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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
PUBLIC HEARING AND PUBLIC MEETING
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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- - -
Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Friday, March 3, 2000
10:55 a.m.

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- - -
BILL 79 - Authorizing Mayor to enter amendments to
lease agreement with Eagles and Phillies. . .
Bill 80 - Authorizing Mayor to enter into agree-
ments with PAID for lease of football practice
facility at Broad and Pattison Avenue. . .
Bill 82 - Authorizing Mayor to enter into
amendments to lease with Eagles and Phillies. . .
Bill 83 - Adding new chapter to Philadelphia Code
imposing a tax on rental vehicles. . .
Bill 84 - Authorizing Mayor to enter into
agreements with PAID for lease of football
practice facility and for leaseback. . .
Bill 85 - Amending Phila. Code on "Contracts and
Procurement" by providing City Council approval
for contract for construction, acquisition, lease,
operation of building or structure. . .

15 PRESENT: COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNA C. VERNA, Chair
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL
16 COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN
COUNCILMAN DARRELL L. CLARKE
17 COUNCILMAN DAVID COHEN
COUNCILMAN FRANK J. DICICCO
18 COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE, JR.
COUNCILMAN JAMES F. KENNEY
19 COUNCILMAN W. THACHER LONGSTRETH
COUNCILMAN RICHARD T. MARIANO
20 COUNCILWOMAN DONNA REED MILLER
COUNCILMAN MICHAEL A. NUTTER
21 COUNCILMAN ANGEL L. ORTIZ
COUNCILMAN FRANK RIZZO
22 COUNCILWOMAN MARIAN B. TASCO

- - -
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6 AFSCME

7 George Casey, President 15
8 Local 22-Philadelphia Firefighters

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2 P R O C E E D I N G S

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Good morning,
4 everyone. This is the continued public hearing of
5 the Committee of the Whole regarding Bill No.'s
6 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, and 85.

7 I believe we have a couple witnesses
8 that would like to testify today. Is Mr. Cronin
9 here? Please approach the witness table. And
10 anyone else that is going to testify with you.

11 (Witnesses come forward.)

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Good morning.

13 MR. CRONIN: Good morning.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Please
15 identify yourself for the record and proceed with
16 your testimony.

17 MR. CRONIN: My name is Thomas Paine
18 Cronin, President of AFSME District Council 47.

19 (Jeers from some audience members.)

20 (President Verna taps gavel.)

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Mr. Cronin,
22 please proceed. Without any disruption, you will
23 proceed.

24 MR. WHEELER: And for the record, I'm
25 James Wheeler, First Vice President of the

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2 Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 5 here in
3 Philadelphia, and we are sitting here with Thomas
4 Cronin to represent the municipal unions.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Do you have
6 written testimony, sir?

7 MR. WHEELER: (Shakes head.)

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: No?

9 Mr. Cronin, please proceed.

10 MR. CRONIN: Okay. Good morning,
11 ladies and gentlemen, my name is Thomas Paine
12 Cronin, and I am President of AFSCME District
13 Council 47, which represents approximately 4,000
14 professional employees of the City of
15 Philadelphia.

16 I am here today to join with 10,000
17 members of our sister union, AFSCME District
18 Council 33, 3,000 members of Firefighters Local
19 22, and 8,000 members of the Fraternal Order of
20 Police to express our misgivings at the proposal
21 you are considering. We are all residents and
22 taxpayers of this city, and we and our families
23 live throughout the City. We are your neighbors,
24 we are your constituents. Our future and our fate
25 are directly connected to the well-being of our

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2 city.

3 Throughout the last decade, our members
4 have been an integral part of the bad times and
5 the good times the City has experienced. We have
6 accepted years of no pay increases, we have
7 suffered through reductions in the health and
8 medical benefits of ourselves and our families.
9 We have risen to the challenge to work smarter, to
10 do more with less.

11 The results of our sacrifices and
12 efforts can be seen in a more efficient City
13 government and in the City's \$200 million budget
14 surplus. Philadelphia's triumphant resurgence is
15 due, in large part, to our members and their
16 commitments to saving our city. Now we stand
17 before you, united by the experience of the past
18 and our concern for the future.

19 You Councilpeople are being asked to
20 make the initial commitments leading to the
21 construction of new baseball and football
22 stadiums. The decisions you now make will impact
23 our members for their entire working lives. Our
24 children and grandchildren will have to live with
25 the financial obligations to which you now agree.

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2 Unfortunately, this whole process is being done in
3 an atmosphere of artificial haste and overwrought
4 theatrics. Now we ask you to stop and consider
5 the real decisions you are facing.

6 The current budget surplus comes from
7 the sacrifice of our members. These same men and
8 women are now beginning contract negotiations with
9 the City. It is morally indefensible and fiscally
10 irresponsible to commit some or all of this money
11 to building new stadiums before -- and, I repeat,
12 before -- reaching a fair and equitable contract
13 settlement with the people directly responsible
14 for producing this surplus. It is a cruel slap to
15 all the citizens of Philadelphia to postpone
16 funding for libraries, recreation centers, and
17 programs which benefit our people so that
18 millionaire owners of the Eagles and Phillies can
19 enjoy spectacular new playgrounds for their
20 teams.

21 Much has been said about the economic
22 and social benefits of new sports stadiums. All
23 of these promises may be true, but the most
24 fundamental question is still, can the City of
25 Philadelphia afford the cost? Unfortunately, the

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2 City does not have an unlimited budget, nor has it
3 addressed all of the problems faced by its
4 citizens, young and old.

5 As our elected representatives, we
6 expect that you will examine all of the facts,
7 consider all of the consequences, and ignore the
8 sound and fury of the marginally involved. It is
9 we, the men and women who work for the City, who
10 live in the City --

11 (Jeers from some audience members.)

12 (President Verna taps gavel.)

13 MR. CRONIN: -- who work for the City,
14 who live in the City --

15 (Jeers from some audience members.)

16 (President Verna taps gavel.)

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Mr. Cronin,
18 please do not proceed.

19 I just want to give everybody fair
20 warning. We continue with this, and I will tell
21 you, we will clear the chamber, we'll call for a
22 recess, I'm not going to tolerate this. Everybody
23 has the right to testify.

24 (Jeers from some audience members.)

25 (President Verna taps gavel.)

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: That's it.

3 (Jeers from some audience members.)

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Another

5 outburst, and we --

6 (Jeers from some audience members.)

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I think

8 another outburst, another outburst, and we will

9 recess. I mean this sincerely. Everybody has the

10 right to testify. Let's be courteous to each

11 other, please.

12 (Jeers from some audience members.)

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Please

14 proceed, Mr. Cronin.

15 MR. CRONIN: It is we, the men and

16 women who work for the City, who live in the City,

17 and whose lives are inexorably connected with the

18 City, who ask you not to waste our hard-earned

19 surplus on private surpluses, but rather to

20 reinvest that money in the people who helped

21 produce it.

22 Thank you.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you

24 very much.

25 (Applause.)

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2 (Jeers from some audience members.)

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: The Chair
4 recognizes Councilman Goode.

5 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you, Madam
6 Chair.

7 Mr. Cronin, are you against stadiums or
8 are you just against spending the fund balance on
9 stadiums?

10 MR. CRONIN: No, I'm not against
11 stadiums.

12 COUNCILMAN GOODE: So are you for
13 stadiums?

14 MR. CRONIN: It's not a question of
15 being for stadiums or against stadiums. What I'm
16 saying is that the City, according to the
17 Five-Year Plan that I've seen the Administration
18 produce, has a limited amount of funds. It is --

19 COUNCILMAN GOODE: It is, then, no talk
20 about spending the fund balance on stadiums.

21 MR. CRONIN: May I finish, sir?

22 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Sure.

23 MR. CRONIN: My concern is just that
24 we, the people that have produced this surplus,
25 that have worked hard, who's had contracts, all

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2 four of the unions have contracts that expired
3 June 30th. Then in the priority of things, it is
4 my belief that the men and the women who work for
5 the Police Department, the Fire Department,
6 District Council 33 and 47, ought to be considered
7 first. We're first at bat.

8 (Jeers from some audience members.)

9 COUNCILMAN GOODE: I am in favor of
10 using the fund balance to allow for fair labor
11 contracts. I don't see what that has to do with
12 stadiums. So what are you asking this Council to
13 do or not to do?

14 MR. CRONIN: I'm asking the Council to
15 consider in its priorities the contracts, the
16 labor contracts of the City workers first, before
17 committing any of the money to any project. I am
18 not saying I am against stadiums, I'm not saying
19 I'm against construction workers -- that's not the
20 point here at all.

21 The point is that this is all
22 taxpayers' money and it comes out of a limited
23 budget. That's what I believe, and I believe that
24 we ought to be considered first because of the
25 sacrifices that we have made in the past. It's as

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2 simple as that.

3 (Jeers from some audience members.)

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Are there any
5 other questions or comments from any of the
6 members?

7 COUNCILMAN Goode: I'm not finished,
8 Madam Chair.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Oh, I'm so
10 sorry.

11 COUNCILMAN Goode: That's okay, no
12 problem.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Please
14 continue.

15 COUNCILMAN Goode: I am in favor of
16 fair labor contracts and starting early
17 negotiation, but are you really asking us to wait
18 until a whole negotiation process is finished with
19 regard to labor contracts before we consider doing
20 anything on the stadiums?

21 MR. Cronin: That's correct.

22 COUNCILMAN Goode: Thank you, Madam
23 Chair.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: You're
25 welcome.

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2 The Chair recognizes Councilman Cohen.

3 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Mr. Cronin, I have
4 to say that I know of no one, anyone in the City
5 of Philadelphia, who has been more dedicated to
6 the welfare of the citizens of Philadelphia and of
7 the employees who work for the City than you. And
8 I have to state, I find it, as a lifelong leader
9 in the struggle to support to labor unions, to see
10 you subject to the booing that took place here.
11 You ought to be hailed by all of the people in
12 Philadelphia because you are responsible, together
13 with some others, but you've been out in the
14 leadership, fighting for the fulfillment of every
15 Philadelphian's dream of adequate services,
16 adequate schools, adequate facilities for all
17 Philadelphians.

18 Now, I understand your concern.

19 (Jeers from some audience members.)

20 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Come on, come on.

21 You can yell and you can scream.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Mr.

23 Gillespie.

24 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Do whatever you want
25 to do, but I'm urging you, don't disgrace --

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Mr.

3 Gillespie, I am asking you --

4 COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- by booing one of
5 the outstanding labor leaders in the City..

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Councilman,
7 Councilman, Councilman Cohen, please, you are not
8 addressing the group, you are addressing Mr.
9 Cronin.

10 Mr. Gillespie, I am asking you please
11 to tell your people that we want to be respected
12 --

13 (Jeers from some audience members.)

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: -- and we
15 want to respect them. However, if that does not
16 happen, we're calling a recess.

17 (Jeers from some audience members.)

18 MR. GILLESPIE: Yo, yo, yo, yo.

19 Everybody should be heard here. All those in
20 favor -- oh, no, never mind.

21 (Laughter.)

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Please
23 proceed, Councilman.

24 I will not allow any Councilmember to
25 be disrespected. Now, I'm asking one more time,

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2 please control yourselves. Everybody has the
3 right to testify.

4 Councilman Cohen, please proceed.

5 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Mr. Cronin, among
6 the testimony presented here in these hearings is
7 that the stadium is all worn out. My God, we're
8 told the stadium is 30 years old, it's got to be
9 replaced.

10 Tell us, from your knowledge, how many
11 of the City facilities are 30 years old, 50 years
12 old 70 years old, 100 years old? Tell us about
13 what the citizens of Philadelphia put up with
14 every day. Tell us about the police stations
15 where all the officers are crowded together in
16 tiny rooms, where they don't have room enough to
17 do their job, so that people understand what City
18 Council's being asked to do.

19 And while we try to work out some
20 method to achieve it, all we're being met with
21 from the audience are boos and blusters. You have
22 -- those in the auditorium above and in the seats
23 behind us also have a responsible to all of the
24 citizens of Philadelphia.

25 Tell us about the facilities that you

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2 fight for. Mr. Cronin -- that's --

3 (Jeers from some audience members.)

4 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Mr. Cronin, can you
5 speak to the needs?

6 MR. CASEY: My name's George Casey, I'm
7 President of Local 22 in Philadelphia, the
8 Firefighters.

9 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Okay. Tell us about
10 the conditions.

11 MR. CASEY: The cuts that we took in
12 the last eight years under the Rendell
13 Administration and the David L. Cohen's, okay, you
14 guys would have been on strike for eight years if
15 you took the cuts we do. I have widows that are
16 losing their houses because our pension plan is
17 only paying them.

18 Two guys died in the line of duty in
19 1974. Their wives called me last week, they're
20 losing their homes because -- you know how much
21 pension they get for risking, you know, their
22 lives -- taking the -- the job took their lives?
23 \$500. One widow is getting \$306. Because our
24 pension fund has been always underfunded, 42 of
25 last year's.

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2 Now, if you did -- your union
3 presidents or your City Council did this, you
4 would be up in arms. Ninety percent of the
5 Philadelphia department firehouses wouldn't even
6 pass their own goddamn fire code. And that's how
7 serious it is. We've had garbage coming up out of
8 the pipes in certain fire houses, they've been
9 living in the same fire houses for years. Our
10 equipment -- I have 142 guys right now that might
11 need their liver transplants, and the City gave me
12 \$3 million. In the first 10-day period, we spent
13 \$45,000 in the (unintelligible) period for this
14 medication, and only half of the guys have come
15 forward already. So it's either, I'm going to
16 have to sue the City for more money or, you know,
17 we're going to have to wait until this contract
18 comes up.

19 But I'm telling you right now, I'm a
20 union man, I've been a union man all my life. And
21 if you guys had to do what we had to do in the
22 last eight years, you would have been on strike
23 for eight years, because we still do not have the
24 same health benefits or the same amount of money
25 that we had in 1992. I'm still \$75 shy of what I

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2 made in 1992 for my health plan. And we're broke,
3 okay?

4 (Jeers from some audience members.)

5 MR. CASEY: Hey, listen, we're not --
6 I'm not against you guys building, okay? But I'm
7 tired of AFL-CIO workers --

8 (Jeers from some audience members.)

9 (President Verna taps gavel.)

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: We will stand
11 in recess until Tuesday, March the 7th, at 10
12 o'clock.

13 Thank you.

14 (Adjourned at 11:15 a.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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RE: COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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JOSEPHINE CARDILLO,

Registered Professional Reporter