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CAMBRIDGE, MA

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

57 Inman Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
498-9014

January 8, 1985

Mr. Joseph Palotta
Cantabridgia Nursing Home
195 Prospect Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Mr. Palotta:

The Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women wishes to express to you our deep concern about the situation that presently exists at the Cantabridgia Nursing Home.

The Commission on the Status of Women is a Department of the City of Cambridge. We were founded by women and commissioned by the city in 1977 to advocate for women and our issues throughout the city.

The issue of the union, Local 285 of the Service Employees International Union, at the Cantabridgia Nursing Home is one that compels us to write. We are aware of the history of the nursing home, formerly the Prospect Street Nursing Home and the problems that have been and continue to be part of its history. We know that the workers there, most of whom are women, have worked under all kinds of management and conditions. We are also aware that no owner before you has refused to recognize the union or honor the contract existing between the Home and the union. We are alarmed at the drastic changes which have been imposed on the workers that include cutting back sick days, reducing holiday pay and refusing to grant annual step raises. We have been informed by Local 285 of SEIU that you refuse to allow workers to discuss the union, and have refused to bargain with the union in good faith, which are violations of the law.

The Women's Commission is committed to improving the status in society of all women. We believe the actions you have taken with regards to the workers at the Home will have a devastating effect on their quality of life. We are familiar with the statistics that tell us most of the workers in the health care industry both in Cambridge and nationally are women. We know they have struggled long and hard to win better wages and conditions in a field that has historically offered little in those areas. The Women's Commission is unable to sit back in silence while those gains come under attack. We have an obligation and a mandate to speak out.

We also have an obligation to speak out on behalf of all the patients at the Cantabridgia Nursing Home. Statistics for Cambridge tell us that 75% of the elderly are women; these women rely on quality nursing home care. We believe that a worsening of conditions for the workers can only lead to a worsening of conditions for the patients.

We urge you to share our concern for your workers and patients and express it by bargaining with Local 285 as the legally authorized bargaining agent for the workers, and by abiding by the contract between the Home and the union which helps to insure better conditions for all.

Sincerely,

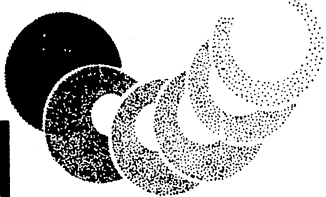
Darleen Bonislawski
Darleen Bonislawski, Commissioner
for the CCSW

cc: City Councillors
Local 285, SEIU



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MASS

CAMBRIDGE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN



57 Inman Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
498-9014

January 10, 1985

TO: All City Councillors

FROM: The Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women

RE: Support for the proposed resolution regarding the
Cantabridgia Nursing Home

The Women's Commission voted at our regular meeting on January 8, 1985 to send the enclosed letter of concern to the proprietor of the Cantabridgia Nursing Home. We have learned that there will be a resolution placed before you regarding the same issue -- work conditions and refusal of the proprietor to recognize and negotiate with the employees' union. We hope the City Council will support the proposed resolution. We have enclosed our letter to Mr. Palotta for your information and because it expresses the basis of our concern.

Thank you.



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Comm. from the Cambridge Commission on the
Status of Women in support of a resolution
pending before the Council at this evening's
meeting Re: the Cantabridgia Nursing Home
& transmitting a letter sent by said Com-
mission to the proprietor of the Home.

In City Council,

January 14, 1985

1/14/85
Placed on File