

C O P Y

CITY OF DETROIT

Executive Office

Edward J. Jeffries, Jr.  
MAYOR

January 29, 1942

To: Charles F. Palmer  
Coordinator of Defense Housing  
Federal Works Agency  
Washington, D.C.

Baird Snyder III  
Acting Director  
Federal Works Agency  
Washington, D.C.

Col. F. Chas. Starr  
Acting Director, Region V  
United States Housing Authority  
Interior Building, North  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

Our Detroit Housing Commission was instructed last week to accept applications for the Sojourner Truth Defense Housing Project from white persons.

To refresh your memory, for months the tenant selection division of the Detroit Housing Commission has been accepting and investigating applications from Negroes. In fact, from the inception of this project, the Housing Commission together with the informed citizenry of Detroit was of the opinion that this was to be a Negro defense housing project. Since our instructions to change this to a white project, a cursory but yet a relatively complete survey of the city has been made for the purposes of locating an alternative Negro project. No place apparently is available with anything like the same satisfaction. In fact, it appears that to build a project of any size with the requirements laid down by the Defense Housing Authority as to vacant land, it seems necessary to go beyond the borders of the city.

Therefore, I have discussed this matter at length with the members of the Common Council of the City of Detroit, and we feel that the Defense Housing Authority has made a mistake in diverting this to a white project, and that in fairness to the Negro population of the City of Detroit and the Negro defense workers, this project should be maintained as a Negro defense housing program.

We earnestly request you to authorize the Housing Commission of Detroit to place Negro defense workers in the Sojourner Truth Project.

Very Truly yours,

(Signed - Edward A. Jeffries, Jr.)