

288, HARVARD STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MA. 02139
JANUARY 18, 1971.

To the Honourable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

I attended the police brutality hearing on January 11 at City Hall and at St. Paul's A.M.E. church, and was aghast at the lack of interest shown by at least four of the councillors present. Whether the alledged beatings took place or not is beside the point, but what should be of importance is that some members of this community genuinely feel that they are not treated as equals with other members of this same community, and worse, that the city council does not care. That of itself should ^{have} brought forth deep and sincere concern from all members of the city council.

As there does not appear to be a set procedure to be followed in the possible instance of police brutality, I would suggest that:

- 1) officers be suspended until a hearing,
- 2) if found guilty said officers should be removed from the force,
- 3) members of the community be present ^{& the} hearing, and
- 4) that the Cambridge Police Chief genuinely concern himself with such matters until well disposed of.

It is my understanding of this city's charter that the city council is empowered to order the Chief of Police, through the City Manager, (according to section 105 of the General Laws pertaining to the City Charters) to proceed with such matters post haste. So please do not countenance your lack of action by hiding behind the City Charter.

I would like to suggest that contract negotiations with the city's police force be broken off until the alledged police brutality incidents are fairly dealt with.

It is well that a city government support it's police department, but at the same time it is not in the interests of the department, or the city, to support those officers who may have acted in excess of their duties.

I am, as the police spokesman said at the hearing, a "concerned and interested citizen" albeit unarmed and not in uniform.

Respectfully,

Veronica B. Cunningham

Veronica B. Cunningham

17

7

Communication from Veronica B.
Cunningham of 288 Harvard St.,
Cambridge concerning police brutality

January 18, 1971

City Council Jan 18 1971

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