

Whipping the taxpayer

Suffolk County Legislature Presiding Officer Donald Blydenburgh was elected to an unprecedented seventh term in that position during the legislature's reorganizational meeting on January 2. That vote of confidence was well deserved, for Blydenburgh has provided a brand of leadership that has toned down, to a large extent, the former "funny farm" antics of the legislative body.

Having said that, however, we are less than pleased with a suggestion put forth by Blydenburgh in his inaugural comments, the creation of a new legislative position, that of whip, which would have the responsibility of lining up votes promised through caucuses and for newly introduced legislation. "It's not necessarily a popular job,"

Blydenburgh said. "But it would be the whip's job to make sure promised support for a particular piece of legislation is still there."

The reason for this new position? According to Blydenburgh, "There are several legislators who've been here a long time and have not had an opportunity to move up in any way. Having the same presiding officer for seven years and the same deputy presiding officer for eight years kind of stunts movement or rewards for those who've spent a great deal of time in this legislature."

Actually, there is more to it. Legislator Allan Binder (R-Huntington) made a bid late last year to become deputy presiding officer in place of the then incumbent and now re-elected

deputy, Joseph Rizzo (R-Islip Terrace). Binder, who has also run, unsuccessfully, twice for a congressional seat, could not muster sufficient support to unseat Rizzo. The now proposed whip position, and the \$4,000 stipend it would carry, is undoubtedly a consolation prize for Binder.

It is that kind of mentality that is wrong with governments and other bodies that can dip their hands into the taxpayers' pockets. It pads the payrolls with new, unneeded, strictly "payoff" positions for reasons that have nothing to do with good government. It is why we have assistants for assistants in state, county, town governments and school districts. It is a mentality that is responsible for driving tax rates on all levels skyward.

We offer a suggestion of our own:

we need an independent management audit of the legislature and the positions it contains. Just how much is being wasted on pure "reward" positions that have no merit other than political welfare.

Legislator Steve Levy (D-Sayville) responded to the proposal in this way: "It's really ridiculous in a body as small as the legislature to have a whip. That's something that's necessary in a body the size of Congress where you have over 400 members. Here we have a majority caucus of 12 and a minority caucus of six. It's just a bogus item."

We agree. If Blydenburgh or the Republican Party needs a whip to keep 12 legislators in line, let them, not the taxpayers, foot the bill.

And why not?

From the children

Many thanks

We are sure if they could, the parents and particularly the children who were the recipients of The Group's efforts during the holiday season would sing out in joy a tremendous thank you to all who participated in the 1995 Group effort.

Over 250 volunteers took part in the administration, shopping, wrapping and delivery effort. The result was that over 200 enjoyed a Christmas that was not supposed to be. In total, 58 families were aided this year. Over 1,000 generous people made a monetary contribution that allowed all of this to happen.

The Group concentrates their efforts on families who normally are able to provide for themselves but, due to unforeseen circumstances, could not do so this year. After the family's plight is confirmed, and the needs are ascertained, each child is shopped for individually. We start with the basics, socks and underwear, then shirts, pants and finally, coats, mittens, and hats. Each child receives a gift certificate for shoes, for this is virtually impossible for strangers to purchase while ensuring proper fit. We try to get each child one non-clothing item they really want and fill in with a host of non-expensive additional toys, books, games and art supplies.

The families receive a gift certificate for \$100 at a food store. Some use it on a single meal, others use it to stock the pantry for January. Every item is individually boxed and gift wrapped. Finally, a day or two before Christmas or on Christmas Eve, the deliveries are made. The recipients never know our names. They just know that there is a group out there willing to reach out and help others. We operate under a simple principle, "There, but for the Grace of God, go I..." We have it, we share it; for none of us knows when we will fall off our

lofty perch and be in need.

During this past season it was touch and go at different points. At one time it did not seem as if we would have enough money to meet our goal. Some late contributions that had come in last year gave us a foundation to start with this year. During the hectic days of December, we were informed about additional families whose needs had to be met, and we were short of shoppers.

The Thursday night before Christmas was the wrap night. We expected 70 volunteers, many coming from the west end of the Island. No snow was predicted but by 3:30 p.m. we were experiencing near blizzard conditions. The phones rang furiously with wrappers canceling out. We were able to convince about 20 people from the Riverhead area to change their plans and come in and help. By 1 a.m., approximately 3,500 packages had been wrapped and bagged, ready for the Friday morning deliveries.

The recipients who were expecting nothing, or possibly just a gift or two, were overwhelmed. Our deliverers were instructed to get in and out as quickly as possible. But all of them reported genuine thanks and appreciation.

Not one cent is spent on administration or overhead. To all the people who contributed so generously, please consider this message our way of thanking you for being part of The Group, 1995. We have no formal organization, no structure, no offices. We are just people who come together each November to make this miracle happen.

Thanks to everyone. We will be back in 1996.

And why not?



JOB WELL DONE--The eastern seaboard felt the wrath of Mother Nature earlier this week, and for the most part normal activities came to a slippery halt. While many of us were involved in the business of shovelling out and keeping warm, there were many who labored through the falling snows, the drifts, the whiteouts, the treacherous driving conditions to clear the roads and respond to emergencies. They have earned our applause and our thanks.

They're still at it

Under former Governor Mario Cuomo, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) took on the role of cop, prosecutor, judge and jury. During his bid for election, Pataki spoke out about this dismal situation, and we had hoped that he would make a change in this agency's mission and mentality.

Recently, however, Greenport Mayor David Kapell cried foul. The DEC wants to fine the Village of Greenport up to \$123,500. The DEC had charged that the village had violations at Greenport's waste water treatment plant. The village has embarked upon a \$600,000 repair to correct these deficiencies.

This is not enough for the DEC. They want their pound of flesh. They want to fine the people of Greenport, to punish them for not jumping through their hoop when and how they said to do so. This is a ludicrous exercise of unjustified power.

The DEC properly identified shortcomings in the village's water treatment plant. This is the proper role of the DEC. The village is moving to cor-

rect these problems. That's good government. If the village had refused to correct the problems, the DEC should have the right to move in and do so and bill the village. But since the village is doing the necessary repairs, such action is not necessary, and the fines for the violations are not only not necessary, they are excessive, abusive, and accomplish little more than dip into the taxpayers' pockets to satisfy the DEC's sense of power.

What good is it going to do to punish the residents of Greenport, fine them their hard-earned tax money that the DEC will spend on pork barrel projects such as its latest favorite, an environmental camp, a camp located far from the streets of Greenport?

George Pataki should personally get involved in this kind of bureaucratic abuse, and put a stop to it.

The DEC is a vital agency when its role is confined to being a helper rather than a hindrance. Mayor Kapell is right to fight the DEC on its fines. This insanity must stop.

And why not?

It isn't Clinton vs. Congress

The impasse that is going on in Washington is not a pitting of wills or personalities. For as long as we can remember, grassroots America has been saying Washington is too big. It imposes too many rules and regulations. It costs too much to operate our government.

During the last 30 years, there hasn't been much difference between Republicans and Democrats, until last year. During this 30-year period, which started with Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, few elected officials had the courage or the stamina to stand up to

the institutions. There was no loyal opposition.

Our new Congress has over 60 freshmen, and they had basically been elected on their Contract With America. From the start, it became clear they were not going to roll over, play dead, go along to get along. They had made a commitment to the folks back home, and they were going to live up to it. They were going to stop the runaway growth of government. They lived up to their commitment and will not roll over and play dead because of threats or intimidation.

The way the game has been played over the past 30 years is a budgetary crisis comes up, there is a threat to shut down government and Congress allocates more funds than we, the citizens, can afford to spend. This has led in the past to harmful inflation, erosion of the value of the dollar and higher taxes. Some of the instances of crisis were real; some were manufactured. In each case, the citizens of the United States lost. We complained, but it seemed like nobody heard our cries of anguish.

The shutdowns of parts of our government have been unfortunate but

have been necessary to bring the parties together for meaningful discussions. Most people we have spoken to have commented that they personally were not affected by these shutdowns, and this has led to them saying, do we really need the federal government as large as it is? Can we trim more than they are attempting to trim now? Can we eliminate nonessential services, agencies, programs and departments? What would our lives be like if our tax burden is reduced and we had money to spend on our own necessities or, possibly, invest in our children's future?

Last June, when I attended the White House Conference on Small Business, the Wall Street Journal published a list of the agencies that were proposed to be cut. Astoundingly, in six-point type it took up over a half-page of that broadsheet. In trying to read through the list and figure out what the names meant, it became apparent that a good portion of these proposed for cuts served only vested or special interest. It was suggested that they only scratched the surface and that there were thousands more sub-departments and agencies that few knew of. There are bureaucracies within bureaucracies that probably have been created for patronage purposes. Once created, they were never sunset.

The discussions going on between the President, the leadership of the Senate and the Congress are about principles, philosophies, real numbers and real dollars. Our economy cannot afford to continue to allow government to grow beyond the rate of inflation or the ability of the American citizens to fund.

The American worker and businesses can no longer afford to fund the unproductive side of society, who have chosen the easy way of life over the sweat of the brow. We have an obligation, a responsibility and a desire to help those who generally need help. And to fund agencies and personnel who truly produce in government, for people. We don't need waste, duplication, surplus or uncontrolled charity. We pray that our leaders have the strength and the ability to reach decisions that are right for the people.

And why not?

Pure politics and egotism

The newest Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) plan to take over the Long Island Lighting Company (LILCO), which was requested by Governor George Pataki, has been critically viewed by some since its release, and more recently by the Democratic members of the State Assembly's Energy Committee. The political nature of the attacks comes as no surprise since public good has all too often been sacrificed for political gain.

Five Energy Committee Democrats reportedly grilled LIPA Chairman James Gill repeatedly to reveal financial data that Gill said could not be detailed without weakening LIPA's negotiating position in the takeover effort, the exact same position taken by the former governor and former LIPA chairman when they released takeover plans themselves. That did not satisfy the Energy Committee Democrats, nor the committee Chairman Paul Tonko, an upstate Democratic assemblyman. Considering the new LIPA plan came at the urgings of a Republican governor, we're not surprised. But why weren't the same critical views targeted at former Governor Mario Cuomo's just-before-the-election takeover proposal?

There was no written document to support the contentions made in Cuomo's post election effort. In fact, many

of the members of the then LIPA board told Suffolk Life at the time they had not actually seen the written plan. When asked for a copy of the plan, Richard Kessel, then LIPA chairman, who had been named to that position by Cuomo, claimed a summary of the plan was being prepared. A summary? An interpretation, rather than the actual plan itself? No thanks. But we heard no Democratic cries of protest then.

Others who have critically reviewed the new plan were the Long Island Association (LIA), which supported LILCO throughout the Shoreham fiasco, and Kessel, who, when chairman of the former board replaced by Pataki, put forth a takeover proposal advanced by the former board members. Kessel now sits as a member of the new LIPA board, appointed by Democratic Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver. Kessel has been ranting and raving against the new LIPA plan. We do not take his comments seriously. We believe them to be nothing more than a desperate effort to keep his name before the public.

At the Energy Committee meeting last week, LIPA Chairman Gill indicated the Cuomo pact with LILCO which helped close the Shoreham plan is still strangling the area. Kessel is reported to have stormed from the meeting at that point, yelling "It's a lie."

Surely he jests. Surely even Kessel knows—as does everyone else—the Cuomo-LILCO deal, which Kessel helped create, is a major cause of the highest in the nation LILCO rates.

It is time to put aside the political motives and the rantings and get on with the task of putting together the best plan to resolve the high energy rate problem, which has clobbered the area's economic health.

Is this the best possible plan? Possibly not. Are there many questions to be answered? Of course. Does it offer enough savings at the outset? No. But does it begin us down the road toward competition in energy purchases? We think so. The proposal to take over the distribution and transmission portion of the LILCO operation is key, in our view, to future energy competition.

Will the breakup of the LILCO generating capability, to be sold to private companies, cause rates to soar in the future? We don't think so. We think it offers five different sources to purchase from, at the lowest price. That's called competition.

Resolving the two most important problems facing us, high energy rates and taxes, is not an easy task. There is no simple solution. But the search for a solution should not be tainted with political and egotistical nonsense. It's time to put the public's benefit first.

And why not?

Salute for efforts

Mother Nature and modern technology

We pay tribute to all the men and women who were involved in the snow clearing and emergency services during last week's blizzard. We particularly say thanks to the volunteers who brought medical personnel to hospitals and other lifesaving institutions. They were the lucky ones who had four-wheel drive vehicles and generously made them available.

We also would like to thank the Islip youths who volunteered their time to dig out senior citizens who were homebound. These youths voluntarily showed that they have a community consciousness and are not as selfish as our youth is generally portrayed.

Coming to work last Thursday, we

noted that there had been no attempt to clear the railroad lines on the East End. We started to reminisce about the big snows we had when we were kids. Snow was a given in those days. Every winter while we were growing up, we had major storms. The railroad trains occasionally ran late, but they always ran. Somehow, those old steam engines plowed through. They had to in those days for they were the main transporters of mail, and mail was to be delivered come hell or high water. Mail was the main link and method of communication between businesses and people. The mailman was one of the most important people in a family's life, for he was the link to the outside. No, I am

not talking about the late 1800s, I am talking about the '40s and early '50s.

I remember my parents having a steaming cup of coffee ready for the mailman when he arrived. I suspect that it was laced with something stronger than cream. Somehow, even with the old-fashioned, outmoded equipment, the streets were cleared and made passable within hours of a storm. Schools rarely closed. Most of the kids walked to school or were driven by their parents.

The sidewalks were cleared as soon as the snow started to fall. Old Fred Cohen, who had a farmette on Roanoke Avenue in Riverhead, hitched up his plow horses to a wooden sled that had been forged into a plow. The horse

and plow cleared the sidewalks throughout the entire hamlet. Within a day-and-a-half, old Fred and his nags would clear from Route 58 through downtown and to the east and west.

Fred and his nags are long gone; they have been replaced by snowblowers. But somehow they never seem to manage to accomplish the work that Fred did in a day-and-a-half.

Mother Nature still continues to knock us down, and with all our modern technology we don't seem to have the ability to come back as quickly to our feet as we did when life was a lot simpler. There are those who say that life changes for the better. As we get older, we sometimes wonder.

And why not?

Long Island rejoins New York State

For years we have wondered whether Long Island was part of New York State other than to be a cash cow which shipped tax money to Albany and was then ignored.

Rarely in the past did we see the governor on the island addressing or helping us with our problems. Governor George Pataki has changed this image.

During the wildfires this summer, Pataki was there front and center. Not only was he in front of the news cameras but he took an active part in rounding up and bringing in experienced manpower and equipment from around the state. This was more than a photo opportunity. It was more than a coincidence that Pataki happened to be visiting the Hamptons during the

summer.

During his election campaign, Pataki had promised to address the high cost of our utilities on Long Island. He took control of the Long Island Power Authority and has come up with a plan that makes good, common sense. The plan calls for LIPA to take over the transmission and distribution lines of LILCO and to foster competition by breaking up LILCO's power generation into five competitive units.

With Pataki's announcement of John O'Meara as the new chairman of the State Public Service Commission, he is putting the PSC commissioners and staff on notice that they should be acting on the consumer's behalf rather than as the protector of the utilities and the stockholders, as they have done in the past. In taking control of the PSC, Pataki is putting LILCO on notice that the days of wine and roses for the corporation are over. They are not going to get another sweetheart

deal.

Pataki has carried this initiative and momentum further. During the January blizzard he was on Long Island and in New York City. He provided and arranged for manpower and equipment to help cope with the storm. He saw the situation firsthand, cut through the protocol and red tape. Supervisor Felix Grucci of Brookhaven Town only had to mention the town's needs and Pataki had manpower and equipment to Brookhaven within hours.

Pataki's recent announcement of money for Long Island for a host of projects that had been stalled shows his understanding of Long Island's needs and that we are part of the community of New York State, we are not only the cash cow. This is welcomed relief.

And why not?

We are so grateful

Boxes upon boxes of subscription renewals have been arriving daily at our office since we appealed to readers to pay for their subscription to Suffolk Life.

To all of you who have voluntarily paid for your subscription, we issue a heartfelt thanks of appreciation. You have told us how much Suffolk Life means to you, how it has helped you keep informed about your local community, the news of your government and the values being offered by the business people.

1995 was an incredibly harsh year financially. Our postal rates increased by over a half million dollars. The cost of paper went up over \$1 million. We fully realize that a good proportion of our readers are finding it tougher today to make ends meet than ever before. That's why it is so gratifying to see so many doing their part to keep Suffolk Life strong and viable.

If you have not already voluntarily sent in your subscription, please fill out the subscription renewal form found in the upper right hand corner of your copy of Suffolk Life. Send the

coupon in now and you will be eligible to win a free weekend for two at Rose-land Ranch or the \$500 cash prize for renewing your subscription in January.

Again, many thanks for your cooperation and your support.

And why not?

In politics too!

Entry level salaries

The term "entry level salaries" has two meanings. Normally, it is applied to someone without experience who is taking their first job. The second meaning is the starting salary for a major position. Most corporations and businesses may pay seasoned em-

ployees who have been in the job some length of time a salary substantially higher than the entry level for that same job.

The difference between the entry level and the salary a seasoned pro may be receiving is reflective of the years on the job and the accumulation of knowledge that they have garnered in this position. When businesses hire to fill a position, salaries are not based on what the current or former position held is making, but what is the entry level for the job. This makes common sense and is a good business practice. Unfortunately, government does not run itself as a business.

Recently, it was announced that a number of politically connected people were assuming high profile positions with the county. Unlike business, these people were given salaries close to the top of the scale, rather than coming in at very respective entry level salaries.

Here's an example

Case in point is the wife of Senator Kenneth LaValle, Penny Wells LaValle, who is a charming woman with many qualifications. She was recently appointed to a five-year term as director of Real Property Tax Services, at an annual salary of \$89,200. She has been employed as a senior appraisal supervisor in the county tax office for about ten years at an annual salary of \$55,567. The average per capita salary in Suffolk is \$24,000 per year. She has been brought in at only 5% under that of the former director who had years of seniority and was earning \$93,600.

We do not have any qualms with patronage if it is used correctly. If a person is the best qualified for a posi-

tion, he or she should not be denied because of involvement in the political party in power. But, there is no ethical or moral reason to pay a salary beyond the entry level for that position.

Why pay more?

The sum of \$63,000, reportedly the starting salary for this position, is not chicken feed. There are probably a host of people out there with the equivalent experience of Mrs. LaValle who would have jumped at the opportunity to earn \$63,000. Why then, are we paying more than we have to?

Ken LaValle may be a New York State senator. He may have helped and assisted as campaign manager in the county executive's campaign. He may have been involved in other campaigns that led to successful Republican victories. But that's politics and this has to do with the expenditure of taxpayer dollars.

John Powell is the Republican county chairman. The Republicans control most branches of government and, as chairman, Powell has an obligation to see that good politics makes for good government. He must put a stop to this kind of shenanigans. He has the power, but more importantly he has the responsibility.

Powell has to learn that when it comes to patronage there is a time to say "no" to greed. It makes no difference whether he is securing a job for a laborer as a skilled equipment operator or a job for an executive at a salary far beyond what needs to be paid.

Powell has good instincts and even he must know that perception can often be worse than the facts.

And why not?

Flat makes sense

Twenty-five years ago we worked with a couple of college professors and came up with a notion that our tax situation in the United States penalized growth, wasted productive dollars and could be better funded through a single, universal tax. I discussed this idea with Congressman Otis Pike. He liked it and promised to have his people in Washington flesh out the idea more thoroughly.

Our concept of a flat tax differed from the one that is currently being proposed. We envisioned a single, universal tax that would replace all other taxes on the federal, state and local levels. Like the current proposal, the tax would be based on a flat tax on wages and all profits. Taxes on capital gains would be indexed.

The taxes would be collected on a local level with municipalities retaining a small portion. The balance of the money collected would be forwarded to the state, which would likewise keep their share and forward the balance to the federal government. Each part of the government would get a prescribed percentage. It would result in taxes and government from the bottom up rather than from the top down.

Since the money would be collected on a local level, there would be pressure from the citizens that would ensure that fellow citizens paid their

fair share. This tax would encourage local municipalities to make themselves more attractive to business and commerce, for they would share in the businesses' prosperity. Communities would be encouraged to make themselves as attractive as possible so as to attract the highest wage earners and, thus, share in more dollars for their percentage of the take.

We had combined all taxes raised by all entities of government and had calculated that a 13% flat tax on all net profits and wages would be sufficient to fund all governmental spending.

A flat tax today has legitimate attractiveness for all income earners. It does away with social engineering through taxation that stifles growth, competition and initiative. We would like to see those who are supporting the flat tax explore the possibility of a single tax, funding all avenues of government.

If the citizens of the United States realized that they could pay one single flat tax on wages and profits, and no longer have to pay state or federal income taxes, sales or real estate taxes, as well as the host of hidden taxes, you would have a populace uprising in support of the flat tax concept.

And why not?

Cheap politics or genuine concern?

For years, the Suffolk County Legislature was depicted as the "funny farm." This unruly body of government earned this reputation because it often stuck its nose into issues that it had no place being. Under the leadership of Donald Blydenburg, some order and decorum was brought to the body. But 1996 is a new year.

The Suffolk County Legislators seem to be going back to their old ways. In a resolution last week, the legislators were asked for subpoena powers that would require Long Island Power Authority Chairman (LIPA) Chairman James Gill to appear before the legislature and publically discuss sensitive documents and positions that are likely to be part of the negotiations over the proposed LILCO takeover.

We all have questions about the

LILCO takeover plan. LILCO today is adversely affecting everyone's life. We are all scrambling for a solution.

The LIPA proposition that would require the break up of the corporation is imaginative. The plan calls for LIPA to take over the transmission and distribution segment of the lighting company, and hire an existing utility company to operate this phase. The generating facilities would be broken into five segments and sold to entrepreneurs. They would be in competition with each other and with the whole world for the generation of electricity. The competition should make them productive and develop rates that are competitive.

The gas division of LILCO would be sold off to another separate company and, because it will be compet-

itive with the electrical division, would have to price gas competitively to gain its share of the market. This is a win-win situation for the consumers.

Because the entire proposition is subject to negotiations, some questions have not been answered publicly. Some cannot be answered because of security rules and regulations. Some questions cannot be answered because they are part of the negotiating strategy between LIPA and LILCO.

Some members of the Suffolk County Legislature see this as an opportunity to grandstand. They can get their mug before a television camera or their picture in a newspaper.

We have found Chairman Gill and responsible members of the LIPA board willing to meet and answer questions confidentially. When we

have gotten into sensitive matters, they have asked to go off the record to safeguard the release of sensitive information which could injure the negotiation process.

We are sure if the legislators were sincere in trying to find a solution to the high utility costs, a meeting could be arranged between Gill and the board in a format that would not become a media event. This is too precarious a time in the life of Long Island to play cheap politics.

Legislators must understand the responsibility that they have and the ramifications of their reckless acts. Reasonable concern is an altruistic aim, a quest for media fame is not.

Reasonableness, ladies and gentlemen, reasonableness.
And why not?

Full investigation needed

Brookhaven National Lab vulnerable

Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL) has been a major employer on Long Island. Currently, more than 3,300 people work there. Their contributions to the economy are important, and for this reason, few people are willing to rock the boat.

BNL, a federal installation operating under the Department of Energy, has been in existence since World War II. The lab was built on the old Camp Upton grounds, a relic from World War I. Originally, when the lab was built it was out in the boondocks where few people lived. It has had a quasi-military existence. It has been shrouded in secrecy. No one ever is quite sure of what is going on, how or why.

Periodically, allegations have been made and rumors have surfaced. In 1989, the lab was designated a Super Fund site. Major pollution had been identified, and under federal directives, it was ordered to be cleaned up. Periodically, during the last 10 to 15 years, events have indicated that there has been more than meets the eye going on at this facility.

Homes surrounding the lab have learned that high concentrations of components that are akin to those found in the nuclear industry are in their well water.

A pond that is downstream from the lab had an enormous fish kill 15 years ago. Although it was never publicly revealed, a major university did autopsies on the fish and, in confidence, revealed that the fish had been killed by radiation exposure.

Homeowners south of the lab, in the North Shirley area, are up in arms about reports that their wells are tainted.

Congressman Michael Forbes and U.S. Senator Alfonse D'Amato have actively become involved and are demanding answers. We all should be demanding answers. How bad is the contamination at BNL? How will it affect all of us? Can the past practices be mitigated against today? It's time to take off the veil of secrecy. The lab is located in the middle of the Pine Barrens area, which is being target for preservation with taxpayers dollars.

The Pine Barrens, according to its staunch proponents, control the destiny of our water supply. How can we tolerate anything less than full disclosure about the contamination from this site and its impact on our ground water supply?

During the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant hearings, we heard testimony from a scientist who had done research on a New England nuclear

By legislator

Another try for more payola

How would you like to earn \$42,000 per year for a part-time job, even though the job description calls for you to work once every two weeks? On top of this salary you get a car, phone, deluxe medical coverage, pension, support staff and other perks. Would you be satisfied or would your greedy little heart drive you to demand more?

Sorry folks, there are only 18 of these jobs and they are held by Suffolk County Legislators. Apparently some greedy public servants feel put upon because they must attend committee meetings in between their regular meetings. They want you to dig deeper into your pockets to compensate them for this inconvenience. They want you to grant them not a stipend, but payola for their presence at these meetings. They are looking for \$1,000 for each committee that they serve on and \$2,500 for being chairman of a committee.

The proposal was advanced earlier this year by Presiding Officer Donald Blydenburgh, who later killed the suggestion because of an apparent

power facility located about five miles from Fishers Island. The scientist testified that the findings indicated that the incidences of certain types of cancer were 2,000% to 4,000% greater within a five-mile radius than a ten-mile radius. The plant had never had a major accident. It was concluded that these alarming increases in cancer were the result of the normal releases of air from the plant, and the wash water

used on the floors.

We are not saying that this same situation can pertain to Brookhaven Lab, but it is time to come clean.

Forbes and D'Amato must bring the full force of Congress into play. The federal government must fess up, accept their responsibility and do what is necessary rather than trying to hide behind the cloak of national security.

And why not?

"They are looking for \$1,000 for each committee that they serve on and \$2,500 for being chairman of a committee."

lack of support on the legislature. But the idea has resurfaced with the filing of a new stipend proposal by Legislator George Guldi.

Guldi, the legislator from the Second Legislative District, revealed that in his first year of office, he was on eight committees and chairman of one. This proposed payola would have added almost 25% to his base pay. This is plain, outright greed.

During the past election campaign, we never heard one legislator so much as utter a single word about

this rip-off scheme. Some legislators apparently feel because they now are in the first part of a two-year term, they can bring up this rip-off, and hopefully you, as voters, will have forgotten about it by the next time that they run for re-election.

If legislators feel this passionate about the issue, they should postpone any decision until 1997. Make it a campaign issue. "Vote for me because I want to fill my own pocket." Let the voters have an opportunity to cast their ballot. Are there any heroes out there who would chance an election on this issue? We doubt it.

The legislature is controlled by the Republicans. John Powell, the county chairman should come down hard on these legislators if they approve this payola scheme. He has the power. He should use it. Now is the time for leadership.

Hopefully it won't come to that, and the legislators will again respond with a lack of support for Guldi's bill. The stipend scheme deserves to be killed again, and for all time.

And why not?