

The Nantucket nightmare

For the last three years, the East Coast has been barraged with ads in daily newspapers and television commercials telling us how wonderful the oil companies are.

They claim to be good employers and good citizens who care about the quality of life and how they do everything possible to drill and transport oil safely. Of course, this is utter hogwash.

Oil companies from day one have been the most ruthless cutthroats and environmentally careless industry in America. They do what is expedient, profitable for them and the hell with the effect it has on the rest of the world.

Look at what they just did to us on December 15.

7,600,000 gallons spilled

The tanker Argo Merchant ran aground off Nantucket, spilling upon the ocean 7,600,000 gallons of heavy oil. The oil has already killed literally thousands of sea birds, and it is feared it will ruin the rich Georges Banks area, a major fishery for hake, cod, winter flounder, whiting, and scallops.

The oil's path of destruction is far from over. As it spreads, carried by tide, wind and current, it is projected to layer the ocean bottom and contaminate beaches from Maine to Long Island.

During the next six months, unaccountable damage will be done to both marine and human life. This single spill has the potential of ravaging the fishing industry, both commercial and sport. It will most likely have devastating effects on the resort and marina businesses all along the Northeast coast. Everybody will feel the effects.

What fish escape being killed or spoiled will be sky high in price, because the supply will be down. As the tourist industry is adversely affected, the economy of resort areas like eastern Long Island will suffer.

This could have been avoided if the oil companies were only half as responsible as their ads claim they are.

The ship involved was a Liberia flagship. Liberia's rules for safety and manning of ships are considered to be the most lenient in the world. This is why many ships are registered in this country. They do not have to meet as stringent standards and safety codes as ships that are registered under the American flag.

By overlooking safety measures, skimping on equipment and working with fewer people than needed for safety, they can be more competitive.

Of course, our benevolent oil companies transport their oil with these shipping companies because they are the cheapest and the hell with safety.

As we read reports of the Argo Merchant tragedy and the events leading up to it, we were aghast. Most privately owned sport fishing boats over 28 feet long have better navigation aids than were contained on this oceangoing ship.

No navigation system aboard

It is inconceivable the Argo Merchant did not have a Loran or an Omega system aboard. One or the other is considered vital, and almost mandatory by any rational deep sea fisherman who cares for his own safety, and that of his crew.

In addition, local fishermen have two, using one as a backup against the other for fear of a malfunction.

Both systems give the navigator his precise location with pinpoint accuracy so he can plot a safe course home. In today's market you can buy a reliable Loran system for less than \$1,000.

Why didn't the Argo Merchant have at least one Loran aboard? This ship depended upon a



**willmotts
and why-nots**
David J. Willmott, Editor

radio direction finder as their primary navigational aid. An RDF is a primitive and not particularly reliable navigational aid that most smaller boats only use as a backup piece of equipment.

For a tanker of the size of the Argo Merchant to depend upon this is ludicrous. Almost every helmsman we know who navigates with an electronic gyrocompass also has a compensated magnetic compass aboard.

They constantly compare the two in case an electronic compass breaks down so that they know about it as soon as possible.

The Argo Merchant had a magnetic compass, but according to testimony, it was off by five degrees. The ship's captain also claimed the depth recorder was out of commission.

How could a ship this size, sailing the oceans of the world not have at least one additional backup recording system?

This is one of the most important, basic aids to navigation you can have. Most sport fishing boats we have been on, have at least two depth recording systems.

What do the oil companies care about the safety or conditions of the ships they are using? They don't own them, they insure the cargo, and if anything goes wrong they are not responsible.

This has been their attitude right from the beginning. They are not responsible for anything. Regardless of their self-proclaimed concern for safety, they are just as irresponsible

today as they were during the wildcat days that ruined parts of Texas and Oklahoma.

The only difference between then and today is that instead of ruining a few acres of prairie or desert, they want to spread their destruction over thousands of miles of ocean. Instead of affecting just a few people, millions will be involved.

Oil will ruin Atlantic

You can believe what you want, but we will stick to our gut feeling that when the oil companies are allowed to drill for oil in the Atlantic, they will ruin it.

They will contaminate and kill off a major source of food for a hungry world. They will ruin our ocean bottom and beaches.

Accidents do happen because sometimes there is nothing we can do about them. Then again, accidents happen because somebody takes the cheapest way out.

This is the way the oil companies have operated in the past. This is the way they operate now as the Argo Merchant so vividly demonstrated, and this is the way they will operate in the future.

That's your ocean out there. That's your oil under that water. You can allow the oil companies to greedily explore, to drill, to pump, and to transport this liquid gold the cheapest way they can or you can demand they not be allowed to drill until they have positively fail-safe methods.

Demand of your Congressman, of your Senator, and the new President of the United States that they stop any further plans for sale or leasing of oil sites in the Atlantic.

Demand no further exploration be allowed or drilling started until the oil companies can prove beyond a shadow of a doubt they have the technology and are willing to make the investment in the equipment that will prevent any accidents from happening.

Also insist they only use a pipeline to transport the oil to shore, which is far more environmentally sound than tankers.

The Argo Merchant is a catastrophe, but only a tip on the iceberg of the potential devastation the oil companies can rain down upon us if allowed to go their merry way.

It is up to you to holler loud and clear not only to your friends and neighbors here, but to those in distant states about the oil companies and what they are doing to us.

And why not?

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willmotts and why-nots

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Big two for 1977

Governor Carey has proposed a state tax cut of \$2,000,000 for this coming year. If passed, it will mean a 5 1/2 per cent reduction in the state budget.

Currently, New York is the highest taxed state in the nation. This long overdue message of fiscal conservatism is welcome news.

Although Carey avoided specific areas, where he intends to make cuts, presumably, they could be made in the two big budget items: welfare and education. But, if all the state does is cut these particular programs, the tax cut could be a worse cure than the ailment, because it will only serve to roll the cost from the state over to local governments.

Local governments are financed primarily through real estate taxes, which have already reached the confiscatory level. Here, in Suffolk, better than one-half of our town taxes go to fund education. Over one-half our County budget is used to fund welfare.

If the state only cuts back its share of education and welfare costs, and leaves its mandated regulations in effect, our local governments will be forced to make up the difference in funding by increasing real estate taxes.

There is no question that educational costs are out of hand and in dire need of being trimmed. It costs New York State 50 per cent more for education than it costs the average of all other states in the nation. This would be a good investment if we were turning out young people who are 50 per cent better educated and prepared to enter life.

On a national average, there is only a marginal educational difference between New York State's students, and those from the other states. If New York's educational costs alone could be rolled back to reflect the average cost throughout the United States, local real estate taxes could be reduced by 25 per cent and state income taxes could be reduced by another 10 per cent.

New York State is a haven for welfare. For the last two decades, we have exchanged our businesses and our industries, our productive and taxpaying population with the sunbelt, for non-productive parasites. By milking the system, they are able to live better than many working taxpayers in the lower-middle income brackets.

New York State's welfare cost is 60 per cent higher than any other state in the nation. If New York State's cost of welfare was brought into line with the national average, Suffolk County's taxes would be reduced by more than 25 per cent. State income, business and sales taxes could also be reduced by approximately another 10 per cent.

The cost of education and welfare in New York State is so high, primarily because of acts passed



by our past state government, and inaction by the legislature and former Governor Rockefeller's desire to buy the Presidency for himself.

The cost in these two areas has skyrocketed during the last twenty years. The Board of Regents (which has members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate) imposed mandatory rules and regulations on local school boards, without regard as to how they might be financed.

The legislature and the Governor rewarded teacher and school employee unions for their support with legislation, which has made these employees the highest paid educational staff in the nation.

In addition, the state mandated fiscally irresponsible pension programs and fringe benefits that more and more school districts are finding near impossible to fund. It was not the anguished cry of the old, the sick, and the needy that Rockefeller and the legislature heard, it was the click of the lever in the voting booth. The more clicks, the better the benefits.

Welfare recipients quickly learned their lesson and pulled the right levers. Today, 1977, they are able to enjoy a better standard of living than one-half the non-welfare population in the state.

The outcome of this mad giveaway is New York State is the heaviest taxed state in the nation. Its productive people are giving up and fleeing in droves. Its job-creating, tax paying individuals and businesses can no longer stand the gaff. New York State is losing over one million jobs per year. Less and less people are left to produce for more and more non-producers.

Any fool can see what the final outcome will be. We hope professional politicians and bureaucrats will be able to see it, too!

The 5 1/2 per cent cut-back is welcome news, but we doubt it is enough.

New York State must get itself back into the

mainstream of the nation in spending and taxation levels if it is ever to rebuild itself.

New York State can only do this if the legislature and the Governor work together to undo what their predecessors have already done. They will have to take back favors, reduce rules and regulations, cut spending and taxes and most important -- eliminate mandated regulations on local governments that have caused confiscatory taxation.

It will be up to these leaders we have elected. The path is clear, the issues are defined, the sides are obvious. The only question left is whether our leaders have the political leverage to do what is necessary and right at this time. We hope so. And why not?

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willmotts and why-nots

David J. Willmott, Editor



We need a tax breaker

When we install an electrical system, we include a circuit breaker or fuse. The purpose of this is to keep the lines from becoming overloaded, causing fire or other damage. This makes good common sense and no one argues against it.

Just before the holidays, we had a lengthy conversation with a couple of old-time Long Islanders. They themselves were born here, married and raised a family. They loved Long Island. It's the only home they have ever known but now they are being reluctantly forced to leave. They had to sell the house that contained four decades of memories.

When they moved into their home, taxes were around \$100.00 a year. It now costs them over 25 per cent of their annual income just for real estate taxes.

The modest principal they retired on is being eaten into. If they stayed, they felt they would be eventually forced to accept welfare and this they are too proud to do. So two more people who helped build Long Island constructively must finish out their golden years in a strange environment not of their own choosing.

During the holidays, we met another couple of the "now generation". They have two young children. For a couple of years, they scrimped and saved and finally three years ago realized the great American dream; they bought their first home.

When they bought it, they carefully analyzed their financial situation and by prudently handling their income, it looked like they could manage the principal, mortgage and taxes on their income. They had budgeted a \$100.00 per month for taxes.

In December, they were three months in arrears on their mortgage and foreclosure was only a matter of procedure. The taxes on their house were over \$2000.

This astronomical rise in real estate taxes coupled with exorbitant heat, electric bills and inflation had brought them to their knees. They are also leaving Long Island. They say they will

miss it, but what can they do? And Long Island loses two more productive citizens.

Ironically, both these couples feel the other is responsible for their predicament. The older couple's house had a market value of approximately the same as the new couple's, yet their taxes were half. The older couple felt they paid their taxes to educate their children when they were small, so why should they now be assessed to pay for the current generation's children? There is some logic to both their arguments but neither are the real culprits.

Government's ability to impose unrestricted taxation upon the citizenry is the cause of both their suffering. Every branch of government takes its few cents in additional taxes. Individually, it doesn't seem to be an awful lot, but when added together year after year, it becomes devastating.

The citizens desperately need a mandatory compilation and indexing of all taxes with a built-in circuit breaker system. Once taxes have reached an overload level, no new taxes can be imposed.

If the government deems a project is necessary and we are at our tax limit, the government would then be forced to find a project of less impact and eliminate it to fund the new project. Such a system could be enacted and should be. If it isn't, government will continue to impose higher taxes and more productive citizens will be pushed out of their homes.

Politicians will tell you such a system is the impossible dream and unrealistic. Is it realistic, though, to confiscate, through taxation, people's homes and force them to move because one tax too many has been placed on them?

This is what our government is doing to us. Before more people are forced into this predicament, our legislature must enact proper laws to protect us from runaway taxation or they will end up in a state filled with non-taxpaying citizens. And why not?

Caputo quits over lulu

Like a spoiled child who can't play the game by his own rules and takes his ball and goes home sulking, County Legislator Caputo quit his special assignments because he could not get a lulu on top of his \$16,000 part-time salary.

Caputo had asked the legislature to give him additional compensation for the time he puts in assisting and administering pension funds. His justification for this was he could make this kind of money on the outside if he was not tied up doing county work.

Caputo's argument brings out the dire need to look at the job and the duties of our legislators.

The position of legislator by its nature was intended to be a part-time position. The county legislature meets officially once every two weeks for a total work year of 26 days. For this they are paid \$16,000 annually, plus fringe benefits, plus expenses, plus staff. If you compute this salary on this basis, legislators would make \$665.00 for each day the legislature is officially in session.

Of course this is a ridiculous salary so the legislators themselves assume additional duties and committee assignments. Some are needed, others are only self-fulfilling. Some legislators claim they work full-time and they probably do. One maintains he works six days a week and averages a twelve hour day.

Most feel they are not justly compensated for the services they perform. They may be right but are they doing what we hired them for? Almost any job can be made into more than it was intended to be. It is human nature to build a mountain out of a molehill. This is a particularly contagious condition as government operates as a bureaucracy with nearly unlimited taxation powers.

This is the system under which our county legislature exists. Legislators admit it is not particularly functional and the condition creates great amounts of wasted time not only for themselves but their staffs and various committee members.

As a first order of business in this New Year, the legislature should take a look at its own house.


It should be brought back into perspective to serve the role it was created for. Let legislators be legislators, not bureaucrats. We will have a more effective and efficient government.

Even Caputo then can have time to devote to his outside pursuit of the almighty dollar and still be a public servant. And why not?

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Better to know the enemy you are dealing with

County Executive Klein and the legislature are at odds over the issue of offshore oil drilling facing Suffolk County. The county has a suit pending to halt the exploration and drilling for oil off our shores.

the support this effort. The federal government has gone ahead and has already auctioned off leases for drilling in this area. The nation's need for additional oil sources appears to be taking precedent over the environmental concerns in the eyes of the federal government. For this reason, Suffolk's suit appears to have little chance to succeed.

Suffolk would stand to benefit economically from offshore oil drilling. Our central location in relation to the various sites places us in an ideal position to be a major staging site. This would mean literally thousands of jobs and millions of dollars flowing into our economy.

The county legislature passed a resolution setting up a committee to informally investigate and engage in talks with oil interests. King John is furious, charging the legislature's action jeopardize the county's law suit. The suit has an environmental basis. It outlines

county concern for the safety precautions to be taken in drilling and the transportation of oil from offshore rigs to the mainland.

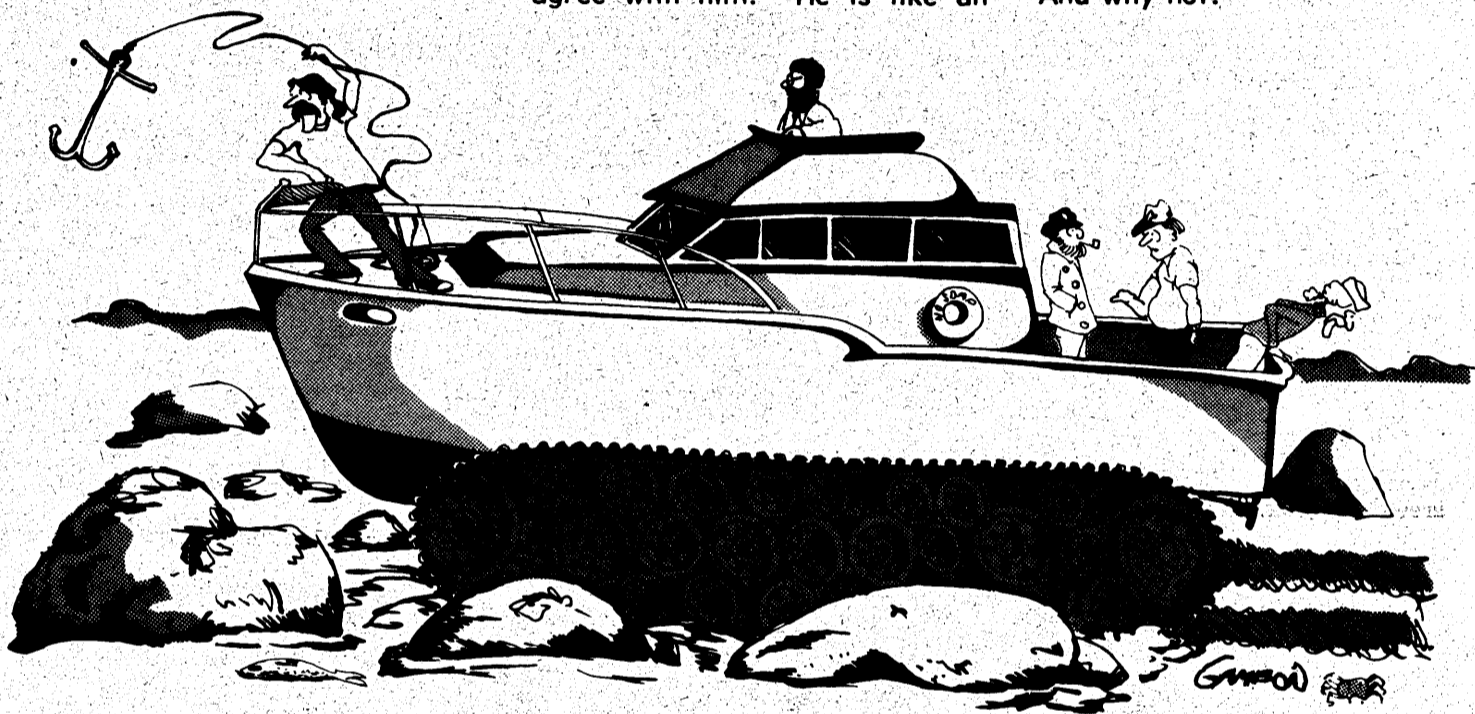
We fail to see how informal talks can jeopardize the county's position in this suit. Having the opposing sides communicate can produce constructive results. It is possible the county could get more

of what it wants out of the oil companies through negotiations, than it will be able to get from the courts. This is particularly important considering the federal government's stand in pushing for offshore oil exploration and production.

King John has a mania for refusing to acknowledge the existence of anybody who does not agree with him. He is like an

ostrich who sticks his head in the sand when he feels frustrated or threatened.

We are glad to see the legislature exercising common sense on this issue and proceeding with a cautious but constructive outlook. King John should realize this oil issue is bigger than Suffering. All the ranting and raving won't effect a tinker's damn on the outcome. And why not?



King John burying the East End

The third largest business in the East End is the tourist industry. Its single biggest asset is our abundant water...water to swim in, water to fish in, and water to boat in.

In order to swim, to boat and to fish, our bays and inlets must be periodically dredged out. This dredging has been done by the County Department of Public Works utilizing the county dredge.

King John has a thing about this dredge, and for years he continued to propose to eliminate it from the budget. This year, the King got his way, and the East End lost the services of this invaluable piece of equipment.

Now the individual East End towns are left with the responsibility of either doing the dredging themselves, or letting the channels fill in. If they are left to fill in, boating activities will dwindle, fishing opportunities will be restricted, and some public beaches will be closed due to pollution created by the poor flow of water.

These are conditions that will happen. There is no "maybe" about it. They will have a

disastrous effect on our tourist economy. This will create unemployment and an additional welfare burden. Ironically, the county will bear the brunt of this. It funds welfare, and in addition, will lose invaluable sales tax revenues.

To avoid this, the five East End towns can contract the dredging privately. Even as Klein took away this county service, he did not, of course, make available to the East End towns their portion of the tax money that was paying for it.

So, where will the funds come from?

This year will be particularly crucial because town budgets have already been set and none of the towns have made provision to provide for this kind of service. It is estimated it will cost upwards of \$1,000,000 to keep the waterways open.

If the towns decide to dredge on their own, they will have to borrow funds, and then pay interest on their debts until the cost of dredging can be included in next year's taxes. East End town residents' can barely carry the burden of their already high real

estate taxes.

This is just another example of the King giving the shaft to the East End. This time, though, it will turn around and get him.

The county is the biggest beneficiary of the tourist sales tax money. King John has greedily refused to share these funds with the municipalities that generate them. The county has more to lose tax wise from a poor tourist season than the towns do.

The county dredge was an expensive operation, but it was not a luxury. An important part of the county economy depends on these waterways remaining open and navigable. Dredging is the only way this can be accomplished. Left to Mother Nature and towns who do not have funds to finance this project, our bays and inlets will fill in.

King John has won his battle, but he will lose the war. And why not?

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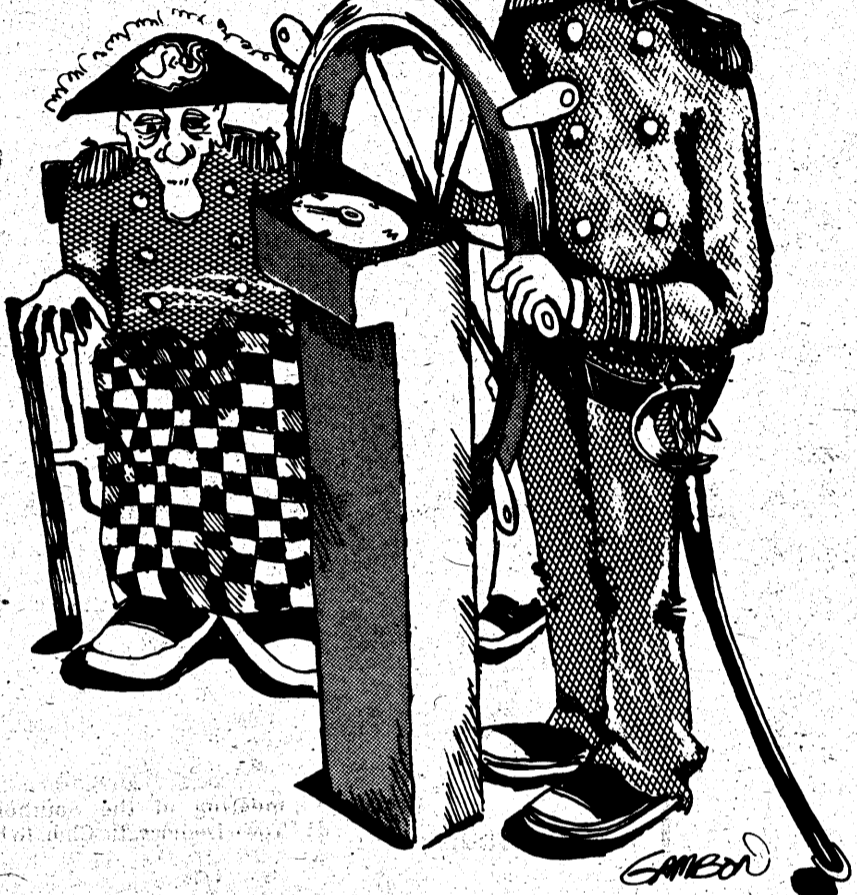
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U.S.S.G.O.P.

"New course, Cap'n?"



Too sensitive a spot for politics

A police department is no place for politics. Just about everybody agrees with this premise, but foolishly the Democrat-controlled legislature has announced it is turning the top spot of the Suffolk County Police Department into a patronage position by appointing Donald Dilworth to replace Eugene Kelly, whose commission expires March 1.

We have no more quarrel with Dilworth's abilities than we have with Kelly as chief administrator of the police department. We do find fault with a political appointment to fill this sensitive position.

Many of us have suspected that Kelly was motivated by politics to bring charges against District Attorney Henry O'Brien, which the courts have since thrown out. This outrage has thrown law enforcement in Suffolk into a state of turmoil. To settle this political dispute, Suffolk taxpayers have laid out over \$1,000,000.

It was, and is a disgrace. Because of this, we can fully understand the Democratic legislators' desire to replace Kelly, but why make the same mistake? Just changing the politics of the police commissioner will not eliminate the fear of the police department being used as a

political tool.

Wouldn't it make more sense to find the very best man this county or this country has to run this multi-million dollar department free of political entanglements? We feel a police commissioner is in too sensitive a position to have in question even a suggestion of political interference.

The Democrats are making the wrong move. It will come back to haunt them next November. The appointment has not been made at this time, so it is not too late for them to rectify the situation.

Legislators will undoubtedly ignore this editorial, but they will not ignore your voice. Speak up. It is your police department that is at stake. The quality of police service, and the cost you will bear are the issues.

In addition, wouldn't you feel a lot more comfortable knowing your police department would be less likely to be used against you for political purposes? Don't think it couldn't happen. Just ask District Attorney O'Brien, the man you elected, about this.

Contact your legislator right now, and make yourself heard. We can well be jumping from the frying pan into the fire if we do not act now. And why not?

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David J. Willmott, Editor

A new Republican leader

County Republican Chairman Buzz Schwenk will step down at the end of this month. The choice of his successor will determine whether the Republican Party will ever be able to regain its position of prominence in Suffolk.

We hope the Republicans have the foresight to choose their leader wisely. They should look at why they are the party on the outs after having a virtual stranglehold on this county for almost a century.

Their fall can be partly attributed to Watergate but the greater share of the blame lies with Suffolk Republicans themselves. The infiltration of the party with men who are only Republicans for personal gain, and their total arrogance were the main reasons for the party's fall from grace. Once on the legitimate take, those individuals did not wait long to cross the fine line and stick their hands in the public till by selling favors and becoming involved in outright illegal practices.

The public, particularly the rank and file Republicans had had enough, so they threw out of office those they felt did not represent them. They elected Democrats, and to the amazement of some, they found out they didn't grow horns as they had been told they would for turning against the party line in the voting booth.

Suffolk County now has a two party system of government, but there is a grave danger of once again becoming a one party system...this time a Democratic one.

The Republican Party can stop this if they can come up with a new face who can transfuse new blood and direction into their movement. Names have been handed around like cord wood, but unfortunately, many are already-rans.

One of the people being pushed

strongly is Gil Hanse. He was rejected by the rank and file during the good times of the Republican party as a candidate for county executive.

At the time of his defeat, the Republicans had almost a two-thirds to one-third registration edge over the Democrats in the county. It seemed at one time almost anybody who the Republicans put up for a county race was a winner upon his nomination. General elections were just a formality they went through to make it legal.

After his defeat, Hanse was pensioned off and named director of Commerce and Industry, a job in which he has not set the world on fire. In fact, most people never expected him to do much. Gil was just finishing out his time, so why expect him to accomplish anything?

To choose him or resurrect any other rejected has-been as leader of the Republican Party is tantamount to serving what is left of Suffolk's government to the Democrats on a silver platter. Republicans must find a bright, new, energetic promoter. They desperately need an executive who can administer and rebuild the Republican Party from the ground floor up, a person who can motivate people to work and win elections.

Suffolk residents are still Republicans in registration and at heart. They have the numbers and they deserve to have the best leadership.

We wish the Republicans well in choosing a successor to Schwenk. We hope they have learned from their past mistakes that this successor is important not only to Republicans but to the rest of the residents of Suffolk County, if we are to have good government in the future. And why not?

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willmotts and why-nots

David J. Willmott, Editor

Goodbye, Mr. President

When Gerald Ford became President, it was under the worst circumstances. He assumed this awesome post as a man who had not been elected by the people.

The office of the Presidency was in disgrace. People of the United States were ashamed and had been humiliated. They had little faith in the Presidency and less faith in a stumbling ex-football player who had just pardoned Nixon. They felt Nixon was guilty and he should be punished as any other criminal.

Ford approached the job openly and honestly. In his own open-shirted way, he came across as, above all else, human. He didn't pretend to be the smartest man in the world.

His only promise was to restore dignity to the office of the Presidency of the United States and do his level best to be a good President.

In two short years, he did much more. He stabilized and turned around a faltering economy. He reduced unemployment. He applied the brakes to inflation by putting checks on Congress' runaway spending programs. Most important, he successfully restored the confidence of the American people in their government.

Ford was not a magician. He stumbled both figuratively and physically. This was good. He showed all of us an American President is human, and we have no right to expect more from him than we do from ourselves.

Jerry Ford is now private citizen number one. We hope he and his wife Betty enjoy their memories of their White House years, and appreciate the sincere gratitude of the people they served. And why not?

Hello, President Carter

I awoke this morning to the sound of the people's inaugural prayer service for Jimmy Carter taking place on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

I thought first of it being just more pomp and circumstance. But, as I listened and watched in my half awake state, I realized that this was much more.

It was signalling the transfer of power taking place in Washington. It was not just the changeover of the Presidency, but more important, it seemed to herald a return to basics for the people and the country.

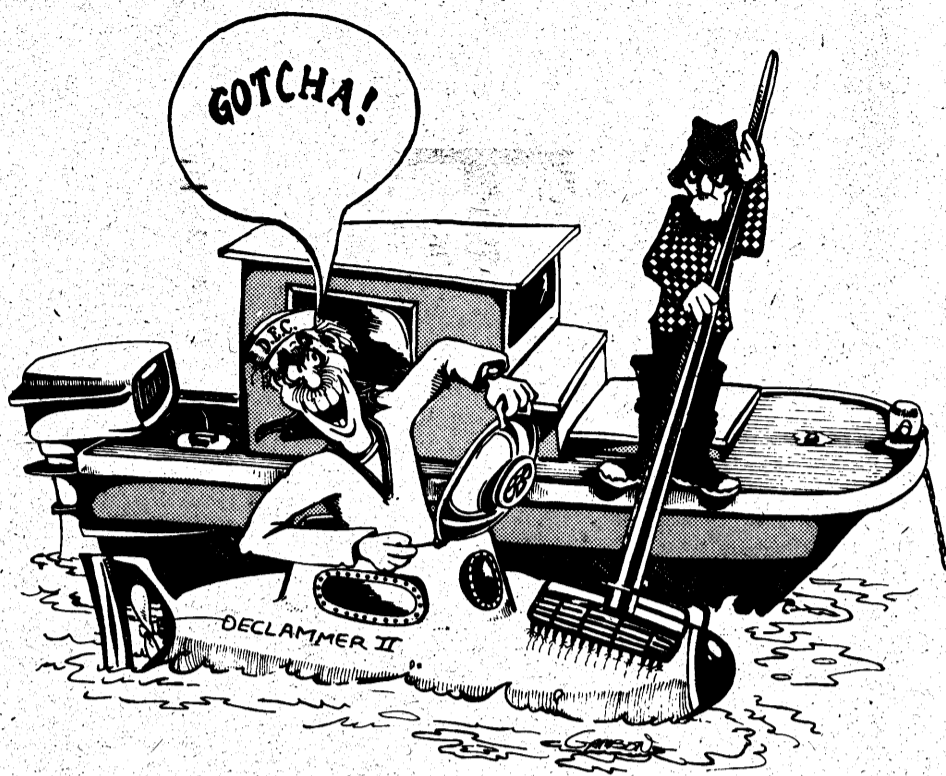
Basic values and the right to participate in them are what made this country strong; that's what America is all about and makes us different from any other country in the world.

During the last forty years, administration after administration took America from a government by and for the people to a government by and for those who controlled it. We came very close to becoming a dictatorship and may well have, had Watergate not come to pass followed by the resignation of then-President Nixon.

That era is behind us.

We have hope and faith President Carter will bring government back to the people so that together we will be able to work to solve our many problems and enjoy rich rewards for our efforts.

Suffolk Life joins with the rest of America in extending our hand and help to President Carter and wish him success. And why not?



The Great 'Clam War'

The waters of Long Island have darn near become a battlefield with the baymen pitted against the Department of Environmental Conservation.

Last week, as the war accelerated, the conservation department threatened to close down almost all clamming on Long Island.

Most of the bay waters are frozen, thwarting the baymen's efforts to make a living. They have been forced to clam in the few areas that are ice free. Some of these are relatively close to shore and in waters the D.E.C. considers unsafe.

Waters closed down by the D.E.C. are supposed to contain a high coliform bacteria count, which is suspected of causing hepatitis in those who consume these clams. There has not been a reported outbreak of hepatitis that can be connected with the consumption of clams in the last 30 years. The D.E.C. maintains it is because they have tested and policed the waters and halted the taking of clams from uncertified areas.

Professional baymen have long maintained that almost 50 per cent of the clam yield on Long Island comes from areas certified by the D.E.C. as being unsafe. Clams in these areas have been taken by "pirates".

Clammers for a number of years have been able to outrun and outmaneuver the D.E.C. by using high speed boats and by working at night so they cannot be detected.

Baymen are a unique breed. They are fiercely independent; they are hard workers who ask the

government for little more than to be left alone. Most of them have a better knowledge of the bays and the waters they are working than the educated professional whom the state sends down from Albany to try to tell them their business.

When a deep freeze hits like the one we are having this winter, there are only limited areas that can be worked.

Come Hell, high water, or the D.E.C., the baymen will ply their trade. Many of the areas in contention are borderline, even by D.E.C. standards. The baymen know this. They feel the waters are clean, and the clams are not contaminated. The baymen feel it is the state's desire to maintain its bureaucracy rather than concern for the health of the consumers that keep these areas closed.

The baymen are asking to have an independent laboratory test the waters in contention, and finally determine whether the waters should be kept closed or opened up for harvesting. The D.E.C. is fighting this move, because they will look foolish and lose their credibility if they are proven wrong by an independent, outside authority.

The D.E.C. should swallow their pride, and allow these studies to take place. Let an unbiased, independent lab examine these waters, and make the final decision based on fact rather than prejudice.

To keep these waters closed is robbing men of their livelihood, and turning honest men into lawbreakers, only to satisfy the whims of bureaucrats. And why not?

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Carter's first mistake

President Carter kept his campaign promise. He pardoned all draft dodgers. His intention was to heal so-called wounds dividing this country. This is commendable, but we fear his action will only further divide this country.

Almost every man has faced the prospect of being drafted. It is not a pleasant feeling. If you are lucky, you will not see action, but will have your life interrupted. This is a sacrifice, which you are conditioned to accept. You know when called, you will be doing your part to keep this country free.

President Ford offered those men who ran from this country a means to return home. Their cases would be examined on an individual basis. The worst they could face would be the prospect of serving their draft time fulfilling humanitarian needs. This was a fair plan designed to reconcile the country. It provided an honorable way for the country to be united.

Carter's blanket pardon opens the door for draft dodgers to come home. It does not mean, though, that they will be welcomed by the American people. In fact, it almost insures the creation of hostility.

Carter's action is tantamount to our next call to arms resulting in

wholesale defections. When those draft notices go out, we might as well send along Canadian travel brochures. As humanitarian as this move may have seen to Carter, we are sorry to see his administration off to a bad start. Let's hope his first mistake is his last. And why not?



willmotts and why-nots

David J. Willmott, Editor

Unemployment fund goes bankrupt

Our state unemployment fund will become bankrupt around the middle of February. We have spent its billion dollar cushion it sat comfortably on less than one year ago. Payments will not stop for those who are entitled to it under its provisions. The fund will borrow interest-free loans from the federal government to continue to operate.

The bankruptcy is an indication of the dire financial and economic condition of New York State. We suffer an unusually large percent of unemployment due to our faltering economy. This is not the only cause.

The system itself has contributed greatly to its own demise. It lacks incentive for those who are unemployed to return to work. Recipients receive up to \$95.00 per week free and clear. They are

eligible for a year and a quarter. To become eligible a person only has to work twenty-six weeks.

The system discourages an employer from protesting an employee's receiving benefits even though the employee does not deserve assistance. It is rampant with cheating and little is done to stop it. You know people who receive unemployment compensation who are capable, but refuse to work. You know of others who supplement their benefits by working off the books. They take these jobs from people who are legitimately looking for work.

The mechanics of the system are self-destructing. It has no reason to keep within its budget. If it has spent all available funds legitimately raised, it just goes into the federal trough. The system is

replenished by interest-free loans without anybody worrying about how they will be paid back.

Today's unemployment system is another form of welfare. It is rapidly drawing our state and country down the tube. The original purpose of an unemployment fund was meaningful and commendable. It was meant to aid temporarily those who were unemployed, through no fault of their own. We now encourage non-productivity. This results in fewer jobs and further unemployment.

You pay for this system. It comes right out of your pocket. Money taken from your em-

ployer is less money he has to pay you for working and producing. This cost must be passed on to you by a higher cost of all purchases.

Our state and federal leaders are aware of the abuses and the unproductivity this system causes. They do nothing about it. You have indicated you are satisfied with the way the system works. This system will continue to go on and grow worse until you demand it be changed.

It is up to you to let your state and federal representatives know you are tired of working so others can live off the sweat of your brow. And why not?

Rock the Republican?

In retiring from the Vice-Presidency, Rockefeller reminisced if he had followed Governor Harriman's advice and changed his registration from Republican to Democrat, he could have been President. The irony of this is it's probably true. Both Rockefeller and the Republican Party would have been better off. Rockefeller persisted this fraud being a Republican in registration by acting and carrying out Liberal-Democratic policies and philosophies. This deception led to a deep split in the Republican Party, and has left them in utter disarray.

The voters no longer can vote for a philosophy of government. The system of checks and balances created by different political philosophies has been lost. Both parties currently reflect a great degree of sameness in their ideologies. The voter finds it difficult to make a clear choice. Our leaders are denied a sense of direction from the voters on what way they want this country to go. Hopefully with Rockefeller's retirement there can be a re-establishment of the basic philosophies our parties represent. And why not?

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Help our birds survive

This is the severest winter we have experienced in Suffolk in over a decade. It has raised havoc with business, family and social lives, and it has been devastating to the birds and wildfowl that winter here. We'll survive, but many of our feathered friends will not.

Ducks and geese have been hit the hardest. During the last ten years, with the change in our winters, large flocks of ducks and geese have changed their migration patterns and have wintered here on Long Island. They depend upon the winter wheat and rye planted as a cover crop in our farm fields and open bays, rivers and ponds as a source of food.

A persistent freeze, and unusually large and lasting quantities of snow have turned these refuges into barren wastelands.

Ducks, geese, and other bird life are reported to be dying of starvation in droves. Most birds are too weak at this time, from lack of food, to move any great distance. They must now depend upon our kindness to survive.

We encourage everyone to save their vegetable greens, even potato skins and stale bread. Take it to the nearest open water. Throw it out on the ice or on the banks where our wildfowl can find it. If you can afford it, buy whole cracked corn or bird seed and distribute it.

Sportsmen's clubs throughout the area are seeking donations and attempting to raise funds for this purpose. Your donation would be greatly appreciated and would help save our wildfowl population.

It is sad to see the Department of Conservation and the U.S. Department of Interior, which has milked millions of dollars from sportsmen through licensing and fees, not coming to the aid of the wildfowl.

Sportsmen are told the money they pay for the privilege of hunting is used for conservation purposes. We are witnessing what could be a massive kill of wildfowl, and yet to our knowledge we know of no feeding efforts being performed by either the state or the federal government to save these birds.

This should be cause enough for our state and federal legislators to investigate both of these departments.

Just how much money contributed by sportsmen is actually being spent for real conservational purposes?

This is an argument for another day.

If our wildfowl are to be saved, it will be through the efforts of people who care. Won't you do your part to help? And why not?

willmotts and why-nots

David J. Willmott, Editor



Dear Otis,

Prior to the election, you mentioned if there was a Democratic Congress and a Democratic President, you would probably have a much better chance to have funds appropriated to stabilize the Moriches and Shinnecock Inlets.

Well Otis, it now looks like you are in the driver's seat. You are a senior Democrat representing the First Congressional District. You are a mighty important member of the House Ways and Means Committee that controls the budget and the purse strings. Our President Jimmy Carter is sure enough a Democrat.

Last time we looked, the inlets were still there. In fact, Mother Nature intends to widen Shinnecock quite a bit.

The jetty on the western end has all but disappeared. What used to be a stable beach and dunes, protected by rock, is now a nice little bay about five acres in size. As the waves wash in, it grows day by day.

About mid-March, around the full moon, you may lose a little bit of your district. Don't worry about it too much. The first good storm should only wipe out the parking lot, the town commercial marina, the Coast Guard navigation light, and if it blows hard enough, a private marina or two. You shouldn't lose more than a handful

of voters; they're probably Republicans.

It's the storms after that you have to watch out for. It won't take long, once the jetty is gone, for the inlet to widen out and shoal up.

Commercial fishing businesses will be finished and so will sport fishing. Even a seasoned helmsman like yourself will not dare navigate this death trap.

Next summer is the one bothering me. Without that inlet, business is going to shrink. You know how unpleasant those Republicans get about that.

Making matters worse will be those New York Democrats who have boats and property in the

area. They will be down everybody's back demanding to know why our Congressman can't get something needed done. There is going to be a hell of a scene. I will bet they hear about it all the way over on Block Island on a Saturday night.

Otis, how about giving it an old down east Yankee try? See if you can nudge those good old boys at the Corps of Engineers into action.

Sitting where you are, you have a big stick. We all know when you hold the purse strings in government you hold the power.

How about it, Otis? And why not?

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