

willmotts and why-nots

David J. Willmott, Editor

The Big Z To Resign - Maybe

Richard Zeidler, Brookhaven Town Republican Chairman, announced this past week that he will resign. True to form though, he didn't say when. Maybe soon -- maybe not.

The king of Suffolk politics has suffered two stunning defeats in general Town elections. Brookhaven's Republican organization lost its clout in County Legislature in 1973, and in last month's election, Town Republicans lost all representation in the Assembly. Zeidler couldn't even carry his two-to-one enrolled town for the governor.

Zeidler has been under constant attack from both the public and from within the party for his arrogance and inability to accomplish anything worthwhile for the people, even though he wielded a tremendous amount of power. Many feel he used this power to enrich himself and those in his inner circle, while he did nothing beneficial for the masses who looked to him for leadership.

Zeidler's strength came from his ability to put together an impregnable political machine. He was a master at it. He motivated people to work with a promise to pay them off in patronage. Once in the pork barrel positions, those same people were shackled from speaking out against boss Zeidler. The result -- a party and a government which responded not to the needs and wants of the people, but only to him and his whims.

That patronage and sloppy, inefficient government has cost the taxpayers needless millions of tax dollars during his decade reign.

It never seemed to bother him. This was politics for politics' sake. And this was what he was a master of.

He was aided in taking control of the town by its enormous size. Because of its size, the people of Brookhaven were disorganized, and until three years ago, there wasn't even a decent means of town-wide communication. Radio stations only reached a small segment of the population, and the weekly newspapers all had very small circulation. For the most part, the Zeidler machine controlled these through patronage in the form of legal advertising.

The advent of Suffolk Life changed this. Here was a newspaper that reached into every home in all of Brookhaven. Suffolk Life is independent and willingly prints both sides of any issue. As Suffolk Life grew people realized you could be independent, and still survive the

Zeidler machine. This realization caused them to speak out and again, Suffolk Life was there to report their feelings. Candidates running for election found their views were being exposed through Suffolk Life. People got to know them and realized that the "Zeidler way" was not necessarily the only way.

All of a sudden it was a new ball game. No longer could party enrollment be counted on to bring in the votes. The voter was thinking for himself, and Zeidler refused to recognize this.

He failed to give credit to the voters for having the intelligence and the ability to select candidates on the basis of their credentials. He continued to put up lightweight candidates to flatter his image and boosted his own ego by thinking he could put anyone he wanted in office. He counted on an unintelligent but properly enrolled electorate to vote for these candidates.

The voters started to realize there was more to a candidate than his party label, and selected candidates they felt would give them the best representation. They rejected the Zeidler candidates, and in political reality, rejected Zeidler.

Zeidler has lost the last two elections. His impregnable machine has been battered. His ability to deliver is no longer there. Sometime between election and last Friday night, Zeidler must have faced himself and said, "I have faced the enemy, and it is myself."

Now Zeidler has announced that he will resign. The questions are when, and under what circumstances.

Was his announcement a trial balloon to smoke out the dissenters or those he really mistrusts? Why was he willing to make an announcement now if he didn't go all the way and resign then and there? Will he resign in name only, as he did from the Water Commission? Even if he does resign, will he still be wielding the power from behind the scenes and have a flunky who has the title do his bidding?

Is there a person in Brookhaven with the ability to build a strong machine the public can have confidence in, or has Mr. Zeidler disposed of these people as they might have been a threat to his power?

A lot of questions have to be answered and we feel time will be the only source of truth.

Republicans throughout the Town of Brookhaven should use this time to investigate their local committeemen and zone leaders. First of all, do you know your committeeman? Has he ever contacted you? Has he ever asked your

help in electing party candidates? Did he ask your opinion on any issue or ask for your help in finding and selecting candidates that would be a representative of the average Republican?

Is the only reason he's a committeeman because he is on the dole and ~~only~~ politics for what he can personally get out of it? If you find yourself answering negatively to the preceding questions, it's your duty, and should be your desire to replace your committeeman with someone who will work for you and your party.

A committeeman's slot is not an honorary title. In reality a committeeman is your closest link to the government. Your committeeman level of town government is where government starts. If the committeeman system is not working, or is working for the benefit of only the leader, then all forms of government above it are weak and corruptable.

Use the time you have now to investigate your committeeman. Work for a committeeman who will be responsive to you and your needs and desires. By doing this you will have a better and stronger party and you will find your government is that much better.

If you delegate this responsibility to someone else, you will end up with another Zeidler who will use your party for his own good and leave you to pay the bills.


Good government is not easy to come by. It is a do-it-yourself project. And why not?

SUFFOLK LIFE

NEWSPAPERS

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500 Percent Rise, 5 Percent Cut Back

In 1962, Suffolk County adopted a charter form of government. It had approximately 600,000 residents and 2,500 county employees to serve them. The budget was just over \$40 million. There was little demand for additional services.

Today, Suffolk's population is 1,250,000. There are 11,450 county employees and a budget of almost one-half billion dollars. But no one seems satisfied with the county government.

The county executive's office has announced a plan to cut back county personnel by five per cent. This is not particularly significant when figures indicate the staff has grown by almost 500 per cent since the switch.

We suppose this is a step in the right direction, while it provides good publicity for Klein, who will have to run for re-election this coming year.

If Klein was that serious about cutting the government down to size, he would

find out why it takes almost five times as many employees to do the job as were doing it in '63 when the population has only doubled.

Political featherbedding and a very real lack of productivity, of course, is the answer. Both must be eliminated and a five per cent cut back is not even going to scratch the surface.

Unless Klein has the guts to act like a real businessman and take the situation in hand, next year's budget will bankrupt the county.

Most businesses are in the process of eliminating those who do not pull their own weight. They are also cutting out the unproductive jobs that are not bringing back tangible returns.

Look at the lay-offs of the nation's auto makers. They plan to survive, and if this means eliminating excess personnel, they are eliminating them now. They are not waiting for the ax to fall.

The continued hardening of financial

arteries for early 1975 will result in a reduction of sales tax revenue. If economic conditions are not stabilized by mid-'75, the county will be in big trouble when it tries to collect real estate taxes. Now is the time to plan ahead.

Using the productivity criteria of '62, there are now almost two people filling each needed job. This should be Klein's yardstick, not a measley five per cent figure.

This coming year, Suffolk County will not be able to afford a patronage-inflated, ineffective county government. It will need a stripped down, effective, efficient one.

If we do not get that government and the economy runs its predicted course, the county will be in serious trouble. Klein's five per cent cut back will be shown for the publicity game it really is. It will be too late to do real trimming back once Suffolk is in the poor house. And why not?

The Public Is Denied Right-Of-Way

Put aside the emotional issue of whether or not the groins do the job of erosion control they were intended for, and look at a practical issue which has never been resolved.

Almost a decade ago, the county, in conjunction with the state and federal government, constructed the jetties to control beach erosion in Westhampton and in East Hampton.

The jetties in Westhampton were to be built in an area where county residents had no access to the ocean beach for several miles.

To build these mammoth structures, the county had to develop rights-of-way from the road to the beach. It was a perfect opportunity for the county to give the public access to the beach.

Instead of using this opportunity for the public's benefit, the county entered into a deal with the land owners to create the rights-of-way, build the jetties to protect their property, and have these access routes closed to the public.

The injustice is that the public has paid for and still is paying for the construction of the jetties, but cannot get to the beach to enjoy what they were built to preserve.

The Corps of Engineers is again pushing to construct more jetties. But environmentalists claim the jetties create more overall harm than good. The beach to the west of the jetties is eaten away by the flow of the current around the jetties.

The Corps has called a public hearing

as required by law, but the Corps of Engineers, one of the pork barrel branches of the government, is interested only in spending the taxpayers' money. They will build anything anywhere, regardless of its effect or usefulness.

The county legislator, who has been backing this project is Beecher Halsey. He doesn't seem to realize the Second Legislative District, which he represents, encompasses more than Dune Road.

County Executive Klein is opposed to this project and has repeatedly vetoed resolutions seeking \$445,000 for the newest Corps project. Klein's opposition is based on the grounds that it is too expensive, of questionable value, and will serve only to protect the homes to the west of the existing groins.

Before the Corps of Engineers and the County Legislature pours any more of the taxpayers' money into this project, they should determine how they are going to get the present rights-of-way opened to the public.

Each right-of-way could park six to ten cars and would make ideal mini-parks and beaches. Since the public has paid for their creation, they should be entitled to whatever benefits can be derived from them.

The beach itself is public property up to the mean high water mark, and legally, the public has as much right to use the beach as the people whose homes front on the water.

But, the land owners whose property is protected by the groins do not want to see the public have access to the beach.

Presently the only places the public can use the ocean beach is at the county property at Shinnecock and Moriches Inlets. This leaves almost 15 miles of beach inaccessible to the public. Opening up the rights-of-way would make this stretch accessible.

The legislature should open up these routes before any more jetties are constructed, and make it mandatory that the new rights-of-way be open to the public. And why not?

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It's OK To Have Christmas

It's officially okay to have Christmas this year. Last year because of the energy crisis we mortals were forbidden to decorate our homes with lights, but this year it's okay.

However, there is no more oil this year than last and the gloom merchants of Washington are still talking about rationing, odd-even days, and the likes. In addition, there is more and more talk about hitting us poor mortals with a new gas tax so that we will not drive as much.

Of course, this is just more Washington hogwash that they hope will disguise what they are really after and that's more taxes. They want these taxes so they can increase their spending. Increased government spending will increase inflation and taxes and will again reduce your spendable income. Not only do they want more, but they are trying to convince you it's good for you.

The American public is caught up in one of the most vicious con games ever. If this was being run outside of government the perpetrators would be hung in public display as victimizing the old, the weak and the infirmed as well as all in-between.

You can't have things both ways. Either there isn't enough energy to afford the luxury of decorative lighting, or there is enough and we shouldn't be hearing talk about gas rationing in January. Somebody is lying at a time when we are tired of being lied to. We had enough of that during the Nixon era.

Americans are pretty sensible people and will respond to the truth. They will make just about any sacrifice needed to cope with real conditions but they have to believe what they hear.

What this country needs is people in Washington that believe in basic economics. Supply and demand will determine the price of goods if the government does not interfere. To increase consumer and corporate demand you cut taxes and give the outside world more spending power. The sustained buying power will multiply itself. It will increase profits and income which taxes are based on.

The government should use these taxes to pay its' bills and to provide essential services needed by the people. The government should only spend what can be produced by tax revenues and

therefore take the wind out of inflation, giving people a real dollar that buys a dollar's worth of goods.

Until basic economic principles are reinstated into our government, we are going to have an economy that is topsy-turvy and subject to rushes of inflation and crippling depressions. The terrorists who believe that government economics can be financed on inflation should be purged from government. Their kind have brought us to throes of the crisis we're in now and their removal will be a right step. It would be the best Christmas present our government could give us. And why not?

Greed Is Their Motive

You're probably scratching your head, as we are, asking yourself why elected county officials voted themselves a ten per cent raise when things are so bad economically.

Didn't we hire these people for the term of office at a set salary? Who said they are allowed to increase their salaries before this term of office is up? Don't they have any conscience or ethics? Is greed their only motive for being in office?

Our county legislators are part-time employees. They meet once every two weeks for anywhere from a few hours to a full day. They have some committee assignments and that's about it.

Before the county legislature was created, their predecessors, the board of supervisors, were paid \$5,000 a year and there were only ten of them to do the work. When the original legislators ran for office they did not even know what salary they were going to get. Most of the candidates, when we interviewed them, felt it was going to be less than what the original ten had received as there were going to be 18 to do the same job. At present, their salaries are \$16,870 and with the 10 per cent raises they will be paying themselves \$18,610 and they are still part-time legislators.

The most tragic part of this is the county executive, who just fattened himself with a \$6,600 raise and in the same breath claims the county is now on an austerity program.

How in hell can you have austerity and still approve a raise for yourself and your cohorts is logic known only to John Klein.

What we need is a law that forbids elected officials to vote themselves any kind of raise or increase in benefits

during the term they are in office. The voters should have the final say on public officials salaries in referendums a year before the general election. The public then would be able to decide what they thought the officials are worth, and officials running for office can decide whether they want the job at the rate the public is willing to pay.

With men who are motivated during these hard times by their own personal greed, we doubt there are any among them who would support such a fair and just idea. We encourage you, however, to contact these people and let them know your feelings.

Below we have printed a "clip and save" coupon on how the legislators in Eastern Suffolk voted on this issue. We encourage you to pin it up in some convenient place and leave it there to remind you how these people voted when they ask you to support them next November. And why not?

CLIP & SAVE UNTIL NOVEMBER, 1975

The following legislators voted for me to pay them more money than they had agreed to work for when they were elected. I will remember them next November.

| Name | District | Political Party |
|--------------------|----------|-----------------|
| Norton W. Daniels | 1st | Republican |
| H. Beecher Halsey | 2nd | Republican |
| Louis A. Fuoco | 3rd | Republican |
| Floyd Linton | 4th | Democrat |
| Clifford Crafts | 7th | Republican |
| John C. Wehrenberg | 8th | Republican |
| Joseph Caputo | 9th | Republican |

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