Lust For Power

Brookhaven Town Supervisor Henrietta Acampora is a very powerful person. If you don't believe that statement, just ask her. She'll tell you just how powerful she is.

She did just that in a recent interview with a North Shore newspaper. "They have to remember, I'm the supervisor of a suburban town and I am very powerful. Nobody is going to take my power away or else I might as well hang up my hat."

Acampora intends to use that power to oust Brookhaven Town Republican Chairman Walter Hazlitt. She is not happy with Hazlitt's leadership. In her interview, she also expressed critical comments about the leadership abilities of the late Jess Marchese, who unfortunately is not here to defend his name against her criticism. Acampora claims credit for moving Marchese out of the leadership post. "I cut him off and he lasted two months," she bragged.

She intends to do the same with Hazlitt. She will not communicate with him and will not give his people patronage jobs. What she intends to do is utilize taxpayer dollars to force out a leader she doesn't like. She seems to forget there are 520 Republican committeepersons in the town organization. If there is to be a change of leadership in the town, that's where the change should come from, not from an elected official seeking to flex her political power muscles.

Acampora is also attempting to use her "power" in the current effort to replace County Republican Chairman Mike Blake. Former Town Republican Leader Tom Neppel, a member of the Republican old guard, is seeking the post, and Acampora has voiced strong support for Neppel in conversations with political leaders elsewhere. The scenario we hear is that the plan is to have Neppel assume county leadership and then use the influence of that position to help Acampora dump Hazlitt. Acampora has expressed some interest in the town leadership position herself, declaring she would make a good compromise candidate. If that should not materialize, she supports town Councilman Anthony LoSquadro, a staunch Acampora ally, for the position.

The dual role of an elected official also serving as a political leader is wrong. It puts the political party right smack into the governmental arena, and lends itself to favoritism for big party contributors even more than what happens now. We already have that problem in one town, Huntington, where Suffolk County Clerk Julietta Kinsella also serves as town Republican leader. The impact of that dual role can be readily seen in the growing number of political appointments in her own office. Although Kinsella vowed in a Suffolk Life interview during her last campaign that she would move to step down from the political position soon, she is apparently reluctant to do so and continues in both roles.

Acampora and others pushing for Neppel to take over the county reins have apparently learned nothing from the events of last November's elections. They don't seem to realize that the Democrats did not single-handedly batter the Republican party. Republican voters did, because they are just plain tired of the lust for power of many of the Republican hierarchy. They're tired of the political games played with taxpayer dollars. One need only take a look at the list of high paying political jobs held by friends and relatives of those in power to understand why political power is so important to those in control. They use it and abuse it, for self benefit. And the people, including many in the Republican ranks, have had enough.

Suffolk Life has long advocated the need for a strong two party system here in our county. The people are not benefited when one party remains dominant over the other. Arrogance is the result. The kind of arrogance displayed in Acampora's remarks. Acampora seems to forget whatever power she has was given to her by the people with their votes. It was given to her to accomplish what is best for the town and its residents. Not for self political benefit. The money for jobs, money that comes out of the pockets of the taxpayers, is not hers to use for political games, to force things her way, and it shouldn't be used to repay political favors. If the taxpayers are paying the bill, they should get the best value for their money that they can.

Hopefully the rank and file Republicans in both the county and Brookhaven Town will take action to ensure they have a say in the future of the party in both areas. Hopefully they will deliver the message that the old guard has had its time and should remain a thing of the past, and that democratic action, not dictatorial muscle, will decide who leads and who doesn't. The future of a strong two-party system in Suffolk County depends on it.

And why not?

High School Censorship

There has been an uproar over the recent Supreme Court decision ruling that schools which publish newspapers have a right to censor the content of those publications, the editorial products of high school editors and reporters. Some journalists have charged that this is a violation of the first amendment rights of the students.

On the surface, it might appear to be, but it isn't. We must remember that the school districts are providing the funds and the mechanisms for the publication of the newspaper. In reality, it is the school district that is the publisher. As the publisher, school officials have a right to determine the content of their publication. The students must live within these confines as long as they are using the school facilities and the school resources to print and distribute the publication.

The students are free to express any opinion they want in their own publication, which they fund and publish with their own funds rather than taxpayer dollars.

We have judged in a number of high school journalism award contests. We have seen some student publications that have tackled highly controversial and provocative subjects. These papers, however, were published under the guidance of qualified staff and the subjects were handled appropriately. We have also seen instances in which students who were given the liberty of publishing papers with liberal guidelines go beyond the norm of decency, lose their editorship and then cry foul.

The restrictions that the Supreme Court placed on high school students, in reality, are nothing more than an affirmation of the professional world of journalism. Reporters and editors, news people and anchor people in the commercial world, must operate within the confines, principles and beliefs of the news organization they work for. No paper that we know of, certainly none worth its reputation, allows its news or editorial staff to publish anything they feel like. Certain guidelines are set, in reputable publications based upon honesty, fairness, objectivity and balance. The tone and direction is set by the publisher and this is followed.

High school students should have no more privileges than their adult peers. No one is stopping these students from expressing their viewpoint, as long as good taste prevails. But if someone else is providing the funds for the dissemination of the news, those who supply those funds have the right to set the guidelines.

And why not?

Amateurs And Their Plan

A former regional director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) lost his job in 1986 because he had the courage to tell the truth. Frank Petrone, who is now an assistant Suffolk County executive involved with the county's Shoreham fight, said the LILCO evacuation plan could not guarantee the safety of the public. He was right. And now there is official agreement on thatimportant point from the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB)

Continued next page

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Amateurs And Their Plan . . .

Cont. from previous page

which has been involved in hearings on the results of LILCO's February 13, 1986 drill.

The ASLB, in a decision dated February 1, 1988, almost two years after the drill, ruled that the LILCO evacuation plan contains "certain fundamental flaws which, while they remain uncorrected, bar the issuance of a full power, full term operating license for the Shoreham Nuclear Power Station." That decision also notes that "it may be difficult for LILCO to cure this fundamental flaw because of the training and experience of the personnel used to implement the plan. As emergency workers, LILCO personnel are amateurs; this fact may be the root cause of the communications problems...it is questionable whether utility personnel can ever achieve the level of performance that professional emergency workers, such as the police, display ...Consequently the Lero approach is generally and funamentally unsatisfactory, and it may be inherently so."

Petrone knew that two years ago, and so did the people of Long Island. The plan is amateurish, and the players are amateurs, even though the problem could be very deadly. The people of Long Island deserve better, they deserve the best possible chance of escape in the event of an accident at Shoreham. Lives should not be put in the hands of amateurs.

Unfortunately, even though the ASLB is a Nuclear Regulatory Commission panel, their findings could be overruled by the NRC commissioners who have already shown they care little about public safety. They have changed the rules of the game so that they can simply "assume" local governments and emergency workers will participate in the event of an accident. And we have no doubts that the NRC commissioners, and others on the Washington level, will continue to put aside public safety to protect the future of the nuclear industry.

Yes, Petrone was right all along, as were all the others who have condemned LILCO's actions in trying to have approved a plan that simply cannot work. A court decision has already said LILCO has no authority to take over police powers, and now the ASLB reveals the LILCO plan contains fundamental flaws, and will not ensure the safety of the public.

LILCO has spent thousands upon thousands of dollars in efforts to convince the people of Long Island that "We care." The key question is: About what? Their continuing efforts to push down the throats of Long Island residents an amateurish plan run by amateurs shows they care more about themselves than they do about the future health of the people of Long Island.

If LILCO really wants to convince the people that they care, they should immediately stop wasting dollars in pushing for an unsafe plan, and a nuclear plant that threatens the future of the area and its people. Meanwhile, the directors of the Long Island Power Authority, which has been stalling in making a decision on a LILCO takeover, should stop dragging its feet and move forward towards a decision. Let's end this nonsense once and for all!

And why not?

Letters to the Editor

"My goal is to follow his footsteps"

Dear Dave:

I read with great interest your editorial "Cost Cutting Starts Here" (January 27, 1988), concerning my recent visit to Suffolk Life. As we agreed, former Congressman Otis Pike provided extraordinary constituent service. It is my goal to follow in his footsteps in serving the people of the First Congressional District.

However, even for Otis, providing that excellent level of service was not always an easy task. According to records kept by the Clerk of the House of Representatives, Otis Pike consistently maintained 15 full time staff members during his last three years in office (1976-1978). This was confirmed by his former office manager.

We all agree that Otis Pike's quality of constituent service was unparalleled. I hope that, someday, I can approach such a level of distinguished service. However, please recognize that the volume of mail to members of Congress has been steadily increasing. As an illustration of this point, I would like to cite a recent report by the Office of the Postmaster in Congress that charts the volume of incoming mail sent to Congress between 1972 and the present. In 1972, approximately 14.6 million pieces of mail were sent to members of Congress. By 1978, Otis Pike's last year in Congress, that figure had reached 100 million pieces. Robert Rota, the Postmaster of the House, informs my office that the 1987 figure was over 180 million pieces. Clearly, the volume of constituent requests has increased dramatically, and my 18 full time staff people are running ragged trying to keep up with the demand.

Let me illustrate how this increasing demand is reflected in the operation of my own office: Last year we solved 1,689 individual cases which involved constituents who had conflicts with various departments of the Federal government. We responded to over 26,000 written inquiries on a broad range of public issues. Congress introduced almost 5,000 bills last year, many of which were controversial in nature. My staff thoroughly researches every important bill on which I am called to vote in Congress, so that I can effectively make the hard legislative choices that would be good for both my own constituency and the country.

While I appreciate your suggestion that cost cutting should start with my office budget, I believe that the best interests of the people of the First Congressional District are best served by my maintaining sufficient staff to do the job my constituents deserve.

Regarding your second concern...defense spending: please understand that I am convinced that working to transfer $300 million of funds from the cancelled T-46 program to Grumman, for the A-6, EA-6B, F-14D and E-2C programs, is absolutely in the best interests of our national defense. In human terms, it means jobs that otherwise would have been lost from Long Island's economy. I come by this opinion not only as a member of the House Armed Services Committee, but as the only member of that committee with technical experience, by virtue of a 25-year professional background in aerospace electrical engineering.

I am working hard in Congress, and particularly on the Armed Services Committee, to make the difficult decisions about cutting billions of dollars in government expenditures. I feel that reducing my staff would impair my ability to make informed judgements about government fiscal policy.

I enjoyed meeting with you and your staff, and appreciate having had the opportunity for an exchange of ideas.

Sincerely,
George J. Hochbrueckner
Member of Congress

Legislation concerning discounting

Dear Editor:

The U.S. Department of Justice, with assistance from some major corporations, is attempting to prevent passage of legislation that is extremely important to consumers throughout New York, who shop at Burlington Coat Factory stores and/or at other discounters like us.

A very serious problem is occurring in the marketplace today. Full-priced retailers, fearful of competition from discounters, are pressuring both manufacturers and suppliers either to discontinue doing business with discounters or to force discounters to raise their prices. This activity harms consumers by raising prices and limiting the range of available goods and services.

Legislation, (S.430), introduced by Senators Metzenbaum (D-OH), Grassley (R-IA), DeConcini (D-AZ), Rudman (R-NH), along with 21 other Democrats and Republicans, will do two things. First, it will protect the consumers' right to shop for lower prices. Second, it will also ensure that, when there is sufficient evidence to show that a manufacturer cut off a discounter for discounting in response to pressure from a full-price retailer, the discounter can get a legitimate case to a jury.

The House version of this legislation was already passed by a unanimous voice vote. You and I cannot stand by and allow the Justice Department and large businesses to interfere with our rights. Price-fixing is both anti-consumer and anti-business.

Protect your rights! Let Senators Moynihan and D'Amato know you want their support for S.430.

Sincerely,
Monroe G. Milstein
Chairman of the Board
Burlington Coat Factory
Burlington, NJ

Supervising judge responds to editorial

Dear Dave:

I have read with interest your editorial printed on page four of your January 20, 1988, issue, concerning your observations while on jury duty.

I am in agreement that many of the things which you describe in your editorial should be changed. For example, the law should be amended to provide that citizens in the East End of the county will be called to serve at Riverhead and the citizens in the west end of the county will be called to serve in Hauppauge. This would require state legislation.

I would also agree that the daily fee paid to jurors, $8.00 per day, is an anachronism. Here again, there should be state legislation providing for uniform juror compensation throughout the state.

At the end of your editorial you have indicated that in your opinion, the present commissioner of jurors, Mr. Thomas Hennessy, has failed to use common sense. You then go on to your expectation that Mr. Hennessy will be replaced by the new county executive, Patrick Halpin.

The county executive has no authority whatsoever regarding the appointment of the county commissioner of jurors. Under the New York State Judiciary Law, the office of commissioner of jurors is established for each county in the state. The law further provides that the commissioner shall take any steps necessary to enforce the laws and rules relating to the drawing, selection, summoning and impanelling jurors. The same law also establishes a County Jury Board composed of the Judges of the Supreme Court residing in the County, the Surrogate Court Judge and the Judges of the County Court. The County Jury Board is directed to meet at least anually and at such additional times as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the law.

Section 504 of the New York State Judiciary Law provides that the County Jury Board, or a majority thereof, shall appoint a Commissioner of Jurors for a term of four years.

Mr. Hennessy was appointed by the Suffolk County Jury Board to a four-year term on March 8, 1984. Simple arithmetic shows that his term will expire on March 8, 1988. At that time, in all probability, the County Jury Board, of which Judge Cromarty is chairman, will meet to reappoint Mr. Hennessy or some other individual.

Under these circumstances, I believe you should contact Judge Cromarty, the chairman, as to your misgivings concerning the continuation of Mr. Hennessy in the office.

Sincerely yours,
Thomas M. Stark
Supervising Judge
Superior Criminal Courts,
Suffolk County

"We feel it appropriate to comment"

Dear Editor:

Having read Judge Cohalan's decision on Town of Huntington vs. Long Island Oyster Farms, we feel it is appropriate for us to comment. First, it is clear that the judge made the only decision he could, given the fact that the town attorney never served the Long Island Oyster Farms with proper notice of termination. This made it impossible for the judge to decide the case on its merits. Frankly, we never thought the town attorney pressed Huntington's case against Long Island Oyster Farms with the enthusiasm it deserved. After all, the town trustees voted 5-0 directing him to issue notice of termination of the Oyster Farms' lease.

It is important to note that this court case did not include any of the affidavits, filed with the town by baymen and others, concerning the Oyster Farms working off their lots, nor did the town attorney do the extensive legal legwork that must be done before taking any case before a court of law.

Everyday we baymen watch as the oyster boats actively pursue shellfish from the public bottom, which by state and town law is to be harvested only by hand. The Long Island Oyster Farms has been ticketed at least three times for using dredges off its lots; it should be 300, but three is a start.

There is a new administration and a new town attorney in Huntington; let them seek the truth and act on it. It is the town trustees' responsibility to insure that the town's resources are not abused. They should renew their commitment to terminate this lease.

One final note to the Long Island Oyster Farms: all the public relations people in the world cannot prevent the truth from shining through.

Respectfully,
Robert M. Wemyss, secretary
Northshore Baymen's Association
Huntington

A Good Beginning

Suffolk County Executive Patrick Halpin's State of the County message, delivered last week, contains a vision of the futurewhich promises an attempt to bring under control the expenditure of taxpayer dollars, while expanding the government's assistance in important areas as well. If accomplished as stated, there's much to look forward to.

Halpin announced the creation of a Blue Ribbon Panel to examine county expenditures in the areas of internal controls, including inventory fleet management, employee travel expense reimbursement, overtime and procurement and contract letting.

An immediate crackdown on the abuse of county vehicles was announced. Halpin declared, in an executive order, that only elected officials, commissioners and deputy county executives will be assigned personal cars. "Everyone else," he added, "will use pool cars or be reimbursed for their travel when appropriate, and I don't consider going back and forth to work a justification for a county car."

And, all county pool cars are to be clearly marked "For Official County Business Only," he said, in an effort to cut down on personal use of county vehicles.

While this action will undoubtedly be greeted with many grumbles on the part of those county employees affected, we soundly applaud it. It is long overdue.

For too long, county employees who have been given the use of county vehicles have considered them a perk of the job. Efforts to pare the fleet of automobiles have brought forth complaints that the action violates the terms of the union contracts.

We have no quarrel with the use of a county car for official purposes. But, like Halpin, we don't believe going back and forth to work is an official use. Nor are the little trips to the store, or to relatives, or any other kind of personal use, and the taxpayers should not have to foot the bill for such abuses.

If you travel east along the Long Island Expressway, you will see the constant flow of county cars heading for county offices. The same holds true in the western areas. And the taxpayers, who have a hard enough time keeping their own heads above water, and pay for their own gas and car repair bills, foot the bill. They shouldn't have to.

Halpin has also taken aim at the use of county credit cards to purchase fuel for the county cars. He reports that employees assigned county cars are also given six major credit cards for the purchase of gasoline. That practice, he said, costs the county approximately 20 cents per gallon more than if they used the county's own gasoline pumps. Halpin said he will demand the return of the credit cards, with the exception of specified individuals, and the refueling will have to be done at county gas pumps.

To be fair, though, Halpin should make it clearly known to the elected officials, commissioners and deputy county executives that his exemption in their cases does not permit them to use county vehicles for personal or political use. Observe the scene at any political gathering, dinner or convention, and you'll see a large number of county vehicles. Why not put county seals on these cars as well? Those who are exempted from the car ban should not be exempted from honest use. Halpin should deliver a strong message to those he has exempted: Abuse it and you'll lose it.

Halpin should also call for the elimination of back and forth from home to office use of cars in the Sheriff's Department as well. That proposal will bring forth a claim that the Sheriff's vehicles offer a swift response in the event of an emergency or a call, but that claim should be supported by a full accounting of the number of such instances.

The abuse of county car use is a problem that has long cried out for a solution. Halpin's executive order is a good beginning toward ending, once and for all, this misuse of taxpayers' dollars. It deserves applause.

And why not?

Law Invites Speed Traps

When the gas crunch hit, federal laws were passed mandating that the maximum speed limit any state could set was 55 m.p.h. After this national law went into effect, people slowed down, but, for the most part, drove in excess of the law on thruways and expressways.

The federal government tried to force states into enforcing the law by threatening to withhold federal funds from states where the law was being regularly ignored.

Just recently it was announced that here in New York State, on six test highways, over 60 percent of the drivers are exceeding the 55 m.p.h. law. Governors and legislators complained to their federal representatives. In response, the federal government passed a law allowing states to up their speed limits to 65 m.p.h. on interstates, expressways and thruways. They threw in a provision that makes as much sense as snow shovels in July. Where the accepted road passes through or is in proximity of cities or hamlets within a certain population, the speed limit must drop to 55 m.p.h.

Recently on an auto trip to Florida, we saw the stupidity of this law. South Carolina has adopted the 65 m.p.h. speed limit, Georgia has not. We went for a stretch of over 50 miles without seeing a 55 m.p.h. speed zone posted in Georgia. But something that Georgia is famous for happened. There, just over a hill, was a speed trap. Most drivers were doing at least 65. They were pulled over and made their contribution to the State of Georgia, because they had broken the law.

In Florida, the situation is even worse. They have adopted the 65 m.p.h. speed limit on the Florida Turnpike, but every ten to fifteen miles, it drops to 55 m.p.h. There appears to be no reason for this as the road is still straight and, to the naked eye, goes through undeveloped land, without houses or shopping centers. But because the population base is within the specified miles of the turnpike, the speed is mandated to drop.

Florida marks its roads well and uses flags to draw the driver's attention to the change in the speed zone. When you are moving with traffic and traffic remains at 65 m.p.h. plus, the temptation is great. The Florida "smokies" know this and around the bend or over the hill they have set up their speed traps. We saw one manned by several units with numerous cars pulled over. The law defies common sense. We believe that the inconsistencies create a safety hazard as confusion will lead to accidents.

It makes sense to drop the speed limits if the interstate or thruways go into or through a highly populated area. When a thruway passes by cities or population belts, the speed limit should be consistent and maintained. If you drive south, watch it. The traps are there and you will be a victim. Be forewarned.

And why not?

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Paying For Influence

A Federal Court jury in Washington last week returned a verdict of guilty against former White House aide Lyn Nofziger on charges of influence peddling. Unfortunately, those charges stemmed from accusations unrelated to Nofziger's lobbying activities on behalf of LILCO. If indeed there has been any prime example of influence peddling, and influence buying, it has been in the matter of the Shoreham nuclear power plant.

Nofziger, who was the chief political strategist for Ronald Reagan for two decades, was hired by LILCO for $20,000 a month as a consultant. According to a LILCO spokesman, he was hired to advise LILCO in mat-

Continued next page

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Paying For Influence. . .

Cont. from previous page

ters relating to political issues, and actions by federal agencies on rules and regulations affecting LILCO. Nofziger was a special White House assistant for political affairs in 1981 and 1982. When he left the White House, he formed his own consulting firm, but, according to Sag Harbor author Karl Grossman in his book "Power Crazy," which details the Shoreham controversy, he continued to serve as an "informal consultant" to Reagan.

Washington attorney Herbert Brown, who represents Suffolk County in its fight against Shoreham, said, in "Power Crazy," "They (LILCO) went to the top--the way if you wanted to buy oil from some prince in a shiekdom, you'd go to the top. You'd go to the top and figure you can pull strings from there. They did that because they became desperate, desperate because of their own blunders."

Facing a state and county government that, refusing to jeopardize the safety of the public, declared they would not participate in evacuation activities because a safe evacuation is impossible, LILCO took their effort to license the plant to Washington. And to Nofziger.

Strange things began to happen. Hearings were expedited. Licensing panels that had voiced concerns were suddenly changed. Rules were revised to move obstacles out of the path of Shoreham's licensing efforts. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has all but eliminated any requirement that a safe evacuation plan must be in place before a plant can be licensed. Now, under the new rules, they need only "assume" local governments will respond in the event of an emergency.

In our view, the role of Nofziger, and federal officials, in the Shoreham push, demands a thorough investigation. Who else got how much? For the protection of the people of Long Island, a full scale investigation should be launched to determine who was influenced, and by whom, and just exactly what LILCO got for the $20,000 a month--reduced to $5,000 last year because Nofziger was reportedly less active. We can only assume he was less active because he had already done the influencing that helped LILCO's cause.

One of the Washington jurors said he was angry over Nofziger's efforts, unsuccessful though they were, to continue funding for a particular aircraft. He said the jury felt it was wrong to possibly endanger the lives of American soldiers in an effort to make money. And although Nofziger was not charged with influence peddling in regards to Shoreham, we think it is absolutely wrong to endanger the people of Long Island by using his Reagan-linked influence to help license a controversial and unsafe nuclear plant. And it is certainly morally wrong--if not criminal--to purchase such influence for self gain as LILCO has.

The verdict has been returned in Washington about other instances of influence peddling. Now we need an investigation into the full scope of such activity in seeking favors for LILCO and Shoreham. A special prosecutor should be named, and a grand jury convened. Let's find out, once and for all, how much influence can be peddled for $20,000 a month.

And why not?

We Won, But We're Losing

A little over a year ago political history was made in the creation of the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA). Its mission was to study the financial ramifications of a takeover of the Long Island Lighting Company, and if it was proven that a savings could result, to proceed toward that takeover. LIPA overcame mountainous obstacles in gaining legislative approval in Albany, including intense lobbying efforts by LILCO and the nuclear industry.

Although we won that battle and achieved a political miracle through the strong support of a majority of Long Island residents, we could now stand to lose the war. What political and utility opponents of LIPA could not achieve, a small group of individuals, acting under the guise of working on behalf of the people, may well accomplish. This group is made up of William Mack, chairman of LIPA; Vincent Tese and Richard Kessel, members of the LIPA board.

The three are involved in secret discussions with LILCO for a negotiated settlement, one that would, they claim, sound the death knell for Shoreham. The three are serving two masters, but only one of them well. Their efforts to reach a settlement with LILCO, while serving on the LIPA board charged by state legislation to study and proceed toward a settlement if a savings can be achieved, has already been blamed for stalling the ultimate decision by the full LIPA board. They have denied their efforts have delayed a LIPA decision. But just last week it was revealed that Kessel, executive director of the state Consumer Protection Board, wrote a letter to Peter Bradford, chairman of the state Public Service Commission, agreeing to a postponement of an audit of LILCO directors. He used the negotiations for a settlement as a reason. William Catacosinos, LILCO chairman, wrote a similar letter, including the negotiations as a reason. Kessel's PSC letter urging a postponement of the PSC audit of LILCO directors gives full credence to the charge those involved in the effort to reach a negotiated settlement have been stalling LIPA efforts.

Mack was appointed to chair LIPA by Governor Mario Cuomo. Both Tese and Kessel are members of the governor's administration, Tese as chairman of the Urban Renewal Development Corporation, and Kessel of the consumer board. They are the governor's men. Which poses a serious question: is Governor Cuomo a participant in the effort to stall LIPA?

Who wants a settlement? LILCO does. That can be plainly seen in the recent statements of the Long Island Association (LIA) and Newsday, both staunch allies of LILCO and proponents of the Shoreham plant. Why? Although the negotiation talks are secret, it is almost a sure bet a settlement would keep LILCO whole, its management intact, and the ratepayers would wind up with higher costs.

The settlement will undoubtedly call for an abandonment of Shoreham, because the governor is committed to that cause, and becausethere can be no life for LILCO unless Shoreham dies. With 70 percent of the people on Long Island opposed to the plant, any agreement that does not call for the plant's death would cause an uproar. The LIPA legislation guarantees Shoreham's demise. It would also result in the ouster of LILCO management, and an end to burdening ratepayers with Shoreham's costs.

Let's examine any LILCO promise to abandon Shoreham under a negotiated settlement. How would that be accomplished? Would the plant simply be mothballed? Or would LILCO say: "We promise to abandon the plant but do not have the funds to decommission the plant now. We'll do it later." With the same management at the helm, would you believe them? Do you really trust LILCO? We don't. What we do see is LILCO going to their friends in Washington, in the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, continuing to push for a license. We see a settlement as a temporary remission for Shoreham, not its final death.

We asked Kessel recently: "Who approves a settlement?" Kessel had no answer. In any negotiations there is usually a final voice. The legislature, and town and school boards have the final say over settlements reached by negotiators in counties, towns and school districts. Who has the final say here? Do the ratepayers have a voice? Mack has promised the LIPA board would have input and an opportunity to approve the settlement. But that's a promise, not written in the law, and thus carries no weight. Who has the final say? Shouldn't we know? If the LIPA board says no, can someone else say yes?

Governor Cuomo is surrounded by aides who opposed LIPA from the very beginning. The governor signed the legislation regardless of that opposition. He showed integrity and common sense then, and hope he will now. We fear he is the recipient of some very bad advice, and should weigh very carefully the impact of a settlement versus the safeguards contained in the LIPA legislation.

There's only one way to end the threat of Shoreham. That's LIPA. The LIPA legislation and the safeguards it contains is a matter of law. Where is the enforcement of a settlement? What happens if Mario Cuomo leaves to fulfill national ambitions? Will the next governor live up to the terms of any settlement he was not a part of approving?

We believe the long-awaited L.I.P.A. Lazard Freres study will confirm the finding of the first four economic studies which indicate there are savings for the ratepayer by a public takeover of the utility.

The legislation passed and signed into law by the governor which created LIPA, states emphatically that if there is a savings for the ratepayer, LIPA is to procede in the takeover. The only choice given is whether it is to be a negotiated agreement via a stock tender offer or a hostile condemnation, a taking of the corporate assets by the Authority.

Presumably, the long-awaited report does indicate substantial savings to the ratepayers. So why should Long Island ratepayers bail out the speculators and the Wall Street interests that own the LILCO stock? There is no way for the LIPA board to escape the intent and meaning of the law. If there's a savings, the entire board must move toward a takeover. The law does not authorize secret meetings by a couple of board members.

The only thing the LIPA board, or the governor's representatives, should be negotiating with LILCO at this point is whether the takeover should be friendly or hostile. If the report shows the savings are there, there is no option. LILCO can agree to a takeover based on today's market value, or the company can fight.

The time has passed for LILCO to negotiate with the state on divesting itself from Shoreham and remaining whole. Once the LIPA board was impanelled, and the takeover process was started, the only thing that could save LILCO from being taken over was unequivocal proof that a public takeover of LILCO would cause rates to be higher than the rates charged by LILCO. All economic studies thus far, and we're confident the Lazard Freres report will bear them out, show a takeover is the best way for the ratepayers.

Kessel, Mack and Tese are working at odds with the LIPA effort in their secret discussions with LILCO. There is a definite conflict of interest in their activities. If they continue, they should step down from the LIPA board and make room for others who would live up to the mandates of the LIPA legislation. They can then continue in their "make a deal with LILCO" ploy, while the LIPA board gets on with its task. Then let's see the numbers and guarantees about Shoreham's future from both sides, and let the people really know what's going on.

The time for procrastinating is over. The time to take over is now. And why not?

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Senators' Shell Game

There is a popular con in the city called the shell game. A con artist sets up a table on a city street, places a bean under one of three shells and shuffles them. The victim bets that he can guess which shell the bean is under. It looks simple and the sucker figures it is quick, easy money. In fact, there is no bean under any of the shells. The con artist has palmed the bean.

Senators Al D'Amato and Daniel Moynihan have their own version of the shell game going. In a proposal made by them under the guise of the gas guzzler tax, our esteemed senators have proposed to double the gas guzzler tax, take the money from this increase and reward people who are using mass transportation. The bill

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Shell Game. . .

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would penalize only foreign cars that do not meet EPA mileage requirements. In reality, however, knowing how our government works when it comes to revising such bills at a later time, we can envision the inclusion of American-built cars if the vehicle does not meet EPA standards, or, if those standards are changed at a later time.

Under the current guzzler tax, funds generated go for a $15 per month subsidy for those who use mass transportation for travel into New York City rather than drive their own cars. It is designed to reduce city traffic. The D'Amato-Moynihan proposal would hike that subsidy to $60 per month.

What D'Amato and Moynihan fail to realize is that only 102,000 of the cars in New York State are used in New York City on any given day for business. Millions of other vehicles are used in suburbia or in small cities.

Mass transportation is already subsidized. The riders pay only a fraction of the cost of their transportation. And residents here, who may never have occasion to travel on mass transportation, are already paying sales taxes to help support the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The gas guzzler tax increase proposal is just another scam to burden everyone for the benefit of a few. We who own our own cars pay our oun way, and then some. We are tired of politicians digging into our suburban pockets to benefit the city folk and the commuters.

This bill should backfire badly on both these senators. From Moynihan's point of view it could be very harmful as he is up for re-election this year. D'Amato is safe for another four years. Everybody says D'Amato is a brilliant political strategist. We wonder if his devious little mind wasn't at work on this one, knowing that this bill would be unpopular with the public, and Moynihan would be connected with it and suffer the consequences.

It is a bad bill that doesn't make any sense, and both senators would be wise to consider dropping their attempt to pass it.

And why not?

Public, Not Private Use

Several years ago when plans were being formed for the construction of the new Ponquogue Bridge, Suffolk Life editorialized quite emphatically, and pushed very hard, for the old bridge to be kept intact so that it could be converted to a fishing pier for the public's use. The new bridge is now opened, most of the sections of the old bridge and roadway have been kept, and as far as anyone knows, it was the intention that this be turned into a public fishing pier.

It was with dismay that we learned that the town is considering a proposal by the Shinnecock Fishermen's Cooperative to acquire the north side of the bridge for a fish loading and packing operation. This is the prime side of the bridge for fishing as the water is deeper and numerous species of fish can be found in the area, particularly, striped bass.

Up and down the coast of Florida, municipalities have built fishing piers which are utilized by a wide range of citizens. The senior citizens who no longer feel secure in going out on a boat, the father with children who cannot afford his own boat but who wants to enjoy the pleasures of fishing. Men and women who can't get off-shore but still enjoy dropping a line in the water.

There are too few spots and very few prime places for the average guy to fish here in Suffolk County. We support the concept of the cooperative. Its current location at the Shinnecock Inlet makes more sense as an off-loading spot than having boats come down the channel to off-load. It was revealed recently that if the cooperative moves, the pending stabilization of the Shinnecock Inlet, which would be started within two years, could be put off for another decade because as part of the justificaton for this stabilization is the fact that the cooperative is located in proximity to the inlet.

Sand pumped from the inlet is planned to be placed on the beach just south of the cooperative. The reason given in the federal perspectus is that the beach south of the cooperative needs stabilization to prevent the dock and cooperative from being washed away.

We encourage the Southampton Town Board to turn down the cooperative's request for use of the fishing pier. The public should be able to use this pier unencumbered, as this was the original intent.

And why not?

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