

CONSTRUCTION FIRM, UNION PITCH IN FOR BOSTON CLEANUP

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By Viola Osgood

The plea for help went out on two new fronts last week - a call to aid city officials in the cleanup of Boston. Yesterday morning at 7 o'clock, the call was answered by almost 200 construction workers from the John McCourt Co. and Local 223 of the Laborers International Union of North America.

The volunteers met in Franklin Park before moving out into sections of Roxbury and North Dorchester, where they would remove hundreds of tons of rodent-infested garbage and rubble from 48 vacant lots.

"I couldn't be more pleased at the turnout," said Richard McCourt, one of the organizers. "My family has been earning its living in Boston for four generations and the cleanup is one little way for us to express our gratitude."

Pat Walsh, business manager for Local 233, called on other trade and craft unions to make a similar commitment: "We all owe something to the city. This cleanup is one of the best programs we could have and everyone should pitch in."

The construction workers' effort, initiated by McCourt and Walsh, is part of Mayor Raymond L. Flynn's spring cleanup campaign. This was the fourth weekend cleanup, but it was the first time a construction firm or union had actively participated.

The workers gave their time and energy. The McCourt Co. donated 8 dump trucks, 16 front end loaders and 12 pickup trucks. McCourt said that amount of manpower and equipment costs \$5100 an hour.

While the construction crews took on the heavier tasks, neighborhood volunteers in Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, South Boston and Hyde Park performed other chores. City work crews were there to supply residents with equipment and to haul away trash.

Mamie Goforth of Dorchester, a laborer for the McCourt Co., said she was glad to be working on a project that was good for the city and for her own neighborhood in particular.

Steve Frick of Malden, an assistant project manager for McCourt, commented: "It's a good idea. You have a group effort of management, labor and the city all working together to clean up Boston. I don't live in Boston, but I work here. I have to look at it everyday, so I think I should help clean it."

In midmorning, Flynn stood near Erie and Greenwood streets in Dorchester and watched as a construction crew used six front end loaders and dozens of rakes to clear two lots that were covered with mounds of debris from illegal dumping.

Flynn praised the labor/management effort from McCourt and Local 223. He said the city can't afford to pay for the kind of heavy work that was being done on the lots.

"I've never seen anything like this," Flynn said. "This shows a commitment to the people in this neighborhood and to the people in the city. Projects like this improve the quality of life. This is what can happen when there is partnership between the public and private sectors. It's a good day for Boston."

Asked how he plans to make sure the lots won't be used as dumping grounds in the future, Flynn said he plans to push for strict enforcement of existing laws and to work for the passage of even tougher statutes.

A 75-year-old retired executive secretary of Local 233 came to show support for the effort.

"I don't want my name in the paper," he said, "but I just want to say what a good project this is in so many ways. You have blacks and whites, men and women working together side by side to clean up the neighborhoods. And that alone has to be a good thing for the city."