

Give public a voice

Legislators should override veto

As expected, County Executive Patrick Halpin has vetoed the measure that would allow you to choose the form of government you wish to be governed by. In doing so, Halpin has denied you your right to choose, to vote. The measure now goes back to the legislature. Eleven members voted to place it on the ballot. Twelve legislators must vote to override Halpin's veto if his action is to be overturned.

You should be given the right to

decide, by ballot, whether you wish to continue with the Suffolk County Legislature, or replace it with a weighted board of supervisors. That's all the legislation Halpin vetoed would have done, give the people the right to decide the issue, once and for all. It would not have abolished the legislature, or created the board of supervisors, unless you, the voter, said that's what you wish to do. The pros and cons of the issue would be thor-

oughly debated before the vote took place, and the people would have the opportunity to decide. Isn't that what Democracy is also about?

The legislature has been, and still is, a very costly and expensive funny farm. It's made Suffolk government the laughing stock of the nation. It has been responsible for the waste of millions of tax dollars. You should be allowed, by ballot, to abolish or keep this form of government. You should not be denied your right to choose by self-serving politicians who are not concerned about your interests. They are concerned about protecting their own power.

The seven members who have voted to deny you your right, all Democrats, are: John Foley (475-5800); Steven Englebright (689-8500); Stephen Levy (567-0460); Sondra Bachety (661-3425); Richard Schaefer (226-1340); Maxine Postal (691-4488); James Gaughran (673-9393).

We encourage you to call these legislators today. Their phone numbers are listed after their names. Tell them you will not tolerate their opposing

your right to choose. When the vote to override comes up, you expect them to support the people rather than politics as usual, which has brought this county to its financial knees.

We also encourage you to call those who have supported your freedom to choose. They are: Michael Caracciolo (722-3130); Herbert Davis (399-0500); Rose Caracappa (732-2000); Donald Blydenburgh (724-4888); Michael D'Andre (724-5705); Joseph Rizzo (581-3621); Thomas Finlay (435-8658); Rick Lazio (661-1800); Allan Binder (499-5886), who was absent at the vote to place the proposal on the ballot but who has said he would vote to override; Fred Thiele (725-4915); Michael O'Donohoe (754-8288).

Let them know that you appreciate their support and are counting on them to hold tight and vote for the people in voting to override this horrible veto.

And why not?

Blind Injustice

A few weeks ago, we editorialized about Judge Weinstein's shenanigans in the LILCO-RICO case. After LILCO had been found guilty by a jury, Weinstein changed the rules of the game. He ruled that utilities could not be prosecuted under the RICO statutes. We find this strange because an organized gang of thieves are racketeers whether they be by national origin or are connected as members on a board of directors.

The editorial drew substantial response from our readers. A few people called this past week, very upset about how justice was being served in the municipal court in East Hampton. A man had been convicted of drunk driving. He had severely injured a young girl. He received a \$500 fine, was placed on probation and ordered into the DWI program. The next case on the agenda was the sentencing of a Mt. Sinai lobsterman who had been convicted of taking 27 short lobsters, a violation of the DEC regulations. The man is alleged to be a repeat offender. He was fined \$500 for each lobster, a total of \$13,500. When he could not produce the cash on the spot, he was ordered to serve four months in jail. Somehow, it does not seem the punishment fits the crime.

On Thursday, we were reading the Wall Street Journal and, again, what appears to be an injustice was reported. A Cuban, a convicted felon, a man who was charged with masterminding the bombing of a civilian airliner in which 73 people died, was paroled after serving only ten years for his crimes. The crime may have been of a political nature but 73 people died. The article makes note that an Irishman who has never been charged nor convicted of any offense against the United States criminal law has spent the last eight years in a cell in Manhattan. The British want him extradited. The Irishman, Doherty, has repeatedly won court battles barring his extradition. Even though he has won in court time and time again, the government will not release him or allow him out on bail. This man obviously is being denied equal justice and due process.

Most of us have high regard for law and justice. We live by the rules, we are law abiding and therefore, we pay little attention to what goes on in the courts. Yet, when we see what appears to be the injustices done to others, we must wonder if we are living in a society of blind injustice.

And why not?

Point of view

'Additional state aid' will cost taxpayers

By Joan M. Scariati
Chairman, Tax PAC Inc.

Deceptive politicians, supported by the major media, are extending themselves in publicizing their latest coup, the raiding of the state teachers' retirement fund, to provide \$331 million of additional state aid for school districts. The reality of the situation (and what the media isn't printing) is that smooth-talking legislators have voted taxpayers into "long-term" debt. During 1989, taxpayers were "soothed" by melifluous ad-

ministrators announcing that the spring payment to the teachers' pension fund and half of the December payment had been "waived." In this year's message, the trigger words are "forgiven" and "pension savings plan."

In an administrative bulletin (90-6) from the New York State Teachers' Retirement System to chief school administrators and college and university presidents, addressing a retroactive change in employer contributions to the system, an obscure line reads, "in addition, the employer contributions
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Tax Dividend

Prior to World War II, federal taxes were relatively low. They were paid at the end of the year under simple formulas that even the least educated could understand.

World War II was enormously costly. The money was raised through taxes. Americans gladly paid their share to keep this country free and defend it from its enemies. Since the end of the war, 1945 through 1989, we have been in a number of smaller wars, Korea, Vietnam, and have had a cold war that has raged with Russia. This cold war finally appears to be abating. Both countries have shown a willingness to give up the suicidal pursuit of mutual distrust and enormous waste of their people's resources. There are planned cutbacks in every branch of the military. Contracts are being cancelled and staffs reduced. The cost of operating our military establishment will decline.

The ink was not even dry on the agreements when the buzz word, "peace dividend" became popular. The liberal spenders were frantically scurrying for new social programs to be funded out of the military reductions. There has been a deafening silence from the Conservative side of the aisle. Why haven't they hollered out loud and clear? The reduction in the cost of the military should be returned to the people in the form of reduced taxes. The people have hollered loud and clear, "We've had enough, we can't afford it and we are tired of paying taxes."

To add insult to injury, our phony, "read my lips" President Bush has indicated he is willing to renege on his promise to the people of the United States that he will not raise taxes. His spokespeople have even had the audacity to float a trial balloon suggesting the elimination of the deductions for state and local taxes. This would be a total disaster for high tax states such as New York. If New Yorkers no longer could deduct their contributions to the state from their federal income tax, the state's economy would collapse because of the rebellion to having to pay twice. Businesses and wealthy individuals would flee this state, with its high taxes, in droves.

When President Bush ran for office he gave hope to many that he would carry on President Reagan's policies on taxes. He obviously doesn't have the gumption that Reagan had and appears ready to collapse.

With the dividends from the cold war's abatement beginning to become apparent, we should be seeing cutbacks in taxes, not increases.

Something is wrong in Washington. We advise you to ask the congressional candidates their viewpoints. And their plans of action to bring the federal government under control.

And why not?

The Sheiks of Long Island

A reader called last week with the following scenario. He was interested in purchasing 400 gallons of number two fuel. The advertised price in Wednesday's Suffolk Life was 52.9 cents. Thursday, the day that Iraq invaded Kuwait, the price jumped to 76.9 cents. On Friday morning it was 76.9 cents. The owner of the delivery company explained to the caller that

he was at the mercy of the tank farms. One of the largest tank farms is located in Riverhead and owned by Northville Industries Corp. This particular tank farm just recently won a tax certiorari suit against the Town of Riverhead based on their claim that the tank farm was not making the kind of money it used to make.

These tank farms own millions

upon millions of gallons of fuel oil, liquid gold if you will, bought cheap, held in storage and sold for whatever they can get for it. According to the quoted figures, there was a 40 percent increase in two days because of a burp in the Middle East. If this is not gouging, we don't know what is.

The phones were ringing off the wall at Suffolk County's Department

of Consumer of Affairs. But since there are no laws governing such increases, Commissioner Jane Devine said, there is nothing the department can do. There should be a law, and it should come from the state level. While those who control the flow of oil in this country may claim the price must be raised to offset the higher costs of replacing the oil inventory, such increases should come only when the higher costs are incurred. The present inventory bought at lower prices should be depleted before the prices are indiscriminately raised. First in, the oil purchased at the lower price, should be first out, and sold at the set price for that gallonage. Last in, the higher price oil, should be last out and priced accordingly.

There is no justification for the immediate increase in prices right after the invasion was announced. The Iraqi troops did not have the time to travel too far into Kuwait before the oil barons here were licking their chops in anticipation of higher profits. Nobody has paid a nickel more for imported fuel, yet the price at the distributors' level increased 40 percent. And those who control the prices of gasoline are already starting to put their hands in the pockets of the public with higher prices at the pumps.

This unholy rip-off of the consumer cries out for the attorney general to do a swift investigation, and come up with legal proposals to prevent it from happening again. State legislators must prepare legislation which will protect the people against those who would gain greedy profits at the expense of the public. We fear the price escalations of last week are but the tip of the iceberg, and if they get away with it, Lord help us.

And why not?

Saving the environment?

For several years, ever since the politicians and the environmental supporters developed the plan to save ground water by acquiring land, we have respectfully asked for a scientifically-based priority list. A list based upon fact that would indicate the most sensitive lands needed for water preservation.

This is a reasonable request, and it's right. Without this list we have been acquiring lands helter skelter. Political favors have been done. Speculators have been enriched. We only have a limited amount of money available to spend. The taxpayers' faucet is running dry.

There are those in the environmental movement who altruistically demand that every undeveloped parcel of land, large or small, be preserved forever more. We are with these folks. We are here, we have our piece of green, and we don't want to see another spade put in the ground. But this is not a realistic dream.

People own these undeveloped pieces of land. Some are water sensitive, some are just nice, undeveloped parcels that contain all kinds of insect, bird and animal life. They are going to be developed whether we like it or not. We just don't have the money to buy

every single piece that has not been developed. It, therefore, makes absolute sense to determine which parcels are the most important.

Those most highly sensitive, those most likely to add to the contamination of water should be preserved first. Those less likely to affect our water supply, but ecologically pleasant to have, should be lower on the priority list. Those areas, particularly the small plots of land, that abut private homes and make great personal nature preserves, at the taxpayers' expense, should be last.

Several politicians, notably Steve Englebright, have claimed they have seen a priority list in the past. When asked to produce it, they have hemmed and hawed. East Hampton Supervisor Tony Bullock was recently quoted as saying he saw such a list, but he can't recall if the Suffolk County Park Trustees, or the Planning Department, is where he found it.

Legislator Fred Thiele claims that the county will produce a scientifically-backed priority list in August. This paper is published on August 8, 1990, and we will bet our sweet bippy neither he nor anyone else has a scientifically developed list of priorities detailing the most sensitive lands our taxes should be invested in.

Folks, the way land is taken here in Suffolk County is a charade. In too many cases the owners of the land are not revealed, or they are hidden by the procedure that has the Nature Conservancy first acquiring the land from the individuals and then turning it over to the county. By law, the county purchase would require full disclosure. The law does not govern private groups. We heard of one four-acre parcel being taken which only benefits a couple of landowners whose property abutted it. This is all being done under the emotionalism that the environmentalists have created and anyone who questions it is tarnished with the cry: "You stand for development and ruination of our water and our air."

This is your money that is being spent. It's time we all got off our haunches and demanded a plan based upon scientific data and accountability for the investment that we are making. It's time we took the selection process out of the hands of the politicians who have created their very own "wish list" to garner votes. It's time we take steps to truly protect our water supply, taking profit, greed and politics out of the process.

And why not?

Point of view

Taxpayers pay for state budget ploy

By Dr. William Bernhard
Superintendent, West Islip Schools

Very often school officials will cite mandates as part of the reason for the high cost of education. Within the last month, two significant pieces of legislation have emerged from Albany which will again place a long term financial burden on our property taxpayers. These legislative initiatives will cost us millions but not one cent will go towards the purchase of a textbook, improving our curriculum, or providing educational services to our students.

Recent news articles have extolled the benefits derived from the state aid to education proposals that school districts will be receiving next year. A closer look, however, reveals that these purported increases are misleading and that many school districts have, in reality, lost millions of dollars in school aid. The meager increase of \$90,000 in aid that West Islip will receive for the 1990-91 school year is offset by a reduction of \$3.2 million in our 1989-90 school aid. What we haven't read about in our local newspapers and Albany press releases is the scheme that was worked out by the governor's office and the teachers'

retirement system. This past year West Islip schools budgeted for a \$3.2 million liability to pay for our obligation to the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS). This bill is normally paid directly to the TRS by the state through a reduction in state aid entitlement. This past year, although the state deducted the TRS payment from our state aid, they did not pay our retirement bill! Instead, these funds were used to balance the state budget. We still owe the \$3.2 million to the TRS and, since we no longer have the funds to pay this obligation, we are now told by the state to pay this over the next 15 years. In effect, we are paying this bill twice. Amortized over 15 years, our annual payment will be \$361,000 at a total cost, with interest, of \$5.4 million. The school districts were neither consulted nor given any choice in this matter.

It is obvious that our property taxes have been used to balance the state budget, and the state, through this legislation, has imposed a long-term liability on all residents. We question the legality of these actions, and our school board will be seeking legal counsel on this issue for the purpose of determining whether or not any state laws have been violated.

Another legislative mandate that is now being considered by the governor will require school districts to pay health insurance for retired-teachers. This means that our school district will be required to pay the full cost of health insurance for our retired teacher employees. Presently this bill has been approved overwhelmingly by the New York State Assembly and the Senate and sent to the governor for his approval. This bill requires that we phase in over a three-year period the full cost of health insurance for our retirees. While we are currently obligated by law to pay a partial amount of this health insurance, the difference between what we are now paying, and what we would pay if the governor approves this bill, is approximately \$175,000 each year. I have contacted the governor's office and strongly urged that he veto this bill.

Through these two legislative actions the West Islip taxpayers can anticipate a recurring cost of over a half-million dollars per year. This is unconscionable and shows little regard for our residents and local property taxpayers. Our best efforts at keeping the cost of education acceptable are too often frustrated by the insensitivity of those lawmakers who continually place financial mandates on local schools.

The Right Place for a good idea

The Grumman facility located in Calverton, the Navy property, is under consideration for conversion to a commercial cargo airport. It is the right place for such use. The facility was built to construct and test jets for the aerospace industry. Calverton is one of the few air facilities that was planned right, built for the future.

The complex itself is housed on over 5,000 acres. There are several

thousand additional acres that serve as buffer zones. The facility is located between Route 25 and the Long Island Expressway and it already has a railroad siding. It is without question the perfect choice for a commercial freight facility as well as a potential site for a national and international airport.

It would create thousands of jobs and fuel Suffolk County's faltering economy. A jetport could coexist with

the environment, allowing us to both have our cake and eat it too.

Riverhead Town, which is where the Calverton facility is located, is badly in need of a strong, commercial industrial base to offset the thousands of acres of land that have been taken off the tax roles for parks, recreation, wetlands, pine barrens and nonprofit use. The Riverhead Town Board should enthusiastically endorse this

concept and put the full might of the government behind it. There are those who will complain, "not in my backyard please." Most of these people moved into the area after the Grumman facility was created. Thankfully, most live miles away and, because of prudent, proper planning, huge buffer zones of land have been created to keep the noise and annoyance to a minimum. Careful planning of landing and takeoff patterns could keep the air traffic away from congested areas, causing less impact on area residents.

To the south is the Peconic River preserve which contains thousands of acres of land that cannot be developed. To the north is the Calverton National Cemetery and other large plots of land that act as a buffer. To the west are the pine barrens and the Brookhaven National Lab. To the east are farms and horse farms, many of whose developmental rights have been sold.

It's time for all of us to take our heads out of the sand and support proper use of our land. An international cargo and jetport at Calverton is such a project, one that would provide needed employment and a strengthened tax base so vitally needed.

Let's get on with it as soon as possible.

And why not?

Citizens, we're at war

Whether or not troops actually confront each other in the Middle East, make no mistake about it, we, the citizens of the United States are at war.

This war is not being fought over religion or political philosophies or ideologies. This war is being fought over greed. We are the victims and we must be the soldiers. The enemy is not only the Iraqis, but it is everyone else, including some of our fellow United States citizens, who, in a true display of utter greed, is trying to profit from this situation.

As involuntary soldiers, we all can fight back, we must fight back. This is going to mean some changes in our lifestyles. Our only weapon is our buying power. We must cut our consumption of fuel and related products.

To start, we have got to go back to

driving under 55 m.p.h. The economies from driving under 55 in most cars is startling. We have to shop diligently for the best price on gasoline and fuel oil. Boycott those service stations or fuel oil dealers that are charging more than others. This may mean giving up some long term relationships you have had with business people. We say relationships because friends would not do to you what some of these dealers are attempting to achieve.

Stop rushing into the service station to fill your tank. If everyone is riding around with a full tank when they normally have less than a half, demand will double, which helps push up the price of fuel. Likewise, if everyone keeps less than normal in their fuel oil tanks, whether it be at home or in the car, a glut will result which will push prices down.

It's time to turn off the air conditioners, or turn up the thermostats so that these air conditioners will not run as often and consume as much electricity. Turn off the lights when you leave a room. Turn off the television and the radios when not watching or listening. Discontinue using the blow dryer. For years men and women allowed their hair to dry naturally. The list goes on in ways to conserve energy. We must conserve.

It is our passion for the good life, for the reckless use of fuel and energy, that has made us the victims of the Long Island sheiks. If you are tired of being a victim, you want to fight back, become a soldier in the consumers' war against greed that is driving the whole Middle East and the United States situation.

And why not?

Point of view

Exec's veto erases fundamental right

By Legislator Michael J. Caracciolo

As sponsor of the legislation designed to afford the voters of Suffolk County an opportunity on Election Day 1990 to abolish the county legislature and replace it with a weighted board of supervisors, I take great exception to County Executive Halpin's recent veto of my legislation and his comments concerning the motivation of such legislation.

First of all, Mr. Halpin ignored the most fundamental rights of the people as expressed so eloquently by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence:

"That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its power in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness..."

Secondly, I am amazed by Mr. Halpin's resort to a cheap shot allegation against Paul Sabatino II, our Legislative Counsel, who drafted this legislation at my request. Mr. Halpin alleges that language was intentionally changed to undermine this legislation and force his veto.

Apparently, Mr. Halpin suffers from selective amnesia since the two provisions he refers to are identical to the language contained in Legislator Herbert Davis' bill to abolish the county legislature, a resolution that Mr. Halpin vetoed earlier this year. Given the fact that both bills were filed on February 27, 1990, and were placed before the county executive for his consideration, it would seem to me that if the new technical difficulties Mr. Halpin claims to have discovered regarding alleged infringements upon his executive powers were really that important, they would have been

mentioned at some time during the intervening four-month period, and, at the very least, would have been mentioned in the first veto message he issued on June 15, 1990.

As far as the actual technicalities are concerned, Mr. Halpin will not be precluded from having any legislator file a bill on his behalf if that legislator agrees with his proposal. The language only prevents the county executive from forcing a presiding officer to sponsor legislation on behalf of the county executive which such presiding officer may not agree with philosophically. Furthermore, since the county board of supervisors would consist of town supervisors who are chief executives and administrative officers for the 10 towns, it would be inappropriate for the county executive to be able to compel such chief executives to attend special meetings at his or her request since it could interfere with the day-to-day operation of town government.

Thirdly, contrary to what Mr. Halpin and the county attorney have stated, my legislation, unlike proposals in prior years, specifically enumerates the voting power that would be allocated to each of the 10 towns as follows:

Shelter Island, .38; Riverhead, .68; Southampton, 1.50; Southold, .68; East Hampton, .50; Babylon, 5.00; Brookhaven, 9.00; Huntington, 5.00; Islip, 7.00; Smithtown, 3.00.

Hence, voters will have precise knowledge when they enter the voting booth in November as to what portion of voting power their respective towns will have under a weighted board of supervisors.

Since the allocation of voting power represents the population base of each of the 10 towns, the "one man-one vote" principle will have been adhered to by my proposal.

Reference to the New York City Board of Estimate case by the county executive is misleading because the Board of Estimate did not have representation that reflected the relative population strength of each of the New York City bo-

roughs. As such, it is understandable that the United States Supreme Court would have set aside that voting scheme as unconstitutional. My legislation does not suffer from the same defect.

Fourthly, arguments pertaining to the ability of certain towns to control the implementation of various tax-cap and budget-cap laws or the veto of legislation are disingenuous because the danger of particular town or regional voting blocs impeding budgetary actions or determining whether vetoes are overridden exists under the current system whereby legislators from a particular region or particular town can join together to block a budgetary proposal or a veto override.

Fifthly, Mr. Halpin argues that no proof has been offered to support the assertion that my measure is a cost-saving bill. Obviously, he has not reviewed the Fiscal Impact Statement attached to that legislation which outlines a \$20 million savings over a five-year period.

Sixthly, Mr. Halpin's alternative solution is to establish a Charter Revision Commission to revise the Suffolk County Charter. In an incredible display of ignorance regarding the structure of current county government, he failed to acknowledge the existence of Legislator Foley's 1985 legislation which created a permanent Suffolk County Charter Revision Commission which meets every 10 years to draft such proposals. In fact, the most recent Charter Revision Commission issued a report during 1988, some of the recommendations of which have been incorporated into law.

Seventhly, as far as the Voting Rights Act argument is concerned, I believe the courts will look beyond the county executive's superficial assumption that my legislation will disenfranchise minority groups and determine that the purpose, intent, and effect of my legislation is not to deprive any voting group of its fundamental right to vote, but, rather, to enhance the rights of all such voters by giving them an opportunity to choose their form of government.

Why Wait for Someone Else?

It should be very apparent to every legislator that there never has been, and there still isn't, despite a lot of political rhetoric, a priority list of lands that should be acquired to protect our water.

The legislators have voted on hundreds of millions of dollars for acquisition of lands. They have voted blindly and because they have, they have failed the people of Suffolk County. The legislature has depended on other agencies and committees. It has accepted their word and their recommendations, and claims that the most sensitive lands were being acquired.

What strikes us is why the legislature itself, the people elected by the

voters, would let someone else do their work. Why hasn't the legislature, long before this, established a criteria for acquisitions and a priority list of lands that should be acquired before the taxpayers' money runs out?

The legislature can no longer accept rhetoric, false and broken promises from bureaucrats who have successfully manipulated our land acquisition programs for political purposes. The taxpayers have a very limited amount of money they can afford to continue to contribute. We are in dire financial shape in Suffolk County. What little resources we have must be invested to acquire the most sensitive lands.

The legislature has now been pre-

sent with a proposal that, instead of authorizing blanket amounts of money to be used by committees for the acquisition of lands, would require that each proposed purchase of land be brought before them for their collective approval. It's not a bad idea. It would offer another check and balance. But to be effective, the legislature must establish a strict criteria that all lands must meet. These lands must be the priority lands, those which would best protect our water supply, and not acquired simply to do a favor for a speculator or someone who wants a park in his backyard, or to give a legislator bragging rights that he or she "brought home the bacon" to his or her legislative district.

Those who have been in control of the acquisition process, and the designation of which lands to purchase, should have been operating from a priority list all the while. That list should have been based on scientific data, not a so-called environmentalist's claims as to which land is valuable and which is not. Since this has not been done, and millions of dollars have been spent without guarantees that the cause of water protection has been met, the legislature must develop its own criteria and establish its priorities now, rather than wait for someone else to do it for them. The longer it takes, the more taxpayers' money will be wasted. Let's get on with it! Now!

And why not?

Levy's liability, he served the boss

Actions speak louder than words. This saying should give the voters of the Third Senatorial District some pause to think. Suffolk County Legislator Steve Levy (D-Holbrook) is challenging the incumbent, Senator Caesar Trunzo (R-Brentwood), for the seat in the November elections.

Two weeks ago, Levy visited our office to give us an outline of the campaign he intends to wage. One of the main points he made was the need for a workable Initiative and Referendum (I & R) mechanism, similar to California's, in New York State. He criticized Cuomo's plan as being subterfuge, one that perpetuates a fraud upon the voters.

We stopped Levy at this point and reminded him that he had an ideal opportunity to prove his point. The Suffolk County Legislature, last Tuesday, was voting on overriding Patrick Halpin's veto of approved legislation that would allow the public to vote on whether it chose to be governed by a weighted board of supervisors, or to continue with the legislature as it now is.

Almost every year for the last eight years, the public has petitioned the legislature to allow this vote. Legis-

lators, fearing for their jobs, have refused to allow the citizens of Suffolk County to determine, by ballot, the form of government they want. They used subterfuge and questionable legal tactics to prevent the issue from being placed on the ballot. This year, when the legislation for a referendum passed the legislature, and it appeared that the citizens finally would have the right to choose, Democratic leader Dominic Baranello made it very clear to all Democratic legislators, and to the county executive, he wanted this initiative killed.

We went over the facts with Levy. The initiative only gave the voters the right to choose in an open, free election. By putting this on the ballot, a legislator did not have to take a stand on the issue. A vote to put the issue on the ballot was not a vote against the legislature, it was simple a vote affirming the people's right to self determination. They would be putting an end to the political trickery that had kept the initiative off the ballot for over a decade. The debates of which system of government would be better would take place between now and November. Intelligent voters would be able to make up their own minds on which

form of government they preferred and would make their choice. It's anybody's guess which way the voters would go.

Levy could be a hero in this situation. Although he favors retaining the legislature, a vote to override the veto would have served notice he believes in the right of the people. He could demonstrate his belief in the I & R process, and then would be free to campaign for the legislature's continued existence.

Newsday has been a strong supporter of the legislative form of government. It could be counted on to present all the merits of this form of government and the pitfalls of a weighted board of supervisors.

Suffolk Life has been a strong supporter of a weighted board of supervisors, and would do its best to take an editorial position for that point of view. With the two major print media in Suffolk County at opposite ends of the spectrum, the public would be well served; they would have both sides of the issue.

Basically it came down to a classic example of what happens under I & R, which Levy claimed in his rhetoric to support. He admitted the present I &

R legislation in this county was written in such a way it could not work. Levy was the key vote needed to override the veto, giving the people, at long last, an opportunity to be heard. The burden fell on his shoulders. It was his opportunity to demonstrate his independence from his boss. It was his opportunity to have courage and do what was right for the people.

Levy failed. He did what the boss wanted. He let the people of his legislative district, of the Third Senatorial District, and the people of Suffolk County, down. He also showed that when things are down and dirty and really count, he is willing to give up his independence to keep the boss happy. This is critical, because in the state senate the bosses control everything. If there are going to be changes in New York State government, they are going to have to come from independent people. The senate is in the control of Republicans, the Democrats have the majority in the assembly, a Democrat sits as the governor, is indicative that the cornerstone of his campaign for the senatorial seat is nothing more than rhetoric. It's too bad politicians can't be true to their word.

And why not?

Point of view

Environment bond a poor investment

By Assemblyman Thomas Barraga, West Islip

This November, the voters of New York State will be asked to approve yet another Environmental Bond Issue -do yourself and your wallet a favor, vote no!

The State Division of the Budget estimates that this \$1.95 billion Environmental Quality Bond Act will cost the taxpayers, over the life of the bonds, \$1.975 billion in long-term debt. New York State ranks number one in the nation in long-term debt, \$51.3 billion, nearly \$18 billion above the next closest state, California. As part of the state budget package passed in May 1990, which I opposed, legislation was approved allowing an additional state debt authorization of \$8.2 billion. With 7.3 percent of the nation's population, New York now accounts for 15 percent of the

nation's state debt and there seems to be no end in sight. When it comes to debt in this state, the sky is the limit unless of course the spectre of bankruptcy intercedes, giving the big spenders in New York a solid dose of fiscal reality. At a time when debt is exploding, New York's credit rating has been reduced to an all-time low; only Massachusetts and Louisiana are rated lower. Doesn't that mean anything to anyone?

The message is clear--New York State is broke...The spending must STOP--even the environmentalist must get the message--we all want to preserve the environment, but I have constituents who are losing their homes because of the negative ramifications brought on by long-term debt and taxes. All special interest groups must begin to realize that unless we stop the spending, the incurrence of long-term debt and the resulting dramatic increasing of state taxes (\$1

billion in 1989 and \$1.4 billion in 1990), the entire state structure will run the risk of financial collapse.

Not all of the money in this bond issue, if approved by the voters in November, will go to environmental concerns. Using budget gimmickry, approximately \$135 million will be taken from the bond issue and will be used to fund maintenance projects that would normally be paid out of the annual state budget--No thanks!

The bond issue also calls for the spending of \$800 million for land acquisition. There will never be near enough money to purchase all of the environmentally sensitive lands in New York State. This approach, I believe, is the wrong one. Counties and towns through proper planning and zoning should bear this responsibility, as opposed to spending billions of taxpayer dollars in land acquisitions. In addition,

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Starting 30th year

Thirty Years is a Long Time

The date, last Tuesday, August 21, struck a responsive chord. Was it somebody's birthday or anniversary? I checked my date book, there was nothing noted. Then I remembered why this date was important to me. On August 21, 1961, I published my first Willmott's and Why Notes in my brand new paper, Central Suffolk Life.

Where have the years gone? What was a dream became a reality. Suffolk Life, now starting its 30th year, grew

very rapidly, catching the imagination of our readers and providing our advertisers with a low cost vehicle to reach everyone within the market.

During this period of time, I estimate I have written over 5,000 editorials, always consistent, always on the side of the people of Suffolk County, the average residents, who have few to speak up for them.

I have had many victories and my

share of defeats. I have heard theories, when first proposed, be called radical only to become, later, popular ideas. Suffolk Life has grown significantly. Today our circulation tops a half million, just about twice that of Newsdays.

We are a major media force here in Suffolk County, not only as a regional newspaper, but with our 26 editions we are a local newspaper as well. It sometimes is amazing to me how we

are able to cover the news with such a small staff of dedicated people.

Our revenues primarily come from our advertisers, many of whom started with us almost thirty years ago. When they have a message for the consumer, we are able to put it into every home for them.

Although we are now entering our 30th year, and I no longer feel the innocence of youth, I still feel young at heart and love the job I am doing. I still get a kick out of picking up the phone and trying to help people wade through the bureaucracy of government, overcome an obstacle, or reach out and give a helping hand.

During these past years, I believe we have made many contributions to this area we call home. Suffolk County is a better place because of our existence. We have tried to point out when we have seen injustices, or identify those who abuse the system. We have helped a number of public servants, who have had the peoples' interest at heart, grow.

During my nearly 30 years as editor of this paper, if I have learned anything, it is this one important fact, you can't change the world overnight. You can nudge it an inch at a time and, at times, the best you can do is try to keep it on a straight and narrow path.

I must thank you, the readers, for allowing us to come into your homes, for reading us and responding both on the issues and to our advertisers' messages. This is what Suffolk Life is all about.

Personally, I am probably on the downside of my life. That's hard to accept. But, I know this, as long as I have you with me I will continue to work enthusiastically for you and we will as a newspaper always try to be on the side of the average citizen.

Thanks for all of these great years. And why not?

Why Close the Dumps?

Television screens are being bombarded with images of Mario Cuomo asking you to support the Environmental Protection Bond Issue.

Cuomo's rhetoric paints a picture of disaster. Unless you agree to this kind of blackmail, you will be drinking contaminated water, he claims.

The last time Cuomo was in our office and we were questioning him on the need to close Long Island dumps, which will double the cost of town taxes, he answered rhetorically, "Do you want to drink polluted water?" We felt then he was full of rhetoric. He had a glib tongue, but he never read a scientific study or reached an independent conclusion on his own. He was saying what was expedient. He wanted to get re-elected at all cost. Cost to you, but not to him.

Since the passage in 1982 of a law that will require all dumps, also known as landfills, to close in December of this year, we have been asking for scientific proof that these dumps are a threat to our ground water supply. A threat of such magnitude that the towns would be forced to spend hundreds of millions of dollars for incinerators that will put toxics into the air and create another nightmare, toxic ash, which would have to be disposed of in, you guessed it, landfills.

The Suffolk County Health Services Department's Division of Environmental Quality recently released an extremely scientific study on the impacts of landfills on the water supply of Suffolk County. It blows the socks off the arguments that all landfills must be closed. The study, based upon samplings of water from wells surrounding the landfills, indicates that only small areas are or would be contaminated because of the limited direction plumes travel, and the unique characteristics of the soil under Long Island. As the leachates travel out from the dumps, the toxics are dissipated by natural conditions so that water, right at the boundaries of dumps in some cases, meets federal standards.

The most revealing conclusion in the report is that "continued use of existing landfills presents no threat to the water supply (present or future) in Suffolk County. In other areas of the state, with different hydrological conditions, separate reviews would be needed."

The Suffolk County Health Services Department's recommendations states: "The continued use of landfills in Suffolk County poses no significant ground water threat to the health and safety of the public, nor in anyway

compromises the ability of public water purveyors to supply a clean, plentiful supply of potable water." The Suffolk County Health Services Department recommended as a precaution that areas down gradient of landfills be provided with public water.

The health department is charged with protecting the health and the environment of Suffolk County residents. This report clearly indicates that Mario Cuomo and the state government are involved in a deliberate scheme, not needed and not necessary, to force the doubling of town taxes and the squandering of your precious resources.

When we discussed this situation with Patrick Vecchio, the supervisor of Smithtown, he commented: "Whenever the DEC issues a regulation, the mob hits another home run."

If the health department says there is no need to close our dumps, to double our town taxes, why are we being forced to do it? Why is this staggering financial burden being forced upon the shoulders of the taxpayers?

Come on, Mario, get off your soap box and give us a break. You can't afford to do less. Have this idiotic tax wasting law, imposed by the state, repealed.

And why not?

For setting fuels prices

Real supply and demand needed

Real supply and demand should be setting the price of fuels. But they are not, according to Oil Heat Institute of Long Island Executive Director Kevin Rooney.

Rooney, in an interview at Suffolk Life offices, claimed that the skyrocketing oil prices can be laid at the feet of Wall Street, the Commodity and Mercantile Exchanges, where speculators gamble on the future prices of oil. These prices should not

be driving the pump price, but they are. The day's retail prices for fuel and gasoline are set at the close of market the previous day.

In addition, Rooney claims, major oil companies have placed their dealers on allocations even though there is no shortage. This is forcing prices up as it does not allow the dealers to build sufficient inventories.

Rooney also conceded that some oil dealers who have storage facilities, and had inventory before the invasion

of Kuwait, are selling this inventory at inflated prices, thus reaping windfall profits.

Rooney said oil should be priced on a first-in, first-out basis, which is the theory we subscribed to in an editorial two weeks ago.

In the past, when the markets have gone wild, the federal government has closed these markets. Where the Mercantile and Commodity Exchange is nothing more than a speculators' gambling house, wouldn't it be wise for the

federal government to suspend trade in oil futures on these exchanges, and let real supply and demand determine the price consumers pay for fuels?

The federal government is to be commended on its swiftness in acting to prevent the invasion of Saudi Arabia. Do President Bush and Congress have the same courage to put the brakes on the speculators and save not only the United States economy, but prevent a worldwide recession?

And why not?