

Call The Tune, Pay The Piper

One of the main, but seldom mentioned, reasons municipalities are in deep financial trouble is today's enormous welfare cost.

In Suffolk, half the budget is allocated for running the welfare department. In New York City the cost is staggering. It runs into billions of dollars each year.

The standard of living for welfare is often higher than a person is able to obtain for himself by toiling for his bread. It is the most often heard complaint from municipal workers, and it is a big argument in their defense for higher salaries. We are suppose to live under a capitalist system where we are rewarded for our effort and ability in proportion to the effort we put forth.

This is not the way it works for the middle class. They end up breaking their back, often at two or three jobs, while many others who are equally capable sit back, abuse the system, demand and get a better standard of living.

Somewhere along the line, the public has been sold a bill of goods that requires the average person to part with his hard earned dollars in support of those who refuse to try.

What even compounds the problem further is the so called false, standard of living that non-producers are guaranteed. Why should non-producers enjoy equal housing with those who work?

Why should they eat the same food, drink the same booze, wear the same clothes, use the same phones, have T.V.'s and appliances and have enough money left over to enjoy the better things? Yet this is what welfare recipients are able to receive under our system.

There are those who are definitely entitled to welfare, they are the sick, the infirm, and the aged. Through no reason of their own, they find themselves in a position of needing assistance and that assistance should be there. But these are not the people that are putting the tremendous drain on the welfare system and causing municipalities to face almost certain bankruptcy. It is those people who abuse the system to support themselves when they are perfectly capable of going out and earning a living.

Under the present system the federal government pays 50 per cent of the cost the other 50 per cent is split evenly between the local and state governments.

For paying half the cost, the federal government has the privilege of setting

the standards. Local municipalities and the state government for its participation, administer the program.

They have to follow the dictates of the federal government. They cannot use common sense in dealing with the system. This system is an example of too many fingers in the pie.

The welfare bureaucracy is overwhelming. In fact, part of the bureaucracy could be eliminated if the federal government took over total funding of the system and administered it.

If welfare was solely a federal project, uniform rules could be established for all the states in the union. This would stop the migration from different parts of the country to those who were handing out the easiest and the best benefits this year.

With the federal government handling the program, eliminating a portion of the

bureaucracy, the cost could be cut and probably result in something closer to what welfare originally was designed to achieve.

There is almost no benefit for the state or local municipalities to be in the welfare system today, particularly when you have the federal government subsidizing half the cost but running the entire system from Washington.

Something must be done now to harness the welfare system. Its cost can no longer be borne by the local communities.

The good that the system was designed to achieve must be looked at through hard eyes.

We seldom recommend that the federal government take over anything, but as long as they are dictating policy, they should take over the whole operation and run it as they see fit. And why not?

They Deserve Our Support

It's fund-raising time for our local fire departments and ambulance companies.

During the next few weeks, you will be asked to contribute either through a direct donation or through a function that they will be running.

We encourage you to give, in accordance to what these men give to you.

Every fireman and ambulance technician give hundreds of hours of his personal time, part in actual service but even more in drills and training. When your time of need comes, you have at your disposal a knowledgeable team to help save your life and your property.

Being volunteers, these men serve their fellow man.

Without their volunteer aid, we would have to pay millions of dollars in taxes to buy this kind of protection.

Each summer, every department has some method of fund raising. Each is custom tailored to the community it serves. In some it is a direct fund drive, either by mail or in person; and in other areas it is a chicken barbecue, carnival or bazaar.

The money that they raise from these affairs or these drives goes right back into the communities. Fire departments and ambulance corps support the community activities like Little League, hospitals, and scouts.

Some of the money is used to supply food and beverages needed to sustain the men when they are combatting a fire or facing a major catastrophe. Other funds are used to finance their racing

teams. Even a little bit is used to pay for social gatherings. This is the least they are entitled to for all they give.

This year when you are approached, give what you can. These men appreciate it. It is not the amount of the contribution that counts, but the great reaching out by everyone in the community.


It says to these volunteers, "yes, we do appreciate the job you do for us, we thank you for your effort.

Your contribution is a tangible way for saying thank you. Your support of their activities keeps them supporting you when they are needed. Please give what you can. And why not?

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willmotts and why-nots

David J. Willmott, Editor

The Great Peanut Butter Scandal

Each week out of your paycheck, Uncle Sam takes withholding taxes.

Part of this money goes to pay the salary of Tom Downey and Otis Pike the congressmen from the first and second district.

But also pay for the salaries of our two New York Senators Jim Buckley and Jacob Javits, and you chip in with the people from the other 50 states to pay for the appointed President Ford and his hand picked successor Rockefeller.

These people work for us, they are our direct employees, they are suppose to represent our interests in Washington.

The rest of the withholding taken from your paycheck, you probably don't give much thought to. In general terms, it goes to support our war machine, our socialism and the bureaucracy needed to run the government.

But do you realize part of your withholding tax is used to make you pay a \$1.99 for a jar of peanut butter that two years ago only cost 89 cents.

That's right, part of your withholding taxes, earned through work, is used to keep food prices artificially high.

Our representatives in Washington know about the situation and condone this scandalous condition although it makes it almost impossible for you to make ends meet on your salary.

When oil prices skyrocketed, everything else went up with it, especially food. We were told it was not only the cost of petroleum and petroleum-base fertilizers causing it, but the old formula of supply and demand.

We sold our excess wheat to Russia, caused a shortage at home and as a result, prices on everything from meats through grains went up.

With the rising cost of meat, you turned to protein substitutes to nutritiously feed your family.

Peanut Butter is known as a great substitute; it is nutritious, it is good and it was fairly reasonably priced. It is assumed the reason the price of peanut butter jumped so substantially was more and more people were turning to it as a substitute for protein, this drove the price up.

It now comes out the government, over this period, has been paying our peanut farmers a subsidy of \$150 per ton to keep prices artificially

high. That's \$150 above the world price for peanuts. That \$150 subsidy is being paid out of your paycheck.

We are being played for suckers again. We pay through the nose in taxes, only to have these taxes used by our representatives to support an industry that has raised the cost of a basic staple over 100 per cent in two years.

This situation is not only unfair, it is scandalous. It is scandalous that you are being made to use substitute foods to feed your family. It is even worse to raise the price of those substitute

foods to keep the prices artificially high for farmers.

What kind of government do we have that allows this situation to exist? What kind of representatives have we elected to office?

It may be peanuts to them, but to the average housewife who is trying to stretch her husband's hard-earned dollars, it is damn serious business. We think our representatives owe the public an explanation. How about it Otis? How about it Tom? How about it Jim? How about it Jake? And why not?

Can LILCO Be Trusted

At one time we thought of LILCO as we did motherhood. We might not like what she did, but we always trusted her.

LILCO, by its recent actions during the hearings on a proposed nuclear power plant in Jamesport have ruined the illusion. As the hearings groaned on, LILCO's credibility has been weakened to a point you can hardly believe anything it says.

LILCO's expert witnesses have turned out to be just high-priced mouth pieces. Experts who have not done their homework and who are trying to bluff their way through the hearings.

Although they might get away with it most of the time in a maze of tables, graphs and technical jargon, the hearings this past week were concerned with the effect the construction of the plant and the plant operation would have on Riverhead. Particular emphasis was placed on the roads or network of roads leading to the plant site.

LILCO's traffic experts testimony was shot full of holes and because of that the believability of the whole LILCO story is questionable.

Last January, the hearings had to be postponed temporarily to give LILCO time to redo their testimony, as it became apparent under cross-examination they had been presenting incomplete information.

We are not dealing with a rate hearing that effects only our pocketbooks, the hearing concerns LILCO's ability to operate a nuclear power

plant capable of contaminating all of Long Island. The health and safety of everyone is at stake.

If LILCO is presenting faulty and misleading information at this stage when they are applying for license under very close scrutiny, you must wonder, what they will do if they operate the plant.

Will it be run as poorly? Will they take the precautions necessary to protect our lives and land? Or will they do whatever is easiest and most convenient and most profitable for them.

It's better that our notions of LILCO, as a trustworthy and honest utility be shattered now, than in the aftermath of a massive catastrophe.

While it is hard for most of us to understand the technical data that is being presented, when it comes down to roads, beaches and the impact this plant will have on our community, we can easily see where they have not been totally honest in their presentation.

It's tragic to find out that LILCO is just another big corporation without a soul. This is LILCO's appearance coming out of these hearings. It's just another big company who doesn't give a damn about the people, the community - just their profits at any cost.

We all better give this some serious thought. LILCO is not playing games with our pocketbooks this time, but gambling our lives. Scary isn't it? And why not?

Perry Took Care Of Himself

If you ever questioned who Perry Duryea represents first in the first district, he just answered that question for you.

With a mountain of bills facing the Assembly, some of critical nature, good old Perry and his Democratic counterpart Al Blumenthal rammed a bill through in less than two weeks giving Perry and the boys credit towards their pension on days they don't show up for work.

Arthur Levitt, the state controller, had ruled a legislator or other persons employed in the bureaucracy of the legislature to earn credit towards his pension had to show up for work each day. If he didn't show up he was docked for that day.

This was a good ruling and a fair ruling. It was meant to put an end to no-show jobs. This is not

the way our Assemblymen saw it. To correct what was a grave injustice to these chosen few, they okayed a bill to make it all right for legislators and the rest of the crew to show up as little as a couple of weeks during the year and still get full credit towards their pensions.


With austerity budgets facing the school districts, its taxpayers' broke, and record unemployment, Perry and most of the Assembly were more concerned about protecting their right not to show up to work.

This is the kind of legislature we have representing us. We hope Governor Carey vetoes this ridiculous self-interest bill.

It is the only fair thing to the taxpayers of the State of New York he can do. And why not?

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Welfare Cheating, The Perfect Crime

Welfare cheating, as reported in last week's Suffolk Life, is much higher in Suffolk than in most other places in the nation. And well it should be, looking at what happens when one is caught.

In recent indictments brought against alleged welfare cheats. These people are given free tax paid legal aid to defend themselves. In most cases, they can still justify for it.

If they are found guilty, and have no prior conviction, it is likely they will be placed on probation.

Because of this conviction and the time taken from their jobs, for the court trial, there is a good chance they will end up unemployed. They then will be eligible to return to the welfare rolls.

Because they will be on the welfare

rolls, there will be no restitution for their thefts as the welfare department would have to make restitution to itself.

Welfare cheating may be the perfect crime. A classic American example of having your cake and eating it too.

A great deal of welfare cheating involves aid to dependent children. The cheaters are the parents and the children are the pawns. Most of the money from the welfare is suppose to go to the aid of children. The more children a person has, the more money they get.

The solution is to take the children away from parents who are convicted of fraud since they are not bringing their children up in a proper environment.

The guilty parent then could be sentenced to jail. The penalty would make

The Fighting Irish

Democrats and Irishmen have one thing in common. They are renown for laundering their dirty linen in public.

It is not surprising to see a flair up between Suffolk's two best known Irish public officials, Eugene Kelley, County police commissioner and Henry O'Brien, the District Attorney.

It might even be humorous except for the serious nature of their business. Their feud could lead to a paralysis of Suffolk's law enforcement agencies.

Kelley seems to be incensed that anybody has the audacity to even suspect him of any wrong doings. When he learned of a possible investigation into his office by the D.A., he immediately went on the offensive.

O'Brien responded by making charges of non-cooperation from the commissioner and a donnybrook has resulted.

It has been suggested arbitration could settle the matter. We doubt it.

For now, both parties should keep their mouths shut, allow the investigation to come to fulfillment. If there are grounds for charges, let them be presented to a grand jury.

If not, let O'Brien announce so in public, and then the matter should be dropped.

No one is above the law, as this country sadly found out with President Nixon. Eugene Kelley, the Police Commissioner of Suffolk isn't either.

An investigation usually begins when someone makes a complaint. An investigation determines if there is any credence to the complaint and if there is, evidence can be gathered for an indictment.

A jury trial follows and the innocence

of the person is determined by his peers. The suspect party is not guilty until proven so.

To get himself into an uproar as Kelley has done just over an investigation does not put him in a particularly good light. His department makes thousands of investigations each year, some have credence, many others are discontinued generally for lack of substance.

O'Brien is not without sin either. He did his office a disservice by falling into a trap of answering Kelley. He could have just as well said he was not free to comment, then let the chips fall where they may.

O'Brien is a different type of District Attorney than Suffolk has ever seen, he has no obligation to anyone, fears no power and he fears no man. He firmly believes he was elected to his office by the people and is charged with upholding the law for everyone equally.

Gone are the days of special interest, political favors and the "You wash my hand and I'll wash yours" philosophy.

For a small group of people, O'Brien is going to be very hard to take as DA. They are not used to an uncontrollable District Attorney's office. O'Brien simply believes no one is above the law.

If you don't like the law, change it, but as long as it is on the books, obey it. He is appalled by the idea there has been two sets of laws, one for the average person to obey, another for the privileged few to flaunt.

If the inner circle hasn't gotten the message of what it is going to be like under O'Brien, they had better move or be ready to defend themselves, when O'Brien's crusaders roll out their guns. And why not?

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Public Must Know How To Escape

In the national weekly newspaper the National Observer there was an article the week of July 12th, on the predicament of Waterford, Connecticut residents. This should be "must" reading for all Long Islanders.

Waterford, just across the Sound, is the home of an operating nuclear generator.

During the past months, they have had two low level accidents and two bomb scares.

It shook local officials into realizing they had no plan or ability to handle an evacuation in case of a major catastrophe.

Suffolk County is in the area of a secondary danger zone of this nuclear plant. In case of a major leak we will have to evacuate the area until levels of radioactivity are acceptable to human life. The exile would last from a few weeks to several months, depending upon the severity.

Suffolk must have a plan of action to follow. Every resident must be made aware of it, and what steps must be taken to evacuate the area in case of an accident.

Even with a plan, it will be an incredible operation to evacuate Long Island. Can you imagine the pandemonium that would break out? Residents would jam the highways to get away from the devastating affects of radiation. It is not a pleasant thought, but one that cannot be put off.

In Waterford town officials learned of the leak through word of mouth, when the utility sent home more than 1,000 workers to avoid contamination. As

these people hit the streets, and filed into local meeting places, word spread through the community.

Since that time, they now have direct radio contact with the utility and are informed of any abnormal occurrence.

Despite four scares, Waterford officials admit they are still without a plan that will work, because of the masses of people that would have to be moved immediately to avoid contamination.

Suffolk County not only has a Connecticut plant to contend with, but with three others LILCO is planning or in the process of building.

It makes it absolutely mandatory we have a plan to evacuate Suffolk in the

sanest manner possible. The public must know details and what is required of them.

Our officials cannot wait until the LILCO plants are built.

Living with the possibility of catastrophe less than 15 miles from Long Island right now necessitates that an immediate plan be implemented.

Because of Long Island Sound, we tend to think of Connecticut being far away. Actually it is not much farther than the distance between Port Jefferson and Patchogue.

We ask our county officials not to put this vital project on the backburner. And why not?

Not Just Another Survey

Call it coincidence; call it an election year gimmick. The legislative airport committee is calling for another study of what to do with the former Suffolk County Air Force Base.

This blatant move appears to be nothing more than a smoke screen to cover up their past ineptness in managing this potentially valuable county property.

There have already been two major studies done on what to do with the base. Both have been shelved, and the base has been allowed to go to ruin.

It costs us, the taxpayers of Suffolk County, almost a million dollars a year to keep this facility. That's a million dollars of our wasted tax dollars doing no one any good.

The base has the potential of being a

valuable asset to the community. But the legislature has not been able to come to grips with how to run it.

We suspect the reason is the lack of quality in the membership of the county legislature. They have heavily demonstrated an inability to manage almost everything, even their own political affairs.

If run properly, it could be a viable industrial, corporate center, a transportation hub and an aviaional college. It could create jobs, provide income and benefit all of Suffolk County.

To call for another study, on the eve of an election, indicates to us the low esteem in which our county politicians hold the voter.

The study is nothing more than an attempt to cover up for their past inaction. Like other recent cover ups we've seen, it will lead only to further voter bitterness and not to fruitful use of the base. And why not?

Will Food Prices Go Up?

The United States government is in the process of selling off huge quantities of our grain to Russia, again.

Two years ago when this happened, we stripped ourselves so badly it caused the price of bread to nearly double, along with everything from meat to breakfast cereals.

We thought the government had learned a lesson.

Agriculture Secretary Butz claims this sell off will only amount to a minute change in the cost of our food stuff.

Congress, as usual, seems to be humming this issue. Unable to marshal enough votes for anything but their own projects, both houses will sit on there hands until prices go up. Even then, Congressmen will get up only long enough to point their scolding finger at the President.

There is one bright hope though.

Remembering what the last Russian wheat deal did to the wives ability to stretch their paychecks, the International Longshoreman's Union voted last week to refuse to load any boats with grain until they have assurance from the federal government that the price of bread and beer will not go up.


The ILA can effectively stop any shipments of grain and can kill the whole deal.

They are doing what our Congress should have done long ago. After all, we elect our Congressmen to protect our interests in Washington, not the ILA.

Yet it is these men who seem to be looking out for our pocketbooks better than our Congressmen. A sad state of affairs. And why not?

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