Dear Governor Lehman:

I have been reclassified by the Selective Draft Board, and I expect to be called into the service of my country. This may cause me to retire from the ring.

But before I retire, I want to put up one more fight - the best of my career - to help my people.

The hardest fight I ever had was against prejudice and intolerance. My people know what I mean. They are all fighting their way up, and I want to open the door of opportunity a little wider for them. The fight I propose to make will not be staged in an arena against one particular opponent but out in the open across the country. If I could get a "gate" as big as I've ever seen in the Yankee Stadium and turn it over to the Department of Race Relations of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America for the splendid work that Department is doing on behalf of the Negro people and better relations with their white neighbors, I'd feel like a real champion!

I propose to start the "gate" with my own contribution, and I want you to subscribe for a box, a ringside seat or other reservation. This is one purse which does not have to be shared with promoters or managers. Every cent will be used to better the condition of my people and in creating better human relations in America.

Will you cooperate by sending your cheque or money order, in any amount, payable to Frank H. Mann, Treasurer, and mail it today? If you help me win this time, I'll feel that I've won the greatest fight of my life.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Joe Louis