

Citation: E. June Smith to Better Business Bureau, April 26, 1962. Folder "Housing 1962," Box 8. Seattle Office of the Mayor Records, 5210-01. Seattle Municipal Archives.

Copy to Mayor Clinton

2310 East Pine
Seattle 22, Washington

April 26, 1962

Director
Better Business Bureau
Republic Building
Seattle 1, Washington

Dear Sir:

On Wednesday, April 25th, 1962, I kept a 4 p.m. appointment with Mrs. Lee of the Lake Washington Realty located at 34th and East Union Streets. It was agreed by telephone that I would be shown an advertised house for sale with Lake Washington view, two bed room and full basement with inside garage. Mrs. Lee, in her own good time, went through all the preparatory motions of showing me this house, to the extent of a call supposedly to the house in question and stating that there seemed to be no one home, but that she had a key, which I saw her remove from the key case indicating that it was the key to the house I was to be shown. One of the co-agents turned to me with the remark that this was "a pretty house, clean as a pin, almost new."

Mrs. Lee then drove me to 1518 - 25th Avenue and showed me through this house as if it were the advertised house.

After we were out of the house and Mrs. Lee made no explanation, I confronted her with the fact that this certainly could not be the house that was advertised in the paper, to which Mrs. Lee replied "That house is sold". In answer to my question as to why she had not told me that before she wasted my time, she said "you're pretty smart, arn't you? To my request to see the house, sold or not sold, Mrs. Lee said "I don't have to show you a house that is already sold".

Later in the evening I called the owner of 1518 - 25th Avenue (I am acquainted with this owner) and learned from her that her house was not listed with the Lake Washington Realty and neither was it for sale or listed with any other real estate firm. This owner expressed her disgust at this brazen act of Mrs. Lee's, and said she had called the Lake Washington Realty and let them understand how she felt. She stated that she had talked to the sister of Mrs. Lee about purchasing a house but had been emphatic that she did not want to consider selling her present dwelling. She said that no real estate agency had a key to her home.

It is my conclusion and complaint that (1) Mrs. Lee intentionally was misrepresenting a sales item to me since she had an appointment with me to show me a specific house which was advertised in the paper, but instead took me to an unlisted house indicating as many items in the home as she could that were listed in the advertisement of the house for sale which I was to see, such as the two bed-rooms, the full basement, etc. (2) Mrs. Lee refused to show me the advertised house as agreed upon by telephone, (3) from statements from persons dealing and attempting to deal with the Lake Washington Realty, this conduct, though more extreme than I have ever heard of, is a pattern directed toward Negroes in relation to property outside the Central Area, and directed toward Negroes, no matter what status.

I would appreciate your investigation of this complaint and will gladly accept an appointment to discuss it more fully.

Very sincerely,
E. June Smith
(Mrs.) E. June Smith
(Mrs. Roscoe O. Smith)

Telephone: EA 3-8502
Copies: Mayor Clinton, Governor Rosellini, Real Estate Board, WSB vs Discrimination