



CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

CITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

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Kevin P. Crane
City Councillor

May 19, 1980

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Councillor Kevin Crane today announced that he intends to begin an all out war on public drunkenness, a problem that is disrupting our neighborhoods and destroying the viability of some of our business centers, most notably, Central Square.

Last Monday night in City Council, Councillor Crane introduced an amendment to the General Ordinances which he feels is an important first step towards the resolution to this problem. The General Ordinances of the City, Chapter 13, Section 13-19 states that if an officer knows a person who violates the law prohibiting public drinking, then he cannot arrest that person without first obtaining a warrant.

Councillor Crane introduced an amendment to the ordinance which would delete the words "if he is unknown to the officer."

On the one hand we want the police officers to develop a rapport with our community and get to know them on a first hand basis. Yet, if an officer

does this, he comes caught in a Catch 22 when one of these people he has come to know violates the law against public drinking. Because he knows the person, he cannot arrest him on the spot but must go back and obtain a warrant. By the time this is accomplished, the perpetrator of the crime has usually disappeared or moved elsewhere. This restriction makes no sense and thus should be eliminated, which is the object of Councillor Crane's legislation.

Should Councillor Crane's amendment become law, it is hoped that the Police will be better equipped to insure that our parks, playgrounds and squares do not become havens for people who drink, become boisterous and offensive, and show little or no respect for the rights of others.

The complaints from the neighborhoods are continuous and mount as the good weather arrives. Only last Monday night, the Council listened to a group of business owners from Central Square tell of the many problems they encounter due to public drunkenness in the Square where they try to run their businesses.

It is inexcussable that this problem should be ignored. Councillor Crane insists that he will stay on top of this problem until it is brought under control.

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