

**CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR THOMAS M. MENINO
Remarks of Mayor Thomas M. Menino
Acceptance of Sacco and Vanzetti Memorial
August 23, 1997**



Thank you, Judge Agnes. Welcome, everyone, to this historic occasion. Governor Cellucci, thanks you for being here today. And I'd like to express my thanks to Judge Agnes and the Massachusetts Dante Alighieri Society for your efforts to bring about this event.

The Dante Alighieri Society does important work for the Italian-American community, and it's thanks to events like this one that the Italian-American community in Boston remains active and thriving.

On behalf of the City of Boston, on the seventieth anniversary of the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti, I am pleased to accept this work of art.

It's an honor to accept and publicly display a creation by the sculptor of Mt. Rushmore, to add to the terrific art and resources in our fine library.

The City's acceptance of this piece is not intended to reopen the debate about the guilt or innocence of Sacco and Vanzetti. We are accepting it to acknowledge this case's impact on the course of justice. I hope it will serve as a reminder to all of us about the importance of a fair trial.

Whether you believe in the guilt or innocence of Sacco and Vanzetti, we must all recognize their crucial role in history. As Judge Agnes has told us, historians and legal scholars everywhere discuss this case as a turning point in the effort to eliminate prejudice from the legal process. Ensuring fairness in the judicial process is important not only for immigrants, not only for minority groups, but for all Americans.

Boston is famous for the high value we've always placed on education and the free exchange of ideas. This library was the first free library open to the public in the United States. Its mission is – and I quote – "to preserve and provide access to the historical record of our society, and to serve the cultural, educational, and informational needs of the City and the Commonwealth."

This work of art – which you'll get a chance to see in a minute, don't worry – commemorates a significant moment in the history of our region. It belongs here, in the library, where people can come reflect on it, and decide what it means to them. It will certainly stimulate debate and discussion, as any library material should.

And now it's my pleasure to introduce the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Argeo Paul Cellucci.