

AN OPEN LETTER TO MAYOR THOMAS M. MENINO

Dear Mayor Menino,

In an article in the Boston Herald dated July 20, 2012, you are quoted as saying, “You can’t have a business in the city of Boston that discriminates against a population. We’re an open city, we’re a city that’s in the forefront of inclusion”. We agree that any kind of discrimination should be unwelcomed in the City of Boston

We, the undersigned, would like to commend you for the strong statements that you made regarding “Chick-Fil-A” because you felt that its practices were discriminatory.

Although we applaud the ideals you espouse, the facts don’t comply with the rhetoric. If you feel so strongly that discrimination is wrong, you should look to all of the discriminatory practices that you have allowed to exist in the City during your reign. Let us point out a few facts:

The City of Boston has a population that is more than 50% people of color (black, Latino and Asian) but, during your long term in office, the agencies under your control don’t even come close to reflecting the ethnic population of the City. Your record of appointing managers and middle managers in the city is even worse.

During your long reign as Mayor, there has been much construction going on in Boston but you have failed to strongly enforce the City Ordinance that requires that women and people of color are proportionally represented in the workforce and that a percentage of city contracts are to be awarded to companies owned by people of color.

During your long reign as Mayor, you have allowed developers to purchase City owned properties and build houses, apartments, condominiums and office buildings. Rather than requiring that housing be built for low and moderate income families, which would help to preserve neighborhoods, you allowed the construction of so called “affordable housing” where only a minimal number of units were actually affordable while the majority of the units were priced so high that most city residents could not afford to rent or purchase, forcing city residents to move out of the city and allowing whole neighborhoods to be displaced. The office buildings that were built were so costly that many of the small business were unable to afford the rent and were forced to move out of the city or close.

During your long reign as Mayor, you have caused to be built a number of City buildings and buildings that will be built to house City agencies in the Roxbury, Dorchester or Mattapan districts. (Police Headquarters, Police Stations, School Committee Building, etc.) This construction is being done by non-minority run companies and the occupants of these buildings are just being moved from other existing city offices. These new buildings and offices will result in little or no net gain

of employment for the community. While this is happening, you blocked Wal-Mart from building in Roxbury with the excuse that Wal-Mart would harm neighborhood businesses, which had validity, while ignoring the fact that the elders and youth in the community were in desperate need of any kind of employment.

During your long reign as Mayor, you allowed the former Superintendent of Schools to eliminate Black History from being taught in the Boston Public Schools. Over 85% of the Boston school population is made up of students of color and yet, all students are denied the opportunity to learn of the contributions that people of color have made to the City and the country.

During your long reign as Mayor, you appointed a Police Commissioner despite his reputation of poor racial relations while Police Chief in Lowell. His behavior was such that he had to be sued by minority officers in the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination in order to get fair treatment. Why is it that all police districts are under command of white males and those members of the command staff of color are without any actual command authority? Why is it that while violence in the community of color is rampant, you refuse to even meet with the Massachusetts Association of Minority Law Enforcement Officers, an organization representing police officers that live in the community and are intimately aware of the problem? Why is it that you have never appointed, or allowed to be appointed, officers of color to occupy the 2 top spots in the police department (Commissioner, Superintendent In Chief) while other law enforcement agencies have chosen Boston officers for leadership positions: Randolph Schools, Transit Police, Harvard University Police, Environmental Police, City of Newark Police, to name a few?

During your long reign as Mayor you allowed the *Pax Centurion*, the newspaper of the Boston Police Patrolman's Association, through its Boston Police officer editor, to spew racial, homophobic and culturally hateful remarks without any comment, which editor is supported by the leadership of the Union. At the same time, the mayor of Leominster, based on charges by the Chief of Police, terminated a police officer who made a few racially offensive comments.

Mayor Menino, if you truly believe that discrimination has no place in the City of Boston and that Boston is an open city, we call upon you, while you are Mayor, to take steps to make your claim a reality: Improve your communication between groups in the community that express divergent ideas from yours.

Promote housing construction that doesn't price out neighborhoods, Clean your house; reach out to the multitude of highly qualified people of color to fill positions of authority in your administration, use your prestige and the power of your office to insure that Boston Schools meet the needs of the community, take steps necessary to insure that the Boston Police Department is actually representative of the community it protects and insure that jobs are brought into the City in numbers that truly represents the diverse population in the City.

SIGNED:

Massachusetts Association of Minority Law Enforcement Officers, Inc.(MAMLEO)

Larry Ellison, President

Massachusetts Association of Nubian Retirees, Inc.

John Wells, President

N.A.A.C.P., Northeast Region,

Juan M. Cofield, President.

Minister Don Mohammed

The *Bostonian* newspaper

Jamahl Crawford, Publisher/Editor

Massachusetts Association of Minority State Police Officers,

Carmello Ayuso, President

Rev. Bruce Wall