician, the best tourist home for Negroes in the city, and State and city employees.

Just last year, after the passing of my husband, I had my home converted into apartments at a cost of \$4,500. As I expect to go on retirement at the close of your administration, I had hoped to have this additional income to give me enough to live on.

Our position, Governor Duff, is not like that of other groups. It is absolutely impossible for us to rent or buy property in Harrisburg in any decent neighborhood because of all kinds of restrictions. Certain districts are designated zones for Negroes, and there seems to be an unwritten law against them living anywhere else. If these properties were typical slum houses, I could understand why they should be torn down, but they are not, and the citizens and voters who live in them are among the best in the city.

This action coming on the eve of our Republican Campaign is not conducive to the best interests of those of us who are actively engaged in the success of the Party.

I am appealing to you not only for myself but for all the other home owners in the area to be taken. At least we should be allowed to retain our present homes until some provision is made to provide decent homes for Negroes in Harrisburg. After all, Government people work in offices, but they must live in homes.

Your loyal friend and supporter,

(Mrs.) Maude B. Coleman