

We'll Save 12%

After almost a year, the Lazard Freres report was released. The report confirmed earlier studies indicating that ratepayers will save 12 percent under a public take-over of LILCO. The report was produced under the most conservative methodology, taking into consideration the worst case scenarios.

It had to be conservative because the board members of L.I.P.A. knew, as did the investment house which prepared it, that the report will be torn apart from cover to cover, word by word, with the management of LILCO trying to discredit the conclusions. Using the worst case conservative scenarios, the research takes into consideration situations that probably won't arise, but had to be accounted for. If everything goes smoothly, ratepayers could save substantially more than the projected 12 percent.

We know from fact that public utilities throughout our nation produce electricity for their ratepayers at rates that average more than 40 percent lower than their profit-making counterparts. Publicly-owned utilities should be able to produce electricity at substantially lower cost. The avenues for financing are greater, and they can issue tax free bonds for financing, bonds which traditionally pay interest one-third under the rates paid on private bonds. These bonds are sought by people with high incomes, who use the tax advantages to their best interest and thus are willing to accept a lower rate of return for the tax abatements.

Private utilities, under Public Service law, are guaranteed a fixed rate of return on the investments that they make. These returns are built into the rates and, generally, are in the range of 12 percent to 14 percent. With the profits stripped out of rates, and with the savings on the financ-

ing, L.I.P.A. should do very well, thank you. They should be able to use part of the savings to rebuild the plant, restoring quality service to Long Islanders.

During Hurricane Gloria, utilities working in this area from out of the area stated, time and time again, that the LILCO system was the worst they had ever seen. Preventive maintenance had not been done, the system suffered from benign neglect. Money that should have been put back into maintenance and upgrading had been thrown into the Shoreham cesspool.

L.I.P.A., upon release of the report, made an offer to the management of LILCO for \$8.75 per share. This is reasonable, for it is the average selling price of the stock over the past 30 days. During the past few years, LILCO stock has sold from under \$4 per share to a high of \$12, \$8.75 is the average over the last 30 days.

There is one group that believes, in making such an offering, the price is too high and represents a bail out of the stockholders in the company. They are gambling that LILCO will face even further devastation, be forced into bankruptcy where the stock could be acquired for a pittance. In taking this stance, they are ignoring the possibility that the feds would license Shoreham and the plant would be opened. They want their cake and to eat it too.

The company is maintaining that the corporation is worth a lot more, even though investors have spoken and the market has set the price at \$8.75. Their argument is that if everything goes right, they get a license to operate Shoreham and all their other problems mysteriously disappear. The price of the stock will rise to reflect what they believe is the real value of the company. In coming to this conclusion they are

putting aside realities. There are a number of them.

Ratepayers already have paid through rates \$2.9 billion toward the construction of the plant. The Public Service Commission has ruled that \$1.9 billion was spent imprudently by the company, and any further expenditures on the plant after the prudence hearing would be considered imprudent. In reality, when you put these two circumstances together, LILCO has little to gain from the ratepayers by licensing the plant.

The Public Service Commission has also denied LILCO's request for a \$60 million rate hike, stating that they will not consider any other rate hikes until the company puts the Shoreham question to rest once and for all. The Long Island Lighting Company is facing two major lawsuits, one civil, one criminal. Under the RICO statute, the company has been charged with racketeering and criminal wrongdoing. The County of Suffolk is the plaintiff. They are seeking several billion dollars in damages. The judge has ordered the case to trial in September. The at-

torneys for the county are very optimistic. The second suit, brought by stockholders, charges that the management wrongly misled their stockholders by issuing false information and is seeking damages. This case also has been scheduled for trial and stands a good chance of being successful.

The fact that LILCO is blocked from increasing rates, finding new-revenues unless Shoreham is disposed of, the pending suits and the reality that no matter what happens, a license for Shoreham is at least a year away, should be cautious warning to the stockholders of LILCO. The offer of \$8.75, although not what the management of the company claims the company is worth, is an attractive offer. An offer we, the ratepayers, can finance and as a result of our investment see a 12 percent savings in our electrical rates over the next 15 years.

The cards are on the table. Now is the time for reason and prudent responsibility on both sides.

And why not?

Whopping Postal Increase

The cost of mailing a first-class letter has gone up, as of April 3, from 22 cents to 25 cents. Most individuals will find it annoying, businesses will find the 10 plus percent increase expensive. But none will find it quite so expensive as mailers such as Suffolk Life.

The cost of bringing you a copy of Suffolk Life has gone up as of April 3 by 26.23 percent, or almost a nickle a copy. Suffolk Life is mailed to close to a half million families each week. This increase is staggering.

Second-class mail rates, those paid by paid newspapers, are almost 250 percent less than are paid by publications that do not charge readers for their newspaper.

The postal system budget is supposed to be based upon first-class mail paying the larger bulk of the cost, for this is what the system is set up for. Second, third and fourth class mail are each supposed to pay a proportion of the overhead cost, plus the cost of handling the mail. In our case, the Post Office's additional cost for handling Suffolk Life are minute compared to many other mailers. Our mail is directly loaded onto postal trucks after being weighed and verified at our printing plant here in Riverhead. The mail is separated not only by zips and towns, but down to the postal route and the order in which a postal carrier delivers the paper. The trucks are

routed in such a way that all drops are made at the Post Offices in sequence, thus eliminating any additional handling at Post Offices or sectional centers. This is accomplished through a highly sophisticated and very expensive system that was, in part, designed to assure us next day delivery and to keep the postal system's costs to an absolute minimum.

Before we made the commitment on this system, we were assured by postal officials that the Post Office had attached new significance to the importance of regaining bulk mail that had been lost to alternative delivery systems. That they would address the delivery and the costing of bulk mail on a business-like basis. That increases on bulk mail would be equitable with other classes of mail, and timely notice would be given of decisions on increases.

We hardly consider a 26.23 percent increase in bulk mail rates fair and equitable when other rates within the Post Office have increased an average of 10 percent. We hardly consider it fair or equitable to be given just a few days notice of such a tremendous increase, when it will take a minimum of 60 days to rearrange our way of doing business.

Why did this come about? How this came about and why is best known by those in the publishing field. News-

Continued next page

SUFFOLK LIFE

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PLEASE CALL

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Postal Increase...

Continued from previous page

papers like Suffolk Life, throughout the country, have been competing successfully against the gigantic newspapers like Newsday. We offer an alternative voice to their one voice and viewpoint dominance that many of those daily newspapers have had in their one newspaper towns. We offer an alternative to the advertisers to buy saturation coverage, and only the circulation they need around their stores. We publish news the daily newspapers have neither the room for nor the desire to print.

Newsday and those other monolithic dailies were successful through their trade associations to lobby the Postal Board of Governors to increase the rates on postal distribution. Their hope, their desire, and their single-minded aim is to drive us out of business so they may once again publish the only viewpoint, and only the news they want

you to be exposed to.

Such a situation is not in the best interests of the people. Consider the matter of Shoreham, a controversy in which Newsday has ignored the feelings and fears of the majority of Long Island's residents. They have constantly pushed for that plant to be opened, even though it poses a serious threat to your future health and safety. Suffolk Life, in contrast, has stood shoulder to shoulder with the people, fighting those who would push this danger down our throats.

We hope we can continue to enjoy your support. It's going to be more important than ever for our advertisers to know you are reading and responding to their ads. It is their ads that go a long way toward helping us bring you our newspaper and be the only alternative there is to Newsday on Long Island.

And why not?

Lacking Common Sense

The Coast Guard recently announced the closing of several stations along the eastern seaboard. These cutbacks and many others are an attempt by the Coast Guard to cut its expenditures, as mandated by the Reagan administration.

At the same time, the Coast Guard Auxiliary is in the process of being dismantled, not for budgetary reasons but for the benefit of a select few private entrepreneurs. The Coast Guard Auxiliary, a voluntary organization that costs the federal government very little, has for years assisted the Coast Guard in their daily operations, particularly during the peak season, by providing volunteers and boats. The Auxiliary patrolled the waterways and rapidly came to the aid of any disabled boater. Members of the Auxiliary not only volunteer their time for service, they underwent numerous hours of intensive training in first aid, boat handling, life saving maneuvers and navigational law. Their presence on the waterways offered an a semblance of law and order which is particularly important in busy channels, inlets and canals.

The Coast Guard, by regulation, has been dumping on the Auxiliary. Where commercial tow firms are operating, the Coast Guard sends

paid operators to the aid of disabled boaters. They have refused to allow the Coast Guard Auxiliary boats to respond to these calls. The result has been a crushing blow to the morale of the Auxiliary members and, as a result, membership has been rapidly declining. This is a crime. The Coast Guard Auxiliary volunteers did for free many of the things the Coast Guard now must do, which only aggravates the budget constraints under which the Coast Guard is operating.

We don't know who the harebrain was that came up with this scheme, but we think it is ludicrous. The only ones that benefit are the select few who operate commercial towing firms. Generally there is only one firm in each area and, because there is a monopoly, boaters have complained loudly about the charges they are forced to pay when they need aid.

The Coast Guard should be forced to rescind the restraints that they have placed on the Auxiliary. Allow this volunteer organization to grow and prosper and continue to help the Coast Guard itself, as well as the boaters.

If you agree, drop a note to your Congressman and Senator.

And why not?

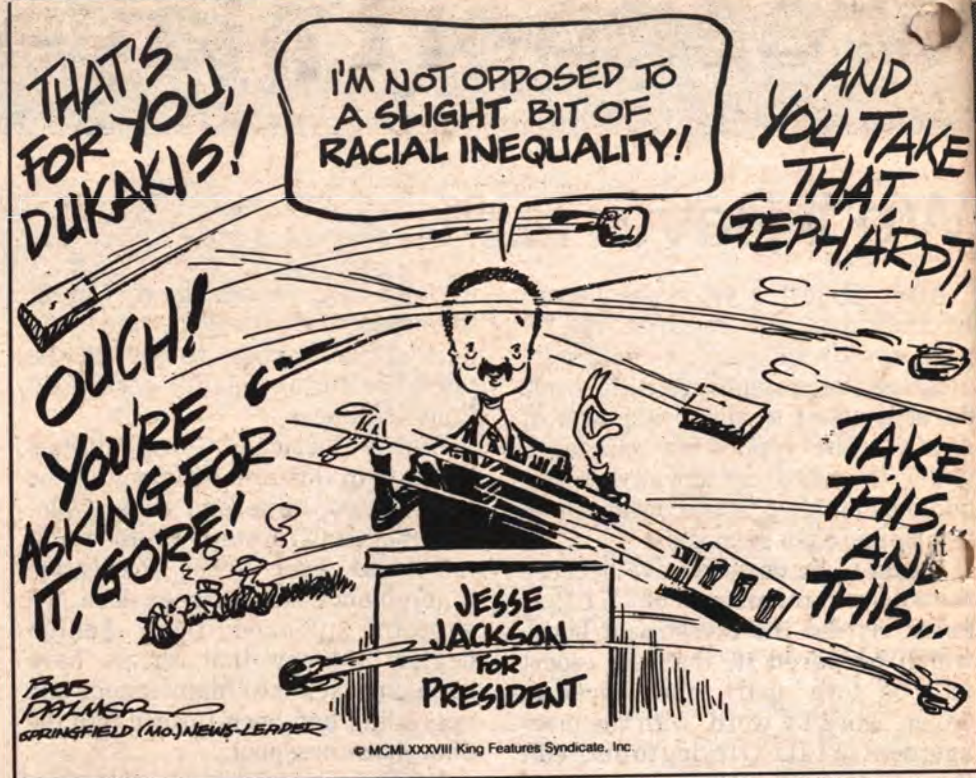
Members of the Senate:
Alfonse D'Amato
One Penn Plaza-Suite 1635
New York, N.Y. 10001

Daniel Patrick Moynihan
733 Third Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10017

Members of the House of Representatives:
George Hochbrueckner
2400 North Ocean Avenue
Farmingville, N.Y. 11738

Thomas J. Downey
4 Udall Road West Islip, N.Y. 11795

Robert J. Mrazek
143 Main Street
Huntington, N.Y. 11743



Letters to the Editor

Plea for format

Dear Mr. Willmott:

Our family has been faithful listeners of WRHD since its inception in 1983. We have enjoyed the "nostalgia" format presented, as I am sure many of the area's "old timers" (those of us fifty years old and older) do.

For us it is the last bastion of soft, listenable music. The other local stations are basically hard rock, heavy metal or some other form of distress to the ears where "vocalists" seem to scream undiscernable words over competitive noise provided by one or more "musicians"

totally amplified in an attempt to drown out the efforts of the vocalist(s).

After all, at least one station ought give recognition to the musical groups whose careers have lasted for decades. On behalf of other "gray panthers," whom I hope will also voice their preference, we ask that you retain the current WRHD format. You already have WRCN-FM wired for the younger set.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Elaine Nichols
Laurel

Praise for nursing home

Dear Editor,

Many people are faced with the decision of placing a loved aged parent in a nursing home. Panic and fear are prevalent having heard and read dreadful stories about filth, neglect and abuse. There are many wonderful, well-supervised, caring homes, as we were fortunate enough to find one of them.

Our 93-year-old mother is in Riverhead Nursing Home and we want to praise every one of the dedicated people working there. They have so much kindness, love, patience and understanding for these elderly people. They are kept clean, fed, entertained, changed as

often as necessary and the rooms and entire home are immaculate. The residents are treated with dignity and individual attention is given as necessary.

Our mother is happy and contented. Our love and gratitude to the entire staff. God bless all of you. Madeline C. Butler, administrator; Marie Lukert, social worker; Mrs. Heeny, supervisor of nursing and all nurses and aides.

Trudy Lawlor
Eleanor Wirth
and children

Veterans helping veterans

Dear Editor:

Do you know why social security recipients are one of the strongest lobbying groups in the nation? Because of numbers, organization, involvement, and leadership, they work together for the benefit of all.

Do you know why veterans are considered to be the scapegoats of Congress when it comes to cuts in benefits, entitlements, and COLA, even though we have the numbers? Because of fragmented leadership and minimal organization and involvement, we seem to have forgotten what we have been taught and applied in the military and put ourselves on a self-destructive course full of apathy, ego, petty jealousies, lack of teamwork, in fighting amongst ourselves and various veterans groups nationwide, and yes, even childishness, never seeming to agree on anything constructive together; we are our own worst enemy.

Until we agree to start working together, veterans organizations, active duty military retirees, previous service disabled vets, officers and enlisted, we will continue to go down in defeat; we must start working for each other's causes, even though you may not personally benefit, so that down the road, when you need help, someone will be there. Veterans helping Veterans. We must work together and earn the respect of our elected members of Congress so when we speak they will listen.

Sgt. Major Shelby T. Clark, Sr. USA
chapter commander, American Military
Retirees Association, Inc., Riverhead

Lyme Disease

Dear Mr. Willmott:

Please be aware Lyme Disease is neither possessive, nor plural. The name comes from the town in Connecticut where it was first identified.

Also, whilst the deer tick is the vector, not all deer ticks are infected. The chances of being bitten by an infected tick dramatically increases in a known hot spot (Montauk and Shelter Island are good examples).

You might also inform your readers there is a difference between the deer tick and the dog tick. Most people are familiar with the brown dog tick which is much larger than the deer tick. (Although dog ticks do not carry Lyme, they can transmit Rocky Mountain spotted fever and babesiosis). Since deer ticks are so small, they can easily be missed unless extremely careful inspection of clothes and body is undertaken following exposure. Better yet, avoid areas of known infestation whenever possible.

Yours truly,
Patricia Weiss
Hampton Bays

Exported To Die

Three weeks ago, a feature article published in Suffolk Life focused on the lack of nursing homes in Suffolk County. This was not simply a story of projected future needs. This was a story of how Suffolk County, which can't provide for its own elderly, has taken to literally exporting its own. We ship people to Flushing and Far Rockaway and other places further away because we don't have the beds for them.

When a Medicaid recipient--and almost everyone winds up on Medicaid--needs a nursing home bed, they can be placed anywhere within 50 miles of their home or the hospital they are discharged from.

Often, when government officials and reporters talk about problems such as this, it is in a detached form--the numbers say this or that. However, since that first story has appeared, Suffolk Life has received a great number of calls from people who are saying, 'that is my story.'

A woman from Port Jefferson called and said she won't allow her grandma to be taken away. "She is in her 90's and if she only has a few weeks to live, I have to be near her. If they try to take her away, I won't let them. I'll get a gun if I have to."

Another woman called and said, "I came from Europe to raise my children. But I don't want to grow old in America. I don't want to die in Far Rockaway."

Most of these people want to know who they can call. We asked a very helpful county expert on Medicaid placement, "Who can they call?" He said, with some regret, "No one."

Well, we don't think that's true.

Part of the reason why there is and will continue to be a severe nursing home shortage lies in the fact that the New York State Health Department refuses to approve enough beds

for expected needs. Instead, they approve only those which would meet a minimum need. We suspect the Health Department's policy is what got the county into this position in the first place. Give them a call at 518-474-2011. If they won't listen, or you're not satisfied with their answer, call Governor Mario Cuomo. After all, the Health Department falls under his jurisdiction. His number is 212-587-2100.

In addition to calling those people, we suggest you call County Executive Patrick Halpin. As an article in this week's newspaper points out, while he was on the campaign trail, he promised to build a new 400-bed nursing home. But he is not going to build it. Give him a call and let him know that he reneged and this will send your mother off to Far Rockaway to die. His number is 360-4000.

While you have those officials on the phone, remind them that there is an instant solution to this problem.

Pilgrim State Hospital, which has room for 18,000 patients, was decommissioned a number of years ago. Governor Hugh Carey converted part of it into a prison at a cost of several million dollars.

Governor Cuomo, running for his first term as governor, promised the people in the surrounding area that he would close the prison down if elected. He kept his word.

Today, this facility lies idle and could be quickly converted back to a hospital-like facility that could be utilized as a nursing home overnight. Why should this facility lie empty when our situation is so pathetic? Why should we be exporting our loved ones to die in outdated nursing homes miles from their loved ones?

Ask these officials why.

And why not?

not discharge their weapon unless they have already been shot at or believe that the person that they are pursuing is armed and about to fire at them.

It is foolhardy to suggest that cops, when in pursuit, should have to abide by the speed laws. Needless to say, they should drive with caution, and most do. They know that reckless driving can get them killed, as well as someone else. As part of their training, they have been taught professionally how to drive in pursuit. They have been trained in high-speed maneuvers and how to use the car to

bring a criminal to justice. It wouldn't take long for the public at large to figure out they can outrun every cop in the county by going a few miles faster than the cops being mandated by law are allowed. It is tragic that two innocent victims' lives were taken in this accident. But let's get one thing straight, it wasn't the cop who killed them, it was the alleged car thief.

Let's let our cops have the tools that are necessary, and use them with discretion, to maintain law and order.

And why not?

Any Year Now

Three times in the last fifteen years, residents of Suffolk County have gone to the polls and endorsed bond issues to clean up the environment, in 1972, 1986 and 1987.

New Yorkers, and particularly Suffolk residents, agreed to indebted themselves for hundreds of millions of dollars. We did this because we were scared, frightened by the propaganda put out by the proponents of these bills. We well remember Governor Cuomo saying, in support of the 1986 bond issue, "do you want to drink your own garbage, your own sewage? If you don't, you better support this measure."

Headlines have repeatedly screamed out about toxic waste sites, creating the illusion that unless cleaned up immediately, we and our children would be polluting and poisoning ourselves by drinking our own water. Although the state has hundreds of millions of dollars appropriated under these bond issues, they have failed to direct these funds and spend them to correct the problem they claimed were endangering our lives. Either the claims were

bogus, pure rhetoric, designed to extract our tax dollars, or they were real. If they were real, and we are in danger of poisoning ourselves, then this is an emergency situation that requires immediate attention.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's answers 'these things take time. It's a long, drawn out process, and the clean-up funds are in the pipeline.' Pipeline, hell! They're stuck in the mire of bureaucracy.

With \$130 million available last year for toxic site clean-ups and land purchases, the state spent a mere \$15 million. That's in the entire state. At the same time, the DEC says there are at least 100 toxic waste sites right here in our backyards of Suffolk County.

If the state ever wants to come forth again with a bond issue, we believe they are going to find a very reluctant voter. Unless the state can get its act together and get itself off its bureaucratic duff, we can't see why taxpayers should say "yes" again to any request for bonded indebtedness.

Handcuffed Cops

Two weeks ago, a stolen car being pursued by the Riverhead Police crashed into another vehicle, killing both the occupants and the driver of the stolen car.

Riverhead Town Police have come under criticism. It has even been suggested that they were negligent, that they should not have been pursuing the criminal. They should have let him go at his own speed and maybe caught up with him on some other day. To this we say poppycock.

You can't have law enforcement without enforcement of the laws.

The enforcement of law sometimes requires force. The need for force occasionally puts citizens in jeopardy. This is the price we must pay if we expect to live in a civilized society. What is the sense of spending millions of dollars to engage law enforcement officers if the only purpose of the handcuffs we give them is to bind their hands behind their backs? As it is now, cops may

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A Better Way

We have all just struggled through the simplified tax reporting system. April 15th has come and gone and has left most of us not only exhausted, but dazed.

For those who serve in congress, and the bureaucrats who work for them, simple means more complex, and the bottom line is that most of us ended up paying more from reduced tax rates.

We don't like paying taxes any more than the next guy, but we are grateful to live in a country that allows us to earn and accumulate wealth. If we are required to share it, so be it, that is the price we pay for the freedoms we enjoy and the economic system that we operate under which permits us to earn our incomes. We do take offense, however, to the enormous burden of record keeping and the complex set of rules we must follow in order to make out our return.

Several years ago, we spent the better part of a winter trying to devise a scheme to consolidate all levels of taxation and have one simple form that would allow us to pay as we go and do away with the nightmare of April 15th.

Using our local library and particularly the World Almanac, we combined all sources of revenues raised by governments. They included local real estate taxes, sales taxes, income taxes, inheritance taxes, transportation and fuel taxes and many other miscellaneous and insidious forms of extracting money from the taxpayer.

Once we had the total, we tried to find a vehicle for taxation that would be all encompassing. We finally set-

tled on the gross national product, which is a reflection of all wages and products produced and all profits earned. At that time, the figure we came up with was 13 percent of the GNP. A flat 13 percent tax on the gross national product would produce enough tax revenue to replace every other form of taxation.

The GNP tax could be collected on the local level. Each level of government would keep their allocated fair share, with the balance being passed on to the higher forms of government. We carried this premise one step further, allowing the branches of government that would be the beneficiaries of this tax to only spend what was raised from this tax during the prior year. In other words, everyone would be on a pay-as-you-go basis. If the economy fell off the year prior, there would be less to spend on government during the coming year. Governments would not be allowed to borrow in anticipation of future revenues. This eliminates one of the huge costs of our government, interest.

It was an idealistic project which appeared on the surface to have merit. It would be an excellent project for a college with all its resources to become involved in. When documented and cross-documented, it might be food for thought for the leaders of our country. It might be a very good way in which we could painlessly pay our taxes and have our country once more become competitive on a worldwide basis.

There has to be a better way than our current system of taxing ourselves to death.

And why not?

Shoreham/Gas Is The Way

Babylon Town has rejected LILCO's request to site a gas powered generator within that community. When LILCO originally put in their application last Fall, they did so with the belief that Shoreham would open as a nuclear power plant. That view is clearly questionable.

The State Public Service Commission has instructed LILCO to find a solution to the Shoreham fiasco before it will entertain any further rate increases. Without further rate increases, LILCO faces bankruptcy or a takeover by the Long Island Power Authority.

LILCO's hands are tied. They maintain we need additional power

sources for future energy needs. Having been turned down on the Babylon site, the management of LILCO should be looking seriously at the utilization of the Shoreham site. It is the most expeditious answer to the critical shortage that they say is facing us.

The Shoreham site contains some 500 acres. There is plenty of room for the gas and oil fired generators. The transmission lines are already in place, having been built to carry the electricity that the Shoreham nuclear power plant was to generate.

The residents of Shoreham are enjoying enormous tax benefits from the Shoreham facility and are look-

ing to have this tax windfall continued. Therefore, there should be minimum opposition from the area. School district officials and others in the community who have supported a nuclear plant, despite its serious potential threat to the people, would surely welcome a tax source with less disastrous impact.

If the need is as critical as the management of LILCO would have us believe, then it is imperative that the management use common sense and immediately make re-application to utilize the Shoreham fa-

cility. If the argument about need is pure hot air and deceitful rhetoric, then there is no urgency, nor is there any more credence to what LILCO is saying today than there was ten years ago.

If LILCO's "we care" slogan has any validity, its management must put the needs of the public first and end their wasteful dedication to a nuclear plant that has been a mistake from the very beginning.

It's time for the management of LILCO to put up or shut up. And why not?

Public vs. Private Compensation

A great uproar erupted over the revelation that former Police Commissioner James Caples was eligible for compensation amounting to over \$120,000 when he recently retired.

The anger was directed at Caples, when it should have been directed at the system that allows such a ludicrous financial arrangement. Caples' retirement package is symbolic of what is wrong with the entire compensation system for all public employees.

Years ago, people who entered public service, whether it be into the school system, the government or the uniform services, traded off comparative salaries for security. Taking a job in government forestalled the possibility of outright firing or layoffs caused by economic conditions. Once you were in the system and had a couple of years of seniority, it was almost impossible to lose your job except for absolute gross negligence. Even in that case, the procedure is so long and costly that few public employers fired employees.

As time progressed, to compensate for the low salaries, elected officials cut back on the hours and, in the case of police, the days an em-

ployee had to work. They granted benefits to these employees far exceeding those being granted by private entrepreneurs.

Again, the argument was, we are not paying them comparable salaries so we must make up this shortfall by not only giving them security, but giving them benefits in the form of superior insurance programs, fewer actual working hours, longer vacations and cumulative sick pay. These benefits slid through because the elected officials did not have to immediately address the cost of these benefits at the time of approval.

As time has passed, the salaries in the public sector have increased dramatically. All too often, employers in the private sector whose salary scales are governed by the realistic economic conditions of the market place, find themselves in the position of not being able to offer salaries in dollars that match those offered by the governments. It is totally impossible for private employers to anywhere near match the benefits public employees receive. These benefit packages have led to not only the Caples' controversy, but other workers leaving their jobs with huge bags of cash. The impact of the past giveaways is being felt in every

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Riverhead
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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.

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Compensation...

Cont. from pg. 3

branch of government.

This coming year, school districts are speaking of increases in school taxes that have been unheard of in the past. Ten to 20 percent seems to be the norm. Counties and towns are being hard hit also, but when all is said and done, those who are going to be the hardest hit are the residents of Suffolk County.

Next November, when the tax bills are issued and the public sees increases of 20 to 30 percent, all hell should break loose. The only way that the government can stop these huge tax jumps is to start paying government workers salaries and benefits that are in parity with the private work force.

The salaries in the private sector are set by realistic economic conditions. In other words, people are paid based upon what customers are willing to pay for a product or service. When a business prices itself out of the market, it goes out of

business because the customer says "no."

We fear if next November's tax bills reflect the increases our towns, county and school districts are looking for in their budgets, far too many homeowners will be forced into the position of having to bail out. Some might have to go bankrupt; some will be forced to walk away from their homes, some will sell and move and this will only complicate our labor supply.

Our elected officials who were voted into office to be prudent and responsible, haven't been, but now they must. Government employees can no longer be paid in salaries and benefits more than the private sector, or more than the taxpayers can afford to fund. It's time to start considering the plight of those who must foot the bill.

And why not?

Letters to the Editor

'Brookhaven County'

To The Editor,

Although the rallying cry for Peconic County has died down somewhat, a proposal to create Brookhaven County is getting a lot of attention. The Brookhaven Town Board has appointed a 90-member task force to examine the issue.

The creation of Brookhaven County would, in turn, force the question of Peconic County for the five East End towns. Forming new counties may have a lot of political appeal and may provide an easy club with which to beat up Suffolk County government for its various inequities, but the cost to the taxpayers of these future counties could well be enormous. In Brookhaven's case, the taxpayer would be the big loser.

After serving two years in the County Legislature, I can assure you that Brookhaven Town gets its fair share from Suffolk County government.

In looking objectively at the potential benefit that may result from the formation of

Brookhaven County, most of it would appear symbolic in nature. Independence and power to control the destiny of the town are significant benefits indeed. But that is where the benefits end.

While it is true that Brookhaven County would be eligible for increased state aid, it is important to understand that the cost of state mandates upon counties would far outdistance the increased state revenues. Furthermore, it is essential to consider all of the programs and services mandated by law as well as those not mandated by law but currently provided by Suffolk County to the residents of Brookhaven Town.

Services such as senior programs, Social Services, police, sheriff and jail facilities, Family Court, District Court, Consumer Affairs, Human Rights Commission, emergency housing, legal services, county attorney's offices, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Child and



Adult Protective Services, Health, Drug Prevention, Youth, Civil Defense, just to name a few, would have to be provided by the newly-formed Brookhaven County.

And, most importantly, Suffolk County must be compensated for all of its assets -- buildings, transportation facilities and open space -- that lie within the boundaries of the proposed new county. Couple this enormous debt with the capital investment of Brookhaven County, and you can start by renaming Brookhaven County "Bankrupthaven County."

When you factor in operating costs, there is no possibility of effectuating a tax decrease for the residents of Brookhaven. Quite to the contrary, substantial tax increases with no chance of relief would be the likely outcome. The major component of the Brookhaven County tax bill will be debt service -- debt service related to the formation of the county government and purchase of Suffolk County assets. Debt service that cannot be reduced for decades.

There is also an important though less measurable benefit to remaining part of a strong, established county such as Suffolk. Success in obtaining state and federal grants does not happen overnight. Youth Board, social and human services, health department, public works, police, etc., have developed over many, many years a level of confidence and a demonstrated ability to solicit and receive state and federal funding. It would be an enormous and costly mistake for the advocates of Brookhaven County to assume that they will receive the same level of funding on a per capita basis that Suffolk County now enjoys. It won't happen that way, and hundreds of millions of dollars each year lie in the balance.

On the East End -- looking at the five East End towns -- we represent approximately 11 percent of the population, yet we contribute 17 percent towards the general fund of Suffolk County. In East Hampton Town, we represent 1.1 percent of the population, yet we pay five percent of the county general fund. In terms of equity, as it relates to general fund dollars paid per capita, Brookhaven is just about right. The East End towns have a stronger argument, but their relative equity is complicated by highly valued summer homes whose inhabitants do not show up in census data. Brookhaven has no such argument to make.

Another major factor that enters the picture is the autonomy issue. The Suffolk County Planning Commission, the Pine Barrens Commission, the Health Dept. and certain environmental laws such as Article 7 and Article 12 provide oversight and regulation to planning and development in Brookhaven Town. Without this oversight, overdevelopment and rampant growth of Brookhaven Town would flourish. While some change in direction has been noticed by recent actions of the Brookhaven Town Board and Planning Board, it is fair to say that Brookhaven hasn't been on the cutting edge of environmental protection and land use regulation in the past decade. Brookhaven badly needs the present county review of development proposals.

There is little to gain from the proposed Brookhaven County. Higher taxes, reduced services and overdevelopment would likely be the result. My advice is for Brookhaven to continue to get its fair share from Suffolk County and work with the county to meet Brookhaven's needs.

Tony Bullock
East Hampton Town Supervisor

'Are the people going to have a second side?'

By Charles F. Probeck

Dear Mr. Willmott:

I recently received my copy of Suffolk Life and realized that I have often received a copy of a paper called "Newsday Extra" which seems to be a weekly paper devoted to advertising and local public news, similar to your publication.

While this does not seem important on the surface, I wonder if you have considered the possibility that Newsday is now not satisfied with being the only daily paper that is available to the people of Long Island, but might want to also become the ONLY newspaper on Long Island.

As you are aware, other daily papers in the past attempted to establish themselves on Long Island, only to be driven out of business by this paper (and we have all heard rumors of how it was done). Newsday is a multi-million dollar corporation and part of the conglomerate of the Times-Mirror organization (which obviously has no intrinsic interest in our community). Is Newsday now using these vast resources to take over or drive out of business the weeklies? If not, why this free publication -- sent out a day or two before the normal delivery time of the weeklies and your paper?

Newspapermen love to quote the First Amendment and hold it holy, but when there is only one newspaper available to the public, is that freedom of the press? Or does freedom of the press belong, as someone once said, only to "those who own the presses?" What happens when a few editors print THEIR opinion in the only paper in town, and people, like Virginia believing in Santa Claus (because it was in the paper), have no opposing opinions to read? Yes, there is the Letters to the Editor column, but these letters are routinely edited by Newsday for "reasons of space," and as the saying goes "How do you fight people who buy ink by the barrel?" And who decides, besides these same editors, what letters are printed?

While I have always been in favor of less government intervention in all phases of our lives, perhaps it is time that a hard look is taken at that First Amendment. Perhaps some regulation is needed to mandate that, when a newspaper becomes a MONOPOLY and is the only source of printed news in an area, that newspaper should be required to provide, free of charge, opposing opinions, and that those opinions be printed prominently and COMPLETELY. Obviously this is a proposal fraught with problems. Even so, some solution must

be found, since the only chance for opposing opinions to Newsday's editors now lies with the "weeklies," who by their very nature cannot provide the impact of a daily pounding home of what some editor thinks is right and what is wrong with a particular situation. But that is somewhat beside the point.

May I say that I have violently disagreed -- and violently agreed with some of your editorial statements, but that is what it is all about. The other thing that it is all about, is that you put your name on your comments, while Newsday's editorials contain no bylines -- which to me is a tacit implication that Newsday wishes to purport that their editorials are not a few men's opinions, but the result of much research and are based on fact, which we know they are not -- they are a few men's opinions.

Mr. Willmott, what I am saying is, "Are the people of Long Island, and Suffolk County in particular, going to have a second side of all controversial issues presented to them, or are we eventually going to have to depend solely on the ONLY show in town?"

If Suffolk Life is brought down by Newsday, the "weeklies" will be next, and then what?????

Sheriff Of Sufferin

It has been some time since ye old scribe has made entries in his diary in the Land of Sufferin.

King John and Queen Mary have come and gone. Prince Peter's nose, like Pinnochio's, grew beyond the commoners' belief and he was retired to the chambers.

In the Hall of Unreality, characters have changed, but not for the better. It just took them a while to make up their minds on which of the clowns would officiate in the center ring.

The Keeper of the Keys is the Sheriff of Sufferin. In the Land of Sufferin it is illegal to burp. The Sheriff of Sufferin decided to join his peers in a windy city to the west. When peers meet, they usually do so for three or four days. But, according to the Sheriff, his peers decided to meet for two weeks.

The Sheriff of Sufferin must be a fastidious dresser, for he packed into the Land of Sufferin's wagon six suitcases. Just think of that, dear commoners, would you take six suitcases if you were going to be away in the Windy City for two weeks?

Upon arriving in the Windy City, the Sheriff of Sufferin one evening decided to take a break from the rigors of his studies. Taking the Land of Sufferin's wagon, he went out and toured the local establishments.

Coming home, he committed the unforgivable sin of burping.

A burp in the Windy City would probably never had been heard back in the Land of Sufferin, but the Sheriff of Sufferin, for reasons best known to himself, while burping, bragged to an ex-Sufferinite that he was the Keeper of the Keys. While driving his wagon back to his accommodations, the wagon wandered across the path and bumped into another wagon. The Sheriff claims he doesn't know how it happened. In fact, he doesn't remember very much.

The Sheriff of Sufferin came home with his loss of memory and sent two of his under-sheriffs back to the Windy City to pick up his bumped up wagon. When asked to explain his actions, the Keeper of the Keys, the upholder of the laws of the Land of Sufferin, stated he refused to answer "under the grounds that my testimony might tend to incriminate me."

Burping, which most of us do once in a while, is a forgivable sin. But refusing to tell the truth isn't, even in the Land of Sufferin.

The moral of the story is, if you burp loud enough somebody is going to hear you. If you are heard, own up. Don't hide the truth.

And why not?

the lawyers and the judges screamed and hollered that the public deserved better. The better they had in mind is the western court complex that will, mark our words, become the next Southwest Sewer District-type boondoggle.

Already, it has started. The design is a subject of controversy, the costs are soaring, and before it is all over, the people of Suffolk County will be digging deeper and deeper to foot the bills.

Part of the court improvement scheme was the rehabilitation of the court facilities in Riverhead. This work was to be finished by 1990. But Halpin's Capitol Program kills that possibility. Despite agreement by all concerned, including the Legislature, that the work was to be done, Halpin has not included the project in his list of capitol expenditures, except for a token sum of \$250,000 for construction costs in 1989. The additional \$13 million required for the work is slated for "subsequent years."

The new court complex boondoggle was sold on the premise that conditions in the Riverhead courts are horrendous. If that doom and gloom picture contains any truth, those conditions must be corrected. "Before we begin new construction projects, resources should be directed towards our existing in-

frastructure. We must reorder our priorities away from the lure of new construction projects and attend to the management, preservation and enhancement of our existing infrastructure," Halpin said in his budget message. If Halpin means what he says, if he is to have any credibility at all, he should start practicing what he preaches.

He can do that by scaling down the western court complex, using some of those funds for the Riverhead project. Remember those words: "Before we begin new construction projects, resources should be directed towards our existing infrastructure." Are they empty words, devoid of credibility?

This is not an east end vs. west end issue. The Riverhead courts serve the entire county. They are located in the geographic center of Suffolk, and are used by residents of both the east and west end. This is a matter of doing what is right.

Members of the Suffolk County Legislature approved the Riverhead court project, and the western court complex scheme. They ought to make it clear to Halpin they will not permit him to say one thing, but do another. That the Riverhead court improvement project was promised to the people and that promise will be kept.

And why not?

Two Sides Of His Mouth

Comments made by Suffolk County Executive Patrick G. Halpin in his recently presented Capitol Program for 1989-91 qualify him for the Most Hypocritical Comments of the Year Award.

According to Halpin, "the Capital Budget and Program being proposed reflects my strong convictions that our existing facilities must be adequately repaired and maintained...Before we begin new construction projects, resources should be directed towards our existing infrastructure." Those words are

hardly reflected, however, in proposals contained within his Capitol Program.

Several years ago, when west end attorneys and judges started to push for a grandiose court complex, the justification they offered for their self-serving proposal was the horrendous condition of the court facilities in Riverhead. They elicited favors from the friendly daily press to detail all of the problems at the Riverhead courts. From falling ceilings to the gurgling sounds of flushed toilets interrupting court sessions,

Bush and the 'experts'

Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, a big winner in last week's primary balloting, appears certain to be the Democratic candidate to face Vice-President George Bush, who has the GOP nomination locked up at this time. A Bush-Dukakis confrontation would have particular significance to the people of Long Island.

The positions of Bush and Dukakis on an issue of grave concern to residents here--the Shoreham nuclear power plant--are vastly different. Dukakis has refused to participate in evacuation planning for the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant and thus, like New York Governor Mario Cuomo, has taken a firm stand on behalf of the safety of the people. He has said that as president he would appoint people to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission who would put the safety of the public first, before any other consideration.

Bush, on the other hand, is an echo of the current Reagan administration pro-nuclear policies. In an interview with a Boston Globe reporter, Bush said, "My view is that you ought to go ahead and have these matter resolved and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is the place they ought to be resolved. If they say it's safe then the thing ought to go forward. If they say it's unsafe, then the corrections ought to be made."

Bush's reliance on the NRC as the "experts" to make the final decision--especially in light of their well-known role as the patsies of the nuclear industry--is scary. In fact, Bush's link with some of those so-called experts is even scarier.

A case in point: NRC Commissioner Thomas M. Roberts is the

target of a Justice Department criminal investigation, according to a New York Times report in April of 1987. The investigation focuses on a secret commission memorandum citing flaws at a Louisiana reactor which found its way from Roberts' office to top executives of the Louisiana Power and Light Company, plant owners, in 1983. Roberts denied any knowledge of how the memorandum was leaked, but acknowledged that he later destroyed an investigative file on the matter, the Times reported.

Roberts, before becoming an NRC commissioner, was president and chief executive officer of the Southern Boiler and Tank Works, a family business in Memphis, Tenn., that manufactures reactor containment liners for nuclear power plants. In 1980 he was a campaign finance officer in the election campaign of Vice-President Bush. He was named to the NRC one month after the Reagan Administration took office in 1981.

The Bush candidacy poses an interesting dilemma for the Suffolk Republicans, most especially those Republican officials who have been strong in opposition to the Shoreham plant. Knowing Bush's stance on nuclear power, and his leave it to the NRC experts position, their support of Bush is going to be hard to swallow, not only for them but for the public as well.

If Suffolk Republicans don't really put Bush's feet to the fire on the Shoreham issue during this campaign, the county's Democrats can look forward to a long reign at the helm of government.

And why not?

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