



City of Cambridge

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Calendar Item #2
Amended Order
IN CITY COUNCIL

~~November 6, 1995~~
November 13, 1995

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

WHEREAS: The Royal Institutional Services recently purchased K-Bro Linen of Dorchester and proceeded to reduce the benefits of their employees; and

WHEREAS: Royal Institutional Services employs approximately 150 employees which are principally Latino and Polish immigrants, with three-fourths being female; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Hospital has a contract for its laundry services with Royal Institutional Services and as such the City of Cambridge is interested in the practices of this company; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to investigate the situation at Royal Institutional Services regarding their personnel practices as they relate to humane and fair treatment of their employees; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to take whatever steps are necessary to inform Royal Institutional Services that unfair and inhumane treatment of their employees will not be sanctioned by the City of Cambridge; and be it further

ORDERED: That the Cambridge Hospital be requested by the City Manager to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that its purchasing policies and practices reflect these basic principles; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager report back within two weeks.

In City Council November 13, 1995

Adopted as amended by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

D. Margaret Drury

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk



City of Cambridge

11.

IN CITY COUNCIL

November 6, 1995

- COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU
- COUNCILLOR BORN
- COUNCILLOR DUEHAY
- COUNCILLOR GALLUCCIO
- COUNCILLOR MYERS
- MAYOR REEVES
- VICE MAYOR RUSSELL
- COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
- COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

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CHARTER RIGHT WAS EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

Amendment to Royal Institutional Services Resolutions

November 13, 1995

COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

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City of Cambridge

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CHARTER RIGHT WAS EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

Whereas:

The City of Cambridge, thru the Cambridge Hospital, ^{Laundry service,} has a contract with Royal Institutional Services which employs around 150 persons, who are principally Latin and Polish immigrants, now therefore:

Ordered

That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to investigate the situation at Royal Institutional Services regarding their personnel practices as they relate to humane and fair treatment of their employees, and be it further:

Ordered

That the City manager be and hereby is requested to take whatever steps that

K.T.

Qq: Whereas

The Royal Institutional Services recently purchased K- Bro Lavin of Rochester and proceeded to reduce the benefits of their employees; and

Whereas:

Royal Institutional Services employs AROUND 150 employees which ARE principally Latino and Polish immigrants, with three-fourths being Female, and

Whereas:

The Cambridge Hospital has ^{A CONTRACT FOR} SITS LAUNDRY SERVICES with Royal Institutional Services and AS such the City of Cambridge IS interested in the conduct of this company, now therefore be it

are necessary to inform Royal Institutional
services that unfair and inhumane
treatment of their employees will not
be sanctioned by the City of Cambridge.

158 Brookline Street
Cambridge, Mass. 02139

November 13, 1995

Margaret Drury, city clerk
Cambridge City Council
City Hall
Cambridge, Ma. 02139

Dear Councilors,

I have just recently been informed about the situation of laundry workers at Royal Institutional Services. If even half of what I have been told is true... illegal firings, unpaid overtime, harassing and firing workers for exposing health and safety violations to O.S.H.A.... then the city of Cambridge has a serious problem on its hands.

Cambridge and Somerville Hospitals have a contract with Royal Institutional Services. The city administration must investigate this company to see if they are in serious and direct violation of their contract.

In addition, this city council has recently taken a clear stand on upholding community standards in all city contracts. Morally and ethically, if not legally, this contract should be no exception. The results of this investigation should be considered when discussing the merger with Somerville Hospital and when bidding a new laundry contract in the future.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this issue.

Sincerely,


Bill Cavellini

194 Auburn Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 864-7370

November 13, 1995

The Honorable Kenneth E. Reeves
Mayor and Chair, Cambridge City Council
City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Your Honor:

As a six-year Cambridgeport resident, I am writing to express my deep concern about the plight of the workers at Royal Institutional Services, a laundry company in Somerville that has a service contract with the Cambridge Hospital, obtained by and through by the City of Cambridge.

It is my understanding that the Royal workers, most of whom are immigrant women with families, are paid very low wages, are required to work long hours, are often not paid for all the hours worked, and work under "sweatshop" conditions that pose a genuine threat to their health and safety.

Efforts by the Royal workers to seek improvements have been systematically met by intimidation and harassment and other unlawful conduct on the part of the company.

I am writing to formally request that the Council investigate the employment practices of Royal to determine whether its workers are being treated in a way that simply cannot be accepted by the City of Cambridge and its residents. I feel that the City Council has an obligation to concern itself with how a company with which the public is doing business treats its workers.

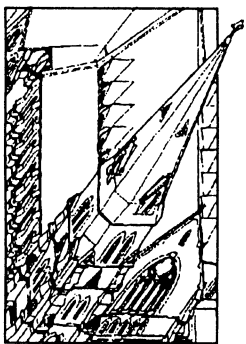
Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,



Paul Germanotta

cc: Kathleen L. Born
Henrietta Davis
Francis H. Duehay
Anthony D. Galluccio
Sheila T. Russell
Michael A. Sullivan
Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
Katherine Triantafillou



150th
Anniversary

October 31, 1995

The Honorable Kenneth E. Reeves
Mayor and Chair, Cambridge City Council
City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Dear Ken:

I am writing to alert you to a situation of which you may already be aware regarding Royal Institutional Services and its employees. As I am sure you know, Royal is the group with whom Cambridge City Hospital has its laundry contract and thereby, the City of Cambridge is a party to the problems within Royal and among its employees.

It is my understanding that Royal recently purchased its major competitor, K-Bro Linen of Dorchester, and cut the wages of that firm's already low-paid employees, reducing even further their benefits, sick days, and so forth.

Since many of Royal's 150 people are primarily Latino and Polish immigrants, and three fourths of them are female, this impacts directly on the economic and social well-being of these populations in our midst. Moreover, many of these workers have families.

It is my further understanding that the National Labor Relations Board has recently charged Royal with illegally firing workers who demanded higher wages and with illegally intimidating and harassing workers for union activities.

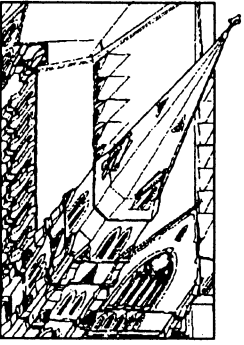
I believe that these facts, as well as the fact that the company is currently under investigation by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for firing an employee who brought health and safety problems at the plant to the attention of OSHA inspectors should be enough to warrant the City's interest in whether or not the conduct of Royal Institutional Services is in the interest of the citizens and taxpayers of our city.

I am not urging, therefore, that the city terminate its contract with Royal, which would clearly have disastrous consequences for the company's already beleaguered employees, but rather, that the city exert pressure upon the company to reform its personnel practices that they might conform more closely to the humane and fair treatment citizens of Cambridge have a right to expect from any employer with a city contract.

Staff:
Laurie Jean Auffant
(617) 864-9275

The Rev. Irving Cummings
(617) 864-8068

OLD CAMBRIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH
1151 Massachusetts Avenue • Cambridge, MA • 02138 • (617) 864-9275



-2-

150th
Anniversary

I hope that the City Council and yourself will devote full attention to this important matter which reflects on all of us as citizens of Cambridge.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Irv Cummings, Pastor
OLD CAMBRIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH

cc: The Honorable Kathleen Born
The Honorable Francis Duehay
The Honorable Anthony Galuccio
The Honorable Jonathan Myers
The Honorable Shiela Russell
The Honorable Michael Sullivan
The Honorable Timothy Toomey
The Honorable Katherine Triantafillou
Mr. Robert Healy

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OLD CAMBRIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH
1151 Massachusetts Avenue • Cambridge, MA • 02138 • (617) 864-9275

SOMERVILLE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
17 WASHINGTON STREET
SOMERVILLE, MA 02143
61666-0600

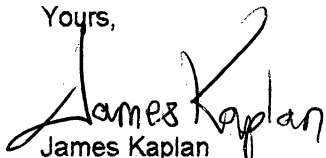
Jonathan Myers
Cambridge City Council
City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA, 02139

Dear Councillor Myers,

I write to you in support of efforts to gain a Cambridge City Council resolution to encourage the Cambridge City Hospital and its contracting linen service Royal Institutional Services to assure union-standard wages, benefits, and working conditions for Royal Institutional Services employees. The Cambridge City Council passes the annual budget for all City of Cambridge agencies, including the Cambridge City Hospital, and is ultimately responsible for the direction of the Cambridge City Hospital. Therefore, it is in position to encourage the hospital to press for decent wages, benefits, and working conditions both for its own direct employees and for indirect employees hired by Hospital contractors such as Royal Institutional Services. Such efforts by the Hospital would greatly help efforts by Royal Institutional Services employees to gain the most elementary standards in their employment.

The alternative is a continuation of Republican-style efforts to erode wages, benefits, and working conditions of all employees by promoting the shifting of work from unionized labor forces to non-union sub-contractors, while turning a blind eye to the sub-standard conditions in which sub-contractors force their employees to work. To prevent progression of this trend, one prong must be efforts by the employees to organize themselves into unions to collectively protect their own interests. Employees of Royal Institutional Services are trying to do just that through affiliation to the Laundry Workers Local 66 of U.N.I.T.E. which is attempting to secure collective bargaining recognition from the company. But there must be a second prong in forcing management to do the right thing: pressure from those who give business to currently non-union employers which provide low-cost services through a strategy of immiserating their employees. Cambridge City Hospital must be pressed to act against any complicity in such a strategy. And to assure such action by Cambridge City Hospital, I look hopefully towards action by the ultimate overseers of the Hospital: the Cambridge City Council.

Yours,


James Kaplan
Chair, Political Action Committee
Somerville Teachers' Association

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Born, DeHay, Galluccio, Myers
Consent Order #11-~~11~~ CM-509 Ord #2

Councillor Triantafillou re: The
Royal Institutional Services reduction
of benefits to their employees.

Reeves, Russell, Sullivan + Tormey
11/13/95

Order Adopted as
Amended

In City Council November 6, 1995

Charter Right was
exercised by Councillor
Triantafillou