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My name is Patrick Corcoran. I live at 667 Green Street, Cambridge and except for my years in the South Pacific during World War II a life long resident of the City.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

I have been a police officer in this City for the past 26 years and after a lot of studying and many civil service exams I was promoted by this City to the rank of Captain and Commanding Officer of the day shift.

As a Captain, I am a member of the management team and ex-officio - an advisor to the Chief of Police.

Although sounding somewhat subjective, I consider myself a good police officer - a good Captain (obviously, I have no problem with my self-image) and I firmly believe that I am a member of an outstanding police department.

As an advisor to the Chief and don't think this as a rubber stamp approval (I am too independent for that attitude) I must applaud him for adopting his position of being opposed to a Civilian Review Board.

I have always considered myself as being the classical civil servant e.g. let the politicians take care of the politics of government.

And I stand here before you knowing that you, the government of the City of Cambridge, you the representatives of the people of this great City will make a decision.

The final decision on whether or not we will have a Civilian Review Board is with you and that is exactly the way it should be.

I, as a police officer, am responsible to the community and/or its representatives and I am fully aware that every ounce of police authority I may possess emanates from this hall. Before you decide to implement a Civilian Review Board, I respectfully request the opportunity to make a few remarks on this very important decision.

A police officer by the very nature of his work is many times in effect a "Judge" in the first instance. He decides whether a crime has been committed who will be arrested, who will be searched, all this within the framework of the Constitution. He works among the law abiding citizen and the law breaker many times not knowing which is which.

In one example, he works in that most sensitive and many times dangerous area of the "Brief Threshold Inquiry" or as is better known the "Stop and Frisk". This very important decision from the U. S. Supreme Court in 1967 gives the police officer "who has reasonable cause to believe that a crime is - has - or about to be committed by a person the right to stop and question and perhaps search for weapons to be sure a criminal may be arrested but it is primarily to exonerate the innocent and prevent him from becoming involved in the criminal justice system and eliminate him or her as a suspect.

It is important that we, the community, have safeguards against police misconduct and safeguards we have e.g. 1. Police Officers of whatever

rank up to and including the Chief of Police. 2. A detective division commanded by Captain Gallagher which will investigate all crimes in the City when called upon to. 3. An Internal Affairs Bureau headed by Captain Grainger. 4. A District Attorney with Grand Juries. 5. A Court System whether State or Federal, Criminal or Civil. And, of course, we may add a new one to the long list "the Civilian Review Board.

Reactions to a C.R.B. in most police circles is apparent. Almost any decision by a police officer in a crisis situation could conceivably leave him open to charges before a Civilian Review Board. How could a civilian sit in judgement of a police officer's actions anymore than I could sit in judgement on the action of a doctor in his Operating Room.

O. W. Wilson, one of the most famous and fearless leaders in Law Enforcement and author of the book "Police Administration" which is required reading for every police officer aspiring to be promoted expressed the following opinion. . .

"A review board in this City would destroy discipline in the Chicago Police Department. If we would have a civilian review board, it would create a situation where I, as the head of the police department, would be confronted by an adversary group, which the entire department would tend to unite against, therefore, if we had a civilian review board my discipline would be less effective than it is today!" This quote is from a police chief who almost single handed was responsible for the resurrection of the Chicago Police Department.

In conclusion, I recognize the need for an informed community and how important it is to the effective operation of my police department. A good vehicle for this dialogue and communication and one I would actively support, a "Citizen/Police Advisory Committee" with the chief law enforcement in the City of Cambridge at its head and who, incidently, would take full responsibility for its success and failure as well.

I agree with many experts and professionals in the Criminal Justice field and voice my disapproval of a Civilian Review Board.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

15.

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Comm. from Police Captain Patrick Corcoran
in opposition to a Civilian Review Board &
expressing support for a "Citizen/Police
Advisory Committee" as a vehicle for dialogue
between the community & Police Dept.

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JUN 13 11 03 AM '84

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

In City Council,

June 25, 1984

6/25/84

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