

Marissa's Ordeal

You have probably read the heart-breaking accounts of little Marissa Stamatis. Marissa is a Down's syndrome child whose parents gave her up at birth because of her condition, a condition they feared would have a drastic effect upon their lifestyle. Tim and Lisa Stamatis of Coram took Marissa into their hearts and lives. They deliberately set out to adopt a handicapped child because they knew that such children are often the last to be chosen.

Several months after the adoption papers had been signed, however, the natural parents changed their minds. But Tim and Lisa Stamatis fought for the child they had come to love so dearly. They won the first court battle, lost the second on a technicality and just recently won the third. That, they hoped, would be the end of the struggle. That the ordeal would be over. But the natural parents are now taking their fight to the United States Supreme Court.

Tim and Lisa Stamatis adopted Marissa out of love. They knew there would be many problems because of her condition, but they were ready to face those problems together, as a family. The couple adopted another Down's syndrome child, a small brother for Marissa. The two have become "like peanut butter and jelly," inseparable. This loving couple have put off having children of their own in order to give a special loving environment to these special children.

The court battles focus on the legal rights of the natural parents. But what of the rights of the child? That child has come to know and love Tim and Lisa as the only parents she has known, parents who have been there when needed, with the love that makes her life meaningful. Is there any right more important than that

of the child, and what is best for that child? In our view there is only one just decision that can be made in this case, a decision that would keep the Stamatis family intact.

Before that can happen, however, additional court battles must be fought because the natural parents choose to continue their efforts to regain the child they didn't want. This battle has not only been emotionally draining for the Stamatis family, but it has been a serious financial drain as well. In order to keep fighting, they have put their house up for sale, the home the children have been raised in and have come to love. It's a shame the courts keep allowing appeals that have drained this caring couple so severely, but that is the system.

Tim Stamatis works as a waiter. His resources are limited. The natural parents on the other hand are professionals, one a lawyer the other a teacher. The financial cards are stacked against Tim and Lisa and because of that this could be a prime example of justice by checkbook.

It doesn't have to be that way. You can help. Friends of the Stamatis have established a support fund to raise the necessary money to continue their battle through the courts. If you would like to help Tim and Lisa Stamatis in their fight to keep Marissa, contributions would be gratefully accepted. They can be sent to "For the Love of Marissa," P.O. Box 793, Coram, N.Y., 11727.

Your contributions would help Tim and Lisa know they are not alone, that the love this special couple offers to this very special child is shared by all of us. You can help make this holiday season very meaningful for Marissa by helping her to stay with the parents who love her.

And why not?

The Man Who Cried Wolf

William Catacosinos appeared at a state legislative hearing last week and cried wolf. The hearing was called to investigate the public takeover of LILCO.

Catacosinos, by inference, called the Public Power proposition a hoax. He reminded us of a used car salesman on a run-down lot trying to sell an Edsel with 180,000 miles as a car driven by a little old lady to church on Sundays only. He tried to paint a picture of superb LILCO management, a state of the art electrical system that had one of the best reputations for reliability. He claimed that LILCO was the best performer of seven major utilities in New York for service restoration and interruption durations. Obviously, he was using figures before "Gloria" and made no attempt to counter the statements by the outside utilities who came in to put Long Island back together again. Employees of those outside utilities said that the system was in the worst repair of any system they had ever seen.

Catacosinos placed a value on the company of approximately three times higher than we have ever heard anyone else suggest. He claims that the price of the stock is deflated because of the actions of the local and state governments, and refuses to accept the rightful blame that belongs to the management of LILCO.

The question of evacuation was raised originally in the construction permit hearings back in the 1970's. The management of LILCO steadfastly maintained at that time the question of evacuation should not be addressed until after the plant was built. The Atomic Energy Commission agreed and, as a result, we are now addressing the question. The

answer is now, and would have been then, there can be no safe evacuation of Shoreham. People will die if we attempt it and that's a fact.

We believe the company knew this was the case prior to the start of construction but felt that if they built the plant, spent the money, they could force the licensing of the plant regardless of whether peoples' lives could be protected. The management of LILCO made this decision based solely on greed, with a reckless disregard for the health and welfare of Long Island residents. They gambled, they lost and because of this it's time for them to move out.

Let the people buy the utility by acquiring the majority of the stock or the fair market value of the assets. Public power has been a winner throughout the nation. A recently released report indicates that rates charged by public power utilities average 40% under those charged by private, profit making utilities. We are not suggesting that Long Island ratepayers would save 40%, but early research indicates savings of 20% to 25%.

There is no question that the public would be better served by directors elected by the people whose responsibility would be responsive to the public's needs, representative of their wishes to run the utility efficiently, effectively and reliably.

The current directors of LILCO are elected by the stockholders of the company. Their only responsibility is to increase profits and the worth of the stock, and they have no meaningful restrictions on how they do it.

We doubt we would buy a used car from Bill Catacosinos and you shouldn't buy his rhetoric either. Good bye LILCO, Hello Public Power!

And why not?

Dump The "Dom"

Dominic Baranellos, affectionately known as Dom, is a likeable--some even say a loveable--leader of the Suffolk County Democratic organization. In this position for almost three decades, Dom can be enthusiastic, flamboyant and a tremendous public speaker. But a question has come to the fore: has Dom become too complacent? Has he become too content to settle for a small piece of the patronage pie at the expense of winning elections?

Such rumors have been heard for some time now, rumors that indicate over the years a deal has been forged that gives the Democrats a 30 per cent split of certain patronage positions even when they are out of power. The danger of this arrangement is that the splitting of the spoils, win or lose, tends to diminish the incentive a political organization has for working hard to win elections.

Some examples of what could have been were keenly recorded during the recent elections. Suffolk Democrats had a unique opportunity to make some tremendous gains in the county legislature. They lost a per-

fect opportunity, however, to break the Republican grip on that legislative body by failing to elect two Democrats who had perfect opportunities, but little help from the Democratic organization. Both Barbara King and Sally Ahearn could have added to their vote totals, and possibly scored upsets, had they had the Ratepayers Against LILCO line other Democratic candidates enjoyed. But both lost those lines because of technicalities. Some concerted effort by the organization in overcoming such problems, and in funding these two campaigns, could have made the difference. Because this didn't happen, the Republicans control the legislature 10 to 8.

The campaigns for district attorney and sheriff are other prime examples of where the lack of organizational strength and help spelled the difference between victory and defeat. The Democratic candidates were well-qualified in both contests, and ran good, close races. But the strength and funding of the GOP organization, contrasted by a weak Democratic organization,

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"Dump The "Dom" . . .

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was too much to overcome.

There is but one person responsible for the strength of the organization, both in the enthusiasm of its workers and size of its treasury to run the campaigns: that is the leader. Dominic Baranello. Suffolk County desperately needs a viable two party system of government. But we will never achieve that except by luck or a fluke while Baranello remains the leader. He has not, in our view, provided the leadership that is necessary to promote party growth. Nor the leadership that can reach out to the rank and file, soliciting their involvement; a dynamic fundraiser who, if he can't get the big bucks as the Republicans do, can go to the masses for the dollars, the tens and the twenties.

Dominic has given almost three decades of his time, his efforts and his energies. He has been town leader, county leader and even state leader. He has earned distinction for himself, but the county organization has remained weak despite his per-

sonal achievements. It is time to retire. It would make a lot of sense, and would be in the best interests of the members of the Democratic Party and the residents of Suffolk County, if Dom would resign gracefully. Now. Not six months from now.

1986 will be a Democratic primary year. A reorganization accomplished now could lead to a revitalization of active, working committeemen by Primary Day. A new Democratic leader—one who could work with all factions of the party rather than extremists from the left or the right—could make the difference to bring a healthy two party system to Suffolk County, to eliminate the one-party stranglehold that currently exists.

The Democratic Party should be reorganized now so that we never again have to see good and qualified candidates become losers because the organization did not provide the workers or the money needed to be winners.

And why not?



CHILD RESTRAINT PROGRAM--Suffolk County's new child restraint loaner program began recently. The program, designed for low income parents who can't afford to buy car seats, provides child car seats on a temporary loan basis for a minimal service charge. Funded by the New York State Health Department, the program is run out of the Brentwood Health Center. Shown receiving the first of 89 car seats that will be available from the program is Frances Rivera, left, and her daughter, Jasmine. Making the presentation on behalf of Suffolk County are County Executive Peter F. Cohalan and Legislator Philip Nolan, right. (Full 326-T)

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The Shoreham Conspiracy Bureaucratic scheme to get Shoreham

By Lou Grasso

The ongoing saga of Shoreham gives the appearance of a struggle between a county and its people and an investor-owned utility seeking to begin operation of a controversial nuclear power plant. In reality, however, the story is one of bureaucratic power versus the will of the people. Before it is over, with growing anger fed by an increasing frustration level, this battle could well border on the edge of open rebellion.

Now in the final throes, the Shoreham battle is focused on the holding of a test of an evacuation plan proposed by LILCO, a plan that would utilize LILCO employees to direct traffic and perform other evacuation duties. Both New York State and Suffolk County have argued, and a Supreme Court decision has agreed, that the utility does not have the legal authority to usurp and take unto itself police powers. But the Nuclear Regulatory Agency, (NRC), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Energy (DOE) have conspired for many months in attempting to find a way to overcome the legal objections to bring about a test of LILCO's plan. Also involved, according to DOE memos, is the White House Office of the Science Advisor.

What is there about Shoreham that makes it so important that federal agencies would be involved in a conspiracy to force its licensing? Actually, Shoreham is a symbol, little else. A DOE memo which, in great detail, explores the Shoreham controversy, points out the problem as follows:

"Commercial nuclear generating plants are being 'held hostage' by the refusal of state or local government to participate in emergency planning, and by regulatory conflicts between the FEMA and NRC. Emergency planning for defense facilities has so far been a less visible problem, but it may quickly become quite visible unless a satisfactory resolution can be found for the related problems of commercial emergency planning."

Secretary of Energy John S. Herrington, in his first speech after his appointment, declared that Shoreham must open. In a letter to FEMA Director Louis O. Giuffrida in March of this year, he urged that "our agencies should continue to work together in a spirit of cooperation and shared objects regarding the testing of the Shoreham Emergency Plan." He added: "This matter is of vital importance if we are to avoid similar problems on other nuclear plants nearing completion." He noted the DOE would continue to support the testing of the Shoreham plan as soon as possible.

That test—a partial, paper test of LILCO's ability to meet an evacuation crisis—is soon to be held. A recent agreement

Point of View

between FEMA and the NRC calls for the holding of the test that will focus on those portions of the LILCO plan that are "feasible" and "legal." People will not be moved. Computer models will simulate traffic flow. Buses may, or then again may not, ride through a route in a simulation of returning students to their homes from school. But there will be no simulation of what would happen if no one is home when the child gets there, nor of moving patients from nursing homes or hospitals:

There are many who claim that such a test would be meaningless. Since local governmental officials will not participate, FEMA will utilize outsiders to sit in and simulate the actions of the missing officials.

In normal test scenarios, FEMA, upon completion of the paper tests, makes note of shortcomings, recommendations for approval, and then issues a "finding," or recommendation. But, according to Samuel Speck, associate director of FEMA, the absence of local officials in the Shoreham test will prevent FEMA from being able to develop a finding as to the success of the exercise.

Why, then, hold a test that will be only partial in nature and will not produce an accurate finding as to the feasibility of the evacuation plan? The following words, found in a DOE memo written back in May of 1984, might hold the answer:

"IF FEMA WERE TO DEVELOP AND TEST SUCH A PLAN, THERE IS A HIGH PROBABILITY THAT IT WOULD BE A SUFFICIENT BASIS FOR LICENSING SHOREHAM."

That memo encouraged FEMA to develop and test the plan, indicating "there is a good likelihood that such actions would provide a basis for resolving this federal licensing barrier to operation of the Shoreham plant."

The conspiracy between the DOE, NRC and FEMA, with a bit of help from the White House and certain congressional figures, is not played out in the open. It takes place in the closed rooms, in conversations, in letters, all of which often escape attention. With luck, or close scrutiny by those interested and involved in fighting for that which is right for the people, these private documents sometimes surface. And when they do, they shed light on the integrity of government, and the partnership of bureaucracy and big business in working against the will and best interests of the public.

Congressman William Carney, who has become a staunch advocate of holding a test of LILCO's emergency plan—something LILCO has been pushing for some time and something they desperately need in order to put Shoreham on line—has been asking this question over and over again of those who oppose such a test: "What are you so afraid of in this test? Let's find out if it is indeed true that Long Island cannot be evacuated under any circumstances. This test may very well prove that point, and the Shoreham issue will be ended once for all."

Here's an answer for Carney: The concern is that the establishment—those federal agencies and congressmen who are working arm in arm with LILCO in a push to put Shoreham on line—will use the results of even a partial test as a sufficient basis for licensing Shoreham. The May 1984 DOE memo says it clearly: "If FEMA were to develop and test such a plan, there is a high probability that it would be a sufficient basis for licensing Shoreham." That sets the stage for what will happen after the partial test. Talking about that test, how in the world can you suggest this partial test would reveal any fatal flaw. The test will cover that part of LILCO's plan which can "feasibly" and "legally" be tested according to FEMA. Without moving people, how can you honestly determine the shortcomings of a mass evacuation? And what kind of a test will it be when LILCO will be developing the test scenario? They will know the answers before they face the test. They will be able to control what will be tested. Are they likely to test those parts of the plan that they cannot achieve?

The truth is a full, realistic test does not fit into the plans of those involved in the Shoreham conspiracy. A test, any test which can be used as a "sufficient basis" for licensing Shoreham is all that is really wanted by the pro-Shoreham conspirators. Anything more than that—any real test—would only be cluttering the issue with facts and truth.

In a recent letter to Assemblyman John Behan, Carney declared: "...the conduct of a test does not mean that Shoreham will be licensed. The NRC must still decide on this issue, and the Commission's Licensing Board and Appeals Board have ruled that a license cannot be granted unless state or local authorities participate in evacuation planning. It is my belief that the full commission will vote in the same way, as this is the only responsible position to take in the unique situation we now face."

Our response: If indeed you believe the NRC will rule, as did the Licensing and Appeals boards, that a license cannot be granted unless state or local authorities participate, because

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So Many In Need

"The Group" has been overwhelmed this year with information about families who will not have a Christmas. "The Group" is an informal gathering of people who have banded together to try and provide Christmas for families, who, because of no fault of their own, will not have a visit from Santa.

The people "The Group" tries to help are those who normally are considered hard working, productive families who have met with adversity, such as illness or accidents which have stripped the family of the ability to give their children a meaningful Christmas.

The families we help never know our names nor do most members of the group know who they are helping. Everything is done anonymously. There are no tax advantages for contributions. Contributions are given from the heart.

"The Group" assembles the names of the families in need. We attempt to buy individual gifts of clothing, toys and games. Many of our area merchants contribute merchandise or other items at cost, so we can stretch our funds to the

maximum. In some instances food or fuel are supplied to fill a need. The people who make this happen come from all walks of life. They are people who thank God for their well being and want to help those who genuinely need help. They are the people that you do not find on welfare roles or who are receiving aid from the various agencies or other formal organizations.

This year we have more families than we probably will be able to help. We also know we will learn about others who are worthy of consideration. We need more members in "The Group." If you would like to join us, you may do so by sending a contribution. You will not receive a membership card, as we are not a formal organization, but you will know in your heart that you have put out your hand to help someone else in need, and that some children genuinely believe that there is a Santa Claus.

You may send your contribution to "The Group" c/o Suffolk Life Newspapers, P.O. Box 167, New York 11901.

And why not?

A Vote For Reason

A battle is underway to decide the next presiding officer for the Suffolk County Legislature. Legislator Gregory Blass has announced his desire to replace the incumbent presiding officer, Lou Howard, who has who has served for three terms and is seeking his fourth. It's not only time for a change, it is vitally necessary to remove Lou Howard from this position in order to establish some sanity to county government, and put that government back in the hands of the people rather than the political leaders.

Lou Howard is out of touch with reality on the most important issue that faces this county: the Shoreham nuclear power plant. He is not only pro-Shoreham, he is solidly pro-LILCO. He tries to deny that now, and even expresses some interest in the possibility of public

power, but those positions are superficial, designed only, in our view, as a ploy to overcome opposition to his reelection to the legislature's top position.

Lou Howard has not been a leader of the Legislature, he has been a virtual dictator. He made changes in the rules which the political leader of his party then hard-nosed other Republican legislators to accept, rule changes that were not designed to enhance the democratic process but to insure Howard's powers. And he has used that power in every possible way to foster his goal of having Shoreham go on line.

Howard has been, since day one of the Shoreham controversy, a staunch ally of LILCO. Whatever LILCO wants is what Howard has been willing to give. He tried to push an evacuation plan, insisting evacu-

ation is possible. He has been the only one of the 18 legislators to make that claim. If he knows better he is perpetuating a fraud upon the people. If he doesn't, he should not even be a legislator, much less the presiding officer.

He went so far once in recent years to set up special panel, known as the Howard panel, to come up with financial figures that would justify opening Shoreham. Guess who was initially on that panel? A vice president of LILCO. When people snickered at such a a move, the vice president stepped down from his panel chair, but continued to sit in the front row so he could continue to serve as an advisor. It shouldn't come as much of a surprise that the panel's report was exceedingly favorable to LILCO and Shoreham.

Howard took the presiding officer's office and turned it into a virtual kingdom. While legislators have but one aide, Howard had from time to time as many as 14. The budget for his office has skyrocketed. Howard's egotistical and politically-motivated rule has been designed for self-gratification rather than service to the public.

Greg Blass is a political maverick who has not been kindly looked upon by the political leaders. From time to time political leaders set out to punish him by denying him, through pressure upon Republican legislators, resolutions which would benefit Blass constituents. Although Blass did a fine job as the chairman of the legislature's Health Committee, Howard replaced him in that role, giving the chairmanship, instead, to a newly-elected, inexperienced legislator. That was Blass' reward for doing what he felt was right for the public rather than meeting the desires of the political leadership.

In our view, the election of Blass as presiding officer would go a long way toward making the county legislature more responsible to the will of the people. On the one issue of Shoreham alone, Blass has been in the forefront of the battle against the controversial plant. With some 70 percent of the county's residents opposed as well, Blass as presiding officer would be a reflection and leader of the public's views. Howard, on the other hand, has done all he can to thwart the wishes of the people. Election of Blass would enhance the county's opposition to the plant, giving a clear message to federal agencies that the people of thos county will not be sacrificed for financial greed.

Blass will not face an easy battle, however. Political pressures will build to a new height as the day of reckoning nears. Legislators, who are the ones who will cast the important votes in this matter, will face overwhelming pressure from the political leaders who want Howard to continue in the role. It will take political courage to withstand this

pressure, and we will see what our legislators are made of by the way they handle themselves in this matter.

Blass appears to have the solid support of the eight Democratic legislators. Blass needs ten votes for election. With eight coming from the Democrats, and his own, he needed one Republican with courage to stand up and be counted. Legislator Don Allgrove is that man. At a recent press conference he announced his support of Blass. We applaud his political courage. While we have not always been supportive of Allgrove, we are surprised and impressed that he is willing to evoke the political anger of the party leadership. That leadership has been known to play rough. And dirty.

It may have already started. Shortly after Allgrove announced his support for Blass, County Attorney Martin Ashare took it upon himself to send an affidavit to a Supreme Court judge declaring a county law requiring seat belts in school busses is unconstitutional. Allgrove was the prime sponsor of that law. It was approved by the legislature and signed into law by the county executive. If Ashare was to declare it unconstitutional, why didn't he do so before it was approved and signed into law? Why now? After Allgrove took his stand for Blass? Why wasn't the legislature notified of his actions officially, rather than read about it in a newspaper article? Has the political retribution begun?

We hope Allgrove can withstand the pressure, and continue to stand for what is right rather than bow to the dictates of the political bosses. It would be nice to see some other Republicans stand up and be counted in the choosing of a legislative leader who reflects the will of the people, now, when it really counts. We hope the Democrats stand firm against pressure from their own political leader who, repeated reports insist, would be willing to trade off the presiding officer's position in return for patronage jobs.

Unfortunately, the ultimate decision will come from the legislators, not from the people. But the people can become involved. They can contact their own legislator and firmly declare we need a legislative leader who represents the public's point of view, not that of LILCO. That Lou Howard has shown himself to be out of touch with the public, arrogantly standing firm as an ally of LILCO at the expense of the people. That Lou Howard's reelection would not be in the public's best interest.

The public must get involved. The Shoreham battle is in its last stages, but unless we speak our mind, that plant is going to be shoved down our throats. Recent action by federal agencies spells that out mighty clear. It's time to speak out. The place to start is the replacement of LILCO Howard with Greg Blass.

And why not?

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Happy New Year

A new year looms on the horizon, a year of hope, of challenge, of important events. It will replace a year that has been good for most Long Islanders in terms of a stronger economy and employment opportunities.

The most important challenge of the new year will, hopefully, be the final solution to the Shoreham crisis. Should the federal bureaucracy continue its efforts to ignore the welfare of the public in favor of the recklessness of the nuclear industry, the matter will go to the courts where the final decisions will be made. Hopefully, justice will prevail, and we can go back to being a government of the people, by the people, for the people.

The new year will bring challenges concerning clean water, garbage disposal, accelerated growth, and solutions must be sought. 1986 could be the year we progress toward these solutions.

Our prayers for the new year include a needed answer to the dreadful impact of cancer, a medical breakthrough, to end the suffering. And medical solutions to other diseases.

We hope, too, that all of you enjoy a prosperous new year full of love, health and dreams come true.

Enjoy the holiday season. Safely. Please, enjoy the festivities, but don't drink and drive. Don't become a statistic. You are important. To your loved ones. To us. Please treat yourself accordingly and join with us as we tackle the challenges that lie ahead. Together we can do it.

And why not?

Hardly A Martyr

Outgoing Presiding Officer Lou Howard called a press conference this past week to announce that he was a martyr, reading to the gathered reporters a definition of "martyr" from the dictionary. He even kept a straight face while doing so.

Howard, who has been a staunch LILCO-Shoreham supporter, said that if he had changed his mind about Shoreham, he would have continued as presiding officer of the legislature. We doubt it. Howard did not read far enough into the dictionary. He should have turned to the "r's" and looked up the word "representative." According to Webster II, "representative" is defined as "1. one that exemplifies or typifies others of the same class. 2. a delegate or agent for another. 3. a member of a legislative body selected by popular vote." It is because he was elected as a representative but failed to understand what a representative is that he no longer will be presiding over the legislature. He felt he could impose his will on all others, even

though his view on Shoreham was contrary to that of over 75% of the people of Suffolk County.

The one lesson that must be learned by all politicians is that they are, first, a representative of the popular majority of their constituents. They are elected to follow the will and the views of their constituents, not decide on their own what is best for the people.

We are looking forward to Gregory Blass as the new presiding officer, and Don Allgrove as the number two man. Blass is a maverick who understands the need for the expression of all viewpoints but, also, the responsibility of following the will of the people:

We would like to congratulate Allgrove on backing Blass and having the fortitude to stand up to leaders. Allgrove has shown a new side of himself that is commendable.

We look forward to new legislative action that puts the people first and the political leaders and decisions last.

And why not?

Would It Make Any Difference

Last Friday, Newsday published an editorial asking, "Is Public Power Right for Long Island." The answer to that question should be, "Would it make any difference to Newsday if it was?"

Newsday, in the editorial, misrepresented and slanted facts and drew erroneous conclusions not based in reality, in an attempt to build a case against public power.

The Steering Committee for a Long Island Power Authority has proposed either a stock takeover or an asset assumption, whichever is cheaper. According to research done for this steering committee, there is precedent and a mechanism for stock takeover, the preferred method of acquisition. This also most likely would be the least costly, estimated to be in the \$4 to \$5 billion dollar range, not the \$16 billion range that Newsday is imagining.

Newsday goes on to try and make a case for LILCO by insinuating that the profits paid to shareholders is of no consequence, and that these monies would be paid, instead to bond holders. They fail to give the readers the fact that LILCO already has bond and note holders. They allude to the fact that if LILCO is allowed to borrow tax free, these costs of borrowing could be reduced as it would be under a public power authority.

In other words, to bail out LILCO we, the government, should allow a profit-making corporation the same benefits governments have in issuing tax free bonds.

The one valid point they make is the mess that has been made on Long

Island because of some authorities, notably the Southwest Sewer District and the M.T.A. They fail to mention the successes, the Suffolk County Water Authority, the Greenport and the Rockville Centre publicly-owned electrical companies. The real failure of this editorial is the failure of Newsday to look at the peoples' interest.

Newsday virtually has a monopoly here on Long Island, yet they fail to use this position of power to protect the interests of the citizens. Would it not make sense for Newsday to explore all the ramifications of public power before jumping to the defense of the Long Island Lighting Company?

Public power, nation-wide, saves the ratepayers an average of 40% on their electrical bills. LILCO's rates are reported to be the second highest in the nation. They are projected to double in the future, and will be the cause of the economic destruction of the region.

Many of us today who are supporting public power do so reluctantly, because we dislike big government. But we can see no logical alternative to solving the LILCO - Shoreham problem. There isn't one of us on the steering committee who does not have an open mind. We are seeking facts, and those that we have obtained thus far clearly indicate that public power is possible, and will benefit the ratepayers and the citizens of Long Island. An alternative must be found to LILCO. Public power could be a viable alternative.

And why not?

Letters to the Editor

'So neatly gutted'

Dear Mr. Willmott:

Last week we read your newspaper announcement that a fair and impartial discussion scheduled by the League of Women Voters would feature two LILCO representatives. They would address the subject of Southold Town's acquiring LILCO's distribution system. The article added that there would be a presentation and a question and answer period. However, no questions concerning Shoreham or Hurricane Gloria would be entertained by the league spokeswoman who was running the meeting.

I have never seen a discussion so neatly gutted of its fundamental issues. By analogy, this is like a discussion of the drug problem which prohibits the mention of heroin.

Shoreham is at the very heart of the matter. The movement for a publicly owned utility emerged when we were appalled by the gigan-

tic cost overruns of Shoreham. Six and one half billion dollars - the cost of Shoreham - when dumped into the rate base, will triple the cost of electricity in Southold. This apprehension gave rise to our founding SEACOM. Shoreham was thus the origin of the movement to disconnect from LILCO.

As to Hurricane Gloria, for the first time an actual comparison could be made between the performance of LILCO and of Greenport Electric under emergency conditions. Greenport was totally back on line in just two hours. LILCO took fifteen days, still charging twice as much for its power.

So let us not have talk of an impartial and fair presentation when the guts of the discussion are eviscerated in advance by the moderator. Yours truly, James Bitses Southold

'Up-coming blood drive'

Dear Sirs:

I am writing to inform you of an up-coming blood drive sponsored by the Long Island Blood Services and Scout Troop 299. The blood drive will be on January 4, 1986 during the hours of 10 am to 3 pm. It will be at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 372 Terryville Road, Port Jefferson Station,

N.Y. Anyone wishing to donate blood should contact Tom Greene (744-0062) for an appointment. I am hoping you will help me with my Eagle Scout Project by notifying the community through your newspaper. Sincerely yours, Life Scout Tom Greene

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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 name of plume.

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

ERRORS - Responsibility for errors in advertisements is limited to the value of the space occupied by the error.

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