

willmotts and why-nots

David J. Willmott, Editor

Wake Up To Gas

Come on, America. Wake up to gas. The service stations are brimming over with gas and just dying for you to come in and top your tank. Isn't it miraculous that less than three weeks after the price went up five to ten cents a gallon, the Arabs lifted their embargo and the oil companies responded to their call of greatness. They have pumped billions of gallons of gas out of the Middle East, loaded it up on tankers, rushed it special delivery to America, geared up the refineries to extra production, worked their truck drivers day and night. And all this happens in less than three weeks? Now you and I can have all the gas we want!

They did it anyway

American ingenuity is wonderful. It's only another example of how our oil companies come to the need of the country when the price is right. Maybe even those long lines in February could have been avoided if those dirty men in Washington had eliminated the price controls and allowed the oil companies to raise their prices at will, which is what they did anyway. We could have all saved ourselves a lot of fuss and bother. Let's face it ... the American public has been taken badly, really badly by the oil companies. We have been taken badly because we had a government that was unable to protect us and instead just added to the chaos.

A manufactured product

We said it last November and we'll say it now: there wasn't any and there wouldn't be any oil crisis except that it was manufactured. It is impossible to have all the gas and oil you need one day and not enough to go around the next. Petroleum products are not like finely tuned machinery that requires extensive tuning up and months of hand work to make it run right. It is a volume product that is pumped by the billions of gallons out of the ground, refined in vast quantities and distributed the same way. The oil companies have a monopoly reaching from oil field to service station. They have the political clout and ownership of many government officials that prevent any concrete action being taken against them. The Sherman Anti-Trust Act should have been invoked a long time ago, but Washington

lacked politicians with free souls who had the courage of their convictions.

Here it comes again

We are going to be taken again. Our guess is about August and if the August slowdown in production does not result in sufficient price hikes, we will be faced with shortages of fuel oil and further skyrocketing prices come next fall and winter; i.e. some time after election day, as the oil companies wouldn't want their favorite sons to be thrown out of office. There is no way we can see that an individual can practically protest to the oil companies because if you stop buying one brand, you're going to have to buy the next, and the way we see it, the majors don't change colors, just names.

There is a way, though - that is for the American public, from coast to coast, to dump those politicians who have allowed, part and parcel, this conspiracy of the majors to plunder the hard-pressed Americans' pocketbook. It will be up to each individual voter to make his own decision this November. You can vote to continue and to keep in office men who have done absolutely nothing except give you lip service or you can replace them with people, who, hopefully, when they take office, will not have been bought and paid for. And why not?

Proposed Development Rights

County Executive John Klein unveiled his much talked about farmland preservation program. When first proposed, the program called for the County to buy approximately 9,000 acres of active farmland here on the East End to preserve forever more as farmland. The new proposal Klein unveiled calls for, in most cases, purchase of the development rights to this property but not the actual purchasing of the property. This is sound. The property will remain on the tax rolls at a lower assessment rate. It will only be taxed for its farm value and not the value of real estate for development purposes. The farmers would receive immediate compensation at today's actual value of the property for the development rights.


It is a way in which the farmer can

have his cake and eat it, too. No longer will he have to be in the business of investing in real estate while attempting to farm. His full energies can be placed in agriculture and he will not be caught in the spiralling tax rate because his land is now worth so much more for the development of houses. This will be a boon to the serious farmer who wishes to see his way clear to farm for many years to come, plus be able to turn his farm operation over to his sons knowing they will not be driven out of business by taxes.

Benefit us, benefit others


This program should be supported by all residents. It will mean great blocks of land here on the East End will remain undeveloped, thus preserving somewhat the nature and quality of life we have all come to love. It will mean no massive housing developments will be built on these large tracts of land, our school taxes can hopefully be stabilized, and the water and air has a chance of remaining pure. It will also have a beneficial effect on our food prices as a farmer will be able to farm for less cost; and if this program is successful here, we can look forward to it being adopted elsewhere in the country where farmers are under similar pressure.

The plan is not Utopia, but a lot of hard work and constructive thought has gone into it and it is one of the better governmental programs we have seen come out of any government in our time of publishing Suffolk Life. We commend Klein and his advisory committee on this proposal and if successfully passed, our children will thank them, too. And why not?



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If He Wasn't President

Over the last two years, we have continually heard about Nixon using his office for his own personal gain and to avoid the rules by which the average citizen must abide. Our media have been filled, morning, noon and night, with stories (most of the time based upon rumor) of what might happen rather than what actually did happen.

Tax money owed

Last week the President got hit with close to half-million dollars in reassessment on his taxes over the last three years. He had said that if the House Committee investigating his tax returns found he owed one penny, he would pay it without question. They found a lot more. Nixon immediately agreed to pay this full sum uncontested. If Nixon was like any other citizen, business, corporation, who had been hit with an audit, he would have protested the findings, and chances are the tax courts would have found some of the findings to be as erroneous as the original filings, and a compromise figure would have been reached that would have satisfied both the IRS and the individual complainant.

Fantastic gesture

Nixon is no ordinary citizen and as a result, he is not taking advantage of the mechanics of our judicial system. Whether you call this an act of courage or an attempt to rebuild confidence in himself, the country and the system under which we operate, it is a fantastic gesture, as Nixon is nowhere as rich as his predecessors, Johnson and Kennedy, who from what we gather could never have stood up under the scrutiny under which Nixon has been placed.

Rights and responsibilities

We think the media in this country who have been so vehement in prosecuting Nixon have been totally unfair in overlooking what Nixon has done in this move. If you feel it is your right to be able to criticize, you must also assume the responsibility to publicize the righteousness of an act or you will have no freedom of the press. Freedom of the press, like any other freedom, has its rights and responsibilities. You can't exercise your rights without exercising your responsibilities as well. And why not?

Bull Power

We have just finished reading the fascinating article in the New York State Conservationist Magazine, dealing with the conversion of solid waste (manure) to energy. The article specifically referred to a farmer in New Hampshire who was able to convert the waste products of his 100-head herd of cattle into enough gas to supply energy to run his entire farm -- from the electricity for the house to the gas to run the tractors, cars and trucks. The article went on to state that only Los Angeles has commercially put the system into effect converting human waste and garbage to electricity in the county. When manure and roughage are mixed together, the biological breakdown gives off a gas called methane that can be fairly easily processed which burns as well as propane. It is estimated that a municipality could provide 4 to 6 per cent of its energy through this method. In addition, sewerage and garbage could be disposed of with an end product that is a high-grade, odor-free sanitary fertilizer.

Look into it

On Long Island, where we are spending billions of dollars on sewage disposal and have created a gigantic pork barrel which environmentalists claim will change the content of our oceans as well as drain off the usable fresh water, why aren't we investigating this new energy source? We are at a point in our history when we must start thinking of ways to reclaim every bit of our waste. We hope and we encourage you to demand that our government agencies investigate the possibilities of a system of this nature here on Long Island. It is practical and makes sense, and will profit all of us and particularly our children in the generations to come. And why not?

Do Come


On April 26 Doctor Arthur R. Tamplin, a former Atomic Energy Commission biophysicist who is internationally known in the field of radioactivity, will be a guest speaker at a meeting presented by a consortium of civic organizations. Dr. Tamplin will speak on the effects the three atomic plants being considered for Suffolk County will have on us. We have all heard LILCO expound their views on the subject. It will be in-

teresting to hear the other side. The creation of these three power plants will be the most important change in the scope and the quality of life affecting all of Suffolk County in the next century. It is of utmost importance that everyone hear both sides of this question.

Pros and cons

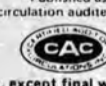
There are tremendously controversial arguments, both pro and con, for the creation of nuclear generating plants. On one hand, you have the utilities' quest for low cost electrical generating facilities and on the other hand you have the question of whether human beings can survive in the midst of these plants. Unfortunately, at this time, there are no clear cut answers as to the safety or the practicality of such installations. We do have the facts on hand that the Atomic Energy Commission will not allow these plants to be built in populated areas because of the safety and health hazards that they do create. Yet, we do have the legitimate need for low cost energy, and somewhere in between a compromise is going to have to be reached. The compromise, if LILCO has its way, will be that the lives of the residents of Eastern Long Island are disposable.

It is for this reason we urge you to attend this meeting to find out the other side of the story and how you personally can be affected, so that you may make up your own mind as to the need and the legitimacy of energy through atomic reactors. The meeting will be held in the spacious cafeteria of the Riverhead Junior High School at 600 Harrison Avenue in Riverhead. The date again is Friday, April 26. The time: 8 p.m. Do try to be there. And why not?



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Youth Registration

Within 30 days after a young man reaches his eighteenth birthday, he has to register for military service. Every high school we know of has a teacher or counselor assigned to this task. He or she assists the young man in filling out the necessary paperwork and sends it to the proper authorities to be recorded. This system works, and works well. There are few men that avoid being registered and the registration is completed with the least amount of aggravation and paperwork.

The students want it

Students from many of our high schools have requested that they be able to register to vote at their local high school. Registering to vote is no longer a complicated procedure. It's as easy as registering for military service. You write down your name, address and other pertinent information and check the party you wish to be registered with or the fact that you do not wish to be registered in any party and prefer to be independent. Your papers are checked and you are registered.

Some politicians in this County feel we should not make it easy for people to register. Two weeks ago at the County Legislature, Floyd Linton (D) and Louis A. Fuoco (R) has prepared a joint resolution that would make simple registration possible. Mr. Fuoco allegedly received a call from Brookhaven Town Republican boss, Richard Zeidler, and as a result, the resolution was held for another two weeks.

Party politics

In Suffolk, Republicans overwhelmingly are the predominant party in registration. It is the feeling of some Republican leaders that if high school students were allowed to register in high school, they would be swayed in their registration by their high school social studies teachers. It is the fear of these leaders that teachers tend to lean more towards the Democratic Party, and as a result, many of these students would end up registered Democrats. We do not dispute that many teachers have Democratic leanings. We do not dispute the fact that many of these teachers directly influence the students and we do not dispute the fact

that under these conditions some students who might normally register Republican would end up being registered as Democrats.

We believe

We do have enough faith, though, in our young people to believe that most of them are not bought cheap. They do have minds of their own. They will choose an ideology they personally can be comfortable with -- we do not think that the Democratic party is the only party offering this ideology. In addition, after registration takes place, there is a period of time before these students will actually vote. If the politicians put together programs to attract these young voters as well as older voters, they will be successful in winning their vote. We are sorry to see that some Republican leaders and most noticeably, Mr. Zeidler, have such little faith in our young people. We do and we think they will act according to their own convictions and should have the flexibility of being able to register at their schools. And why not?

Worth The Deposit

The Suffolk County Legislature last Tuesday held a hearing in Hauppauge on a proposal for the County to charge a deposit on all beverage containers, both deposit type and throwaways. The logic behind this proposal is if the consumer is made to bring back his returnables or pay a stiff penalty, he will. The State of Oregon put this system into operation and it has worked. An upstate county is scheduled to use the system starting this fall. Suffolk is considering it now.

Who is responsible?

Beverage containers contribute heavily to our solid waste disposal problems. There is hardly a road you can drive down that is not littered with non-returnable cans and bottles. At present the consumer pays about five cents more for the privilege of not returning containers. In addition, it is becoming more and more difficult for the consumer, who wishes to save and who goes through the trouble of returning bottles to find these returnables stocked in our beverage houses and supermarkets. Most people we have talked to have stated (particularly since the ecology movement has grown) they would be more than


glad to return their containers if they can get the selection and variety in the beverages they want in returnable containers. The beverage industry maintains that the consumer demands non-returnable containers. We rather feel that the consumer has been forced to buy these. The industry maintained that if the county makes it mandatory for all containers to be of deposit form, this would destroy jobs and raise prices; it would do nothing to prevent litter; it would not substantially help our solid waste problem.

Different conclusions

We cannot understand how they come to these conclusions. As for jobs, more people will be needed to handle the returnable containers. Therefore there will be more jobs. If the containers are of a re-usable form, they will not show up in our garbage dumps and cause more solid waste problems. Those that are not re-usable can be recycled if they are returned. If someone knows they are throwing a dime out the window, the tendency would be to throw the can underneath the seat of the car and return it the next time you go to buy beverages.


Back to the source

There is no doubt that a deposit on all containers will cause problems for the industry, but it has been the industry that has caused the problem in the first place. Now what the people are saying through the Legislature is, "the problem is back in your laps, boys, where it belongs". We hope that the Legislature sticks to its guns and passes a strong measure requiring all beverage containers be subject to deposit. And why not?



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One Tax For All

We have all just completed the annual agony of filling out our tax returns. To go along with the agony, we saw the President of the United States charged with misinterpretation of the tax laws and reassessed almost one half million in back taxes. This place because he and his accountants interpreted the laws to mean one thing and the Congressional Committee interpreted them another way. As each of us sat down to do our taxes, we had to interpret what the law meant as it was applied to us individually. Do you count the five pounds of bluefish your neighbor gave you as income or don't you? Do you count the 20 miles your traveled last May 20 to take Suzie to the orthodontist as a medical expense? Do you count circulation sales to be delivered in '74 but sold prior to December 31 as 1973 income or 1974 income? And on and on the confusion goes.

Who pays most?

An economic fact the liberal press very often forgets to remind the taxpayer of is that over 66 percent of the public pays in excess of 42 percent of their income in taxes. This is something the average person is generally not aware of because he thinks of himself paying a smaller percentage and the fat cats on the top are the ones that are being socked 40, 50, 60, and 70 percent and more. What the average person also is not aware of is with inflation and his rate of pay rising upwards over the last decade, he has moved up into new tax brackets that once were reserved for the wealthy. With the progressive income tax and inflation, it is the guy in the middle who is paying a bigger and bigger bite in taxes. Can this all be eliminated and made equal? The answer is "yes".

So-called adjustments

At present, our tax laws are used to create so-called social adjustment and to equalize the wealth of the nation. This is hogwash, but it makes for good politics. The very wealthy maintain their wealth through tax loopholes and keep a greater proportion of their earnings free from the tax man. We are not opposed to this idea as the idea that this country offers an opportunity for you to get rich and to have, to hold and to use this wealth is an unalienable right. We are opposed to the average person picking up more than his share

of the tab, which is what he does through our tax system.

Offering a starting point

It is our feeling that a system can be devised that will take the nightmare out of paying taxes and equalize for everyone the share of carrying the tax burden. We do not pretend to be mathematicians or social economists and only offer the following plan as a starting point for serious thought for those who are concerned about this country and how it is run. The premise on which our tax plan would operate would be as follows:

Everyone pays an equal tax. There are no loopholes, no deductions, and no way that anyone can avoid paying his rightful share. All taxes in existence at present - income, corporate, real estate, withholding, custom, inheritance, hidden and otherwise - are repealed. They are replaced with one tax based on the total output of the country, better known as the gross national product, including the gross national income and wealth transfer.

In 1972, (the latest figures we have to work with), the figures indicate that the gross national product and the gross national income amounted to \$2,096,947,000,000. The Federal government spent \$238 billion; combined state governments spent \$11 billion; local municipalities spent an estimated \$1 billion, bringing the total government expenditure to \$250 billion. \$250 billion divided into the total gross national product and gross national income gives you a percentage just shy of 12 per cent.

Allowing for sloppy mathematics for which we are famous, and other factors beyond our limited intelligence, it would indicate a one-time tax of 13 percent on everything we buy, everything we make, all profits, and all labors, which would totally take care of every tax burden with which we are now faced. This tax would be 29 percent less than what the average person is paying. It's a heck of a lot less than what our corporations are paying on their actual earnings. It would be simple to administrate and very difficult to cheat on as there are no deductions, no loopholes, and no allowances. You would not need the complicated tax laws under which we now operate that are subject to misinterpretation. A simple tax of this nature, with the elimination of all other taxes, would substantially wipe out the bureaucracy that the tax bureaus are so famous for. It would


allow everybody and every company to be able to figure their tax burden on a week-to-week basis and not have to sweat out the end of the year.

No more loopholes

The plan is simple, and we believe many would consider it a radical approach to a complex problem, but this may be what is needed in today's government if we are going to survive. The plan would eliminate the loopholes both for the individual and the corporation. It would make each of us wholly responsible for ourselves and could once more put this country on sound financial footing.


In addition to a simplistic idea as this, at the same time this plan were to be adopted, the budgeting for all government agencies would be based upon the total income of the year before rather than the hoped-for income of the year to come. In other words, the government would be forced to live within the means allotted to it by the efforts of its people the year before. In addition, if the government officials were serious about reducing the size of the governmental budgets, and stopping inflation, it could be accomplished by simply making a mandatory 1 percent cut in the amount to be spent progressively each year for five years. This would only be 1 percent the first year but would amount to 31 percent over five years.

We realize a concept such as this is Utopian, and more than we could ever hope for, but we hope those who are concerned about our great country will at least think out this idea as we have and discuss the ramifications and benefits to be derived for all. And why not?



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