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**STATEMENT ON THE COMMEMORATION
OF THE
DALEY & HALLIGAN BICENTENNIAL**

We, the members of the Northampton Human Rights Commission, are pleased to have been invited to make a statement on the occasion of the Daley and Halligan Bicentennial Commemoration.

We believe it is important to publicly remember this act of prejudice and injustice in our community's history. It is important to acknowledge how our community's tolerance has evolved over the last 200 years and to celebrate the 1984 proclamation by Michael Dukakis that sought to remove the stigma and disgrace resulting from Daley and Halligan's wrongful conviction and execution. It is also important to recognize and bear witness to the dangers of ethnic and racial hatred and to be aware of how our prejudices can inhibit justice and destroy lives.

This should be an occasion for community and individual self-reflection and scrutiny as well. We know through the study of history that a group of people who are in some way defined as "different" can become the target of a community's intolerance and fear, and that the targets of hate and prejudice may change over time. The targets may be Native American, or African American, or Irish, or French-Canadian, or Italian, or Polish, or Puerto Rican, or Middle Eastern, or any new immigrant, or perhaps someone who has a disability, or a mental illness, or a different sexual orientation or religion.

And so, in commemoration of Daley and Halligan, let us affirm our commitment to creating and sustaining a community whose legacy will be justice, fairness and the protection of the rights of all citizens.

Signed this 5th day of June, 2006
Northampton Human Rights Commission
Heather Johnson, Chair
Valerie Nelson, Vice-chair
Wendy Berg
Sayed Iqbal
Linda Stone