

A Very Special Place

This is Holy Week, the last week of Lent, and this coming Friday is Good Friday. Christians throughout the world, in special services, will re-enact the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Lord.

The Stations of the Cross depict the stages from Christ's betrayal, his carrying of the cross, his crucifixion and his death. According to the prophets, God would put on earth his only Son as a sign, as an example of his love for mankind. His Son offered an opportunity to those who believed to be re-born and find a path that would take them to heaven upon their earthly demise. His life, according to the prophets, would end in death at the hands of his fellowman, but would be followed with Jesus rising from the grave and, six weeks later, ascending into heaven.

A few years back, after too many years of abstinence from services, we went on Good Friday to the Shrine of Our Lady of the Island, an outdoor

sanctuary. Our Lady of the Island is located in Eastport, just off Sunrise Highway. It was created by the Vigolotta family of Moriches, whose son is a priest. The facility is set in the woods. It is, in a sense, an outdoor church, with life-size stations of the Cross as well as a huge statue of the Virgin Mary, which is situated on top of a rock overlooking most of the Island. Good Friday services are held with groups of people progressing through the Stations of the Cross listening and taking part in prayer while communicating with God. The Stations, which are life-size, are set in the woods. Being out of doors in a serene setting them seem to have more meaning and a closeness with God. We felt in ourselves a special serenity and we could see it in others.

This Good Friday, or during the Easter season, we highly recommend a visit to the Shrine.

And why not?

Share Wealth, Not Only Loss

The proposal that taxes from windfall projects, such as a utility facility in Port Jefferson or Shoreham, be spread over a regional rather than a local basis has been raised many times in the past. As a result of recent happenings, which will spread the loss of taxes being withheld by LILCO for Shoreham on local districts within Brookhaven Town, serious consideration of that proposal is now important.

Whenever such proposals were made in the past, the local school district which benefited from the tax paid by the utility would raise its voice loud and clear in protest. "We suffer whatever adverse impact that comes from the facility," a school district spokesman would declare, "and therefore should enjoy the sole

benefit of the tax yield." There was indeed logic in that argument, and therefore the proposal never made any headway.

Things have changed, however, now that the Shoreham-Wading River School District has been involved in a successful challenge of a court ruling that would impose the tax loss strictly on that district. Because LILCO has refused to pay its taxes on Shoreham, Brookhaven Town initially decided they would dole out the tax monies on a percentage basis, rather than that which was actually owed to each district. Had it been done on the basis of monies collected in each district Shoreham-Wading River, with LILCO as its biggest taxpayer, would have suffered the financial impact alone.

A lower court reversed the town's action, but that decision was overturned in an appeal before the Appellate Division. And thus local districts who enjoy no tax benefit from Shoreham are, in effect, subsidizing the beneficiary of Shoreham taxes, the Shoreham-Wading River district.

If the loss is to be shared, why then isn't the benefit shared as well? How can the Shoreham-Wading River officials reach out for all the benefit, but expect others to share the burden when its major taxpayer arrogantly refuses to pay its bill?

There are other reasons why strong consideration should be given to spreading Shoreham taxes on a regional basis. The impact of an accident at that facility will not be confined to the Shoreham-Wading

River district. Other districts will have to prepare for that possibility with local evacuation plans for their students. The impact of a Shoreham accident will spread far beyond the borders of the Shoreham-Wading River School District, negating the earlier arguments raised against sharing a windfall tax base. But more than anything else, the recent court ruling that would have all districts suffer a financial impact because of a tax loss within the Shoreham-Wading River should be the key to a renewed effort to spread that tax benefit.

We believe serious consideration should be given to legislation which would share the wealth, now that a decision has been made that shares the loss.

And why not?

5% Isn't A Mandate

During the past month, most Long Island customers of LILCO received a mailing from a California based public relations firm who represent a group on Long Island called, "Citizens for Open".

LILCO is reported to have spent \$200,000 of ratepayers money on this public relations effort to convince people through propaganda that the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant is safe, and will be economical. At the end of the mailing, LILCO included a postage paid card and asked residents to show their support for LILCO by returning the card.

LILCO proudly announced this past Monday that over 30,000 cards had been received. If we were LILCO, had received only 5% of the cards back in support of Shoreham, we would have folded up our tent and crept away in the dark of the night. The 30,000 cards represent less than 5% of the residents of Long Island. That means, that 95% of the public is opposed to LILCO's putting the plant on line.

The last public poll conducted indicated that 70% of Long Islanders were opposed to the opening of the plant. It's a crying shame that the management of LILCO and its Board of Directors refuse to acknowledge their mistake and cut their losses. It's costing the company between \$40 and \$50 million dollars a month to

continue to fight to open the plant. The fact is the plant was built wrong, and in the wrong place. If it is opened and there is an accident, people are going to be endangered in the event of an accident.

Our elected officials have a constitutional responsibility to protect the people's health and welfare and therefore, by law, must wage an expansive and costly battle to keep the plant from opening. Suffolk County officials from all parties are opposed to the opening and are committed to fighting it.

Governor Cuomo this past week took on the federal government for trying to use the back door to open the plant. He is opposed to the opening on the same grounds that County officials are: a safe evacuation plan cannot be developed and therefore he will not sacrifice lives of Long Island residents for the sake of bailing out the Long Island Lighting Company and its vested financial interests.

The longer the Long Island Lighting Company's Board of Directors continue to fight, the more millions of dollars of stockholders and ratepayers money is being wasted.

Pressure should be brought to bear on the Board of Directors to abandon the plant now before there is nothing left in the company or Long Island's economy to salvage.

And why not?

Readers' Opinion

Dear Mr. Willmott:

Every day my two grade school daughters bring home memos from school, everything from school closings to PTA candy sales. The school staff, at taxpayers' expense, finds the time to run these memos off. But no responsible adult in the William Floyd School District has found time or felt responsible enough to send home memos about the children's safety.

I've been told by several bus drivers from both United and William Floyd Transportation that there are notices posted and drivers have been told to be on the lookout for certain cars in our area that are trying to lure children at bus stops. I've also been told that this problem is serious enough that the district security force is looking into it.

Why in God's name aren't the parents notified of the situation? Small children

every day are allowed to go to bus stops alone. Children stand at these bus stops alone and unattended. If parents were notified of this problem many parents would find the time or maybe make arrangements between each other to be with these children in the morning and meet them when school is over.

Is the school district afraid they'll start pandamonium among parents by making them aware of the situation? Mr. Poulos, wake up, turn on any TV news program. Remember Adam? Remember young Douglas Meyer? Don't make it hit home again. We are loving mothers and fathers who are more afraid of not knowing. Give us the chance to protect our children now. Not after a child is reported missing.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Agnes Schuck
Mastic Beach

SUFFOLK LIFE

Vol. 24 No. 30

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Willmotts and Why-Not's

David J. Willmott, Editor

LILCO Threatens Bankruptcy

In the Long Island Lighting Company's Annual Report to the stockholders, the company threatened that the company may be faced with bankruptcy if the Public Service Commission concurs with the PSC judges and finds that the company was imprudent in construction costs for Shoreham.

The State Consumer Protection Agency charged LILCO with a minimum of \$2.3 billion of imprudent costs. The staff of the Public Service Commission concluded the figure should be \$1.8 billion. The judges who heard testimony concluded that the management of LILCO was responsible for \$1.2 billion in imprudent costs. Somewhere between the judge's findings and the CPA assertions, the final figure of imprudent costs are expected to be assessed.

During the Shoreham hearings, the Cuomo Commission believed that if the company was found imprudent for more than \$750 million of the cost, the company's assets would be wiped out and they would be forced to declare bankruptcy.

Imprudently incurred costs by a utility are those charges caused by erroneous and unqualified decisions by the management. Imprudent charges can not be worked into the rate base, and, therefore, be passed on to the consumer. These are charges that must be absorbed by the corporation, its stockholders and the financial interests that stand to gain if the project is profitable.

There should be no crying or weeping for the board of directors or the management of LILCO for having either incurred imprudent charges or being forced to pay for their mistakes. A number of electric companies across the country which are also involved with nuclear power

plants, some almost completed, realized they had made a mistake and abandoned the projects, thus cutting their losses.

The management of LILCO, although their own former president admitted to the Cuomo Commission that Shoreham was a mistake, continued on with their pursuit to open the plant. President Uhl told the commission that the management decided to continue to fight to open the plant because they felt that if they didn't, the decision to construct the plant would be ruled imprudent, as would the total costs of the project.

We expect the public relations people and their mouthpiece, Newsday, will somehow try to turn liability for the imprudent costs from the company to the ratepayers. None of us should tolerate this injustice. We, as ratepayers, are victims of the corporation LILCO and the vested interests. We have had no say as to the need for or the construction of the plant. We have had no protection against the abuses heaped on us by the corporation. Our only hope all along has been that some of the costs of the plant would be found to be imprudent, and that the unclarified laws of "used" and "useful" would be clearly defined and implemented.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) will have the final say on how much LILCO will be charged. Whether the company can afford it or it will cause bankruptcy should play no part in the decision. Imprudent costs are imprudent costs, and must be borne by those who made the mistake. No bail out from the taxpayers or the ratepayers should be considered.

And why not?

C.S.E.A., sheriffs and police workers of Suffolk County. By all observations and the facts at hand during this dispute, it became very

apparent that the settlement reached between the county executive's office and the workers would create financial havoc in late 1985 with the 1986 budget.

Wage increases up to 70 per cent were granted many county workers. The average increase, including step increases, amounted to 46 per cent. Even under the best of circumstances, with a favorable economic condition, it was apparent to us that the county executive would have to cut back government workers and services between 20 per cent and 40 per cent for the 1986 budget unless taxes were raised in humongous proportions to cover the shortfall.

Last year, the county government cut out approximately 10 per cent of the projected costs through costly early retirements and other acts of austerity. This year, county departments have been told to find an additional 10 per cent to 20 per cent reduction in staff and services to meet the expected shortfall.

The failure of the Long Island Lighting Company to pay taxes on the Shoreham plant is the reason being given for the shortfall by coun-

ty officials. That is not the real reason and is being used only to pull the wool over the taxpayers' eyes. The shortfall caused by LILCO's withholding taxes has hurt, but the real culprits are the increases called for in the contract for the county workers that went into effect in 1985, and are scheduled to go into effect in 1986.

We charged then that the contract was badly mismanaged. We reiterate these charges now. The county executive who developed the contract, and the county legislators who, although they knew the ramifications, ratified the contract must bite the bullet now and make the hard decisions.

The county government must be cut back even if it means the reduction and consolidation of departments, and the elimination of services that are duplicated by the state and the towns.

After last year's tax increases on both sales and real estate, the taxpayers are in no mood for additional increases to bail out the poor management of the county.

And why not?

Why Go After A Good Judge

This November Suffolk citizens will be called upon to vote for the Surrogate Judge of Suffolk County.

The position is currently held by Ernest Signorelli, who won this seat eight years ago. From all accounts he has been not only a good judge, but an excellent administrator. For the most part, he has kept politics out of his office which traditionally has been filled with politics.

The surrogate handles wills and estates and the disbursement thereof. The Chief Surrogate has within his power the appointment of attorneys to administer the settlements and the guardianship of these estates. This, in the past, has been a very lucrative spot for the political organization, for they can assign the party faithful to various estates and, by looking the other way, condone a condition which permits attorneys to prolong settlement time and decisions, enabling them to receive larger fees, at the expense of the beneficiaries.

Signorelli has not played the political game. He has run his court for the people he serves, the residents of Suffolk County. He has been fair, he has been impartial in the assignment of attorneys. Instead of seeking the

boys from the club house, he has made assignments based on qualifications. In doing so, he has given assignments to such horrendous people as Independents and Democrats. We suspect this is what has Mike Blake so upset.

Blake, the Republican leader, is alleged to be encouraging a primary against Signorelli. His heir apparent for the designation is Judge Ken Rohl. Rohl, himself, has built a good reputation as a criminal judge and we are sorry to see that he has allowed himself to be dragged into what promises to be an ugly battle. Both Signorelli and Rohl are good campaigners. Both are fighters. It's a shame to see two good men pitted against each other as both are doing a competent job in their respective courts.

Mike Blake would be wise as the Republican leader to put out the fire instead of fanning the flames, unless he has substantial information available for dissemination that would clearly indicate that Signorelli has misused or abused the people as Chief Surrogate.

And why not?

Coming Home To Roost

There is little joy in saying, "We told you so." Two years ago, we found ourselves in the middle of a contract dispute between the

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Vol. 24 No. 31

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Readers' Opinion

"To the Litter Pigs"

Dear Editor:

To the "Litter Pigs" in Mastic Beach, Mastic and Shirley:

Is a piece of paper, empty paper cup, container or a cigarette butt too heavy for you to put in a receptacle (garbage can)? Or to cover your garbage can tightly so the dogs don't get at your garbage and drag it halfway up your street?

It is a disgusting sight. Not only are our streets covered with all kinds of garbage, but also our shopping centers.

It is the filthy people who make them look the way they do, throwing everything onto the ground. Even the youngsters are doing the same.

The South Brookhaven Health Center in Shirley is another messy sight—littered

with pieces of paper, cigarette butts, etc., in front of the entrance and parking lot. I myself saw people in several cars open their doors and dump their cigarette butts onto the ground before they drove off. Do you people get a thrill by doing this? Do you do these things in front of your own property?

Take a ride through Bellport, Center Moriches or Riverhead, for example, and see how clean their streets are!

It is up to all of us to clean up the mess in our neighborhoods and set an example for our children to do the same, before our communities become garbage dumps!

I Love Mastic Beach,
Sonia Homanock

Shouldn't Parents Have Rights, Too?

A distraught mother approached us the other day with a horror story. She has a daughter who can best be described as uncontrollable. She has broken her mother's heart by refusing to be part of the family, disobeying requests, instructions and throwing guidance to the four winds. She has been a problem in school, a constant truant, a nightmare for the guidance department.

Upon turning 16, she was allegedly told by the guidance department of the school that she could, if she wished, quit school. The girl did, declaring herself emancipated, moved out of her home and eventually applied to welfare for support. Probably for the first time in many years, she took the advice of an authority figure, the guidance counselor, who solved his problem for he no longer had to put up with her shenanigans. He took the easy way out instead of working with the parents in hopes of keeping the child in school. He told her of her rights, but little about responsibility.

The mother is not only suffering from a broken heart, she recently received notice from the Family Court that her daughter is seeking to be declared emancipated. What that means in the eyes of the law is this girl is free from parental jurisdiction, but the parents are not free from the financial obligations connected with the emancipated child. The Family Court notice followed application by the girl for welfare. The Welfare people never bothered to contact the girl's parents, they simply advised her to file a petition with the Family Court, seeking the emancipation status. If the court granted that request and the child did receive welfare payments, "we could then go after the parents for

support payments," a department spokesman told us. The spokesman could not tell us why the department did not contact the family to find out why the child was not sleeping in her own bed, eating the food prepared by her mother, or about the concerns the mother has for the girl's welfare and safety.

Through quirks in the laws, this 16-year-old girl can throw away any and all parental guidance and yet demand through the courts that her parents be responsible for outside support.

The system stinks!

What kind of a system is it that takes away the ability of a parent to guide and control a child's behavior, yet still expects them to be financially responsible for their selfish behavior. What kind of a system is it that allows a perfectly healthy 16-year-old girl to go on the dole instead of facing the responsibility of work. What kind of responsibility are we teaching our children? And why are our guidance people, the welfare department and even the courts, by entertaining a request for emancipation without even contacting the family, aid and abetting the selfish desires of some of your youth who want to live as they wish, without controls, but want mommy and daddy to pay the bills?

We do not yet know how this particular case will turn out. But we do know that there are some serious flaws in the system that can permit such goings on. And we do know that some of our state legislators had better start taking a good long look at these problems to put a semblance of sanity back into the system.

After all, parents have rights too, don't they?

And why not?

Flat Tax Looks Better

President Reagan's income tax reform measure which is based upon a simplified flat tax should look more appealing today to most of us than it looked when it was first proposed.

With April 15 just behind us, the agony going over all kinds of records and papers to prepare out returns should still be fresh in our minds. And the concept of a simplified tax system should be a light at the end of a dark tunnel.

Being in a business, we have available to us a tremendous number of possible deductions and tax shelters. The utilization of these require painstakingly maintained records and adherence to procedures. We, our bookkeepers and our accountants spend an inordinate amount of time, that could otherwise be productively used, to satisfy the requirements of the I.R.S. There has to be a better way!

Reagan's proposal calls for the elimination of many shelters and deductions, a simplified tax reporting system and lower taxation for everyone. Our current system of taxation is decades old and has been changed, amended and interpreted in so many different ways that it is a hodge-podge of bureaucracy. Trained I.R.S. employees have enormous difficulty in figuring out what is taxable and what is not. A simplified system based upon fairness and equality is more appealing than our current maze of bureaucracy.

We are fortunate we live in a country that has an economic system that allows us to earn through our labors, and our investments. We have no objections to paying taxes, but let's make the system simple, fair and equitable.

And why not?

Readers' Opinion

To whom it may concern;

To react to your article on Mr. Goetz, I feel you as a professional in the field of Journalism should represent the facts, not just your personal prejudices. Mr. Willmott, let's put the shoe on the other foot. Suppose those 4 criminals as you despicted them rather publicly or privately were white and the person who shot them was Black. I doubt very seriously if you would of been motivated to create space in your paper. It's too bad people who represent the national interest of our Society would let their prejudices come to light. I feel it's appropriate you advise your readers why you condone such a despicable act of violence. Tell them why you support a man be he a caucasian that would deliberately stand over another human and say "you're not hurt enough" and fire again. Maybe, Mr. Willmott, you would print your article again on gun control.

Have you as a public institution further separated our Society with your inhumane article? Whatever happened the basic principles of the Bible many of your readers should be reading about? I guess in closing we should support people like you because you present what Society stands for???

And Why-not.

Michael A. Brown

Editor's Note: I assure you my reaction would be the same if the colors were reversed.

Dear President Reagan:

The American Military Retirees Association, Inc., on behalf of all its members, recommends the resignation of Budget Director David Stockman.

We feel that David Stockman's remarks of the Military Retirees and the Military pension "scandal, outrage" are unwarranted, inexcusable and unacceptable. We, the Military Retirees who have devoted a career for our country during war and peace, are outraged at Stockman's remarks and feel he has defamed the years of service given by uniformed men and women to our country. Military Retirees have been dedicated to the service of our Country and National Security, and in case of a National Emergency, we will be the first ones called back to active duty. We have earned and deserve the pension promised us when we entered the service of our country.

The Military Retirees are what our young men and women look up to when they are deciding whether they will make the Military a career or not.

Sincerely,
AMRA, Inc., L.I. Chapter 2-4
Sgt. Major Shelby T. Clark, U.S.A. (Ret)
President

Letters to the Editor:

Congratulations for a Job Well Done.

I had a most enjoyable evening at the Oregon Avenue School in Medford on Thursday, March 21, while watching the student's rendition of the musical Peter Pan. I thought it over when my wife asked whether or not I would like to attend the first night performance of the play. I was not sure that I could sit through a couple of hours watching a group of middle school students trying to entertain an audience.

But when the curtain opened and the play started I was more than surprised to see the professional acting by the cast with Peter Pan flying across the stage and the little Tinkerbell light flickering around the stage. I came to the conclusion that everyone knew what they were doing and acted in a very professional manner. The director, producer, the stage crew and the lighting crew and anyone else that helped to put the show together deserved the standing ovation that they received at the end of the fine performance by everyone, congratulations again; I had a wonderful, enjoyable evening.

Walter J. Maresco
Medford, N.Y.

Dear Editor:

I read in Suffolk Life today that LILCO once again is requesting a rate hike which, when it is granted will put the cost of electricity to LILCO ratepayers at 12.2 cents a KWH (second highest in the U.S.A.). In the same issue was an article about the redevelopment of the Hempstead Town Resource Recovery facility which will cost \$200 million and will produce 40 megawatts of power. According to the article, the power will then be sold to LILCO for 6 cents a KWH. LILCO will then turn around and sell this same electricity back to Nassau residents for doing nothing but sending out the electric bills. Seems to me that the ratepayers are getting a double shafting on this one! But then, that's typical.

Please keep up the good work. I look forward to receiving Suffolk Life each week.

Respectfully,
Bruce Steinberg
Farmingville

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The Cost of Silence

The county's opposition to the Shoreham nuclear power plant took a couple of unusual turns last week in the form of a curb on spending and a silence rule imposed upon the attorneys representing Suffolk in the legal battle. Both were initiated by Chief Deputy County Executive John Gallagher, undoubtedly upon orders by Suffolk County Executive Peter F. Cohalan. Both have raised new questions about the integrity of Cohalan's opposition to the plant.

The rationale given for the actions was based on financial affairs, but raised new cries that Cohalan is turning tail on the matter and is about to cave in to put himself into position for a long-rumored federal post. Cohalan has repeatedly denied he has any such ambitions, but the measures imposed last week will do nothing to enhance the county's stand against Shoreham, which was initially based on the possible threat to public safety, and should surely bring some happy smiles to the faces of LILCO officials.

We think the "financial" reason given for the actions is suspect. If Cohalan really wants to save money to ease the financial strain he claims the county is suffering because of LILCO's refusal to pay taxes on the plant, there are many other places he could look to economize, places that would not threaten the public's safety. He might consider, for example, scaling down the grandiose western court complex plan which has been pushed by judges and lawyers from the west end, who do not like to travel to Riverhead. Isn't the public safety far more important than inconvenience to those judges and lawyers?

Cohalan could also take a hard look at some of the proposed projects in his capital improvement budget. Some of the items in there are strongly opposed by residents of the area in which they are proposed. What's more important: public safety or a road widening project?

Cohalan should also investigate the budget of the county legislature, most especially that of Presiding Officer Lou Howard, whose budget has soared at about the same rate as

has the total construction cost of Shoreham. Surely the public's safety is far more important than Howard's questionable budget expenditures.

Cohalan might also consider paring down the county's payroll, eliminating some of the patronage positions that seem designed to provide employment for former public officials, political leaders or party faithful. Shouldn't he be more concerned about public safety than he is about political payoffs?

It's one thing to curb legal spending in an effort to save some bucks, but it's another to put a "cone of silence" over the attorneys who have been a prime source of information about what is going on in the Shoreham battle. Gallagher started his silence rules during negotiations with LILCO about future rates, playing right into LILCO's hands by duplicating LILCO's "We're not going to tell you anything" attitude on any Shoreham news. You can hide a lot when you keep things under wraps, and LILCO's stance is understandable since they don't want anyone to know too much about what's going on in their efforts to put that plant on line. But what is the county now trying to hide?

Cohalan has steadfastly insisted his opposition to the plant is based on the fact that evacuation is not possible, thus the public cannot be protected if an accident occurs at the plant. What has happened to change that now? Is the plant any safer? Is evacuation now possible? What is the real reason—we don't buy for one moment the cost factor cited by Gallagher—for gagging the county's attorneys during the final hours of this long struggle?

A more important question can be posed to the members of the Suffolk County Legislature: What are you going to do about Cohalan's new rules? Are you going to sit back and let Cohalan let silence reign?

Or are you going to stand firm, united against silence which benefits only LILCO at the expense of the public.

And why not?

Selective Opposition

Motherhood and apple pie have a new companion on the list of things everyone in this whole wide world should support: the preservation of our water supply. And it's about time!

The problem is, however, that under the guise of "protecting our water," some people raise their voices in opposition for a host of other reasons, personal or otherwise. You can hide a lot of prejudices with the "protect our water"

cry. Everyone will agree, nod their head in support, and too often too few will ever stop to consider if the water supply is really endangered by a particular project. Raise the issue and you are home free.

Of course we should preserve our water. And it's time that more concern is being aimed at protecting this valuable resource. In many instances, however, what's being done now is too little, too late. We should have been doing something all along,

we should have been listening to the cry raised for the last 20 years by a man we consider to be the dean of Long Island journalists, Frank Mooney, the editor and publisher of the Main Street Press in Patchogue. Frank has been warning about the threats to our water supply for 20 or more years, but he was a lone voice in the wilderness in far too many instances, a man before his time.

Well, Frank Mooney has a lot of company now. A lot of opposition is being raised about a number of projects these days, with water the predominant reason given. But a careful analysis of some recent protests leads us to believe it's selective opposition. The lack of consistency in the raising of some opposition gives us great cause for wonder.

A case in point: The Pine Barrens have become the rallying cry for a number of environmental groups. County officials in the west end, who through classic examples of poor planning have spoiled their own water supplies, are now looking toward the Pine Barrens as the source of their future water. Thus, they have hatched something called Article 7 which proposes to regulate the kinds of industry that can be placed within the boundaries of the precious Pine Barrens. When the Grucci fireworks family attempted to secure land within the Pine Barrens, all hell broke loose. "They're going to pollute our water," came the cry. And yet these same people have said precious little about the problems being generated from the Brookhaven National Laboratory which is also located within those same boundaries. Recent reports of a radioactive spill from the lab brought no great outpourings of concern from the same people who screamed about the Grucci application. Precious little has been said about the contamination of wells with radioactive content from previous lab actions. Why? We've heard people say, "That's a federal installation and we can do nothing about it." Not even protest? Not even demand that action be taken to protect and preserve our water supply

ly in the vicinity of the lab, and of the Peconic River which, according to journalist Karl Grossman, is the most radioactive river in the country? Are we saying we must protect our water supply from private sources, but it's perfectly fine for a federal installation to be a source of pollution? Isn't that selective opposition?

Another prime example of selective opposition has developed in Hampton Bays where a private marina operator seeks to expand his operation. He has been denied approval by the Southampton Town Trustees, but their action was overturned in the courts. Now a South Fork environmental group has joined in the opposition to this project. Strangely enough, however, this group said nothing when the County of Suffolk, with the help of federal funds, constructed a new marina across the bay. The opposition in this case is the threat to the marine habitat because of proposed dredging planned for the expansion. But they dredged for the county marina too. What affect did that dredging have on the marine habitat? Is the threat to the marine habitat less because the dredging is being done for a county project? We think not.

For too long a time the environment was not the target of the kind of concern it deserves. For too long a time development for development's sake, or for the increase of a tax base, was the norm. It's good that the environment is getting the kind of attention that will help preserve our water and marine resources. But we're beginning to wonder if "the environment" isn't being used in some cases as a convenient cover for other reasons.

The pendulum has swung to the side of the environmentalists. But it's not going to stay there too much longer if selective opposition continues in the future as it has in the past. The credibility of those who pick and choose their targets for opposition will surely deserve close scrutiny.

And why not?

SUFFOLK LIFE

Vol. 24 No. 33

NEWSPAPERS and Suffolk County Life

Offices and Plant Located at 1461 Old Country Rd. (Rte. 58) Riverhead 369-0800 Classified Ads 369-0820
Mailing Address P.O. Box 167 Riverhead, N.Y. 11901-0102

Suffolk Life is published in 19 market zone editions every Wednesday

North Fork	Patchogue	Canterech	Rocky Point
Riverhead	Medford	Selden	Port Jefferson
Hampton East	Holbrook/Holtsville	Coram	Three Village
Mid-hampton	Sayville	Mastic/Shirley	
Westhampton	Oakdale		
Moriches	Ronkonkoma		

Total circulation audited and verified in excess of
218,000 Circulation Weekly

Suffolk Life is an Official Newspaper of: Town of Southampton, Town of Islip, Surrogate Court, County of Suffolk, Rocky Point School District, Patchogue-Medford School District, Suffolk County Life published weekly each Wednesday, is an Official Newspaper of: Town of Islip, Town of Riverhead, Town of Brookhaven, Village of Port Jefferson



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Subscription Rate In Suffolk County, \$4.99 per year Outside Suffolk County, \$17.00 per year. Newsstand single copy sales, 25¢ per issue. Suffolk County Life, In Suffolk County \$4.99 per year, Outside Suffolk County \$7.99 per year. Newsstand single copy sales, 25¢ per issue.

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