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March 7, 1946

Mr. George W. Greenwood, Chairman
Mayor's Civic Unity Committee
Seattle, Washington

Dear Mr. Greenwood:

Some months ago Miss Thursel Boylis, a mature woman of color, purchased at a tax site sale eight vacant lots, described as lots one to eight inclusive, block 18, Empire Way Addition to the city of Seattle. These lots are located at the southwest corner of 37th Avenue, South and Lucile Street.

Since the purchase, Miss Boylis has purchased a prefabricated house, obtained a permit from the building department of the city of Seattle and entered into a contract with a construction company to assemble the house on one of the above described lots.

Some of the white neighbors, hearing that the purchaser of the lots is a colored person, called a meeting of the Empire Way Community Club for the purpose of formulating plans to prevent this Negro and all Negroes in the future from acquiring property in or in any manner moving into the community. There were some white neighbors who thought otherwise and contacted the Urban League for counsel and advice. With the assistance of the League a number of white friends were present at the Community Club at 7:45 p.m., March 5, 1946. Both sides of the subject was discussed but no action taken. It was suggested, however, that a petition providing for racial restrictions be prepared and circulated among the neighbors. It is believed that this project will be developed.

Realizing that this is possibly the beginning of a long chain of such cases which our community will have to face, we are calling this one to the attention of your committee with the hope that together we might find a happy solution and that the people of the community might become reconciled and a democratic policy might be established for the benefit of all now living in the community and others who might hereafter decide to purchase or build homes in the area.

Shedding Rays of Light Without Sparks of Heat on Community Problems

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Ltr. to Labor's Civic Unity Com. Cont'd.
3-7-46

I wish to further inform your committee that the Urban League has checked on the reputation of the purchaser of the lots and has found that Miss Boylis has lived in Seattle several years, that she enjoys the reputation of being decent, respectable and working woman. She is said to be preparing this home for herself and an aged aunt whom she is expecting to come here from Michigan. Miss Boylis is at present residing with Mrs. Arlia Penn, 1807 -26th Avenue, South, Phone: Pr-9632.

The Urban League is following through on the matter, and will welcome any advice or assistance your committee might see fit to offer. If on the other hand your committee should desire to take over the project we shall be happy to give you all available details and cooperate with your organization in any way possible.

Sincerely,


DEAN E. HART

Executive Secretary

DEH/m