

Schwarz-Scam

*file.*

Mrs. R. Schwarzenberger  
1895 Morris Avenue  
Bronx, 53, N.Y.

April 11, 1945

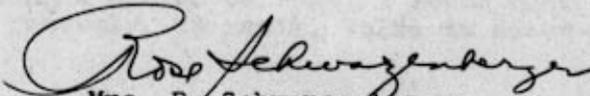
Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt  
Hyde Park  
New York

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Attached herewith is an article representing my views on the present housing problem in New York City. Inasmuch as the problems of New York City affect such great masses of people, I assume that you will want to do your utmost to help straighten them out.

Newspapers several months ago publicized the fact that the Navy was ready to relinquish the buildings that were being used to house the Waves in the Upper Bronx. Up to the present time I understand from reliable sources that nothing has been done about this. I believe these buildings represent over 500 apartments which would help a great deal in this needy time.

Respectfully yours,

  
Mrs. R. Schwarzenberger

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There is much talk about what we are doing and expect to do to aid the returning war veteran. It is therefore, appropriate to bring to the fore a problem which is facing those who would aid the returning veteran in New York City; that is the housing situation. I will try here to make certain points regarding this.

1. Since approximately the year 1940, no new apartment houses have been erected in New York City.

2. The years 1940 through 1945 saw a "boom" in marriages. It is safe to estimate that the greater portion of these marriages cover men who were either in the armed forces at the time of marriage, or who have since become members of the armed forces. It is also fairly safe to estimate that 75 to 80% of these marriages will survive the war. It is quite natural that these people will want homes, as that has always been the aim of every couple getting married.

3. The housing problem has been, more or less, shelved as a post war problem, and up to now, treated as such. However, our veterans have already started returning to us and those who have, are mostly medically discharged veterans, and as such, deserve the greatest kind of understanding and help. I dislike thinking what is going on in the mind of a man who has lost possibly one of his vital organs, who upon being discharged from the army finds it impossible to locate a home for himself and his wife. It is needless to go into the details concerning the reasons why a man has to go through when returning to civilian life. Much as been said about it. It would be a great help to him to know that he has a home and that he can start from there.

4. Within the past six months, materials have been released for the renovation of old buildings in New York City into suitable apartments. One can easily say that this is helping to solve the problem. Yet, all one has to do, is just read the classified advertisements in any of the New York newspapers, and he will find that these renovated apartments rent anywhere from \$70 to \$180 per month for from one to two and a half room unfurnished apartments. This may solve someone's problem, but it certainly cannot solve the problem of the great number of people who are looking for homes, as they are the ones who can't afford to pay such exorbitant rentals. It is hard to understand how such rentals have been affixed to these apartments, as after investigating a number of them, I found that they definitely do not compare, even remotely, in rental value to apartments elsewhere in the community.

5. We have heard that volunteers have been asked for, to list the wants of people in apartments. We have also heard that there will be spot programs on the radio asking for anyone who has any news of an apartment or has an apartment available, to let the New York City Housing Bureau know about it. May I suggest that such measures can be likened to the doctor who will treat an illness superficially where an operation is indicated.

It is high time all this talk be stopped and some action started. We all understand the great need of our armed forces and certainly, their needs must take precedence over everything else. Yet, the morale of the armed forces has always been considered an important factor. When a man overseas realized that his wife, and/or family, cannot find a home to live in, his morale cannot be too high. When a fighting man hears of the housing shortage and that the possibilities are that when he returns to civilian life, he may either have to take his wife and himself and live with relatives, or try to find a furnished room, the prospect does not make him too happy.

By and large, the letters from our men overseas have the constant refrain -- "Boy! when I get home" . It is up to us to see that he has a home to come to.