



City of Cambridge

19.

IN CITY COUNCIL

VICE MAYOR REEVES

March 26, 1990

- WHEREAS:** Area residents, many of them refugees from Eritrea in the Horn of Africa, will hold a candlelight vigil at Harvard Square/Holyoke Center from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Friday, March 30, 1990 to demonstrate their support of the HUNGER STRIKE FOR P.E.A.C.E. (to Protest Ethio-Soviet Annihilation of Civilans in Eritrea), which a group of young Eritreans began on March 30, 1990 in Washington, DC to protest Soviet military involvement in the Ethiopia-Eritrea war. Members of the community are welcome to join in. In addition to the candlelight vigil, area residents are holding a one-day fast called a "Sympathy Hunger Strike;" and
- WHEREAS:** The refugee organizers of the candlelight vigil and Sympathy Hunger Strike fled their homeland because of the war that began there in 1961 because Eritrea was being forcibly annexed by Ethiopia. A quarter of a million people have been killed or injured in this war. The fighting takes place entirely on Eritrean soil, and civilian areas are regularly targeted for attack by the Ethiopian military; and
- WHEREAS:** The Soviet Union provided Ethiopia with \$11 billion worth of arms between 1977 and 1988, and \$800 million in 1989. At a time when it is scaling down military involvement around the globe, its support for Ethiopia - the sixth poorest country in the world, whose leader has one of the worst records on human rights - seems to remain constant; and
- WHEREAS:** Cambridge/Boston area organizers of the candlelight vigil and Sympathy Hunger Strike want to show their support for the HUNGER STRIKE FOR P.E.A.C.E. because they are very concerned about current events in their homeland. Right now a new famine endangers 5 million people in Eritrea and northern Ethiopia. Although triggered by drought, war is a prime underlying cause for the famine, and also imperils international food aid. After Eritrean rebels and others fighting the central Ethiopian government have scored major victories in recent weeks, government retaliation attacks and bombing raids with Soviet and Israeli weapons threatens to escalate suffering for innocent people; and
- WHEREAS:** The HUNGER STRIKE FOR P.E.A.C.E. has high aims. As one hunger striker says, "Perhaps it seems unlikely that a small

group of young Africans could influence Soviet foreign policy, but we felt morally compelled to do something, whatever we could, to stop the killing of our people. I hate to think that at home children are learning to spot hidden landmines instead of playing games."; and

WHEREAS: The hunger strikers hope for success by appealing to President Gorbachev on a human level, and also wish to be helped by thousands of supporters who will write letters to President Bush, President Gorbachev, and UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the City Council go on record supporting the Boston/Cambridge area Sympathy Hunger Strike and candlelight vigil on March 30, 1990 as part of a national wave of similar events happening in communities across the country. There are approximately 300 Eritrean refugees living in the Boston/Cambridge area. For further information, contact Berhane Haile 298-0479 or Solomon Mehari 391-3533.

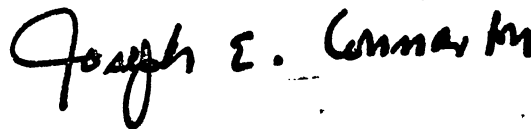
In City Council March 26, 1990.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-



Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.



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MAR. 26 1990

City Council

Adopted by the affirmative vote

of 9 members

Joseph E. Conna, Jr.
City Clerk

Order # 19 S-294

Vice-Mayor Reeves re: supporting the
Boston/Cambridge area Sympathy Hunger
Strike and Candlelight Vigil on
March 30, 1990.

In City Council,

March 26, 1990

Order adopted