

65 Eustis Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts
February 17, 1977

Chief of Police Fratto
Cambridge Police Headquarters
5 Western Avenue
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Sir:

At approximately 12:30 am on the morning of Friday the eleventh of February, my car was struck as it was parked on the Cambridge side of Harris Street. According to three witnesses, the car which struck mine was in the process of being chased by a City of Cambridge Police patrol car. The damage to my car is serious - it could easily exceed one thousand dollars.

Since the time of the accident I have:

- Gone to the Cambridge Police Office on several occasions which has been totally fruitless.
- On my first visit to your offices, I met with one Sgt. Donovan, who had me file an accident report form and checked the reports of police chases from the previous night, and informed me that there had been two chases on that night, and that I should try to get in touch with one Officer Jillett, who was involved with one of the chases and had filed a sketchy report and then gone home with an injured knee.
- Doing the bulk of your office's research for you, I next tried to get in touch with Officer Jillett. I called headquarters on Monday morning (the 14th), only to be told that Officer Jillett would be out for the rest of the week. On a subsequent call, I was told that the reason that Officer Jillett would not be there for the remainder of the week was because he was at the Police Academy, and that I might be able to reach him there. I called the Police Academy numerous times, each time leaving my name, my home and work telephone numbers and a message for Officer Jillett to please get in touch with me, as Sgt. Donovan suggested that it may have been he (Officer Jillett) who was involved in the chase of the car which hit mine. Finally, on Wednesday (the 16th), I got a hold of Officer Jillett. (After three days of calling on my part, and not one attempt on his part to get in touch with me.) Officer Jillett told me that he was not involved in the chase on Harris St., but that he pursued a car from Sacramento St. (two blocks away) to Inman Sq., where he eventually made the arrest.
- Realizing that talking to Officer Jillett was totally useless, I decided to return to headquarters on Thursday (the 17th), to check the front desk journal to see if any more substantial reports had been entered concerning the night of the incident. With the help of

Officer Mason (who was very helpful), I searched the front desk journal. To the surprise of Officer Mason, the pages which should have contained the information for the night in question were missing from the journal (pp. 230-34). Officer Mason then asked another Officer (plainclothesman) if his office might by chance have copies of the missing pages in his journal. The officer replied that he believed he did. Going to the new office, Officer Mason found a record of the night in question in the journal. This journal had a report which stated that a chase had taken place on the night in question, and was in fact a report of Officer Jillett's actions. There was no other report of a chase taking place on that night. Officer Jillett's chase seems to be (on paper) the only one which took place. Jillett said that the car which he eventually stopped was not damaged. ~~The car which hit mine would have to be damaged as it drove my car back fifteen feet from a parked position.~~

What I would like to know from your police department is:

- 1) Why have I had to go around and try to uncover the facts of what happened. Why is not Sgt. Donovan's office (Accident), doing anything to investigate the case. There has not even been an officer here to look at the scene, even though it involves an accident which took place during a police action.
- 2) I fully realize that the police have many more serious cases to investigate, but I do not think that that calls for an almost callous inconsideration for my plight. My car is still sitting in a heap because I cannot find out who to take my case to, not to mention the woman's car behind mine, who is suing me. Who do I sue???

I would sincerely appreciate any efforts your office can make in expediting this situation.

Thank You,



Cathy Heller

cc: Mayor Al Velucci
City Councilman Frank Duehay

S-105

Comm. from Cathy Heller requesting reimbursement for damages done to her car during a police chase.

In City Council,
Feb. 28, 1977

To Claims

-L. Duchay-

Copy sent to Claims
and to C. Duchay 3/3/77
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