



City of Cambridge

58.

IN CITY COUNCIL

September 8, 1997

COUNCILLOR GALLUCCIO
 VICE MAYOR BORN
 COUNCILLOR DAVIS
 COUNCILLOR DUEHAY
 COUNCILLOR REEVES
 MAYOR RUSSELL
 COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
 COUNCILLOR TOOMEY
 COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

WHEREAS: On the twenty-first day of August, 1997, the Dante Alighieri Society remembered the seventieth anniversary of the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti and commemorated the twentieth anniversary of the proclamation by Governor Dukakis declaring that they did not receive a fair trial; and

WHEREAS: As was so movingly described by commemoration participant Neil Proto, the distinguished author and attorney, in "Only Silence Is Shame" in the March 1997 Italian American, in the days before their death, during a visit to Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco by friends and a reporter, Bartolomeo Vanzetti spoke his famous words:

"If it had not been for this thing, I might have live out my life, talking at street corners to scorning men. I might have die, unmarked, unknown, a failure. Now we are not a failure. This is our career and our triumph. Never in our full life can we hope to do such work for tolerance, for justice, for man's understanding of man, as we now do by accident."

"Our words - our lives - our pains - nothing. The taking of our lives - lives of a good shoemaker and a poor fish peddler - all. That last moment belongs to us - agony is our triumph;" and

WHEREAS: Mr. Proto goes on to record the comments on these words by Upton Sinclair, who read and later recorded Vanzetti's statement:

"History records that those who heard the Gettysburg address of Abraham Lincoln were ill-pleased by it [.] But the future seldom chooses words which are flowery; it chooses those which have been wrung from the human heart in moments of great suffering...Pass on, Bartolomeo Vanzetti, your work is done!... Fear not the executioner, not yet the raging slanderer - they are powerless to harm you [.] You have spoken the noblest words heard in America in two generations since Abraham Lincoln died!" and

WHEREAS: Seventy years later, it is clear that Sacco and Vanzetti did not receive a fair trial and that their treatment was in large measure based on fear and suspicion of the Italian immigrants who, along with many other immigrants, brought deeply rooted traditions of economic justice and working class pride; and

WHEREAS: The tragedy of the Sacco and Vanzetti cases has lead to improvements in American criminal justice and increased recognition of the importance of the fundamental human right of fair treatment of those accused of crime; and

WHEREAS: Today's commemoration includes not only the unveiling of museum-quality reproductions of the 1977 Proclamations, but also film, music and a speaking program, and will include the participation of Governor Dukakis, Neil Proto and other special guests; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That this City Council go on record, do hereby express gratitude and appreciation to the Dante Alighieri Society and the distinguished participants for this magnificent commemoration.



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WHEREAS: As was so movingly described by Neil Proto, the distinguished author and attorney, who joins us today, in "Only Silence Is Shame" in the March 1997 Italian American, in the days before their death, during a visit to Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco by friends and a reporter, Bartolomeo Vanzetti spoke his famous words:

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Consent Order #58 <sup>Entire
memb.</sup>

R-1154

Councillor Galluccio re: The Dante
Alighieri Society commemorates the
seventieth anniversary of the execution
of Sacco and Vanzetti.

In City Council September 8, 1997

ORDER ADOPTED