



City of Cambridge

34.

IN CITY COUNCIL

April 24, 1995

COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR DUEHAY
COUNCILLOR GALLUCCIO
COUNCILLOR MYERS
MAYOR REEVES
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY
COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

WHEREAS: This City Council was deeply saddened at learning of the senseless act of murder which claimed the young life of Iqbal Masih of Pakistan; and

WHEREAS: Iqbal Masih, who was sold into slavery at the age of four, was chained to a loom for some twelve hours a day by the carpet industry; and

WHEREAS: Iqbal, with the assistance of the Banded Labor Liberation Front, escaped from his captivity at the age of 10 and enrolled in school; and

WHEREAS: In December of 1994, he was named the recipient of the Reebok International's Youth in Action Human Rights Award for his work in freeing some three thousand children in slavery; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That this City Council go on record condemning this senseless act of violence and hope that justice will be served swiftly.

In City Council April 24, 1995

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:- *D. Margaret Drury*

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

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Councillor Sullivan

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20-ft 12
Served

Crusader vs. child labor slave

Pakistani, 12, escaped from slavery, was honored in Hub

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Iqbal Masih was only 4 years old when his parents sold him into slavery to carpet weavers who kept him working 12 hours a day, chained to a loom. By age 12, Brandeis University had offered him a full scholarship out of respect for his work crusading around the world against horrific child labor abuses.

"I am lucky, I got freedom," Masih told the Herald in Boston last December when he became the youngest person ever to win Reebok International's Youth in Action human rights award.

Sunday he was shot dead. Some believe his murder was carried out by angry members of the carpet industry who had made repeated threats to silence the young activist — most recently two weeks ago.

"We know his death was a conspiracy by the carpet mafia," claimed Ehsan Ullah Khan, chairman of the Bonded Labor Liberation Front, a private group that fights against child labor in Pakistan.

As president of the BLLF children's wing, Masih traveled the globe to tell his life story, typical of the estimated 6 million Pakistani child workers age 14 or younger enslaved to the Persian rug trade, brick factories and farms.

Masih's parents sold him for less than \$16 to the rug trade where he was beaten and undernourished.

Carpet factory owners prefer children because their tiny fingers make the smallest, tightest knots and hence the best carpets.

"We had to get up at 4 and work 12 hours," Masih, barely tall enough at the time to peer over the podium, told a conference last November. "We were chained to the looms, but after work we were usually released and could go home to sleep."

When he was 10, Masih contacted the BLLF and escaped. He still owed his boss 13,000 rupees — the equivalent of \$419 — a huge sum considering he earned only one rupee a day.

He then went to school and finished a five-year course in half the time.

"I am not afraid of the owner any longer," Masih told the Herald in December. "Now he is afraid of me."

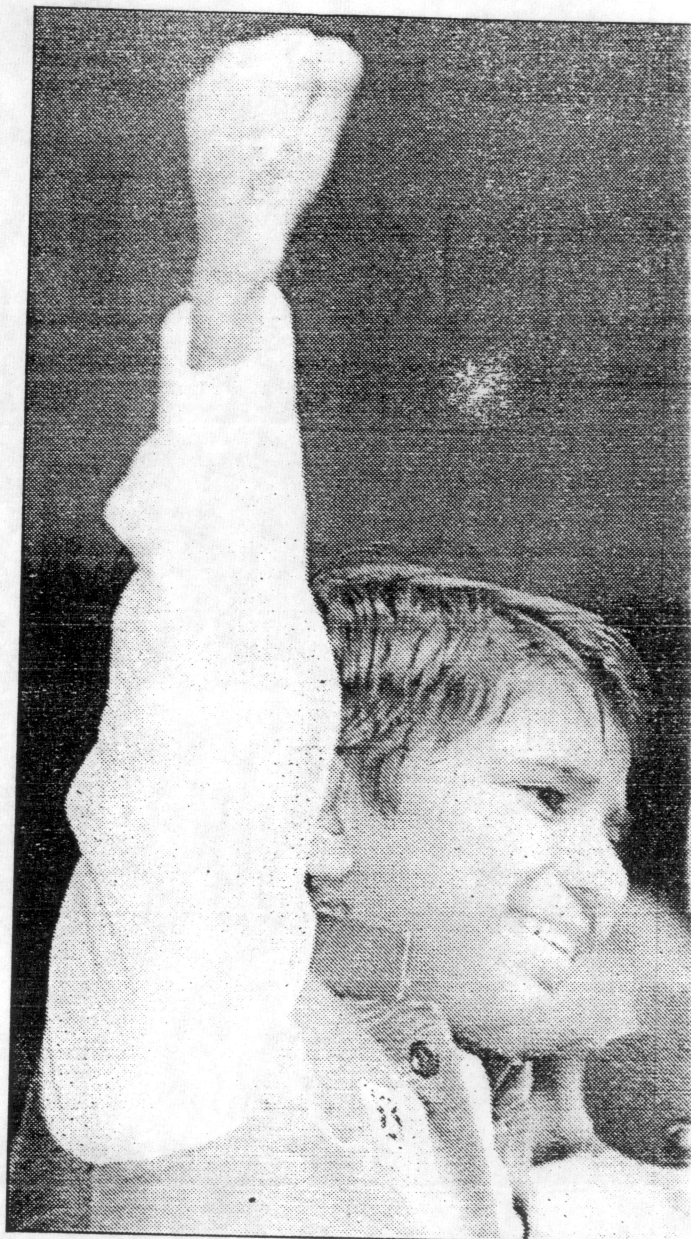
Three thousand children were freed from slavery and dozens of carpet factories were shut down thanks to his campaign, which Masih likened to the American Civil War.

"He was so brave ... you can't imagine," said Khan.

Masih planned to be a lawyer.

"The world today is a crueler and emptier place because of his death," said Brandeis University President Jehuda Reinharz.

— Lauren Beckam contributed to this Herald wire services report.



SILENCED: Iqbal Masih, 12, gestures as he receives the Reebok Action Award in Boston in December for his efforts to abolish child labor. Masih was shot to death Sunday in his hometown in Pakistan.

Dad says he fathered, killed daughter's 2nd infant

SCOTTTDALE, Pa. — A man suspected of burying alive a son he fathered with his own daughter was charged with murder yesterday after admitting he killed their second child.

Mendum Paul Corvin, 61, sent authorities yesterday to the Scottdale, Pa., basement where he said he had buried their newborn daughter in 1970.

Firefighters and police with sledgehammers dug for about eight hours under the cellar floor at the house where Corvin and three daughters once lived. They found no sign of the infant girl, but planned to re-

sume looking today.

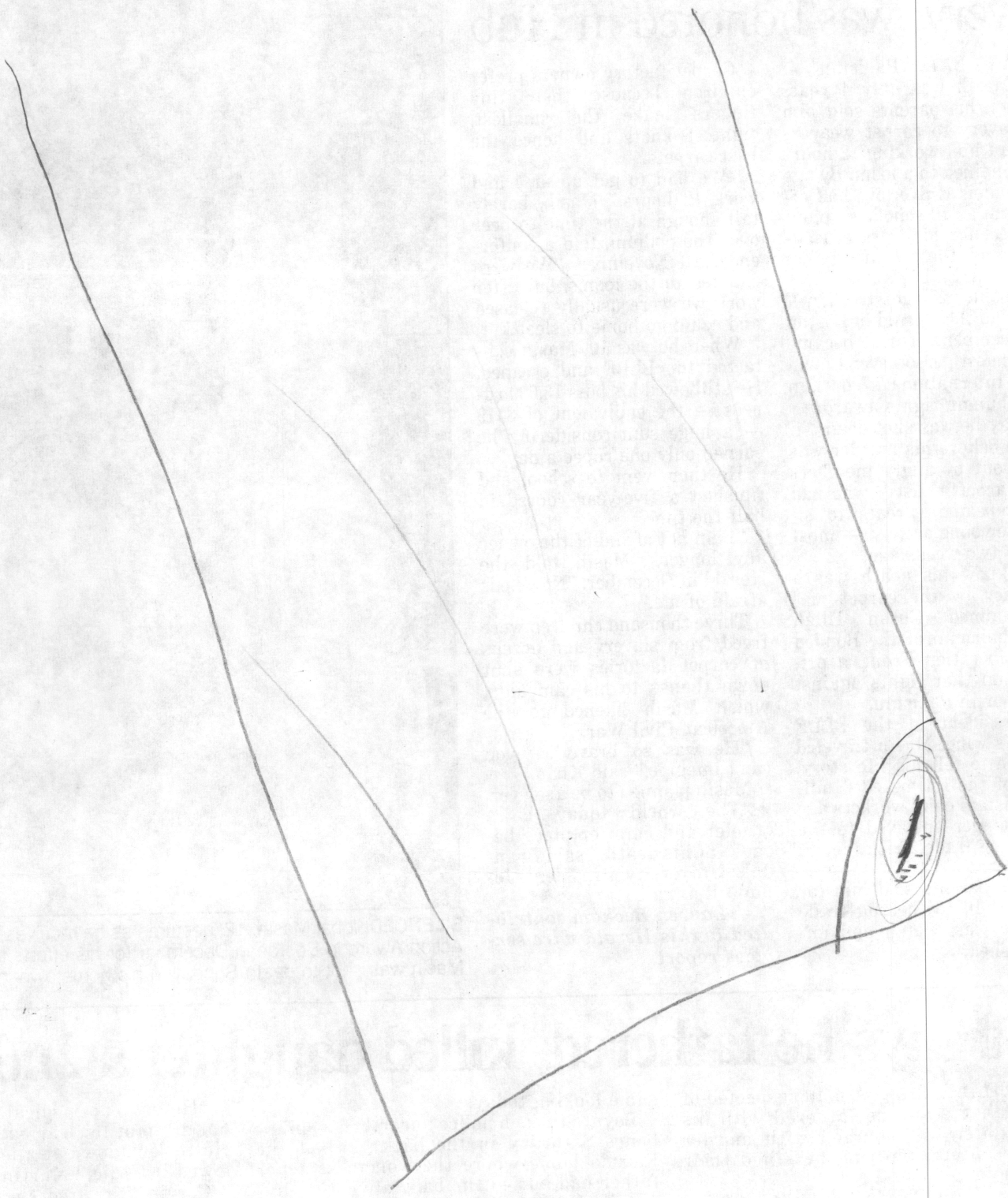
Boynton Beach police unearthed a child's bones Saturday in the back yard of the Florida home where the woman said her father had buried the baby alive. Corvin's ex-wife lives there now.

Corvin's daughter, now a 39-year-old bartender in Florida, told police last week-end her father killed her newborn children in 1968 and 1970.

Scottdale Police Chief Tony Martin said Corvin calmly told officers he took the second baby from his daughter's arms and laid it on the basement floor.

"He gave no medical assistance, not attempt to clear out the baby. He took it down to the basement and allowed it to die," Martin said.

Corvin, a retired electrician, was charged yesterday in Pennsylvania. Charges have not been filed in Florida, but police on their way to interview him yesterday. Corvin's two youngest daughters, 32 and 34, also have accused Corvin of sexual abuse with them repeatedly when they were children, said Sgt. Kevin McGowan of Boynton Beach police.





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Duehry Gallucci Myers Reeves
Joomey Triantafyllou

Consent Order #34

R-374

Councillor Sullivan re: Resolution on the senseless
murder of Iqbal Masih of Pakistan.

In City Council April 24, 1995

Order adopted.