

Willmotts and Why-Nots

David J. Willmott, Editor

Let The People Decide

For a number of months, a war has raged in Brookhaven Town over the site selection of a proposed new town hall. Patchogue Village business interests have organized and are demanding that the town hall be kept in downtown Patchogue. Residents of Farmingville, led by the Farmingville Chamber of Commerce, are waging an equally publicized campaign, arguing that the town hall should be centrally located and more accessible to all parts of Brookhaven.

No one, until recently, has brought up what the people of Brookhaven can afford, or if they even want a new town hall. All the cost ramifications should be brought out and decided upon prior to a site selection. Between the outlandish county contracts, the South West Sewer District, the real possibility of loss of LILCO's taxes, increases that are forthcoming in other town costs as well as in school districts, the burden may well be

more than the taxpayers of Brookhaven can afford.

Rather than this being an assumption on the part of town board members, all the facts pertaining to this cost should be exposed and matched against the taxpayer's ability to fund. With the facts in hand, the voters should be presented with an opportunity of authorizing or rejecting the concept of a town hall. They also should be given, at the same time, the opportunity to express their preference as to the location of their town hall. Their preference, of course, is not binding, but it would give those who are elected some guidance and direction in making the right decision.

It's the peoples' town hall, not the politicians. Let the people decide in November whether they want a new town hall, and where they want it located. Let the people decide.

And why not?

Bad Politics Makes Bad Government

The term of Everett F. McNab, currently the Republican commissioner at the Board of Elections, ended at the close of last year, and there are strong indications he will not be reappointed to that post. His deputy is Gerald Berger, who enjoys a reputation of being the one real worker and full-time executive at the Elections Board. Common sense would dictate that Berger, unquestionably the best qualified person to move up into the commissioner's spot, would be chosen for the position. But political greed appears to be stepping in the way.

Berger is known for his principles, and his ability to treat friend and foe with absolute fairness, providing all that is allowed under the law to all political parties. There is not one person in this county who does, or could, question his abilities or his professionalism. Berger knows election law backwards and forwards, he maintains excellent records, and motivates his people to a new level of professionalism.

Berger has been instrumental in bringing to fruition a long sought dream at the Board of Elections: its total computerization, eliminating the archaic system of the past and bringing that agency into the twentieth century. That dream will make more efficient the registration of new voters, and the continual updating of the entire file of voters. It will also modernize the system of tallying election results, efficiently, swiftly and economically. When the computer system is fully up and running, Suffolk's Board of Elections can be pointed to as a model operation for all others. And Berger deserves the credit.

The Republican and Democratic commissioners and the deputy commissioners of the Board of

Elections are selected through the political process, with input from the political leaders. Berger has been steadfastly loyal to Anthony Prudenti, the current county Republican leader, who has been at odds in the past with certain political factions. Those who oppose Prudenti are attempting to deny Berger the commissioner's position because of his loyalty to Prudenti.

There exists in this county a group of disgruntled Republicans who were ousted with the defeat of John Klein and the change in county leadership. They have never stopped battling since their defeat. These are the guys who were swept out by the determination of Prudenti and County Executive Peter Cohalan to not only clean up the county, but to clean up their own house, the Republican Party.

With the advent of Cohalan and Prudenti, Suffolk County was no longer for sale. You could no longer go to Blue Point, make a contribution and get done what you wanted. Some of the good old boys do not like the fact they can no longer wheel and deal, enriching themselves and their friends. They have waged a continual war in their attempts to get back into power, at first using Babylon as their base.

Six months ago, Jess Marchese, who had a topsy turvy alliance with Prudenti, resigned as Brookhaven GOP leader. Walter Hazlitt, from the Richard Zeidler era and connections, was elected as Brookhaven Town leader. Prudenti opposed the selection of Hazlitt, but was out maneuvered in his opposition.

Berger remained loyal to Prudenti and because of this loyalty, Berger is now being threatened not only with not becoming commissioner, a job he has rightfully earned and truly

deserves, but also with the position he now holds as deputy commissioner. Last week, as Berger waited outside the courtroom where three punks were being tried for the murder of his son, he was approached by a political leader who warned if he persisted in trying to achieve the commissioner's seat, he was putting his own position in jeopardy, for the deputy is appointed by the commissioner.

Under the new rules of the Suffolk County Legislature, Berger's name must advance through the Personnel Committee before it can get to the legislature for a full vote. Approval by four members of that committee is needed before Berger's name can be advanced to the full legislature. Two of the members of that committee, reliable information reveals, Legislators John Rosso and Ferdinand Giese are reportedly under the control of Hazlitt, and thus are stalling action on the Berger appointment.

It doesn't surprise us that Giese would do Hazlitt's bidding. But we are surprised that Rosso, who has attempted to create the illusion that he is above politics, would allow himself to become used as a political pawn. If he is as free from politics as he claims to be, he will vote in favor of moving Berger's appointment for action by the full legislature. If he doesn't, he will have to shoulder the shame of

being nothing more than a political lackey.

It is reported that Berger has solid support of 13 out of the 18 legislators, and that he would be appointed if politics was put aside and qualifications became the main criterion for the job, as well it should be.

Cohalan could break the impasse by issuing a Certificate of Necessity to Gregory Blass, who wants to introduce the legislation naming Berger as commissioner. This would, however, have severe political ramifications for Cohalan. He has paid dearly in an attempt to unify all the Republican factions within the county before his reelection bid this November. Cohalan has a cold, hard, calculating decision to make that may show the mantle of the man.

He is famous for saying, "Good politics makes good government." In this matter, there is some very bad politics being played that will make for very bad government, unless Cohalan intervenes and proves he believes what he says.

Time is running out for Cohalan. He has to decide on which side of the angels he is flying. The Berger issue will give the public, particularly the Republicans, a clear cut idea on where Cohalan stands today.

And why not?

Readers' Opinion

Dear Sir:

Having heard and read so much on Shoreham, I would like to submit to you a thought or two on this subject.

I have been a resident of Southampton for over 50 years and I've enjoyed those 50 years. I also am concerned as much as anyone about our younger generation and what kind of a world we will leave them.

Here in America we have 76 Nuclear Reactors and, with the exception of Three Mile Island, all are operating for many years. Even at Three Mile Island there was not the loss of a single life.

I have compiled a list of Nuclear Plants in foreign countries. There are no figures available for the Soviet Union but no doubt they have at least 75 as their population is greater than ours. I have not listed those countries which have from 1 to 8 Reactors.

Country	Population	Nuclear Reactors
U.S.A.	225 Million	76
Great Britain	56 Million	33
Japan	116 Million	20
France	54 Million	15
West Germany	61 Million	10
Canada	24 Million	8
Soviet Union	263 Million	?

You will note that Great Britain has more Nuclear plants per population than we have. No doubt they have great faith and believe in Nuclear Power.

Evacuation plan? Why? When our 76 plants were started, it was not necessary to have an evacuation plan. Why this sudden fear? Have we lost all confidence in our engineers and scientists? Should we close all our colleges and universities because they are not giving us qualified engineers and scientists? It was American technology that landed our men on the moon with pin-point accuracy and brought them back to earth with the same remarkable accuracy. And there are hundreds of foreign students attending our colleges and universities, because they know that our educational institutions are the best in the world.

So let's have faith and confidence in American know-how.

Let Shoreham join the other 194 Nuclear Reactors that are running quietly and efficiently.

These figures are available in any World Almanac and I am not a LILCO stockholder.

Very truly yours,
Charles W. Thaens
Southampton

SUFFOLK LIFE

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and Suffolk County Life

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Bad For LILCO, Good For The People

Controversy over the Shoreham nuclear power plant has focused on two vital areas: concerns over safe operation of the facility, and evacuation from the county in the event of an accident releasing radiation into the air. Two developments last week affect both of those concerns.

First, LILCO disclosed plans to offer a new evacuation plan which would replace Suffolk County, which has ruled a safe evacuation is not possible, with other governmental agencies. Apparently the premise is evacuation, safe or not, but some semblance of a plan even if it's unworkable. Bring in the National Guard, the Marines, the Navy, the Army perhaps; forget the fact that these people, who may or may not respond, don't know much about our area. They can always read a map to find out what is where, and what clogged roadways they are to travel.

What state agency will LILCO assign to what tasks? Will the Troopers from upstate rush down to bolster the limited number of State Police here in Suffolk? Will the state's Department of Public Works, which has enough trouble trying to cope with snow storms with limited equipment, be in charge of the roadways? Perhaps Governor Cuomo will be the traffic coordinator for the traffic jams which will surely develop.

Nice try LILCO. If you can get some state officials insane enough to accept your new proposal, you're in business and we're in trouble.

Speaking of trouble, the NRC staff joined the ranks of those worrying about the safety of the Shoreham plant last week, urging that LILCO not get a license for Shoreham until the utility agrees to accept an NRC requirement that equipment once considered non-safety related to be looked at in a new light. The NRC staff wants LILCO to view specific

equipment as "important to safety." But LILCO refuses, insisting to do so would involve "horrendous financial implications." Because it was a non-safety classified valve that started Three Mile Island on its way toward near-disaster, the NRC has now determined that many once classified non-safety items can, indeed, compromise safety.

Unless LILCO accepts the NRC's new "important to safety" concerns, "the plant's safety performance and operation performance will be poor," declared Roger J. Mattson, director of the Division of System Integration and one of the NRC's top safety officials. Thus it is now more than the "minority of alarmists," as LILCO likes to portray those opposed to Shoreham, who harbor some very strong concerns about the safety of Shoreham. It is people within the NRC itself, those who are involved in the nuclear field, who have come up with new concerns based on new findings.

That being the case, LILCO's attempt to by-pass Suffolk in putting together a flawed evacuation plan is just another callous example of the utility's efforts to put Shoreham on line at any cost. While LILCO officials concern themselves with the cost of being sure, they shove aside the possible impact on public health.

These latest developments should eliminate any doubts that the Shoreham plant must be gone over with a fine toothed comb by outside agencies to insure its safety, and LILCO's compliance with safety regulations. The NRC should immediately stop any further consideration of permitting Shoreham to go in operation for even low power, until all concerns of safety are fully addressed. Open the doors or shut the plant. Better yet, keep them closed forever.

And why not?

The Buck Stops Here

Harry Truman was famous for his saying: "The buck stops here." As the President of the United States, Truman used those words to give notice he was responsible for whatever happened in U.S. government. He was the boss. Unfortunately, this is not the case with Patrick Henry, district attorney for Suffolk County.

After lengthy investigation, the district attorney's office moved to prosecute William Floyd School District Superintendent Nicholas Poulos on a 40 count indictment they secured from a Grand Jury. And then, on the eve of trial, the district attorney settled the case by accepting a guilty plea to two misdemeanors involving tax evasion. That action stunned the community.

Those who supported Poulos

wanted to know why the district attorney's office conducted such a long witch hunt and brought so many charges against the man if all they were willing to settle on were two misdemeanor charges. Those who opposed Poulos questioned the whole criminal system, one that would allow a man who had been indicted on a 40 count indictment - 26 of them felony charges - to get off with little more than a slap on the wrist.

We understand the district attorney's office has received thousands of letters from throughout the county questioning the credibility of the district attorney's office based on the plea bargaining arrangement worked out with Poulos. The questioning of the district attorney's action in this matter not only continues, but is growing.

And now, District Attorney Patrick Henry declares, as he did in a recent letter to a Mastic Beach resident, that because of the reaction that Poulos "beat the system" and that "backroom deals and political arrangements" were involved, Henry now declares, "...it is my opinion that the plea was inappropriate." Henry insists his office "does not respond to public pressures and opinions" but, he further notes: "The question, simply stated, is 'Does the disposition of the case justify the disenchantment of the community?' And the answer must be 'No.'"

What a cop out. Does Henry now expect us to believe that a case as important as this was not under his constant scrutiny, that some subordinate made the deal without his knowledge? Certainly he had to know the depth of feeling in the community, and that an uproar would develop as a result of the plea he now considers "inappropriate." If it's "inappropriate" now, why wasn't it "inappropriate" when it was arranged? Come on, give us a break!

Second guessing the plea bargaining deal made by his own office, now that the matter is officially dead as far as his office is concerned, is ludicrous. If the facts were there, the case should have been pursued to the end in a court of law. Such action would have prevented the rumors that political pressure was brought to bear to prevent some members of the community from having to testify. It would have stemmed the question now being

asked: What is being hushed up?

Henry now declares that one of the items involved in the tax evasion plea deals with funds received from a school vendor. That doesn't show in the transcript, admits James O'Rourke, who pursued the investigation and indictment for the DA's office. Why not? If funds from an alleged bribe are involved in the tax matter, wouldn't that indicate a bribe was involved? If so, why wasn't that a part of the plea bargain?

The problem with all this questioning is that there are no final answers because of the way this matter was handled by the district attorney's office. There was no final chapter to the lengthy story. And although Poulos escaped criminal punishment, the cloud of suspicion still hangs over his head. If he is innocent of wrongdoing, that is terribly unfair.

Although this was initially a case of one man and his alleged actions within a school district, it has now become a matter of suspicion, almost an indictment, against the office of the district attorney. That's unfortunate. For if that office is not absolutely aloof from political interference, we're all in a whole lot of trouble.

When justice becomes a tool of the politicians, rather than an arm and protector of the public, perhaps it's time to seek out a special prosecutor to fully examine what happened, and why, and how often it does.

And why not?

Readers' Opinion

Dear Mr. Willmott:

On March 10th, the Hampton Bays Teachers' Association sponsored a Guest Chef Night at Indian Cove Restaurant. The proceeds from this dinner went into the association's scholarship fund. A scholarship will be awarded to a Hampton Bays High School graduate in June 1983. The association has awarded a scholarship to a deserving graduate for the past 10 years.

The teachers' association is very grateful to all those members of the school and community who helped make this event a success. We wish to thank those who attended and those who donated alike.

A special thank you is extended to Mr. Watt, principal of Hampton Bays Elementary School, and Mr. Ciraco, principal of Hampton Bays Junior-Senior High School. They supported the event by being the guest chefs of the evening, and added to its festivities with time and energy.

This was an event in which all involved shared a common concern: the welfare of the

students.

Grateful to all,
The Hampton Bays Teachers' Association
Scholarship Fund Committee

Dear Mr. Grasso:

A note of thanks and appreciation for putting to such good use all the many photographs I have sent to Suffolk Life to publicize the Guild Hall events. But a very special thank you for the front page placement of our children's workshop in your March 16 edition.

The response we've received from this one photo has been tremendous. And it does let the community know that Guild Hall offers more than exhibitions and theater productions—and you have certainly helped us to spread the word!

Thank you again.

Sincerely,
Melodi Brown
Guild Hall
East Hampton

SUFFOLK LIFE

VOL. 22 NO. 34

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Willmotts and Why-Not's

David J. Willmott, Editor

Tip Of The Iceberg?

We were at a high school function in Brookhaven Town a few weeks ago where we ran into Gene Gerrard, a first-term Brookhaven Town councilman. Gene has been the pillar of society, heavily involved in his community, a first-rate businessman, and a man of honorable reputation. We asked him how things were going. He said, "The first year was fun, but the last few months have been horrendous."

We mentioned that we had heard a number of rumors. We were checking out some allegations, and it looked like it was business as usual, that Brookhaven was again for sale.

We said to Gene, "It must be really tough, coming from where you have come from." He said, "Thanks, I needed that." He seemed to be relieved that possibly we still believed in him.

The rumors became quite real with D.A.'s allegations that another Councilman, Steven Burke, was

nailed in the process of taking a bribe of \$6,000 to secure a re-zoning less than a week later.

Brookhaven politics have constantly been under question, but we have never seen things quite as out in the open and brazen as they appear to have become in the past few months. We can't remember a time when a politician was actually caught with cash in hand. As one former Republican party official was overheard to say just a few weeks ago, "We've got the town back and if you think this is good, wait until we take over the county, there are millions to be made."

Hopefully, the District Attorney won't blow this one. "If he does, Governor Mario Cuomo will have no choice but to appoint a special prosecutor to look into the appearance of wrong doing in Brookhaven and some of the other Suffolk towns.

And why not?

replace the life LILCO is asking you to trust them with. As cynical as we can be about politicians, we would trust them before we trust the management of LILCO. At least politicians are open to public scrutiny, and there are laws that allow for the discovery of their wrong doings.

Trust LILCO? You have got to be kidding! They have arrogantly demonstrated that even when under the closest scrutiny, they will brazenly take short cuts, regardless of the safety of the people. Even the partisan LILCO supporters should stop trusting and begin to question this corporation.

And why not?

One More Time For Democracy

On July 25, 1978 Hugh Carey signed into law an Initiative and Referendum procedure for Suffolk County residents making Suffolk the first county to have such a mechanism allowing direct input from the people in the development of the lawmaking process. New York City has such a mechanism, but it is rarely used.

The creation of this mechanism was a long-sought goal of this newspaper. We believe strongly that the people have a right to directly determine those issues that directly affect their lives. The law appeared to be a good one. It was alleged by the politicians who developed Suffolk's I & R law that it was a copy of the California law which enabled residents of that state to have direct input into their lives by government. It wasn't! It was an aberration, designed never to work.

We should have known better, for here in Suffolk County we do not have politicians who are always honest and forthright.

In 1980, a group attempted to use this mechanism to put on the ballot a referendum calling for the voters to be given a choice between a County Legislature form of government or a return to a weighted Board of Supervisors. We were deeply involved in this movement, one of the prime sponsors. In attempting to work with the law we realized it apparently had been set up with a host of deliberate pitfalls that made its execution a bureaucratic nightmare. If every party utilizes all the time that is allowed between the introduction of the legislation and its final fulfillment, the process will take 444 days. Yet, the law calls for those

attempting to use it to self destruct after 365 days. Only if the sponsors cut their allotted time substantially, fulfilling the petition gathering procedure and verification in record time, can the mechanism possibly work.

Knowing this beforehand, a group of citizens, mostly senior citizens, banded together under the banner of Tax Action and are again going to try to make democracy work. This week they are starting an initiative drive to give you, the citizens of Suffolk County, an opportunity to decide at the polling booth whether you want to be governed by a legislative form of government, or a weighted Board of Supervisors.

This group has a decent shot at pulling it off as they are a large group made up of representatives of senior citizen's clubs, and individuals from throughout the County. As seniors they have the most precious asset of all, time.

Time and many hands is what is needed. They have carefully researched the law, have been joined by some lawyers who are providing expertise in this field and they are hell bent and determined that they are going to give all of us, young and old, an opportunity to directly decide what form of government we, as free citizens of Suffolk County, wish to be governed by. We applaud and support their efforts and hope that all county residents cheer them on in their battle to give us, the people of Suffolk County, a freedom of choice.

And why not?

And They Ask For Your Trust!

The N.R.C. announced recently they are fining the Long Island Lighting Company \$40,000 for failure to follow proper safety procedures in testing diesel backup generators at the nuclear site in Shoreham.

The fine is being assessed against the corporation, not the management, who should be held responsible. The N.R.C. charged that LILCO fudged the test in their race to open this nuclear facility.

This is not the first time LILCO has faced a fine in recent times. The state's Public Service Commission not long ago announced intent to lodge a whopping big fine against the utility for neglect in maintaining its gas lines, a neglect that could lead to possible disastrous results.

The controversy surrounding Shoreham has been filled with allegations of mismanagement, unsafe construction practices, all posing a threat to our lives. LILCO has answered that these allegations are ridiculous.

Charlie Pierce, their mouth piece,

has relentlessly said, Trust us, we wouldn't do anything to harm you. It's those dirty politicians, namely Peter Cohalan, who are harming you for political gain. Cohalan wants to keep the plant from opening for political advantage. We don't need an independent, outside inspection. Trust us, we have done everything as perfectly as we could. Trust us, you don't need an emergency evacuation plan because you can trust that we have built the plant perfectly. Trust us, there will never be an accident.

It seems the N.R.C. trusted LILCO to follow procedure in testing the diesel backup generator. This trust was misplaced. They did not follow procedure; they took the short cut, the expedient way out. They got caught and now the corporation, but not the management, will pay the fines.

The P.S.C. trusted LILCO to properly maintain the gas lines. They didn't, and are to be fined for this neglect.

Fines are fine, but they can never

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Readers' Opinion

Dear Sir:

The following are some additional comments I made to State Senator LaValle's Shoreham Questionnaire.

I don't expect my comments to get into your paper because they differ so radically from yours.

You have managed beautifully to keep the populace stirred up needlessly. I guess there was nothing going on at the time where you could stir up some controversy and confusion and Shoreham gave you a chance to splash heavy black headlines on the front page.

I agree wholeheartedly with Thos. Jefferson when he said: "Even the least informed of the American people have learned nothing is to be believed in a newspaper."

My comments to Sen. LaValle:

"It's a form of madness to allow a small vocal minority and newspapers that are twisting the truth and scaring the wits out

of the people, to shut down a facility that has already cost \$3 billion!

Shoreham has been inspected some 2,000 times and found to be safe.

It's shocking to think of closing a \$3 billion facility like a snap of a finger and impose this terrible financial burden on the taxpayers just to please a noisy minority and unscrupulous newspapers that refuse to tell the truth about nuclear power.

The world oil supply is not going to last forever. We must have something to take its place.

Unless our politicians have the mentality of retarded squirrels, they should be able to see who is behind the closing of Shoreham. If they are successful in closing Shoreham, they will go on to close other nuclear facilities as well.

Yours truly,
Anne Montgomery
Greenport

Willmotts and Why-Nots

David J. Willmott, Editor

Why Another Test?

Suffolk County employees, whether civilian or police, must take and score high on civil service tests as part of the promotion process. Such tests are given to establish eligibility lists which can last from two to four years. Those who score the highest receive promotions as they are made, but rarely are the number of advancements made to get very far down the list.

The cost of giving these tests - as will be the case in the scheduled test for police sergeant - can run as high as a quarter of a million dollars, considering paid time off before and during the testing, and the actual test costs.

When new tests are scheduled, all who are awaiting or seeking promotion, including those who scored high on the previous test, are required to go through the testing process all over again. Controversy has developed over the soon-to-be-held sergeant test.

The sergeant's test was given two years ago, and since that time only 17 promotions have been made from the list, which numbers more than 500 names. That test was given to establish a four-year list, but for some strange reason a hue and cry was started to give a new test and scrap the current list. That would, of course, give some individuals not on the current list an opportunity to take the test and hope for the best.

On the other hand, however, those

already on the list, who have waited patiently for their time to move into a new rank, stand the chance of losing their standing on the new list, and the taxpayer has to shell out a whole lot of dollars to satisfy just a few.

Interestingly, this matter came before the Suffolk County Legislature, where the legislators defeated the proposal to schedule a new test. The legislators did the right thing by the taxpayer in rejecting that move. But the county's new head of Civil Service, Alan Schneider, has taken it upon himself to schedule a new test, ignoring that which the legislators decided. He has established himself as the person responsible for such decisions, regardless of the cost or burden upon the backs of the taxpayers.

There is a list in place, and few openings that lie ahead. Why then waste a quarter of a million dollars to hold another test when there really is no need? What political reasons are behind it? That may become apparent when the new list comes out, a list that will be carefully scrutinized to see what political names may suddenly appear.

The scheduling of a new sergeant's test when there are many now highly qualified at the top of the current list, and few promotions scheduled to come, is nothing more than a waste of our taxpayers' dollars, and should be reconsidered!

And why not?

their campaigns under the so-called Judicial Cannon of Ethics.

If candidates live up to the letter of the law, they need only smile pretty and keep their mouths shut, nothing is said about their qualifications or their weaknesses. They are only allowed to publish a resume that tells you as much about the candidate as reading a telephone directory.

Under this system, it is impossible for a voter or an independent screening board to delve into whether the person is honest or a thief; has pre-determined biases or prejudices, or even a competent knowledge of the law.

We do not know whether the person is of good character or a moral degenerate. Their qualifications and abilities, and their pasts, are cloaked in secrecy. Their opponents, if they dare bring out these facets which the voters are entitled to know, find themselves subject to censure and condemnation.

The legal fraternity claims that before candidates are presented to the public, they are carefully screened by the local bar association, which is, in reality, an insiders club. It's made up of attorneys who are or will be practicing in front of the judicial candidate. The insiders don't want the boat rocked, nor do they particularly want the very best candidate who might reform the court and refuse to put up with their legal shenanigans and common breaches of courtesy toward clients and witnesses. Occasionally, but not as often as it should, the bar association will assert itself and deny a favorable recommendation for a candidate. Even this action can be questionable. Just last year, for example, the bar association turned down a sitting judge as "unqualified" when he sought election to a higher office. The political screws were tightened and the bar association met in an unusual Saturday session, without an official

quorum, and changed their ruling from "unqualified" to "qualified." The candidate was cross endorsed by the Republican and Democratic parties, and is now sitting in a higher court of law. So much for the ethics and integrity of the bar association.

Under our political system, voters are supposed to be given a choice. Here in Suffolk County, as in many other counties where one party has a dominant registration over the other, the political bosses get together behind closed doors and award judgeships to the party faithful.

If there are ten judges to be elected and the Democrats have 40 percent of the registered vote, the Republicans have 60 percent, six loyal Republicans end up with nominations as do four Democrats. Nothing insures they are the best qualified candidates. They run without opposition, the voter has no choice. The only thing for certain is these candidates have been good old boys or girls as far as the political leaders are concerned. They have paid their dues in the past and can be counted on if they ever want to move up again, to pay in the future.

We are not saying the system is crooked, but the system stinks and is a breeding ground for corruption. The League of Women Voters is investigating ways of making the selection of judges more realistic. They support the appointment of judges, taking the voter totally out of the picture, making legal what has been done behind closed doors in the past.

For the sake of democracy, we would much prefer to see judges forced to run as legitimate candidates on a one to one basis, with all the wash hanging out, good, bad or indifferent.

If we are going to elect incompetents of questionable reputations, let us know about it before we go into the polling booth.

And why not?

Who Should Be A Judge?

Our county, in our state, we have dozens of courts of law, ranging from the justice or district court all the way up to the State Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals.

In these courts, we have some outstanding judges. Judges who possess great legal minds, have a passion for fairness and work long and hard. Unfortunately, we also have too many incompetents who have become judges not out of merit, but out of politics.

The system currently used to select judges is deplorable. Even seasoned politicians are turned off by the caliber of some people who slide

through the system and become judicial candidates with cross endorsements.

Instead of being the best possible candidate, they are too often those who can't make a good living in the private legal profession, whose incompetence is rewarded by kicking them upstairs.

Judicial candidates are human beings the same as the rest of us. They have good points and weak points. Yet, few of the voters are ever privy to their strengths and weaknesses. The legal fraternity has made sure the public never knows the quality of a candidate by cloaking

LILCO Lies Again

Last week in a Congressional hearing, Wilfred Uhl president of LILCO, stated in sworn testimony that the supervisors of Riverhead and Brookhaven Towns supported Suffolk County's Presiding Officer Lou Howard's belief that an evacuation plan could be developed in case of an accident at the Shoreham nuclear power plant. Henrietta Acampora and Joseph Janoski both have feverishly denied they are in support of Howard's stand. They said they had sent a letter to Howard, expressing the view if the plant was to go on line, they felt an evacuation plan was needed beforehand. They did not support either LILCO's plan, which was rejected by the county, or the enlarged plan developed by the county at a cost of \$600,000 which was then rejected by county officials as an impossibility.

Acampora and Janoski indignantly question how Uhl could construe their

letter as statement of support for LILCO. Uhl's statement appears to be a blatant mistruth, given at a Congressional hearing to create the impression that the two towns most affected by the Shoreham nuclear power plant are in support of LILCO, without reservation. We wonder what the ramifications would be if J.Q. Public gave false testimony at a Congressional hearing. Would John Q. Public be cited for contempt? Indicted in federal court for perjury? Jailed and the key thrown away?

What is even more alarming is what will happen to John Q. Public if LILCO is able to get away with such dishonesty, which could lead to the opening of this plant without every safety precaution having been taken.

One more example of why even the supporters should question the integrity of the management of the Long Island Lighting Company.

And why not?

Letters to the editor

Dear Mr. Grasso:

We appreciate the wonderful coverage your paper gave the Chamber Luncheon of March 18th, 1983. We hope that you will continue to give us the same excellent coverage on our future events.

Once again, thank you.

"Love, Riverhead",
Paul J. Kantrowich
President
Riverhead Chamber of Commerce

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