



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
County of Middlesex

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.
SUPERIOR COURTHOUSE
EAST CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02141

S. LESTER RALPH, Somerville
Commissioner

ELIZABETH L. McFARLANE
Head Executive Assistant

February 22, 1980

Cambridge City Council
City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Gentlemen:

I write in reference to the current flap on the Cambridge Court situation.

To place the matter in perspective, I am sure you will all recall a few years ago when a Japanese soldier came out of the Philippine jungle where he had hid for 30 years, believing the Empire of Japan was still at war with the United States and that he was engaged in guerilla warfare.

Applying this illustration to the Cambridge Court and Jail building, City Councillor Vellucci recently came riding down Third Street on a donkey just high enough for Mr. Vellucci to be riding and walking at the same time. He was preceded by City Councillor Thomas Danehy, blithely ice skating in white sneakers. Mr. Vellucci and Mr. Danehy have long been identified as the VD Combo.

These two gentlemen, accompanied by the chorus of the rest of the Cambridge City Council, wail that overnight a mushroom in disguise grew into a 22 story building with a jail on the top. Such devious stealth must certainly be opposed by the City Fathers.

It will be as difficult to suggest a different history to these local politicians as it was to convince the Japanese soldier the war ended thirty years ago. However, I should like to try:

First, the building has been there for nigh onto twenty years, and is finally being put to the precise use for which it was constructed. Never, in all that time did these latter day Paul Reveres utter the slightest call to arms.

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Cambridge City Council

Second, Mr. Danehy's brother, the County Commissioner, is the only survivor of the group who planned, designed and built the structure. I have not heard of any Cain-Abel type estrangement between the two, so I assume one brother made the other aware of what was going on.

Third, Mr. Vellucci is planning to have his son run for state representative this year, and publicity thus becomes the name of the game, and since the only game in town at the present time appears to be the Courthouse, here we go! Imagine, if you will, the double whammy of having 2 Danehys and 2 Velluccis presiding over Cambridge!

Fourth, I was initially elected County Commissioner because the Danehys and the Velluccis did not oppose the construction of this building, and I did. Now that their action, or inaction, allowed the building to be erected, I would like to hear what they would prefer to have on the top 5 floors - a rose garden, perhaps, or a health club for the City Council. Mr. Vellucci is particularly imaginative in these areas. Perhaps he would sponsor a resolution to saw off the five top floors, attach nineteen 5 cent balloons and float the structure over into the Harvard yard to be used as a genetic research center.

In any case I respectfully suggest that the gentlemen who themselves allowed the problem to happen, might exercise some elemental prudence and not attempt to now surface as the champions of the people.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "S. Lester Ralph". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "S." and last name "Ralph" being more distinct than the middle name "Lester".

S. Lester Ralph

SLR:ml

S 85

Comm. from S. Lester Ralph, County Commissioner,
re: use of the East Cambridge Court House as
a reception and classification unit.

In City Council,

Feb. 25, 1980

- 2/25/1980 -
City Clerk read letter
at the request of
the Mayor -

Placed on File

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