

You Should Be Covered

With all we have written on the Shoreham/LILCO controversy, we have written very little about the Price Anderson Act. The Price Anderson Act is federal legislation which limits the coverage, in case of nuclear accident, to \$640 million. This is the total coverage that is available to compensate victims for deaths, for injuries, for property that is ruined and may be forced to lie fallow.

The scenarios developed by the government in the case of nuclear accidents proposed losses ranging in the tens of billions of dollars. No dollar figure has been put on the value of lives, or on medical bills incurred because of health problems caused by the accident.

The \$640 million is the maximum combined contribution of the federal government and of the nuclear industry. The limit is set at \$640 million! No further payments will be made by the nuclear industry regardless of the amount of destruction caused by a nuclear accident. Under the Price Anderson Act, this limit applies even when it can be proved that willful negligence and reckless disregard for safety caused the accident.

Take a look at your homeowners, your automotive and boat policies. You will find, in the small print, an escape clause for the insurance companies. They do not cover you for a nuclear accident. In other words, when there is a nuclear accident, the victims are wiped out. You are without coverage either through the government, or by your own personal insurer.

The Price Anderson Act expires in August, 1987. Congress currently is discussing, in committee, the renewal of this bill. There are also

several other bills dealing with the same subject, some good, some bad. The bills that favor victim compensation, corporate responsibility and taxpayer protection should be supported. These bills call for anyone who is injured by any nuclear accident to be compensated for all losses, without arbitrary limits. They make those who create nuclear risk accountable and hold them responsible for the consequences of accidents. They force nuclear companies such as LILCO to live up to their corporate responsibilities by placing the burden for an accident on their shoulders. They eliminate the special privilege that only nuclear industries enjoy, a limit on their liability for accidents caused by even reckless and criminal negligence. They shift the responsibility for paying for an accident from the taxpayer to the profit-making corporate entities involved in the nuclear industry. The two bills worthy of your support which encompass most of the provisions for your protection, are the Stafford Bill (S1761) and the Hart and Seiberling bills, (S445) and (HR445).

There are two bills we urge you to oppose, as they limit liability and do not hold corporations responsible for negligence or recklessness. They are the Simpson, McClure Bill (S1125) and the Udall Bill (HR3653).

We urge you to write to your congressmen and to your United States senators. Let them know that you are aware of these bills and that you want their support for those that protect you most. With the Shoreham nuclear reactor in our backyard, waiting for the federal government to give it their blessing, you'll need every bit of protection you can get.

And why not?

Nowhere in the Suffolk County employees' contract is day care benefits mentioned. Yet, our county legislature is considering developing a County Day Care Center for Suffolk County employees.

The alleged reason is that the county cannot find highly qualified people who wish to be employed. We rather doubt this assumption as the county, with its current pay scale, is one of the highest-paying employers in the county.

In addition to a lucrative pay scale, county employees receive fringes way above what is offered by large corporations and way beyond what smaller businesses can offer their employees.

The concept of a day care center is ludicrous for county workers. The county is spread over 10 towns from East Hampton to Huntington, Southold to Babylon. County offices and facilities are strung out over this entire geographical region. If you give a benefit to one, you must provide the benefit to all on a reasonable basis. To accomplish the county's goal, a multiple of day care centers would have to be set up and operated around the clock. The cost of day care centers for county workers would end up being paid for by the taxpayers. Taxpayers who

must provide their own child care facilities for their own children.

Why should these taxpayers be forced to subsidize day care centers that would be open only to county employees' families? This is not fair, just or logical.

The county employees are covered under union contracts. These union contracts contain the provisions of employment, scales of payment and benefits offered that have been negotiated by the union with the county executive's office.

These contracts are approved by the legislature after debate. Adding mid-contracts, a new, major benefit such as day care through the concept of negotiated benefits and contracts, is out of kilter. If day care is a benefit sought by county workers, it should be part of pre-contract negotiations. The cost and the services to be provided should be spelled out and included as part of the over-all cost of employment. Not just an idea thrown into the hopper by a politician who is looking for headlines.

We recommend strongly that the county legislature, where this idea originated, stop meddling with employment contracts and leave this to the executive and his negotiators.

And why not?

Carney's Forked Tongue

Two years ago, when running for re-election, Rep. William Carney proudly displayed a letter from President Reagan saying there would be no federal intervention into the Shoreham plant.

Carney stood as tall as he could and proclaimed to the constituents of his district that this letter from the President of the United States puts to rest once and for all the issue of Shoreham in this campaign.

Folks, look at it this way: your Congressman, Bill Carney, has delivered the pledge and the promise of the President of the United States on this most vital issue, and your Congressman with the help of the President will stop LILCO from opening the plant.

We said hogwash then and now, even Bill Carney says hogwash to his promise and pledge. Two years after the fact in his bid for re-election, Carney now proclaims that the letter did not mean what it said. It only means that President Reagan will not have the Marines or federal marshals act as agents for LILCO.

Come on, Bill, give us a break, stop talking out of both sides of your mouth. Either you are for us or against us, but you can't be both. It's a shame to see a congressman of the United States have so little regard for the word of the President or is it the President who has so little resources for the people of Long Island?

And why not?

Stop the Fighting Let's Go Fishing

The new Shinnecock dock in Southampton has been the subject of controversy from the start. The land the dock is built upon is owned by the Town of Southampton. It is controlled by the trustees through the authority granted them under the Dongan Patent.

Shinnecock fishermen were locked in under a caste system to a few commercial buyers and brokers who deal in fish. To break out of the system, they needed docking facilities where they could load and unload without interference. Where they were free to sell their catch to the highest bidder or form a cooperative

to market their product themselves.

Recognizing the growth potential of Shinnecock, the town, the county and the federal government created docking facilities. The town provided the land and was to provide the management of the facility. The county and the federal government provided the grants which built the facility. The town awarded leases for the docking space to town residents who had been involved and were supportive of the creation of this project. Some fishermen who had not been active in the project charged that they were shut out because of

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General Information

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR - We encourage our readers to express their views regardless of opinion through the Letters to the Editor Column. All letters must be signed with author's signature and address. We will withhold names on request and assign a nom de plume.

NEWS AND PHOTOGRAPHS - Readers are welcome to submit ideas of interest and photographs for consideration of publication. All news and photographs become the property of Suffolk Life upon submittal and cannot be returned for any reason.

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Willmotts and Why-Not's

David J. Willmott, Editor

Stop the Fighting...

Cont. from page 3

politics and favoritism. Others from outside the Shinnecock area claimed that they were discriminated against unfairly because they were not selected although county and federal monies had been used to build the facility.

A compromise was reached between the town and county which protected those who had already been granted leases, yet opened up an additional number of limited leases for outsiders and those who felt they had been discriminated against. This compromise got caught in a cross fire between defeated

County Legislator Heaney and Supervisor Martin Lang of Southampton. The result has been ongoing agitation, costly legal battles and turmoil. This culminated recently with the fishermen who hold leases from Southampton Town being given eviction notices by the county.

This situation is ludicrous. We believe the town holds the upper hand for they still maintain control over the land on which the facility is built. The town and county both should stop their feuding, reach an effective compromise and let the fishermen get back to the business of fishing.

And why not?

Letters to the Editor

'Impasse on bridge work'

Letter to the Editor:

The saga of the Sagg Bridge in Sagaponack appears to have reached what could be termed an impasse. The County Public Works Department has withdrawn its request for federal funds to replace the small span with a new million dollar D.O.T. "super bridge".

The question I have is whether or not the County yielded to local opposition or merely ran out of time to apply for the Federal and State funding available for the project. I suspect the latter. Citizen involvement and the absurdity of the proposal brought about delays in the planning stages of the project. Legislators Lou Howard, Greg Blass, and others joined Southampton officials in calling for the repairs of the existing bridge (at less than half the cost) as opposed to replacement.

Anyone crossing the bridge would hardly have time to notice it and would be too distracted by the beautiful setting surrounding them to pay too much attention to the roadway. It is a small, quaint bridge in a somewhat remote area. Nonetheless, the people in charge of building roads and bridges were determined to press for replacement. They wanted to swat this fly with a sledgehammer. They wanted to spend a million dollars of taxpayers' money on this project. Ironically, the very reason, the proposal gained so much

steam has led to its present state of impasse.

The motivation behind the push for the new bridge was the promise of Federal and State money. Like a huge carrot on a string this money was irresistible to professional government Public Works types. Only when it was clear that the door to the Federal vault was closing did we see the abandonment of the Sagg Bridge project. Fearful of losing Federal Funds altogether the County Public Works Department requested that the funds be re-directed towards a less controversial maintenance project on the Quogue Bridge.

The question now is how do we assure that the proposal does not resurface. If new federal or state funds revive the interest in a full replacement project, the Sagg Bridge battle will have to be fought all over again. To avoid this, the county should proceed immediately with a major renovation project and Southampton Town should assume responsibility for the maintenance of the structure. As it now stands, the replacement proposal still exists in the County's capital program. I plan to initiate legislation that will modify the capital program to call for a renovation of the existing structure and hopefully once and for all end the saga of Sagg Bridge.

Legislator Tony Bullock
Southampton

'No risk, no progress'

Dear Mr. Willmott:

This is in response to Anne Montgomery's letter that appeared in your March 5th issue regarding the Challenger disaster.

Why does Mrs. Montgomery assume that Christa McAuliffe and her husband didn't discuss the possibility of an accident? Perhaps after weighing all the pros and cons, they decided she shouldn't let the opportunity go by. Christa McAuliffe was a mother, but she had other important roles too; teacher, explorer, adventurer. I'm convinced that she did

what she did because she believed in the space program and wanted to be a part of it. She took a risk and she lost, but that's the chance any of us take when we want to make progress.

And I might add that Christa McAuliffe wasn't the only crew member to leave behind children. It is difficult to lose a father too.

Sincerely,
Name Withheld
Southold

NEW LOCATION AND PHONE NUMBERS

1461 Old Country Rd. (Route 58)
Riverhead, N.Y. 11901-2026

Main & General
Office
369-0800

News
Office
369-0810

Classified
Office
369-0820

'Overkill reaction'

Dear Editor:

Another Town "overkill" reaction makes unsuspecting citizens law breakers.

In response to unobtainable complaints from land owners, Mr. Lang proposed a law that, in part, makes it illegal for you to park a car on someone's property without the owner's permission and without notifying the Town in writing (now we have to write Big Brother.)

But, the law continues, makes it illegal to park your car on any public highway and offer it for sale.

Now:

1) If a friend comes to visit you and has his car for sale with a sign on it, he/she is breaking the law as written.

2) If you have a For Sale sign in your car and go visit someone in Southampton or go shopping and park your car, you are violating the law.

3) Mr. Lang's response is, "take your sign down". I respond, "I shouldn't have to".

When I pointed these flaws out to Mr. Lang at the Town meeting, he stated, "We will have to look into this further".

He advised me that the ordinance was not voted on at this meeting. I read in the Hampton Chronicle that the Town Board voted on the ordinance and passed it unanimously at the meeting.

I ask, why did our Town attorney draft a flawed law? Why did Mr. Lang propose it? Why did the board extend to public roads when the "complaints" were about private property? Why did our Police Chief (Mr. Lang said that he wanted this law) show up at the Meeting to support the ordinance when he can't the Police Chief use trespass laws to accomplish his purpose?

I suggest that:

1) Everyone put a For Sale sign in their car window.

2) Everytime you see a car with a For Sale sign on it that you call the police and see if that situation is in violation of the law.

Robert S. Perlow
Hampton Bays

'Halt the blackmail'

Dear Sir:

With the oil prices that LILCO pays to run their generators going down most every day, interest should be shown to get the public service commission to reverse their decision to allow LILCO their latest rate increase. I do not see how they could dare refuse their request.

The oil glut and resulting super low price per barrel makes the starting up of the Shoreham plant out of the question.

When a private stockholder owned company wants to sell their product to the public, the public has a right to demand a fair and honorable fee be charged for the product.

I see nothing fair or honorable coming from LILCO or the Public Service Commission to come.

Therefore, we must take legal action to halt this blackmail! We must take the case to the highest court if need be, and make them open their books and prove to the public that the real need, if there is a real need, is to lower the blackmail rates they are forcing on us. We must do this at once, before Long Island area residents, (you and me babe) go down to drain with LILCO.

And Why Not???
George E. Griffen
Gulfport, Fla.

'Expressions of half truths'

Dear Mr. Willmott:

I dare you to print this. I knew it the moment it happened.

On the day of the Challenger disaster, I remarked to a co-worker "Willmott will compare the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant to the Challenger explosion."

You, sir, have sunk to the lowest form of journalism there is. Your most tasteless editorial attests to this.

In my eyes you are a printed matter terrified of expressing half truths and in some cases full truths in order to terrorize persons not acquainted with either radiation safety or the Nuclear Power Industry.

In closing, I must say that this by far the most disgusting and tasteless form of sensationalism I have read.

Garry Zukas
Southold

'Thanks for coverage'

Dear David:

Thank you for the article in Suffolk Life on Catholic Schools Week. I'm sure it was welcomed by all the denominational schools as well it should.

Then, too, thank you for the kind words

about the principal at St. John's - she's always indebted to you.

Always in my prayers
as ever,
Ann Quentin
Riverhead

'Support for library'

Dear Dave:

Many thanks to you and your staff for Suffolk Life's recent coverage of Love Your Library Week.

The library is a community gem and your support was a great morale booster for our 630

members.

Very truly yours,
Peter S. Danowski, Jr.
President, Friends of
Riverhead Library

'The voice of the people'

To the Editor:

The citizens of Southold Town spoke out, and won, with the town Board's 4 to 2 vote to end the Airport Site Selection/Master Plan study. The people, and the Town Board's

majority who acted in accordance with the desires of the vast majority of voters, deserve our perpetual thanks.
Franklin Bear

'Wake up America'

Dear Mr. Willmott:

WE HAVE A PROBLEM!

Can anyone imagine living and working in an atmosphere of major impending catastrophic proportions?

The Nuke Plant looms with its dreary umbrella in the backdrop of limitless garbage strewn everywhere, hundreds of stray dogs about in the area, and now the latest blurb which is the contamination of our drinking water. Our frightened moms who today have to work for a living, also have the terrible responsibility of checking those cute little jars we

are so familiar with for broken glass. Having a headache seems to pose a problem, since we don't really know if the capsule isn't poisoned and so many of us just tough it out. We now have a myriad of choices - stand by and be destroyed by the Nuke, or just turn your tap water on and drink the water. Writing to your congressman may give us peace of mind, and getting feedback from family and friends may tranquilize the feeling of impending doom - but only temporarily.

Wake up America - the end is near.
A Very Concerned Citizen

Now, Down to Work

This past weekend, the state legislature concluded the budget process. From the beginning of the legislative session to the conclusion of the budgetary process, little other than state fiscal matters are worked on in Albany. One major item that was shuttled to the side is the energy legislation.

This vital legislation not only was aside this year, but kept out of debate and vote by Republican Senate Majority Leader Warren Anderson. Anderson, by his actions, has become labeled the darling of the utilities. A man who can be counted on to stop energy and utility reforms. Anderson is the majority leader solely because the Republicans are in control of the New York State Senate. The Republicans have a five-seat majority. Five of these seats belong to senators from the Suffolk County area. These five senators can, if they wish, block Anderson from being majority leader. They can also, by acting as a unified Long Island delegation, forcefully demand that Warren Anderson get off center and allow energy/utility reform out on the floor for a vote in the senate.

What has gone on in past sessions of the legislature is, the governor and Long Island assemblymen propose legislation and reforms. They are debated and voted upon in the legislature. They go to the senate and Anderson stars the bills, which keeps them bottled up in committee, not letting them out for debate or vote.

The Long Island senators come back home, tell their constituents, "Look, I not only was in favor of these reforms, I introduced the legislation in the senate. But, the majority leader wanted a complete package, not piecemeal reform and therefore would not allow any individual bills out on the floor. Wait until next year, we will do better."

Well guys, next year is here. It's either put up or shut up because if you can't represent the vital needs of constituents, you don't deserve to be reelected senator, you deserve to be beaten by a Democrat. The Democrats can't do any worse than you have done and maybe, with a Democratic majority leader, we might have some cooperation between the

governor's office, the legislature and the senate.

The following must be passed this year or you fail as a senator.

One: A state-wide used and useful bill clarifying when customers can be charged and under what circumstances, for proposals and projects started by utilities and not completed or not of value to the users.

Second, a complete revamping of the Public Service Law and the Public Service Commission, itself, to make the laws and the people they serve responsive to the ratepayers. Ratepayers' interests must take precedent over the interest of the utilities and their capitalistic, profit seeking stockholders. Third, the approval of the Long Island Power Authority, to acquire the assets by stock purchase or condemnation of the Long Island Lighting Company.

There are a host of other energy/utility reform bills in the hopper that should be debated and voted upon by the entire senate. You can no longer allow these vital issues to Long Islanders to continue to be locked up by Republican Warren Anderson's one man dictatorship.

As senators, you either show your guts by standing up to this dictatorial leadership and getting movement on these bills or admit defeat and resign, allowing another Republican or a Democrat to be elected by the people to serve them in a responsible fashion.

The governor must also accept his responsibility for the energy-utility dilemma we have here in New York State. According to commissioners on the Public Service Commission, the chairman holds virtual dictatorial powers. He controls all staff and funding of the commission. What he says goes. Paul Gioia is the acting commissioner. He is a holdover that could have been replaced by the governor. Gioia, by his own statements, is outrageously anti-consumer, anti-Long Island. He has done everything in his power to aid and abet the Long Island Lighting Company in their attempt to cripple our economy. He has been supportive of the corporation, its management and its policies.

The governor, any time during the

past three years, could have replaced Gioia as the chairman's appointment is made by the governor. Before Cuomo can come to Long Island and ask for our support in his reelection bid, he must stop his waffling and give the voters more than lip service by appointing a chairman of the Public Service Commission who is pro-consumer.

Governor Cuomo has two excellent candidates of his own political persuasion in his own camp. We have recommended before, and we recommend again he select either Richard Kessell, the head of the State Consumer Protection Board or Ann Mead, a current member of the Public Service Commission.

Both these people have excellent records of public service and a tendency to be and speak out for the

consumer. The appointment of either of these individuals will be a tangible sign to Long Island that there is hope in an impossible situation.

It will be a signal to Wall Street that they can no longer count on the utility to be able to rape and plunder the ratepayers by unjustifiable and crippling rate increases. We recommend strongly that the governor show the courage of his convictions by an appointment of one of these individuals. Do it now and our senators may find courage to stand up to Warren Anderson.

It is time for action, for statesmanship, the time for representation and for fulfillment of your obligations to your constituents.

And why not?

Making I & R Work

We have an I & R law in Suffolk County. In theory, this mechanism is supposed to allow the citizens to petition their government for laws or changes the Legislature will not initiate on its own.

The law, itself, calls for the entire process to be completed within 365 days. Yet, if each unit of government takes its prescribed time to fulfill its obligations as called for under the law, the total time frame is 440 days. As a result, the petitioners are not left with sufficient time to gain the necessary signatures to bring a measure to ballot.

There have been four attempts to bring measures to the voters under this mechanism. Three of the measures dealt with giving the voters a choice of whether they wished to continue with the legislative form of government or revert to a county board of supervisors who would vote on a weighted basis according to the population in their towns. Those who were involved with these initiatives found the whole system stacked against successful implementation.

Presiding officer Gregory Blass, recognizing these problems, has assigned two legislators, Bullock and Romaine, to revamp the procedure. They would be wise to start with the petition form itself.

Under current law, the petitions are required to be printed on an over-sized sheet that is approximately the size of a broadsheet newspaper page such as the New York Times. There are few presses large enough to accommodate this petition, making it very expensive for the initiators to even print a ballot. A more reasonable size such as 8½ by 11 or 11 by 14 is needed.

The current law requires the printing of not only the initiative measure itself but the exact wording of the law. This serves no purpose as people who are signing the petition do not take the time to read all the verbiage. The initiative measure and a simple summary would more than suffice.

The petition form was designed to deliberately cause error and make the mechanism unworkable. If there

are errors in the form, those who do not want the measure passed can challenge on technicalities. One of the requirements is for the signer to include his election district. Often times people do not know the number of their election district. Petitioners who are soliciting signatures are forced to carry around with them the election list which is cumbersome, and these lists are not often available in the quantity needed. The affidavit the collector of signatures must sign is confusing and requires information that often is not available.

One must remember the circumstances surrounding the development of the first I & R measure here in Suffolk County. Suffolk Life had editorialized over an extended period of time quite forcefully for the citizens to gain this right. The combination of senior citizens' organizations and Tax Action joined the effort and applied pressure to the Legislature to enact the measure. The Suffolk County Legislature hastily passed the measure, and it was sent to the state. It was passed at the 11th hour as the Legislature was closing its session. It finally reached the governor's desk where it was signed. Those of us who had been involved were elated. We knew the new law would be difficult to work with, but at least we finally had a mechanism in Suffolk County for the citizens to directly affect the laws they wanted enacted.

We are delighted that Chairman Blass has initiated a review which should lead to the needed changes. Some legislators have confused I & R with the abolishment of the Legislature. Although I & R may be used for this purpose, it is not the sole issue. Because they may be opposed to abolishing the Legislature they should not oppose the changes needed in this law.

The issue surrounding I & R is the right of the citizens to petition their government in a reasonable manner for the enactment of laws or changes. The procedure must be workable. We hope that the Legislature will enact the needed changes.

And why not?

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Raped Again

The average negotiated nation-wide wage settlement last year amounted to under 3%, inflation moved ahead less than 3% last year and it is projected, during 1986, we will have no inflation at all, due to falling petroleum prices and the effect those lower prices have on gasoline, fuel and electricity costs.

The inflationary spiral of the seventies and early eighties is over. Over for most of us, but not for Suffolk County government. Legislator Tony Bullock revealed this past week that the management and exempt employees were to receive wage increases of up to 40%.

The raises average \$6,027 for the 147 top echelon employees in the county. The average wage increase is in excess of 10%. This is ludicrous and we should not, as taxpayers, tolerate it.

Many of the salaries affected are already in the \$60,000 to \$70,000 range. As one person said, "At these salaries they are being paid twice as much as they could hope to earn, considering their abilities and ambitions, in private industry."

We also must keep in mind that on top of these huge salaries these fat cats receive benefits that boost their total income package by at least another 50%. Plain and simple, the top echelon of the county is not worth what it is getting paid. There are too many of them, duplicating each others' efforts, spending far too much time building and defending their own fiefdoms to serve the public who are paying the bills.

Unfortunately, as we all too well know, the county executive can't say no. There were those of us who had hoped that Cohalan would be a strong fiscal manager. Instead, he has turned out to be weak-kneed and has done anything but protect the taxpayers from the bureaucratic structure.

After the last round of increases county employees received, including these exempts whose salaries were subject to a lengthy law suits, a settlement of status quo or mini-

mal raises should have been sufficient in this period of non-inflation. To further add insult to injury, the resolution submitted by the county executive's office authorizing these raises was the height of skullduggery. It was a shell game that only an astute observer could understand enough to ascertain its impact.

The county executive not only heaped huge raises into this package, he changed the various steps of employees, creating a scenario whereby certain favored employees received raises on top of raises.

"Let's look at the bottom line. Did you or can you anticipate a raise of \$6,000 this year? We bet 99% of the people reading Suffolk Life will answer no. Yet, you are being asked through your taxes to fund and pay for the raises the top echelon of Suffolk County government are attempting to extract from you.

Everything may appear fine and rosy financially for the county at the present time. But, the more prudent of our elected officials should keep in mind that they will not have inflationary increases in sales tax revenues that have bailed them out in the past. In addition, there will be actual reversals in the revenues realized from gasoline sales taxes and other taxes directly related to the cost of petroleum products. This will cause a definite shortfall in the projected budget figures. This shortfall will have to be made up. What does Cohalan plan to do, lay off the lesser paid civil service employees? We all know he will not eliminate his cronies at the top. What's left is another tax increase.

The legislature was expected to either rescind or re-study the exempt wage package at yesterday's board meeting. Hopefully, they will stop this rape of the Suffolk County taxpayers, send the package back to the negotiator and have the settlement reflect the value of the employees, our current economic times, sanity and reality.

And why not?

The name Petrone today is synonymous with courage and honesty. The man who brought recognition to this name is Frank Petrone, a former \$67,000 a year Washington bureaucrat who, up until recently, was the Northeast Regional Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

FEMA had been ordered by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to conduct a test of the illegal Long Island Lighting Company's Shoreham evacuation plan. Acting under the dictates of the NRC, FEMA complied, holding, on February 13, a very partial test of the LILCO plan. As Northeast Regional Director, Frank Petrone was the man in charge of supervising the drill, and also had the responsibility of overseeing the final report on the exercise.

The management of LILCO, the Reagan administration, the NRC and Petrone's boss at FEMA wanted a report that could be used to give LILCO a clean bill of health for the illegal evacuation plan. In order to create such a report, however, they would have to ignore reality. Petrone chose not to do so. He said in the post-drill briefing that because of the partial nature of the drill--without participation by state and local governments--FEMA would not be able to give reasonable assurance that the LILCO plan could guarantee the public's health and safety could be protected.

Petrone's comments were not an exaggeration of the truth, they were common sense, pure and simple. The test scenario, which had been developed in large part by LILCO, ignored the sounding of sirens, the movement of people. It ignored people's emotions, fears and the possibility of panic. The drill ignored the shadow effect of people from outside the limited, arbitrary evacuation zone evacuating as well, jamming a limited roadway system to over capacity, preventing people from within the zone from having an opportunity to flee to safety. And, because local governments did not participate, as they do in normal exercises, there is no way their actions could be evaluated.

Because the drill was so partial in nature that crucial information was not able to be determined, Petrone stated that which is obvious. The February 13 drill evaluation cannot guarantee the safety of the public. That is a crucial point. The sole reason such drills are held. Petrone was pressured to "remove" this statement. FEMA officials, their conspiracy threatened by truth, insisted the statement constituted a finding, something they had said earlier they would not offer because of the partial nature of the drill. Petrone countered it was not a finding, it was a statement of fact, a matter of truth. He refused to camouflage the truth, to become a

liar on behalf of the United States Government. He was given a choice, remove the statement, resign or be removed from his post.

Petrone weighed the alternatives. He could yield and keep his \$67,000 a year job, a salary not easy to walk away from. In doing so, however, he would be walking away from his responsibility to the public. What good is a pound of silver if you place thousands of people's lives in jeopardy? What good is a pound of silver if you cannot look at yourself in the mirror? Petrone chose truth. He chose to stand with the people. He resigned his post rather than lose his integrity.

Frank Petrone did what was right. He brought honor to his name, to his family and to his community. Petrone did what was right for the people, even though the personal cost was high. He chose truth over dollars.

When FEMA's report came out last week, Petrone's statement had been eliminated. There is no mention of the lack of reasonable assurances that the people can be protected. The public's safety has been whitewashed as part of the FEMA, NRC, LILCO conspiracy to put Shoreham on line at all costs, even if those costs mount up in human suffering.

How much longer can we put up with corrupt government? How much longer will we put up with a government that will deliberately lie to us to gain their own end. If Washington is willing to change facts surrounding the Shoreham controversy to open a nuclear plant that may well put our lives in danger, how much faith can we have in what we are being told about Libya?

Frank Petrone, by his courageous act, has shaken the very core of the administration and the bureaucrats who are running it. We have seen too tragically in the space program how our government allows shortcuts to be taken to meet its goals. How safety had been put aside in order to meet a deadline. And the horror of those actions. Can we allow the same kind of short cuts to happen so openly and brazenly here on Long Island? Can we allow our government to risk our lives as they did those of the seven brave astronauts?

Our congressmen, our senators can no longer allow the falsehoods concerning Shoreham to go unchallenged. Either they are with us or against us. Sanity, honesty and truthfulness must be brought back to Washington. Our lives should not be disposables that can be wasted for corporate and political gain.

Frank Petrone is a hero today. May what he did be an inspiration to his peers in the bureaucracy. The administration must be stopped. Integrity must be restored to the actions of our federal government, the kind of integrity displayed by Frank Petrone.

And why not?

SUFFOLK LIFE

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The Better Choice: Blydenburgh

Next week's special election in the Sixth Legislative District, to fill the seat of former County Legislator Donald Allgrove, has taken on significance far beyond the importance of simply filling an empty legislative seat. The balance of power between the Democrats and the Republicans hinges on the outcome.

The Democratic candidate, Barbara Barnett, has used this as a selling point for her candidacy, claiming her victory would give the county "bipartisan" government, since it would give the Democrats nine seats and the Republican-Conservative bloc an equal number. The sad alternative to bipartisan, however, could well be stalemate since neither side of the aisle would have the necessary 10 votes to pass legislation. And county government could be mired in a mess of stalled debate. A better representative, one who would best serve the public, is more important in our view than is an equal number of Republicans and Democrats.

A candidate who has the ability to get along with members of both political parties, casting a vote on the merits rather than the politics of an issue would be the better choice. Of the three seeking election next week--Barbara Barnett (D-RAL); Donald Blydenburgh (Rep.-CCAL) and Anthony DiPerna (Con.)--we think Blydenburgh fits that bill the best. His track record as Smithtown town attorney has proven he can work in a bipartisan fashion. He was appointed by Republicans and reappointed by Democrats, who recognized his capabilities. Suffolk Life thinks Donald Blydenburgh would be the best choice to represent the Sixth Legislative District, and supports his candidacy.

Blydenburgh's town experience comes through in his approach to the issues. He believes there should be more cooperation by the county in working with towns to solve problems. He opposes the Shoreham nu-

clear power plant, and is in favor of public power. His views are, in our mind, more people-oriented than those of his opponents. He has secured the endorsements of organizations which have been in the forefront of the fight against Shoreham.

Barnett sought the seat in a run against Allgrove last November. We were unimpressed with her views on the issues then, and time has not shown an improvement. In fact, in at least one instance, they have gone the other way. Last November, Barnett favored giving the public an opportunity to vote on the future of the legislature. Should it be abolished, with a return to a county board of supervisors, or continued as it is now? She has changed her position. She now opposes giving the public a voice in that issue. Asked why, she said that "the public would vote to abolish the legislature." If that's what the public wants, shouldn't the public have an opportunity to decide that issue? "No," she declared, "because the current system is better." We could only conclude that Barbara Barnett knows what's best for the public and would act to keep the public from doing the wrong thing! Right or wrong, we'd rather take our chances with the public rather than a politician.

To her credit, Barnett is opposed to Shoreham and favors public power, as do we. But that is not enough, in our view, to consider her a viable candidate.

DiPerna is both articulate and bright, but our accolades end there. On the issue of Shoreham he appears to be a clone of pro-utility Congressman Bill Carney. He, like Carney, believes the Nuclear Regulatory Commission should be the final voice on the safety of the plant. Shoreham must open, he declares, because "we need the energy." One of his campaign issues is the need for traffic improvement because of the current snarls, but then says a safe

evacuation is possible. He thinks private enterprise--such as LILCO--is far better than a municipal source of power. And declares the provision of affordable housing should be left up to the developers, without government involvement.

In last November's legislative elections, the Ratepayers Against LILCO line made the difference between victory and defeat in several races. The Democrats ran out and incorporated that line recently, hoping to take advantage of anti-LILCO sentiments. The Republicans countered with a Concerned Citizens

Against LILCO slot on the ballot. Voters should be aware that both lines represent nothing more than attempts to garner added votes, and are not an indication of a candidate's abilities to bring solutions to the problems caused by LILCO's management or Shoreham plans.

On the issues, and with his ability to work with people regardless of political affiliation, Blydenburgh would be the best bet to better represent his constituents, and deserves your support. We endorse him for election in the Sixth Legislative District.

Keeping Truth Hidden

The Vanderbilt Museum controversy continues unchanged as a result of action last week by the Suffolk County Legislature. For the second time the legislature rejected, along party lines, an attempt to give subpoena powers to a legislative committee, headed by Legislator Steve Englebright, which is attempting to investigate long-standing allegations about the museum's operation.

As we noted in a previous editorial, the committee must be given subpoena powers if it is to get at the full truth. The trustees of the museum, which includes many high ranking political figures, have refused many times in the past to provide information requested. County Legislator Sandra Bachety (D-Babylon) went to court in an effort to get copies of minutes which were refused her. Trustees now say, very belatedly, that they will send her the minutes. But, how can anyone have confidence that the minutes they now offer will be complete, or accurate.

The museum operates with funds from a trust established by the Vanderbilts, and with county funds as well. One of the trustees, obviously not part of the political operating clan, claims the trustees have had no say in the creation of a budget, that only a small select group is involved in that. There are claims that funds have been shifted to a second bank account that is the private tool of the small select group. Calls to this newspaper from persons involved at the museum indicate there is much that needs to be fully aired. But much of that information is going to be left uncovered unless subpoena powers are granted that would protect those summoned to testify. Most fear the possibility of recrimination and are less than willing to volunteer information.

The second attempt last week to grant the legislative committee subpoena powers was defeated by the Republicans. Their claim was they want to give the trustees more time to respond to requests for information. Presiding Officer Gregory Blass said concerns that litigation by

the trustees against the subpoenas for information would only stall the investigation were the basis for the rejection. He claims that he is prepared to push for the subpoena powers if the trustees do not cooperate fully by the next meeting of the legislature. Considering the fact that the leader of the Suffolk Republican Party is one of the trustees, we seriously question the motives of the Republicans.

The Vanderbilt controversy goes far beyond the operation of that western Suffolk museum. The key issue here is whether those who are involved in any way with county funds should be permitted to operate behind closed doors. If they should be permitted to thumb their noses at attempts to scrutinize their operations, and how county funds are being spent.

We say the doors should be fully opened. We say the trustees have had enough time to respond to demands for information. We say their refusal to do so indicates an arrogant attitude and something to hide. In our view, the refusal by Republican legislators to approve subpoena powers for its own committee makes them part and parcel of this arrogance. We have to wonder if they are more concerned about protecting their political colleagues than they are about getting the truth.

We'll know soon. If the legislators refuse to grant subpoena powers to Englebright's committee at the next meeting, we'll know for sure they are marching to the tune of the political leaders, and are unconcerned about protecting expenditures of the county's funds. They will have given a message to other county organizations--the water authority and Off-track Betting, for example--that there is nothing to fear, that the legislature will protect them.

If that happens, it will be time for the voters to deliver their own message: If you are not for open and honest government in all operations that deal with county funds, you don't deserve to hold office. That message should be delivered at re-election time.

And why not?

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