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January 24, 1963

The Honorable Ivan Allen, Jr., Mayor  
City of Atlanta  
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Ivan:

Many thanks for your great assistance Tuesday. The meeting went much better than we could have expected. I feel very definitely that this fair is a handle to promote many things. Wherever I've talked, the fair has been a most popular subject. Even the Metropolitan Herald and the Northside News have given it favorable treatment! As I stated Tuesday, those buildings proposed - and urban renewal funds in the upcoming bond issue - could be Atlanta's contribution toward the fair. (This was the pattern in Seattle.) If the fair is as popular an idea as it seems to be it could be used to assist the bond issue.

In regard to the other matter we discussed, let me say that while my reaction to Peyton Road was not favorable, I did understand the truly desperate situation that faced you. Basically I think the Mayor is being placed in an impossible situation when he is asked to solve a problem so deep-rooted in human emotions and history as Atlanta's racial housing. The government's tools are so limited and those few available so full of political dynamite that any solution will make enemies. It seems to me that the story you have to tell is important. You fell heir to a situation not of your making and you attempted to lend your good offices to stabilizing a serious situation. In doing this you sacrificed your own position for the good of the City. The action taken was drastic and distasteful, but the situation itself was drastic and distasteful. Let some of those who are so aroused propose solutions if they have them.

I do have some positive thoughts on the subject, on a long range basis. If you want to hear them let me know.

Sincerely,



Cecil A. Alexander

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