

New Pre-Inspection Law

Suffolk County Executive Cohalan announced recently the enactment of pre-inspection covering rentals that are subsidized or paid for by the Suffolk County Social Service Department.

This is probably one of the more meaningful accomplishments of the Cohalan administration. Without this law, people on Social Services have been forced to live in hovels, some not suitable for habitation by four-legged animals. Apartments and houses without running water, plumbing or heat, filthy beyond cleaning, run down beyond repair.

Greedy landlords took the rent checks and laughed at the system. They had the stereotype image of the welfare family on their side, down-trodden, beaten, slobs who neither cared or would maintain a house in good repair. These slums were all they deserved.

Let's make no mistake about it, there are a small minority of those who are on Social Services who fit and perpetuate the image, but the great majority of those who have had to apply for assistance do so reluctantly. They enter the system with pride and dignity. They have no intention of staying, only looking for help over a temporary period of time, to be able to readjust their lives, to rebuild and go

forth again.

The majority of the people in the Social Service system, given a decent place to live, will maintain it in an acceptable standard. After all, it is their home, it is where they lay their head, spend their time. Putting people into slums takes away dignity and pride and strips many of the incentive to get up and get out. There is no reason why we, who are paying into the system through our taxes, should tolerate our taxes supporting slums and substandard housing.

The minority of those who are on welfare and do abuse the property should be evicted. This may be the weakness of the pre-inspection law. There must also be a mechanism for legitimate landlords to swiftly evict those who will not maintain or take care of the property that they are being given, without long, drawn out court fights. As long as the Social Service system is going to pre-inspect, they should be allowed to come back in and re-inspect at either the tenants' or the landlords' request.

Those who persist in ruining or not maintaining the property they are housed in should be evicted and made to find another home in another area to live in.

And why not?

A View From The Ivory Tower

Somewhere in the Land of Suffering there is a tower, and perched at the top of this tower there is a person who thinks he has great vision. He foresees the future and in his divine wisdom plans for its orderly development, or so he would have you believe.

The wonderful one, the Wizard of Planning, recently looked down from his tower and directed his vision to the Great Bay of Peconic. He saw himself as Mother Nature's helper. In fact, maybe even Mother Nature's father. He is going to plant nice, neat rows of quahogs (clams) and lease them out to the chosen few so that there might be quahogs on the plates of many for years to come.

The idea, as with many ideas,

sounds like a good idea but, when presented to the people of the bay, it was met with skepticism and plain statements about hogwash. It appears the Great Wizard of Planning, Mother Nature's father, had forgotten to ask those who have spent their years on the bay cultivating the beds, scratching out a living, for their input. But that makes little difference. After all, the Great Wizard of Planning had been a landscaper before he cultivated his friendship with politicians. As we all know, in the Land of Suffering, it is more important to cultivate the politicians you know than the baymen you are planning for.

And why not?

We Love You

Mother Nature threw her worst at us last Thursday. Phones went silent, lights went out. Residents were marooned and fires broke out.

To the thousands of people who responded to these emergencies, all of us say, thank you, we love you. Those who responded include a host of volunteers, the fire companies, ambulances and rescue squads. Also, the employees of the town highway departments, town police, county

police and the department of public works; along with the employees of the Long Island Lighting Company and the New York Telephone Company, and others.

Your quick response, dedication to duty and community, have made all of us feel proud to be your neighbors here in Suffolk County.

Our heartfelt thanks for your professionalism.

And why not?

Point of view:

Shoreham and the Federal Government

By Congressman William Carney

It has been a long and trying experience for all involved, but the battle over the Long Island Lighting Company's Shoreham nuclear plant is drawing to a close. The utility's financial troubles and difficulties in its attempt to complete and operate the facility are part of a very familiar story. But at this point, there is little to be gained by second-guessing the wisdom of past decisions and pointing the finger of blame. Like any other experience, there is a lesson to be learned from Shoreham, and that is when questions of public safety arise, there is no room for political considerations.

Since the day I entered Congress over five years ago, I have steadfastly maintained that Shoreham should not be permitted to operate unless two absolutely crucial tests are met: First, that the safety of the plant, and those living near it, are guaranteed. Secondly, it must offer Long Islanders an economical source of power. Along the way, there have been those seeking to hasten or prevent Shoreham's operation. Now that the hour of decision is fast approaching, I will introduce no bill, or support any legislation, designed to circumvent the established review process.

Despite what some Shoreham critics say, the agencies charged with examining the plant have consistently placed the good of the residents above LILCO's interests. Those critics have long argued that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission cannot be trusted to ensure the plant's safety, that it is little more than a "rubber stamp" for the nuclear industry. The Shoreham case, and others across the country, clearly indicate how tough a regulator the NRC can be.

Last April, that agency fined LILCO \$40,000 for failing to properly test its back-up

diesel generators. The NRC also refused to grant the company a temporary license to operate the plant at low power because the diesels failed to function properly. The agency previously delayed consideration of the low power application while emergency planning disagreements remained unresolved. When the state and county governments refused to sanction an emergency response plan, the utility turned to the federal government for help. But again, the department responsible refused to roll over. This time the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) found legal difficulties in LILCO's proposal to use utility personnel to conduct an evacuation, should the need ever arise.

It has become clear that the amount of money invested in a nuclear plant, or how close it may be to completion, does not override the basic concern for human safety. You won't hear the Commonwealth Edison Company of Chicago describe the NRC as a "rubber stamp." Despite the fact that the utility had completed its \$3.35 billion Byron nuclear plant, the NRC refused to grant a license: saying it could not guarantee the safety of the twin reactors.

In its approach to Shoreham, the NRC has examined a number of safety issues in a painstaking, step-by-step manner. There has been no attempt to assist LILCO, either by reducing the federal requirements or shortening the official process. Despite its well-publicized cash flow problems, the Long Island Lighting Company has not discovered any shortcuts, and I can guarantee that Congress won't create any.

In the end, the Shoreham plant will fail or succeed on its own merits, and that is exactly how it should be.

Suffolk Life responds:

Carney and Shoreham

It has taken quite a while to get Congressman William Carney to speak out on the Shoreham problem, but it has finally happened. And now we know why Carney has been silent for so long: he has nothing of substance to say and, unfortunately, very little concern for the people of Suffolk County.

Carney insists "there is little to be gained by second guessing the wisdom of past decisions and pointing the finger of blame." That's his first mistake! The wisdom of decisions extends far beyond the now pinpointed waste of 2 plus billion dollars in the construction of Shoreham, it goes to the very heart of its safety. If the wisdom that created the condition of waste in spending was the same wisdom — and it was — that targeted on safety matters, where does that leave the matter of safety? In the same mess as Shoreham's finances, that's where!

The finger of blame is important because it goes right to the heart of financial obligation.

If the plant goes on line, or at the least gets a low power license — and there are unconfirmed reports Carney is pushing for that behind the scenes — LILCO would like nothing better than to put the entire cost on the backs of the ratepayers. And yet the staff of the Public Service Commission, after a lengthy investigation, insists LILCO should bear the cost of the plant above a cap of \$2.3 billion, that all costs above that result from LILCO's imprudent management. That finger of blame is important to all ratepayers, it's not something that should be so easily dismissed as Carney would do.

Carney declares that since he entered Congress, "I have steadfastly maintained that Shoreham should not be permitted to operate unless two absolutely crucial tests are met: First, that the safety of the plant, and those living near it, are guaranteed. Secondly, it must offer Long Islanders an economical source of power."

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Easter Reflections

To those in the Christian world, Easter is the happiest of holidays. Christ's death opened the doors of heaven for the souls of those who have led their lives in Christ's image.

Death is never easy to accept. The death of Christ is certainly more difficult to accept. Yet, life is not eternal and it does come to an end. It is what we do with our lives from the moment we are born until our eyes are finally closed that becomes the mark of our existence.

Christ's life and his teachings give us a blueprint to follow. Christ's life can be summed simply: "A love and a caring for his fellow man more than for

himself." How often are we confronted with a situation where we are asked to give of ourselves to help others? It is how we face these situations that determines how we are remembered, and whether or not the Gates of Heaven will be opened for us.

Life is but a series of trials. If we approach these situations in the way that Jesus has taught us, our individual lives will be more meaningful, and a life of eternal rest hereafter can be ours.

The staff here at Suffolk Life wishes you and yours a happy and a peaceful Easter.

And why not?

Hope for the Inlet

At the recent Corps of Army Engineers' hearing, hundreds of people involved in fishing and boating, or otherwise affected by the shoaling of the Shinnecock Inlet, spoke forcefully and coherently about the problem.

We had expected this hearing to result in nothing more than a vehicle for emotionalism which would be humiliated by the Corps, with no resulting action.

We are happy to say that Corps officials indicated they have \$300,000 for emergency dredging work available. The county has agreed to match the Corps' expenditure. The \$600,000 is enough to reopen the inlet on a temporary basis. Arrangements are being made for a sea-going dredge, which is located in North

Carolina, to be in the Shinnecock area within 30 days if approvals are obtained from Washington.

This is good news for both commercial and recreational fishermen and boaters. It is, however, only a stop-gap measure. The shoaling will continue until a permanent sand bypass system is installed, which is commonly used in the South at major inlets. What is good for the South should be good for the North. We suspect the only difference is the quality of representation these states have in Washington vs. the quality we have from New York State.

Let's hope that our legislators become the equal of their Southern counterparts.

And why not?

Coverup at the NRC?

It has become increasingly apparent in recent weeks that the staff of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and some of its commissioners will stop at nothing to do what they have wanted to do all along: approve the operation of the Shoreham nuclear power plant.

When one licensing board which had been hearing the matter declared it would not entertain LILCO's request for low power operation until problems with the troubled diesels were resolved, and the evacuation issue was settled, the powers-to-be at the NRC simply named a new licensing board.

The new board has expedited the hearing process, has given LILCO every shortcut it has sought, and appears hell bent on giving the approval LILCO seeks.

In fact, the word is already out at the plant itself that loading of the fuel will take place in mid-May. The hearings, apparently, are nothing more than a charade. The decision has apparently already been made, and the expedited hearings are nothing more than a cover up for that which has been decided in the back rooms.

A recent speech made by Victor

Gilinsky, an NRC commissioner, clearly illustrates the point. Gilinsky noted: "The staff (of the NRC) habitually lines up with the utility to argue for a license." Then Gilinsky, who is not being reappointed as commissioner for what is a very obvious reason — he speaks the truth — cited a particular instance:

"The Byron case, in which the Licensing Board recently denied an application for an operating license, demonstrates the problems which exist. There, it is quite clear that the staff, which was seeking approval of the license, tried to circumvent the Licensing Board's review of the plant's quality assurance program and failed to inform the board or the commission promptly of some of the problems at the plant..."

"After the board's denial of the license, the NRC staff and the plant's owners met to discuss how best to extract the license from the board. Again, the commission was out of the picture. While the NRC staff argues that its discussions with the Byron owners were about the underlying technical issues, "It is clear that the object of the meeting was to determine how to reverse the setback suffered before the licensing board..." Gilinsky said.

Lo and behold, an article which appeared in the April 13 edition of the New York Times reveals the following:

"The licensing board of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission made a 'clear error of judgement in denying an operating permit for the \$3.7 billion Byron nuclear power plant in Illinois, according to a new report by the commission's inspection staff."

"The report said a licensing hearing should be reopened to give the Commonwealth Edison Company a chance to get approval to operate the nuclear power plant near Rockford, Ill...."

By Golly, they're still trying, aren't they.

A utility spokesman indicated the

company "takes comfort" from the new report. And indeed, why shouldn't they? The report was, undoubtedly, custom written just for the company. In the NRC staff's language, that's one of the "underlying technical issues" that was discussed at the special meeting between staff and the utility, we can only assume.

Meanwhile, back at Shoreham, the problems continue. Just this past weekend one of the required back-up safety diesels was found to have a major crack in its block. But the hearings, undoubtedly, will continue, for there is more than one crack involved in this whole fiasco. There's a major crack in the integrity of those in the NRC who are, supposedly, duty bound to protect the public.

And in some of our federal officials who hide behind the NRC in the entire Shoreham controversy.

Happily there are some, Congressmen Edward Markey and Robert J. Mrazek are two examples, who have issued harsh words toward the NRC and its push ahead with Shoreham at flank speed endeavors.

What is really needed, however, is a congressional investigation into the practices of the NRC, and most especially of its staff. We must hold accountable those who would ignore the safety of the public for the benefit of the utilities.

Congressman Mrazek, in a letter to NRC Chairman Nuncio Paladino, declared: "Any effort to override normal licensing procedure in an attempt to establish the plant as a 'fait accompli' is certainly illegal." We quite agree, and would urge a special investigation into the behind-the-scenes happenings at both Byron and Shoreham.

If there is wrongdoing in either instance, let's uncover it before the lives of innocent people are wrongfully threatened.

And why not?

Common Sense Prevails

Last September an arbitrator ruled that Sheriff deputies using county cars for commutation were entitled to overtime compensation during this commuting time simply because they were directed to turn on the radios when they entered the cars.

We thought the arbitrator's ruling was wrong and said so. We suggested that the county order the radios not be turned on until the deputies officially reported to their duty stations. The overtime could be eliminated with such an order.

We are happy to say that recently County Executive Cohalan suggested, and Sheriff John Finnerty ordered the deputies not to turn on their radios

until they are officially working, saving us, the taxpayers, an hour overtime every day of the week the Sheriff's deputies are commuting to work in county cars.

We are happy that Cohalan has made this move, but sorry that it has taken him eight months to see the reasonableness of it. We would have even been happier to have seen him order all county cars, including the Sheriff's, into centralized compounds and forbidding their use for commutation. But that day may come to pass in the near future, according to Finnerty. The sooner the better.

And why not?

Missing Question

As a stockholder of LILCO it is interesting to note that on this year's stockholder's proxy, there is a question missing that has been on the ballot for the past several years: "Do you, as a stockholder, favor the company abandoning the Shoreham Nuclear Power Project?"

It doesn't take many brains to figure out why the Board of Directors eliminated this question this year.

They fear the answer from the owners of the company. They fear that the investors would direct the board of directors to get out of this mismanaged boondoggle in order to save the company.

So much for honesty, truth and democracy in the board room. It should be one heck of an interesting annual meeting.

And why not?

SUFFOLK LIFE

NEWSPAPERS

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Willmotts and Why-Nots

David J. Willmott, Editor

Demand Congressional Inquiry

Government should never be permitted to operate outside of the realm of representation of the public, for government in a democracy is the people. Yet we have witnessed this happening with frightening regularity, in and day out, over the past six months as the Shoreham situation has come more and more to a head.

There is a small group, a very powerfully-organized clique centered at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which has thrown reason to the winds in an attempt to open the Shoreham nuclear power plant. It has changed, to meet its own goals, the regulations which were originally designed to protect the health and welfare of the public. It has now become very clear that officials of the Department of Energy, and perhaps of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, are involved and perhaps the initiators of the public be damned actions designed to hasten the plant's operation at the expense of the public.

Secretary of Energy Donald Hodel, in a memo to his staff last year, made it clear that finances — not safety — and "the potential threat to the viability of the nuclear power industry" are the key concerns of those now thumbing their noses at the public.

Government without control here in the United States is no different than government without the control of those who live in a Communist state. If the people do not control the government, they become slaves of it. Control over the federal agencies is at the discretion of the President with the approval of Congress. When government gets out of control, or when the administration directs it, Congress must hold an inquiry to define the agencies' role and bring it back under the law.

Let's look at what has happened over the past several months regarding Shoreham: An NRC licensing board turned down the request for a low power license for Shoreham until defective diesels, needed to protect us in the event of a power failure at the plant, are resolved. The problems have not only continued, they have grown worse. Despite this, the NRC

staff removed the original licensing board and named a new board which apparently — from what has transpired since — has its marching orders: speed things up, expedite the hearings, so that LILCO can get what is undoubtedly a predetermined approval as quickly as possible.

The more we learn the more it becomes clear the decision has already been made. Discussions are being held at a frantic pace in order to come up with an announcement favorable to LILCO before the end of this week. In announcing a scheduled meeting between officials of the Department of Energy and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), an Energy official noted: "Important for LILCO to know this so they don't throw in the towel. April 27 line of credit due." He was referring to a deadline in LILCO's financial crisis which could force the company into bankruptcy. If the announcement — and who can doubt it will be favorable — bolsters LILCO efforts to put the plant on line, it could help the troubled utility in the financial market.

An attorney for Suffolk County protested the reckless subversion of due process of law in speeding up the low power hearings, and was cited by the new licensing board's administrative judge for having the audacity to question the legality of this obviously illegal action. If a lawyer cannot question the law, what is left?

Suffolk County officials spent close to a million dollars in attempting to devise an evacuation plan. They determined no safe plan could be put into place that would protect the safety of the public. Governor Mario Cuomo has declared he will not impose a plan upon the county because the state could not guarantee the safety of the public.

LILCO tried to skirt this obstacle by developing a "plan" of its own. LILCO officials insisted all along they could legally carry out such a plan, but now, with approval seemingly in their grasp, they admit they cannot do so without some help from the feds. And so, the federal officials in bed with LILCO are trying another scam, somehow they will attempt to give LILCO the legal right to usurp the

powers of government and law enforcement in the implementation of its plan.

What the federal government does not realize is the frustration and growing anger of the public here in Suffolk County. Reasonable thinking, good citizens have been brought to the verge of not trusting their government in any shape or form. We have heard the following words many times in the past few months: "If there is an evacuation, I am getting my family out first. I will load them into the car and God help anybody who tries to stop me. If it is a LILCO worker who is putting up his hand to stop me, I will mow him down just on principle.

This warning being issued by good people is a small measure of the frustration that is growing. It will get worse if the government forces an unsafe plant down our throats simply to help ease the financial crisis of the utility, or protect the future of the nuclear industry. People simply will not permit their families to be used as the sacrificial lambs for such unjust goals.

An attorney we know has often said "litigation is the only alternative to revolution."

Litigation depends on integrity not only in the judicial system, but also in the agencies who make the decisions that can affect our lives. Without that integrity, litigation is meaningless, and there is but one alternative.

We do not believe the public will sit back and watch a government run out of control, a Congress paralyzed by bureaucrats, a Congress sitting back doing nothing. The only hope they have now is a Congressional inquiry, one with teeth, which would go a long way to quiet the fears and anger of the people.

We have no hope that the Congressman of the First District, William Carney, will raise his voice. He is part of the clique, lock, stock and

barrel. Congressman Bob Mrazek has been at the forefront of the Long Island delegation speaking out against the NRC's push for an accelerated pace of the licensing process. Let's hope his voice will be heard.

What about Congressman Tom Downey? He has the seniority and the respect in Washington and the reputation for standing up for his constituents. But then, Downey's father is employed by LILCO and has been an outspoken advocate of the Shoreham facility.

What about Senator Al D'Amato and Senator Patrick Moynihan? They asked to be our senators. Isn't it a part of a senator's responsibility to protect his constituents from the bureaucratic federal government, particularly when the safety and health of the public is being traded off for the monetary interests of the corporation?

Speaking of monetary interests, we believe it imperative that the Security and Exchange Commission hold an investigation into the reasons why the huge effort is being made to open Shoreham at all costs. Shoreham currently is owned by speculators, the moms and pops, for the most part, are out of the market. Those who hold LILCO stock are the raw crapshooters. They are betting that the Federal government will force the plant to be opened, regardless of the safety factors. Hundreds of millions of dollars can be made or lost by the change of a point or two in the value of the stock. It is not beyond our imagination to question if some of those who are forcing the Shoreham decisions have money as a motivating factor. We think the Security and Exchange Commission should be very carefully investigating this possibility.

Safety is more important than money. Is our safety being sold for someone's profit? It's not beyond the realm of possibility is it?

And why not?

letters to the editor

Dear Senator Simpson:

Last summer at the Suffolk County Center I addressed an N.R.C. hearing on LILCO's Shoreham Evacuation Plan. An excerpt follows:

"We have a legally constituted government here that authorized the expenditure of \$600,000 in our tax monies for experts to study the feasibility of an emergency radiological response to a hypothetical accident at an operative Shoreham nuclear power plant.

After 6 months of study it was concluded that such a response would of necessity include injuries, latent cancers, and deaths in the thousands. These findings have never been disproved; neither by the N.R.C., F.E.M.A., N.Y.S.D.P.C., nor LILCO.

After extensive hearings including further expert testimony, LILCO's brief, a fact-finding tour of 3 Mile Island, days of public expression, our duly elected representatives decided they could not and would not put Suffolk citizens at such a risk. Reflecting the will of Suffolk's majority, they opted for prevention rather than preparation; a chain of events commonly known as the democratic process.

They asked that the hearings be stopped. Instead this Commission has persevered in a proceeding that somewhere along the line has lost even the semblance of its former legitimacy.

LILCO, the originator of do-it-yourself inspections, now offers a do-it-yourself evacuation plan and the Commissioners have allowed its submission for approval; fully cognizant that F.E.M.A., upon whose recommendations N.R.C. depends in the

licensing process, cannot accept emergency plans from a utility. F.E.M.A., furthermore, has publically joined with the county in questioning the legality of LILCO's ludicrous plan.

When existing federal law, given the circumstances, actually requires the abandonment of the Shoreham facility, what are we to make of such a performance?

We can only conclude that the N.R.C. is, in reality, conducting a delaying action, if you will, for LILCO's Washington cronies to rewrite the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 as the LILCO Enabling Act of 1983....."

Well, Senator Simpson, if you've done nothing else, you've made an honest woman of me.

Presumably the endorsements of Senators D'Amato and Moynihan are intended to lend an aura of validity to the scheme. Ironically, their connivance merely serves to demonstrate their feet of clay to New Yorkers who will think twice before sending them to Washington again.

As I read it, your amendment's purpose is two-fold: 1. to circumvent the democratic process by a federal grab of powers legally vested in the states in order to force those states and localities to accept the unacceptable and 2. to promote, by so doing, the profiteering of the Long Island Lighting Company.

Since the first is unconstitutional and the second unconscionable it is doubtful that your amendment will ever see the light of day; or should.

Shoreham is dead, Senator. It simply awaits pronouncement.

Yours truly,
B. Hoyer
Shelter Island

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ERRORS - Responsibility for errors in advertisements is limited to the value of the space occupied by the error.

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