

November 20th., 1949

445 Gottingen St.,
Halifax, N. S.

The Honourable Attorney-General,
Halifax, N. S.

*This letter was composed
and typed by Dr. Alfred
Waddell on behalf of
Viola Desmond who
then signed the letter.*

Dear Sir:-

On November 8th., 1947, I entered the Roseland Theatre in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, unaware of any seating restrictions to members of my race (Coloured).

I was refused admission to the Orchestra on account of my race, and was ordered to leave the Theatre.

I refused to comply, feeling that it would be a shameful betrayal of my pride in Canadian citizenship to submit to such humiliation.

I did not realize that Canadian citizenship was qualified by any spectroscopic limitations.

That was an error of faith for which I paid dearly.

I was brutally handled, incarcerated, and subsequently fined Twenty Dollars and costs.

I have written to the Department of Justice requesting information on certain aspects of this matter, and they have referred me to your Department.

I desire to know why, at the time of arrest, there was no statement of cause, no opportunity to be advised by counsel, and no opportunity for bail.

Also, why I was both imprisoned, and fined for an alleged offence, the nature of which was obviously the result of an afterthought.

A copy of correspondence both to and from the Minister of Justice is herewith attached.

Yours very truly,