

The Year Ahead

A new year is upon us. As 1986 becomes reality, it is a time of reflection and a time of hope. Serious problems loom in the days ahead, problems which could have a major impact on all the residents of Suffolk County. How history records the events of the new year will depend greatly on:

THE FATE OF SHOREHAM: 1986 would appear to be the year that the fate of Shoreham will be decided. The controversial nuclear power plant threatens the future in many ways. In February, on February 13 to be exact, the Federal Emergency Management Agency will hold a partial test of the LILCO evacuation plan, devised by the utility in the absence of county and state participation.

The battle lines are clear. More than seventy percent of the residents of Suffolk oppose this facility. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Department of Energy and big business are in support. Our projection is the partial test scheduled by FEMA will be declared a success, and the NRC will license the plant, based on the "assumption" that local officials will participate in the event of an emergency. They will use as a basis for that assumption a letter written by Peter F. Cohalan, who suddenly switched from the side of the people to the camp of LILCO. Cohalan now says he's against the paper test, but has yet to rescind his damaging letter. The matter of Shoreham and its fake test will undoubtedly go to court, and, if justice exists, the people will prevail.

WE'LL GET OUR LICKS IN '86: The new year will bring a new opportunity to evaluate the performance of our elected state officials. We will have an opportunity to pass judgement at the polls on the accomplishments, both good and bad, of our state assembly members and our state senators. Some of the incumbents face big problems. They played follow the leader instead of being a leader for the public. Some

bills that passed shouldn't have, and others that deserved passage died in committee, because the leader's will prevailed and our incumbents were too weak. If they didn't have the drive in '85, we'll get our licks in '86.

LEGISLATURE'S FIRST TEST: The Suffolk County Legislature will face a test of character in the first days of the new year. While the selection of the legislature's presiding officer is usually decided in the office of the political leadership of the majority party, a unique blend of two Republicans and eight Democrats could well change that this year.

Legislator Gregory Blass will sit as the new presiding officer if this combination holds together, but political pressure has been intense and anything could happen before the votes are counted. Blass, a political maverick, is not the choice of the leadership, which is particularly incensed that the Democrats will have a say in the selection for the post.

The public should watch this one closely. The integrity and character of the individual legislators will be spotlighted in the way they vote on this matter. The party hacks will follow the will of the leaders. Those with gumption and integrity will follow their own conscience and vote for a new presiding officer who will represent the views of the electorate rather than the orders of the political leaders. The election of Blass, in our view, will be a victory for the people.

LILCO's only real ally on the legislature, the current Presiding Officer Lou Howard, has reported he is dropping out of contention for the post because the Republican leadership did not give him a ringing endorsement. It's our guess he would jump right back in the ring given half a chance. Two others who have announced their interest in the seat, Legislators Pat Mahoney and Joe Rizzo, would be little better than Howard, considering their track records. While Rizzo has been staunchly anti-Shoreham, he has flipped on a

number of other issues, and Mahoney has become a big question mark on the Shoreham issue and the target of some conflict of interest comments on others.

Will the legislators who claim to stand for good government in their support of Blass be able to withstand the political pressures? Will they vote on behalf of the people for a new leadership that will trim the excessive number of political aides added to the presiding officer's office in recent years, and a change in the rules to return government to the legislators and to the people? Or will they crumble to the demands of the

political leaders? Their votes will provide the answers.

1986 promises to be an interesting year, with some vital issues to be faced. A landfill plan, continued water pollution problems, growth of our areas, soaring electric rates and a host of other problems will test our patience and our wisdom.

Together we will explore these issues, seeking out the solutions which will benefit all. Together we will begin our journey through the days of 1986, hoping they will bring happiness, health and prosperity for all.

And why not?

Letters to the Editor

"We're truly blessed"

The following letter was recently received by Suffolk Life reporter Doreen Ercolano from the family of Marissa Stamatis:

Dear Doreen:

Please forgive me for not writing before Christmas to thank you, but I hope you'll accept my New Year's wishes. The same amount of love and admiration are behind them. We will never be able to repay your kindness and concern. You and the staff at Suffolk Life adopted our family and troubles when no one else wanted to help us. This Christmas was the best! God has given us a miracle - Marissa. Yes, we might have to face the Federal Supreme Court and sell our house, but we're filled only with joy. A house is just four walls. We can replace our house, but never our daughter. We know God will give us the strength to face whatever the New Year brings.

We have received such beautiful, inspiring cards. It is comforting to know others care about our family. As I've said, Marissa and Toby have a natural beauty that shines and illuminates our darkest days and paths. And believe me, there have been many dark days. So many people have pulled together for us because of Suffolk Life, we're truly blessed.

Now we would like to get on with our lives, build new hopes and dreams and hope that we've endured this ordeal so no other person has to go through it. When we are settled, our bills paid, the first way we'll celebrate is to adopt more "special" children. Life is too short not to spend it the way you want to, so no matter if Tim and I never have another house and have to work ten jobs, we're the luckiest, happiest people on earth.

Thank you so very, very much for all your help. I now have every reason in the world to get up in the morning.

With our hearts, prayers and love,
Marissa, Toby, Tim and Lisa

'Summary of its purpose and a reason'

Dear Editor:

In enacting the Long Island Landfill Law (Chapter 299, Laws of 1983) which provides a complete ban on the landfilling of garbage in Nassau and Suffolk counties after December 1990, the New York State Legislature ruled that a landfill ban was necessary to eliminate "a significant threat to the quality of groundwater and, therefore, the quality of drinking water in the counties of Nassau and Suffolk." Although the concept of the law should be applauded by all, it only magnifies the significant problems of solid waste management that are threatening to poison our very way of life. These problems were brought to light by the Long Island Regional Ashfill Board at a recent "informational meeting" held recently at Riverhead High School.

As I listened to the Regional Ashfill Board present a summary of its purpose and a reason for the selection of each proposed site, I saw not only silent rage on the faces of my neighbors in the standing-room-only crowd, but also genuine fear that what these "strangers" were

suggesting would forever change the quality of life that eastern Long Islanders cherish. I, too, felt that same fear, but it wasn't until after the Board "experts" from the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation allowed the local residents to speak that I really became worried.

Democracy provides us freedom of speech, but not necessarily freedom of hearing. As a parent and educator, the term "selective hearing" or only hearing the words you want to hear, quickly came to mind. It became apparent to me that after listening to the local residents and politicians unanimously condemn not only the particular sites chosen but also the concept of a regional ashfill, the Board was determined to find a site. It didn't matter what the people were saying!

Trying to remain objective, I tried to analyze why I came to that conclusion. As a strong advocate of environmental education over the last fourteen years, I was proud of the fact that what I have been teaching to adults

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Another LILCO rate increase

Last week the Public Service Commission awarded LILCO a \$64 million dollar rate increase without any strings attached. The action comes as no surprise. It continues a dismal track record of utility oriented decisions at the expense of the public.

Murray Barbash, the leader of the Citizens for Public Power attended Public Service Commission hearing in Albany. Far from being a novice, Barbash was shocked at some of the comments from Paul Gioia and other commissioners. Some of the logic used for granting LILCO the rate increase was "Long Island is one of the richest areas in the nation, the people can afford the rate increase." As far as putting a limitation on the rate increase being used to further LILCO/Shoreham's cause, one commissioner was heard to say, "They are going to pay for it whether it opens or not. Maybe this will stop them from fighting."

Paul Gioia has been LILCO's best friend in Albany. He has regularly supported whatever the company wants. He is a holdover and could have been replaced at any time the governor so chose. What we cannot understand, and many Long Islanders are asking, if the governor is serious about supporting Long Islanders in the fight against LILCO, why has he kept Gioia on?

From what we understand, the commissioner of the Public Service Commission is a virtual dictator. He controls all staff and support personnel. The other commissioners have limited power, and most go along to get along.

The Public Service Commission does not operate as a protector of

the public. They see their primary mission as keeping the utilities economically healthy, irregardless of the mismanagement by the utilities executives. The Public Service Commission takes their marching orders from the vested financial institutions and establishments. They protect those who invest in utilities without offering protection, care or concern for the ratepayers.

While on the Shoreham Commission we attended a conference in Albany at the P.S.C. offices where they were setting up an economic model to calculate the ramifications of the Shoreham nuclear power plant. This model took into account the ramifications on financial institutions, banks and other security holders. It took into account the effects it would have on taxes. I asked, "aren't you going to develop a scenario that will determine the economic impact on the ratepayers?" I was greeted with a shocked look of amazement, no they did not weigh the impact of the ratepayers.

It is this asinine, perverted mentality that has led to rate increases on top of rate increases, not only for the lighting companies but for the telephone companies as well.

We believe before Governor Cuomo can start his campaign for re-election he must address the reorganization of the P.S.C. Further, he should immediately replace Gioia. As we have suggested before--replace him with Richard Kessell and for the first time in 40 years, residents of New York State will have a true regulator at the helm of the P.S.C.

And why not?

Insult to injury

Congressman William Carney has earned the scorn of those who put him into high office in the way he has represented their interests. In the matter of Shoreham he has cast his lot with LILCO and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, disregarding the concerns of his constituents and their future health. In recent

days he added more insult to that injury by utilizing taxpayer funds to have printed and mailed a piece of propaganda that attempts to offer the people of the First Congressional District an "objective, accurate understanding" as to where Long Island stands on the matter of Shoreham.

Carney starts off with this: "Despite what some would have you believe, the President's promise to me that the federal government would not impose an emergency response plan over the objections of state or local authorities is as valid today as it was the day he gave it over a year ago." Those words are as meaningless as has been Carney's congressional career. Carney knows full well that the president is not going to impose a federal plan, he doesn't have too. Carney knows full well that the federal plan is this: FEMA will hold a very partial test of the LILCO evacuation plan, which will utilize utility workers in place of police and government officials, on February 13. Since the only parts of the plan that will be tested are those that involve LILCO, and since they helped make up the test, and since LILCO is currently rehearsing like mad that which they will be tested on, the FEMA and NRC observers will declare: "You did good. There are a few minor adjustments that have to be made (they have to find some fault, you know) but you passed the test."

Carney's letter declares: "A test is simply the evaluation of an emergency plan, and in no way strips local governments of their authority. The test is a required component of the federal licensing procedure, and could very well prove the contention that Long Island cannot be evacuated." Carney has been asked repeatedly, in this newspaper and by the public, how on earth will this test prove Long Island cannot be evacuated? People will not be evacuated. Children will not be evacuated from their schools. Patients and elderly nursing home patients will not be evacuated. There will be no evacuation traffic. The partial drill being staged by LILCO, FEMA and the NRC is nothing more than a game. A very dangerous game.

We challenge Carney to answer these questions: If you don't move people, how can you test the the flow of traffic? How will you judge the shadow effect of people evacuating far beyond the ten mile zone LILCO stipulates as an evacuation zone. How will this shadow effect impact on the times that LILCO says it will take to move people? How, indeed, will you test these times when you don't move people.

Police department testimony insists LILCO's time estimates are wrong. LILCO insists they are right. How will a test without the movement of people on the limited evacuation routes provide the answers?

Carney declares "It's obvious that no emergency plan could succeed without the participation and cooperation of state or local governments." The courts declare that LILCO does not have the legal authority to take over the powers of the police in directing traffic and other evacuation duties. But Carney knows full well that the NRC, once the February 13 drill is declared a success, is going to approve a full power license on the "assumption" that local governments will participate in the event of an actual emergency. And based on that assumption, the people will be saddled with an unsafe nuclear power facility and an untested evacuation plan. And Carney will have had an important part in helping this scam work.

"The law specifically insulates the review process from political tamperings. But it guarantees that proponents and opponents alike will be afforded an equal opportunity to state their case. To interfere with this would violate some of the most fundamental rights of a free democratic society, that is the right to due process." So says Carney. But Carney knows full well there has been political tampering by and on the side of LILCO and the nuclear industry all along. The Department of Energy, FEMA and the NRC, all the creations of a political system, have been involved in back room meetings devising ways to get Shoreham on line. Carney, himself, has received a lot of money in political contributions from utilities and the nuclear industry. The fundamental rights of a free democratic society don't exist when political finagling and financial greed take precedent over public safety.

Hopefully the public's rights will be upheld in the courts, where this matter is surely going to wind up. In the meantime, we would hope that the next time Carney has the mind to spend taxpayer's dollars on another letter, it would be his letter of resignation. That would well be worth any cost. And why not?

Blass beats bosses

Gregory Blass, an east end legislator, Republican maverick and staunch Shoreham opponent, has beat all the political odds to become the presiding officer of the legislature. We offer him our heartiest congratulations.

We would like to publically acknowledge Legislator Donald Allgrove who provided the necessary Republican support to make this a reality. Allgrove, from Smithtown, has been critized from time to time both by politicians and the press, including Suffolk Life, for switching positions. We understand he was under a constant siege to give up his support of Blass, not only local pressure but pressure right from the White House. Allgrove stood

tall and we congratulate him for having had the courage and the fortitude to do what was right.

Lou Howard, the former presiding officer, joined the eight Democrats in supporting Blass. However, Howard's vote for Blass was more a symbol of his disgust with Michael Blake and the Republican hierarchy.

Republican Chairman Blake seems to be a perpetual loser who has lost all respect and control of the Republican party. Blake, like his predecessor Anthony Prudenti, has gotten caught up in doing the bidding of Peter Cohalan, and Cohalan is wrong more than he is right.

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Moynihan Heard, Where is D'Amato

United States Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan has raised his voice and used his office to represent the people of Long Island. Seventy per cent of the people on Long Island are opposed to the opening of the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant. The federal government is ignoring this majority and is attempting to hold, through F.E.M.A. a let's pretend test of a test that was created by LILCO, not to save people's lives but to provide them with the necessary impetus to obtain a license so that they may charge the public for the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant.

Just about everyone has seen through this farce. The anger is felt from the person on the street to most elected officials. Moynihan wrote President Reagan this past Monday, reminding him of his pledge to Long Islanders that the federal government would not impose an evacuation plan over the objections of local and state governments.

Suffolk County has maintained an evacuation cannot be implemented without loss of life. Suffolk County will not impose a plan on the residents because of this fact. Governor Cuomo has joined the county in this stance.

Moynihan asked President Reagan to live up to his word and order F.E.M.A. to discontinue this farce. It's ironical that a Liberal Democratic United States Senator has to remind a Conservative Republican President of states' rights and the interference by the federal government in local matters. In addition to writing to the President, Moynihan wrote to the head of the U.S. General Accounting office into the legal propriety of the planned test. The head of F.E.M.A. wanted to know why it took this bureaucrat six weeks to answer his first correspondence. Moynihan obviously has heard the voice of the people and is representing those Long Islanders. We congratulate him for being sensitive to our needs.

The other New York United

States Senator is Alphonse D'Amato. You remember him, he was the guy who ran a campaign based upon his being "our last chance for survival." How he singlehandedly would stand up to big government, big business and, being a little person, fight for the rights of little guys.

D'Amato has done anything but fight for us. It has appeared to many that were close to him in the past that once he ascended to the throne of U.S. Senate he perceived himself as a God, not having to worry or care about the needs or wants about those who put him there. He has been repeatedly asked by some who were close to him to come out front, to use his good office to protect the rights of Long Islanders. To intercede with the President, to make him aware how important the Shoreham question is to his constituents. Instead, D'Amato has taken the path of William Carney, and has been silent on the people's behalf.

There is still time for D'Amato to redeem himself by not only coming out strongly in opposition to F.E.M.A.'s attempt to hold a test of a test, but to intercede with the President of the United States and having him order F.E.M.A. to discontinue all efforts to aid and abet the Long Island Lighting Company.

D'Amato recently was quoted as saying he is looking to Long Island for a 100,000 vote plurality this coming November in his re-election bid. D'Amato should be asking himself "why should Long Islanders support me at all? What have I done for them lately?" We believe if D'Amato was to ask himself these questions, and would have the courage to listen to the answers, he might realize he is vulnerable on Long Island no matter who runs against him. Forget 100,000, on his present course he will be lucky to break even.

Alphonse, wherever you are, we are listening, but we don't hear you!

And why not?

Proper Planning Now!

Suffolk County Sheriff Eugene Dooley has launched his new career as sheriff by targeting on the need for additional jail space to ease the overcrowded conditions that currently exist at the present prison. Since the county is in the throes of planning a new court complex in western Suffolk, proper planning would dictate the inclusion of new jail space in those plans. But don't bet on it happening.

The reason is quite simple. The new court complex is not designed to best serve the public. It is being designed to serve the legal profession so that the western lawyers and judges need not travel "all the way out to Riverhead" to ply their profession. They use as the rationale for the new courts the fact that the western Suffolk area contains the most population. That being the case, common sense would indicate the largest percentage of prisoners comes from western Suffolk. Following that logic a bit further, it would make a lot of sense to put the jails where the most prisoners come from.

If you do any kind of travelling on the Long Island Expressway, you will have seen the sheriff's vans and cars transporting prisoners back and forth from the western courts to the eastern jail. This costs the taxpayers a bundle in terms of employeetime, wear and tear on vehicles, and gasoline. Since the county wants more of the jails in the western area, this wasteful expense

is going to increase.

It shouldn't. Now, while the planning is underway for the court complex, is the time to plan the inclusion of jail facilities at the court complex. Planned properly, the jail could handle the western prisoners without the need for unnecessary transportation. Underground tunnels could connect the courts and the jail, providing a more convenient, secure and cheaper system.

Makes sense, right? But that's the reason it won't happen. Common sense does not always exist in the governmental structure. While western officials are anxious for the courts, they don't want the jails. People don't like jails. Not in their neighborhood. And the western politicians know that the people in the west won't think much of having a court complex in their midst if that court complex is going to contain a jail.

The thing to do then, the politicians decide, is to push for the courts, add on to the jail out in Riverhead, and forget about the added cost caused by this selective kind of planning.

If Sheriff Dooley is serious about meeting the need for added jail space in the county, and if he doesn't get caught up in this political game, he will analyze the cost factors and push for the creation of more jail space where it is most needed, is most economical, and is in keeping with proper planning that best serves the public.

And why not?

Is Cuomo Making A Mistake?

Governor Cuomo has been a decent chief executive. He has shown wisdom and foresight, which are rare commodities with elected officials. Cuomo has had it relatively easy fiscally during the past term of office. The state's economy has been rather healthy, which has produced surpluses in both sales, income and corporate taxes. The state has received large grants from the federal government to assist them and implement many programs.

As we are all aware, the federal government has adopted the Gramm-Rudman Bill that requires the federal government to operate on a balanced budget by 1991. The federal government is preparing to meet its obligations under this bill. Cutbacks are being planned in both military and domestic spending. States have been put on notice, they are not to look to Washington for wholesale continuation of support they had received in the past. The federal Santa Claus was killed with the Gramm-Rudman measure.

In addition, Congress is working on a tax revision package that could

have added severe ramifications on state spending. Part of the bill calls for the elimination of local and state taxes as a deduction against the federal returns. Cuomo spoke out very eloquently about the impact that this might have on a high tax state such as New York. He convinced some minds and this may cause a modification. But it will not necessarily totally eliminate the ramifications.

We believe Cuomo is making a mistake in not planning for intended cutbacks from Washington to the state, county and local governments. It would be prudent to cast a jaundice eye at Washington and prepare for the worst. To continue on spending when our source of funds may well disappear is not only imprudent, it's reckless.

We fear Cuomo's decision to continue on this path is being motivated more by Cuomo's desire to become president than on the good common sense he has displayed so often as governor. We encourage the governor to rethink his intentions.

And why not?

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Office
369-0810

Classified
Office
369-0820

Letter To The President

Dear Mr. President:

I am the publisher of Suffolk Life Newspapers. We currently reach 318,000 homes, with a readership of over 1,000,000. This newspaper has vigorously supported you and your programs because we believed in you and in your promises.

You promised the people that you were a staunch defender of states' rights, of the ability of local government to control their local destiny. You reaffirmed that promise in October of 1984 when, in a letter to Congressman William Carney, you declared that you would not impose your administration's authority over state and local government's objections concerning evacuation planning for the Shoreham nuclear power plant.

Mr. President, the people of Suffolk County believed that promise and gave you their support. They put their trust in your hands, believing as we have editorialized time and again that you are a man of your word. That if President Ronald Reagan made a promise you could count on him to keep it. That you would not turn your back on our people.

Mr. President, surely you know that there are those in your administration who are doing just that. People who are working hand in hand with the management of LILCO to thrust an evacuation plan upon us over the objections of nearly 80 percent of our residents who know evacuation is simply not possible because of the unique geographic conditions here.

Officials of your Department of Energy, including the head of that department, have been in collusion with the management of the Long Island Lighting Company to run a test of an illegal plan. Officials of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, are also involved in this collusion, and are making every attempt to seek ways to approve the evacuation plan submitted by LILCO to do an end

run over the objections of state and county governments.

FEMA, at the insistence of the NRC and with the urging of Energy Secretary John Herrington, has scheduled a "test" of this plan for February 13. This test is different from any held before. It is designed only to give the NRC an excuse to approve this plant for full power operation. This test will prove nothing. It will not move people, nor make any attempt to be an honest evaluation of the LILCO plan. It is subterfuge at its worst by a government run amuck, a prime example of the bureaucratic arrogance that has caused people to lose confidence in their government. It is a betrayal of the people. Mr. President, you made a promise to the people of Suffolk County, and we ask that you keep that promise. Please do not betray the trust that has been put in you.

Mr. President, officials of the County of Suffolk determined, after a costly planning study and a series of public hearings, that a safe evacuation would not be possible. They decided they would not lie to the people and tell them that a safe evacuation is possible when it is not. All action in this matter taken by the county has been found to be legal in the courts. In contrast, LILCO's actions regarding emergency planning has been found by the courts to be illegal.

The NRC has denied Shoreham an operating license because the courts have determined that LILCO cannot legally implement its plan over the objections of state and county governments. How can it be, Mr. President, that your administration would justify the test of an illegal emergency plan for a nuclear plant that has been denied a license to operate, a test that is being held over the lawful objections of local governments? How can your administration possibly justify the holding of a test of this illegal plan, over the objections of the majority of our people, when you promised

you would not utilize your authority to impose such a plan?

Mr. President, our fight is not a fight against nuclear power. Our fight is in support of good government, of a government which tells its people the truth that evacuation is not possible, of taking a stand on behalf of the safety of its people. Isn't that the kind of government you have advocated for these many years?

Mr. President, we ask only that you keep your word to us as we

kept our word to you, and supported you and your programs based on your promises. We told our readers you were a man of your word. Were we wrong?

Mr. President, we are loyal Americans who believe that when the man who holds the highest office in our land makes a promise, he should keep that promise. Mr. President, will you keep your promise?

And why not?

To Our Readers

Suffolk Life Newspapers has been in the forefront of the fight against putting an unsafe nuclear plant, Shoreham, on line. We have spent countless hour and finances in this effort. We now need your help.

Time and again our readers have asked: "What can we do to help?" And time and again our readers have responded to let our officials know how they feel.

We are now in the final hours of the Shoreham battle. If we don't succeed now, all the efforts that have gone before will have been in vain. And we will have to face a

future with a nuclear plant that was poorly built, in an area where a safe evacuation is not possible. Our president promised he would not impose an evacuation plan upon us, but there are those in his administration who are doing just that, without regard for the safety of the public.

Please fill out the coupon below and sent it to President Ronald Reagan, The White House, Washington, D.C. 20500. Do it today! This may be your last chance to voice your view in this important matter.

And why not?

Send to the President Today

Dear Mr. President:

Please keep your promise. In October of 1984 you gave your word that your administration would not use its authority to impose a Shoreham emergency plan upon the people of Suffolk County and over the objections of local governments. And yet, there are those in your administration who are doing exactly that in scheduling a test of an illegal plan.

Mr. President, we trusted you when you said in 1984 that this would not happen. We ask you to keep your word. We ask that you halt the action within your administration to hold a test of the emergency plan the courts have ruled illegal.

Name:.....

Address:.....

Town:.....

Confessions of a Canner

I am a canner. Rather than hauling my beverage containers back to the store, I throw them out. A nickle at a time, I deplete my asset. I, like many others, are either too lazy or too busy to return beverage containers. I must admit it bothers me. I don't like to waste, particularly money. It further annoys me that the beverage companies are making a windfall profit out of my wastefulness.

When the initial legislation was passed to create the deposit law, I wondered why our money-hungry legislature did not see the opportunity for government to get into the deposit business. Make it a returnable tax rather than deposit. This could be accomplished by placing a tax by the state on containers. If returned, the tax is refunded. If not, the state benefits rather than the beverage company or retailer.

A look at the campaign contributions of several legislators gave a

good indication why they passed up this opportunity. Major bottlers and brewers and their associations had been heavy contributors during the period the legislation was being considered.

I was delighted last week to read where Governor Cuomo was proposing legislation that would enable the state government to recover deposits that were not redeemed. Under the current law, the bottlers get to keep our nickles if we do not return the container. People like me, who do not return containers, have forgone, collectively, millions of dollars per year.

Cuomo wants these unclaimed deposits for the state to be dedicated for environmental purposes. We are all for it. I will still feel guilty about throwing away a nickle, but at least I will know it will be used for the good of all rather than to enrich the few that own the beverage companies.

And why not?

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR - We encourage our readers to express their views regardless of opinion through the Letters to the Editor Column. All letters must be signed with author's signature and address. We will withhold names on request and assign a nom de plume

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

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