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Many publications spend this amount -- and more -- in billing their readers. We choose not to go through an elaborate individual billing system but use the money that normally would go to cover such costs to improve the news content of our newspaper.

When you think of it, \$5 a year for a weekly newspaper is a bargain today. This \$5 investment in Suffolk Life helps pay the people needed to record and report honestly on the workings of government, to photograph and publish coverage of your clubs' activities and of life in Suffolk. In just this week's edition of Suffolk Life alone there is a number you can call

to receive a free carton of cigarettes which, in itself, more than covers the cost of your annual subscription.

Besides the news, Suffolk Life brings you, each week, money-saving messages from local retailers and one of the largest classified ad sections of any weekly newspaper in Suffolk County. Suffolk Life has, in the more than 20 years of its existence, fought more battles than any weekly newspaper to harness the cost of government and control taxation.

Suffolk Life is your watchdog. We are a combination of an ombudsman and a Ralph Nader. To continue to be effective, we need to have everyone subscribe. The \$5 that you invest in your annual subscription gives you more value than any other investment you can make. Although our system is unorthodox, we hope you will take it seriously. Please sit down today, clip the bill off the front cover, fill it out and send it in with your \$5. As you count on us each week, we are counting on you this week. Thank you.

And why not?

The Case Against Regulation

Want clean air? Then we will have to regulate things that cause pollution.

Based on this simple premise, downstate drivers face a mandatory annual inspection of automobile emissions effective Jan. 1, 1981. But this is only where the story begins.

The federal government's Environmental Protection Agency mandates that special sections of the nation develop an emissions testing program to meet EPA specifications. New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, in conjunction with the state Department of Environmental Control, chose one system and one manufacturer to supply all the machines. The machines themselves provide a highly sophisticated analysis of the emissions being produced by automobiles, but they don't stop here. They also work as a tune-up system to aid in the repair of the car, but it doesn't stop here either, and this is the frightening part.

Using the federal mandates as a weapon, the state has made these machines a costly black box to help Big Brother spy on the average

citizen. The machine records all kinds of data that have absolutely nothing to do with emission control. These data are gathered and fed into a bigger computer so Big Brother up in Albany can keep track of every car registered in the state, its condition, its mileage and its operator.

We question the need for a computer to do simple pass-fail auto emission tests. Even if there is a valid reason for the use of a computer, we question why service station operators were not allowed to buy a single machine to perform this function. A single-function mechanism could have been purchased at a cost savings of approximately \$3,000. This also would have eliminated the \$100-per-month service fee which is being charged not only to keep the machine running properly but to collect the data that is fed into Big Brother's spy network.

This auto emission plan is the direct result of the lack of leadership by the governor of this state. It is Hugh Carey's black box. There is a good chance the new administration coming into office in Washington will

eliminate the requirements for this machine, for it is expected to deregulate many of the programs foisted on the American public over the last decade. Even the state environmental officials admit such a hodgepodge network of emissions requirements will be ineffective in controlling pollution. Much of the so-called bad air reaching the New York metropolitan area comes from areas that currently are unaffected by the federal emissions standards. The state DEC admits that its experts have tested air on a regular basis only as far east as Babylon, yet even at Montauk and Orient Points drivers are required to participate under this ludicrous arrangement.

This whole system stinks, from the selection of the sole supplier to the

added-on capabilities of spying on the citizens, to the phony argument that emissions testing will clean up the environment. Of course, the financing of the system is not being borne by the state. It will be paid by the motorist; first, in having to pay 100 percent more to have his car inspected; second, to have repairs done that will not last on most modern cars; and third, the ultimate, that the Department of Motor Vehicles and the DEC sidestep the question of mandatory replacement of a catalytic system which can cost anywhere between \$200 to \$800. We hope that soon after the Reagan administration is inaugurated it will eliminate the requirement for these nonsensical tests.

And why not?

The Plight Of Vietnam Vets

The plight of the Vietnam veteran is unique in American history. Never before have those who responded to a call to service in the armed forces of our nation been treated so shabbily.

Participants, through no fault of their own in an unpopular military action, the Vietnam veterans received no glory as returning heroes. Rather, they all too often were looked down by too many of our citizens, and received far less than their fair share of the benefits which have been handed out to veterans of other military actions.

A case in point: many Vietnam veterans suffer not only the traumatic aftereffects of active service in front-line fighting, but also continued threats to their very lives -- and horrible effects on their children -- as a result of chemical spraying in Vietnam to defoliate many sectors of that country. Untold thousands of American servicemen were exposed to Agent Orange, a defoliant that is suspected of causing cancer and birth defects in the offspring of Vietnam vets.

A recent federal court ruling paved the way for Vietnam veterans and their families to sue as a group to recover for Agent Orange damage. That's good news. That ruling also stipulated those suits could be lodged only against the chemical companies that manufactured the Agent Orange defoliant, not the United States government, which ordered its use. That strikes us as an easy way for the government to sidestep responsibility in the matter. That's wrong.

Those who suffer from the Agent Orange ordeal tell us the government is less than cooperative in providing the details of Vietnam service to veterans who seek legal action to cover health problems they now endure. Some requests for such information have brought the response that it is unavailable because it is still "classified information." Which is another way for the government to cover its tracks.

Vietnam Veterans of America, a non-profit national veterans' organization organized to help the Vietnam vet, has said: "Until now the only Vietnam veterans who got any respect were those who came home in a box." That's a terrible indictment of the attitude of this country and one which we, as its citizens, should not accept nor permit to continue.

It's time the Vietnam veteran received the respect of the nation they fought for, whether that action was just or unjust, popular or unpopular.

An encouraging note is the fact State Assemblyman John Behan of Montauk is being seriously considered for a top position in the Veterans Administration in Washington by President-elect Ronald Reagan. Behan's appointment would be good news for Vietnam vets, for Behan is one himself. He lost his legs in that conflict. He knows from personal experience the problems faced by a Vietnam vet and we're confident would help elevate the status of these veterans to a position of respect.

And why not?

For The Birds

The recent cold snap that solidly froze up most lakes, and even the bays, prompts us to ask our readers to remember our wildfowl.

The ducks and geese that winter on Long Island depend upon open water for survival. Most of the ducks and geese obtain a good portion of their food from the water they inhabit. The rest they get in the fields by eating grains that have been missed in picking and the cover crops farmers plant to keep the dust down.

If we get a major snowstorm, which covers these fields, and the lakes, rivers and bays are frozen, hundreds of thousands of ducks and geese will starve to death. The only thing that will save them will be a massive feeding program by the

citizens who care. We encourage those who do to dump whole or cracked corn, rye or wheat along the edges of whatever water is open. If you can't put out the feed yourself, many of the sportsmen's clubs in the area will be conducting a feeding program and they would greatly appreciate contributions of cash or grains.

The Great South Bay Waterfowlers Association, over the past few years, has conducted a substantial feeding program. If you wish to make a cash contribution, you can mail a check to the Association in care of P.O. Box 36, Brightwaters, N.Y. 11718. We hope everyone will help feed the millions of birds that winter over here.

And why not?

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SUFFOLK LIFE

and Suffolk County Life
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Mid Hampton
Westhampton
Moriches

Mastic, Shirley
Patchogue
Medford
Sayville, Oakdale
Ronkonkoma
Centereach

Selden
Coram
Rocky Point
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The Welfare Monkey

Senator D'Amato campaigned from Niagara to Montauk on getting the welfare monkey off productive New York State workers' backs. During his campaign D'Amato offered facts indicating that an average welfare family taking advantage of all the various programs receives in cash and services the equivalent of \$18,000 after taxes.

Today, as has been the situation for almost a decade, welfare recipients receive more here in New York State than they do in the rest of the nation. We not only pay more in flat grants but in a host of other welfare programs from both federal and state levels.

Welfare recipients are able to live better than the great majority of working taxpayers. This has led to a huge migration of people from other states to New York. They come by the thousands to get on New York State's welfare dole.

Basic welfare grants themselves have not been raised during the last six years. But many new programs have been instituted, such as fuel allotment, and others have been increased as costs have risen such as medical charges. Governor Carey, in his 1981 "State of the State" address, took this into consideration. Carey recommended that the basic welfare grants allow the highest in the nation be increased 21 percent. He advocated a 10 percent increase this year and a 10 percent increase in 1982 which, when compounded, amounts to a 21 percent hike.

We understand Carey's concern for the poor. But we have more feeling for the working poor, the great majority of the taxpayers in this state whose total pre-tax family income is substantially less than what can be achieved by those on welfare.

The average family of four combined income of husband, wife and other contributors state-wide amounts to less than \$14,000. The net income they take home after taxes and other deductions averages under \$200 per week. Out of this they must provide, without subsidy, their own housing. They must buy, without the aid of food stamps, the daily necessities. They receive no fuel assistance; instead, they pay taxes on what they buy. The only aid in

clothing is hand-me-downs from family, neighbors and friends. Their children do not receive a free hot lunch -- it's peanut butter and jelly in a brown bag. Their medical bills must either be paid by themselves or through insurance payments that they must budget for each week. The list of what they pay for themselves without assistance is endless.

It is a fact of life that living in New York State is expensive. Many productive New York State residents have painfully made the decision to abandon this area and live in what they consider less desirable places because the need for fuel is lower, energy costs less and the tax burden is substantially reduced.

It has not only been productive workers who have been painfully led to this decision, but businesses and industries as well. Even the most liberal of state officials concluded that the New York business exodus was brought about by the enormous cost of government and the taxes that had to be raised to subsist here. One of the largest contributing cost factors is New York State's overly generous welfare benefits.

As state revenues have increased because we lacked an indexing of our taxes to inflation, some percentage of business and personal taxes have been reduced. This has helped temporarily stop the outflow of New York State productivity. An increase in welfare benefits at this time will start this spiral rolling again and cause a loss of more businesses and more jobs, which are the only things that produce revenues for the government itself.

New York State's welfare benefits should be no higher than the nation's average. There should be no incentive for people to migrate to New York for welfare. Carey should be more concerned about the working poor than he is about the non-productive of our society. His lack of concern for those is driving the working poor from the state and that is wrong. Too bad it is the supervisors up for election this year and not the governor. But you can still write him and let him know your feelings. You would be surprised how sensitive he is to the voters' feelings.

And why not?

No one has to remind you that there is snow and ice on the roads. They are slippery and deceiving. Automobile operation is regulated by numerous laws, but the single most important law can't be legislated, and that is common sense.

During this past week, we noted some horrendous examples of lack of common sense by drivers. We watched people pass not only on the left but on the right. We saw folks driving far faster than the conditions dictated as either safe or sane. We saw drivers speeding to beat a traffic light, then attempt to stop as it turned red -- as they normally might -- but ending up

in accidents.

Even though the roads may appear to be dry, patches of ice lying in the shadows are booby traps, waiting for the unconcerned operator.

Please, for your own sake and for others, drive as little as you have to and when you do, assume that even if the road looks clear that it is glazed with ice and potentially could contribute to your own death or someone else's. The mortician doesn't care whether it was an act of nature or an accident of nature's damn fool that caused death.

And why not?

Readers' Opinion

"Keep Two-Year Terms"

Dear Mr. Willmott:

I read your article entitled "Keep Two-Year Terms" relating to the Supervisors of Suffolk County. I agree that the recall provisions in New York State are weak and that it would seem beneficial to the public to have the shortest possible term for an elected official.

There are many subtleties to this issue, however, that I think should be looked into before you give your final negative imprimatur to the four-year suggestion. One of these is that the Chief Executive in Town Government is the one that should have the authority over the efficient functioning of departments and all personnel within that town and that there should be some continuity for a longer period of time so these departments can work efficiently. In the case of towns, however, you will find that the legislative branch, the town councilmen, are the ones that have the four-year term and have far greater continuity than does the Chief Executive.

In my personal opinion in my observations of town governments within the last 15 years in Suffolk County, the two-year term for supervisor accounts for the major reason why towns are unable to follow a reasonable plan for industrialization, a reasonable plan for environmental protection, and a plan for meeting the critical functions of town government that are concerned with the health, safety and welfare of the people. For example, in Islip Town where we had five supervisors in 10 years' time during the 60's, it was the greatest period of retrogression the town has ever gone through in all of its history. That was the decade of land scandals, the decade of declining housing, the creation of slums, abandonment of downtown areas and a complete disregard for the recreation needs and the protection of local resources in Islip. Contrasted with that was the period of time that former Supervisor Peter Cohalan was Chief Executive. During that eight year period we were able to make the greatest progressive strides in the history of Islip Town. The notion that a short term provides for greater accountability is not an unreasonable one, except that you have to trade that off with the notion that a short term causes the inability for a supervisor to plan ahead and stabilize a local government to the point where it can be most responsive to the people.

It is true that Peter Cohalan ran every two years and that he had to be accountable to the people every other year, but the fact remains and Peter Cohalan himself will tell you that the funny season, the nonsense that goes along with an election every other year, detracts from the time that should be put into resolving serious and long range problems that require the time and energy of a Chief Executive without the encumbrance of having to run for office every other year.

I think it should be pointed out to your readers that the supervisors who discussed the idea of a four-year term did so not out of selfishness because it was suggested that the legislation be effective at least four years from the present time. They in fact have done so from a position of experience knowing that their towns and the townspeople suffer more by the fact that a supervisor can only perform for one year and then has to engage in all of the political activities that are necessary for re-election in the following year. As long as that system prevails, we will not have a strong and effective local government that can respond to today's demand. Those governments were good for the horse and buggy days, but they no longer are satisfactory for municipalities the size of the Town of Islip which is well over a third of a million people in 84,000 or more dwelling units.

It would be just as absurd to consider the Brookhaven Town Supervisor who has a two-year term and is presiding over a municipality whose population size is equivalent to the size of the state of Wyoming and the state of Alaska, to say that he should be subjected to a political process every other year that will take away his attention from vital problems.

A four-year term would only mean that people would be more selective in their electing of a chief executive, and that also a four-year term would mean that candidates who have potential and who are dedicated may be willing to run for office. I think that a four-year term would draw better quality people and will make the voters far more responsive in their choice of a chief executive.

Very truly yours,
Michael A. LoGrande
Islip Town Supervisor

"The Federal Clean Air Act"

Dear Mr. Willmott:

I applaud the article on emissions testing by Barbara Selvin which appeared in your paper on Wednesday, Dec. 17.

This new program mandated by the Federal Clean Air Act which calls for testing all cars for emissions is a program which affects us all.

The need, therefore, for extensive public coverage is vital to the success of that program. In that light, Barbara Selvin's article, which was both comprehensive and

professional, should be applauded and is a welcomed service to the citizens of Suffolk County.

As one final note, if a motorist has any difficulty finding a station to inspect his or her vehicle, they can call toll-free 800-342-3823 for a list of stations in their neighborhood.

Sincerely,
James P. Melton
Commissioner
State of New York Department of Motor Vehicles

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Moriches

Mastic, Shirley
Patchogue
Medford
Sayville, Oakdale
Ronkonkoma
Centereach

Selden
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Rocky Point
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Auto Test Is A Trojan Horse

There have been numerous disturbing aspects regarding the mandatory auto emissions test for the downstate area. Now that the program is getting underway we are even more deeply disturbed about how the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles is trying to slide this program into existence. It's claiming the public.

The DMV is being cute. It is claiming the first year's test is free. Even if you have something wrong with your car and it's belching pollutants, you will not be ordered to have your auto repaired. It claims it's "a test you can't fail." If it has no intention of cleaning up the air this year, why did it insist that service stations each spend more than \$6,000 for the auto emissions test equipment, and you as a driver be required to pay 100 percent more for your annual automotive inspection?

The reason is quite obvious when you understand all the facts. The DMV is trying to slide what it knows is going to be a highly objectionable program into existence. So to speak, to get the public used to the program before it imposes penalties. Next year the standards will be raised. The DMV has set an optimum goal which it wants to achieve by 1985. Twenty-

five percent of the cars will be failed each year for the next three years. After this the standards will be raised 25 percent higher, meaning more and more cars will fail and be required to have expensive repairs performed in order to be registered.

The real bombshell, we suspect, will be when it's announced to the public that catalytic converters, costing \$200 to \$800, will have to be replaced. Catalytic converters are the anti-pollution devices the federal government insisted be placed on all vehicles over the last five years. It is reported that these devices "burn out" after a motorist has run two tanks of non-leaded through the engine. During the recent gas shortage many motorists both knowingly and unknowingly used leaded gas, as it was the only gas available. If the federal and state governments are allowed to continue with this program, we foresee in the future every automobile owner facing an annual \$200 to \$800 catalytic converter replacement fee. Motorists should not be lulled by the state's slimy soft-sell: nothing in this world is free. Nor do you get by for long in Big Brother's world by passing a test you have really failed.

And why not?

tide and wave action. Kammerer claims that if the steel sheets are removed the sand will be washed out rapidly and we will have to do the project all over again. Even more ludicrous is the Corps' insistence that the road the contractor built be removed. Kammerer claims that if the contractor is forced to remove the road; the county will just have to replace it. He needs to have a road there to get equipment out to the beach to maintain it.

Moriches Inlet also is a favorite haunt for naturalists and sportsmen.

Without the road, the inlet is only accessible if you have a four-wheel drive vehicle, a luxury most working taxpayers can't afford. A road out to the inlet would give them access to the beach and to the good fishing that has traditionally been found there.

Kammerer can't do much more than holler. We expect the "kid" from Island Park who is now Long Island's Senator will have some influence. How about it, Al? Straighten up those boys down there in Washington.

And why not?

Indexing Does Work

The Wall Street Journal had an interesting article last week. A study had been made which indicated that indexing of taxes does work. The researchers concluded that in the states where indexing had been adopted, bureaucratic waste was substantially cut, budgets were reduced -- and before spending could be increased, legislators had to go to the public for tax increase approval.

New York State and our federal government must adopt tax indexing legislation. Indexing takes the benefit of inflation away from the govern-

ment. It allows taxpayers and corporations to adjust their income tax payments to reflect the reduction in the value of the dollar caused by inflation. It stops governments from receiving unauthorized, unlegislated increases in revenues which they then squander and create additional inflation with. We hope our new Congress will look seriously at indexing. It is imperative that it does. Our state legislature should do the same.

And why not?

God Speed President Reagan

Today we have a new President. He takes the helm of this country at a time when the waters could not be more turbulent. Both our nation's and the individual's economic survival is the number one priority.

We have watched and followed Reagan for the last 16 years. We have liked what he has had to say. We hope Congress will give him an opportunity to put his theories to test.

Reagan can be one of the greatest Presidents this country ever has had. Reagan has the luxury if he chooses of being a single-term President. He can perform from day one without the fear of having to run for re-election.

We are extremely impressed by

most of his cabinet choices. They are hard-nosed, proven executives. Most are able to afford the substantial cut in pay they were required to take. They have taken on the obligation and responsibility because they do feel a strong desire and need to use their talents for the good of this country. In order to bring this country back on its proper course, sacrifices will be made.

If Reagan lives up to his image he will first look toward those in government before he looks to the people. We offer Ronald Reagan our congratulations and God speed to do what has to be done.

And why not?

Open Letter To Senator Al D'Amato

Dear Al:

Hope you have had time to become settled in office. As we discussed during your campaign last year, Long Island desperately needs representation in Washington. Washington had to be stopped from wasting hard-earned taxpayers' money and creating hardships just to satisfy bureaucratic nonsense. Okay, you are up at bat, you have your first challenge and it is a beaut.

The Army Corps of Engineers, in connection with the state and county governments, has undertaken the rebuilding of the barrier beach east of Moriches Inlet which was washed out

by a winter storm last March. The contractor sunk steel sheeting as a bulkhead to stop the sand from being eroded away as it was being filled in. The contractor also built a road out and over the washed-out area for the trucks to use while they were hauling the sand.

Spoke with Rudy Kammerer, commissioner of public works, the other day. He was blowing his cork. The Army Corps of Engineers is insisting the contractor remove the bulkheading and the road.

That's damn fool nonsense. The bulkhead will help stabilize the beach, as it will provide a barrier against the

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Readers' Opinion

'The myriad of regulations'

Dear Mr. Willmott:

Taxes - property taxes in particular - emerged as key concern of the voter in this election year. Yet, many are unaware that there is a battle that has been building over legislation that could directly affect their property taxes: revenue sharing.

Too often in the debate about general revenue sharing, Congress loses sight of the fact that it and the various federal agencies mandate millions of dollars of programs, rules and regulations. Most of these federal and state mandates apply to local governments, like the Town of Brookhaven, as direct orders, even though the state or the federal government never received any federal aid.

Thus, for the most local governments the primary source of complying with these mandates is general revenue sharing.

Federal and state mandates significantly have eroded local budget flexibility and control. They limit local decision-making power, shrink already limited tax revenues, and overburden administrative cost requirements of individual programs. Federal involvement usually means added paperwork, delays and extra cost for staffing

to comply with the myriad of regulations.

At the same time, federal taxes of every kind are siphoning off much of the available tax base. As we all are becoming aware, there is a limit to the total tax burden that can be imposed on homeowners and the federal and state governments take far more than their fair share of the tax base.

That is why the battle for revenue sharing is important. General revenue sharing is one small way in which some of those tax revenues can be returned to the localities and ease the burden of soaring property taxes.

Even more importantly, revenue sharing has few "strings" attached and local government, and not Washington, can make the decision on how it is spent.

Thus, we need to send a clear message to our Congressmen and Senators - reauthorize revenue sharing; it is the best investment the Congress can make in America.

Sincerely,
Edward P. Romaine

Editor's Note: Congress re-authorized revenue sharing earlier this month.

Thank God They're Home

The 52 Americans who have been held prisoners of war by the Iranians are now home. The deal that finally got them out returned to Iran the assets that were seized in retaliation for their barbarous act and breach of international law, for kidnapping and having held these American men and women. Right down to the last moment, the Iranians showed their lack of civilization by waiting until after President Carter had left office before releasing the P.O.W.'s.

There is much speculation as to what Carter gave away over and above the property of the Iranians. There are those who feel the Reagan administration should live up to the agreement reached by the Carter administration and give to the Iranians everything that was promised. They claim it's a matter of American honor. Bull. The Iranians kidnapped American citizens. The agreement is nothing more than

ransom. If a child was kidnapped from a parent, ransom demanded to be paid after release, you can bet your sweet bippy that once the release had been secured not an additional penny would be paid.

The Iranians are nothing more than uncivilized thugs. They deserve to be treated as a country of common criminals. Reagan was elected by a landslide because the American people were tired of being perceived as weak-kneed imbeciles. President Reagan can give the American people the boost they need and set a tone for his administration by telling the Iranians to go scratch. What they have in their hands now is all they are going to get. They had better not turn their backs because we are going to take back what we gave them plus anything else they have. There never has been a time when Americans needed more to talk tough, act tough and be tough. And why not?

Physician, Heal Thyself

Some 25 years ago I was in a discussion with a gentleman of Scandinavian descent who had come to this country and established a greenhouse and small florist shop. He was bitterly advocating socialized medicine. One of his parents had just passed away after suffering from cancer. He felt the doctors kept his parent alive until he and his family had been wiped out financially, then allowed this person to die. He advocated the socialization, the government operation, of all medical facilities. He maintained that doctors looked at their patients as nothing more than money machines that, once broke, they turned their backs on. Needless to say, I, being of a conservative bent, argued against the socialization of medicine. I felt the emotional and financial strain he had undergone had brought him to false conclusions.

Twenty-five years ago, doctors still knew their patients and cared for them. They were family friends. They even made house calls, particularly in emergencies or when going out into the cold could aggravate the illness

the person was suffering from. Today, we have to agree with our old Scandinavian friend. The practice of medicine, for too many doctors, has stopped being a humanitarian practice and become a cold-blooded business that is designed to be monopolistic and to enrich the practitioner without regard to human feelings.

A good portion of our Social Security taxes are used to fund Medicaid. These taxes amount to almost 20 percent of every dollar we make, when the employee and employer contributions are combined. In addition, most of us today must purchase health insurance to avoid being financially wiped out. The cost of this insurance eliminates five to 10 percent of our disposable income. Yet, even with up to 25 percent of the money we earn going for health insurance, we still are gouged by many doctors who demand fees over and above what our insurance covers. Worse yet, the fees for their services are on the doctors' terms and under the doctors' conditions, doled out when they feel like practicing their

profession, not when the need is there if it might inconvenience their way of life. The strong argument against socialized medicine is the quality of service free-enterprise doctors are supposed to give. Yet, with doctors banded together in group practices -- which are commonly referred to as factories -- how much personal or quality care do we receive? Does it make any difference whether these factories are run by the government or by self-serving businessmen who

have a monopoly on living and dying?

You probably have your own horror story of mistreatment by the medical profession. We have ours. Why not let us know how you have been mistreated. Collectively it won't make a pretty picture but it may be what is needed to awaken the public as a community and put an end to the greed and the insensitivity the medical profession has made its purpose. And why not?

Paying For What You Get

More than a decade ago the East End voted not to join the Suffolk County Police in a county-wide police force. East Enders traditionally have cherished home rule, including the right to form and operate their own police force. Even though the residents of the East End voted to maintain their own police force, they ended up with the county detective force to handle and investigate serious crimes. This was in addition to their own town detective forces and the New York State police detectives which serve this area.

In the last two years, west end legislators have attempted to double the cost to the East End for the 7th Squad by insisting the East End pick up a portion of the county-wide administrative costs of the police department. This situation came to a head recently when the East End supervisors announced they will no longer call upon the 7th Squad for normal services. They have offered to buy, at competitive rates, special

services when needed from the county police force.

We applaud the East End supervisors' decision. The Suffolk County Police and the west end legislators were attempting a power play that, if successful, would have led to the elimination of the local forces. Local detectives in combination with the New York State detectives can handle any major crimes. The presence of the county detectives is a duplication of services that is not justifiable. East Enders can look forward to a reduction in taxes rather than the increases that would have been caused by forcing the East Enders to assume administrative costs of the Suffolk County Police, from whom they neither want nor receive services.

The sentiment is still strong, in fact, growing, for a separate county on the East End. The East End does not want or need west end interference or the taxes that go with it. And why not?

Readers' Opinion

Dear Mr. Willmott:

Your recent editorial about a Board of Health action to protect the groundwater quality touches upon a very important issue: "When does public health become unaffordable?"

Of course no one denies the need to weigh economic consequences against public health benefits. Cost benefit analysis is a crucial planning tool for today's public health official.

In this particular case, however, the weighing of pros and cons become somewhat more difficult because not all information is at hand leaving us with, as you say, "some degree of uncertainty and imperfect knowledge." But there is ample evidence that our groundwaters are indeed vulnerable to contamination from high density land development. The only question that arises is what specific long-term health consequences will result from low concentrations of certain contaminants. But for many pollutants the threat to health is both well known and well documented. To ignore the obvious public health peril presented by unplanned development over the few remaining pristine groundwater supplies in this county is more than imprudent, it is downright dangerous.

Yes, there will be economic consequences, but these consequences fall on both sides of the issue. In the final analysis, the vigor of any economy is determined more by the general factors governing American business: the cost of energy, an inhospitable tax climate, the availability or lack of a trained work force, inflation, transportation or the supply of money than it is by regulations required to protect the people's health. It should be clear to the citizenry that nothing is more inimical to the economic health of a region than a reputation for an inadequate or contaminated water supply.

By requiring low density development over those areas identified by the 208 study as key groundwater sources, a very decisive public

health need is met -- the preservation of a clean drinking water supply. Contrary to the claims of your editorial, the new Board of Health action (Article 6) will not mandate that most of Suffolk County be sewered. Article 6 will deter the development of extensive and expensive sewer projects. Based on the "208" study, low density approach, Article 6 will actually obviate the need for widespread sewerage. Indeed, if Article 6 or something similar is not adopted, not only will our remaining pristine water supply be endangered, but unplanned, high density development over the aquifer will also ultimately force the construction of sewers as the only way out.

And for the more skeptical economists among us, it should be reassuring to recall the words of Henry Walcott, President of the Massachusetts Board of Health and pioneer in the development of pure water supplies, in 1886: "No Country (or community) has yet been ruined by expenses incurred in protecting the public health." That statement was true then; it is true now.

Sincerely,
David Harris, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner
Department of Health Services
Suffolk County

Dear Mr. Willmott:

I would like to thank the Mastic Ambulance for its prompt respond on Dec. 27 at 3:30 a.m. to take care of my wife and taking her to the hospital, as she suffered a heart attack.

I am glad that I live in Mastic where the ambulance service is excellent, compared with New York City, and some other towns that don't take the ambulance service seriously.

Please publish this open "thank you."

Respectfully,
Charles Fornsel
Mastic

USPS 098-300

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and Suffolk County Life

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