

8 Clinton St. Cambridge, Ma 02139

Ted Moynihan

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CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

Members of City Council
Cambridge

Friends,

I am challenging the Cambridge City Council to take responsibility for enforcing city ordinances regarding litter on our streets and the pasting of posters on lamp posts and mailboxes.

I want to appear before the City Council on Monday June 9 to describe my experience of keeping the north side of Mass. Ave from City Hall to Old Cambridge Baptist Church litter-free from ~~March~~ May 4 to May 25, to make recommendations based on that experience and to issue a challenge for a litter-picking contest to the Councilors. See the Chronicle piece of May 29 on the other side of this sheet.

Ted Moynihan

Battling litterbugs can be a full-time occupation

Cambridge Chronicle

THURSDAY MAY 29, 1975

By Mac Herring

"My fate is litter. I can't get away from it. I am so aware of dirt, I can"

We all choose a place to fulfill our unique little destinies; some may work in panelled offices on Milk St., others may do their labor in a machine shop on Broadway.

No matter where we do our work, it is in one or another familiar setting.

Ted Moynihan goes to work every day like anyone else, but in his "office" most people either spit on it or dump their unwanted debris on it.

His job is made possible because of Cambridge's and man's ugliest urban sin: littering.

The above comments could have come from a psychiatrist's notes after a visit with a disgruntled Public Works paper-stabber.

But, Ted Moynihan is no such workman.

He actually volunteers to scoop up crushed cigarette butts, the soiled napkins, and occasional mattresses and has been doing so since May 4 along Mass. Ave. in his own unique, litter patrol.

Disgusted by the filth and wind-whipped piles of unat-

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called and received cooperation from organizations that post illegal bills on buildings; and has threatened to sue one Mass. Ave. businessman who refuses to prevent his trash from blowing down the street.

While he alone can only do so much, he looks to other individuals acting together to achieve permanent change.

"People taking responsibility for taking care of their own block" is the first step in changing attitudes about littering.

"The city could be such a garden - a beautiful garden - if people would keep it clean. We don't have to live in an ugly place," he says..

However, he doesn't want to appear self-righteous: "I have also been negligent and blind to the whole problem of littering."

While he moved his way down Mass. Ave. every day, he would encounter pedestrians who would litter, and then express resentment and guilt if asked to pick it up.

Nevertheless, signs of cooperation were evident: one eight year-old boy enthusiastically helped him clean up one morning; gas station workers in one location now sheepishly clean up the trash on their lot; others volunteered to work on their own litter patrol in their neighborhood.

Not afraid of involvement, Moynihan expects the same commitment from public officials.

Challenges councillors

He openly challenges any three city councillors to compete with him a ten-block litter competition along Mass. Ave. which he says he will win

easily.

On Sunday, after the People For Riverbend Park Picnic had disbanded, litter from some 1,500-2,000 people was scattered along the Charles River banks.

Rounding up his friends, Michael Krasnow, Graham Slater, Leo Manis, and Lorraine Irritano, and a few volunteers, Moynihan descended upon the trash with plastic bags.

Giving it "the once over" and running out of daylight, he called officials from Governor Dukakis down until he finally reached Metropolitan District Commissioner William Byrne late Sunday night to ask for help.

Byrne had his work crew out Monday morning, finishing the work that Moynihan had begun.

Friend and Nobel Laureate George Wald from Harvard



has mentioned to Moynihan that "I have often thought of taking a plastic bag and picking up trash" and Moynihan is trying to enlist his aid.

Solutions

The most immediate solution Moynihan sees for the litter problem is simply having more trash barrels out to discourage littering.

More imaginative ways to educate the public about lit-

tering, such as putting flags in litter barrels, which Moynihan did on Sunday, is another route, he says.

It all starts with us, he adds, however. "If we can win in Cambridge, we can win Massachusetts," he prophesizes. Public and private responsibility are still the cornerstones of his anti-litter campaign.

"We would be off to a good start if each member of the City Council would pick up his side of the street."

Inceded over unsightly posters plastered over the Museum of Science building, Moynihan convinced the Museum to withhold payment to the offending agency, "Cosmic Resonance," until they were removed. He also called the National Coalition against Racism and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored people to ask them to remove posters about their May 17 March Against Racism. They say they will comply.

He reminds groups that drape mailboxes with advertisements that the federal offense carries a punishment of three months or a \$1,000 fine.

The real change will have to be in attitude.

Children "will often see things an adult will not see" and pick up trash, while the adult will feel "guilty" about littering, he says, but not act.

Although he has developed his coordination and toughened up his hands from his three-week litter patrol, Moynihan hopes that the public, along Mass. Ave. from City Hall to Harvard Sq. at least, will put him out of work.

Handwritten scribbles and signatures at the bottom of the page, including what appears to be the name 'Mac Herring'.

City of Cambridge

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Comm. from Ted Moynahan re: enforcing the
litter ordinance of the City of Cambridge.

In City Council,

June 9, 1975

*6/9/75 Referred to
- Hearing held -
at 10 PM*