

Drop Dead Long Island, Love, LILCO

LILCO Board Chairman Bill Catacosinos effectively told Long Island residents and businesses to drop dead last Thursday when he announced that it's full steam ahead for LILCO's opening of Shoreham.

Catacosinos issued what he characterized was a position paper. A 56-page report would make Adolph Hitler smile if he was alive, for it is one of the most blatant examples in recent history of Hitler's big lie technique. Tell it big enough. Tell it long enough, tell it loud enough, and if people don't believe it they will, at least, be confused.

Catacosinos opens with a statement in his first paragraph that "after over 18 years of planning, construction and licensing, LILCO-Shoreham Nuclear Power Station is complete and ready to go into operation." That is a bold face lie and the report goes downhill from there.

SNPS is not completed. SNPS is not licensed. They are still trying to fix or replace the diesels. SNPS cannot be licensed because a safe, workable evacuation plan cannot be developed, according to county and state officials who, under present law, are the lead agencies for implementing an evacuation plan.

The guts of Catacosinos' plan calls for a series of rate hikes that, when compounded, would raise the cost of electricity on Long Island to staggering proportions. According to LILCO, the current cost of electricity for the average homeowner is 11.6 cents per kilowatt hour. Under the Catacosinos plan, the cost of electricity would increase to 17.7 cents per kilowatt hour by 1988, to 21.1 cents in 1991, and would be double that we now pay by 1996. By the year 2000, according to his proposal, the cost per kilowatt hour here on Long Island would be 25.2 cents. A staggering 117 per cent increase.

In addition, Catacosinos wants the government to reduce taxes to the corporation. If the government were to reduce these taxes, they would simply have to tax the residents or the businesses more to make up for this loss in government revenues.

Catacosinos also wants the state to

buy LILCO's ill-conceived interest in the Nine Mile Two nuclear power plant. Not only does LILCO want the people of the State of New York to buy their mistake dollar for dollar, but to assume their future obligations as well. Reading Catacosinos' position paper reminded us of a greedy brat trying to blackmail Santa Claus.

Catacosinos goes on to try and make his case, using half-truths and showing a total disregard for the laws of this state. He declares that no matter what happens, the public is going to pay for the corporation's greed and mismanagement. That is what he would like the public to do. But that's not what state law says the public has to do.

The used and useful principles of the law very specifically state that (1) before a utility can work a plant into the rate base, the power must be needed. According to testimony heard by Governor Cuomo's Shoreham Commission, the power generated by Shoreham will not be needed until the late 1990s at the earliest. And (2) if it is not useful, the law says, it should not be worked into the rate base. If SNPS cannot be licensed it is not useable.

Attorney General Robert Abrams, through his representative, Jerrold Oppenheimer, pointed this out quite vocally at the last meeting of Cuomo's Shoreham Commission. He further stated that it is the intention of the Attorney General to fight LILCO on this issue, to protect the public against the corporation's greed.

Governor Cuomo forcefully spoke out in reaction to Catacosinos' presentation. He characterized the corporation's arrogant stand as a gamble. What Catacosinos asked for in his position paper is for the public to pay for the mistakes made by the corporation in its quest for profits, he said. Under no circumstances is the Governor going to allow the public to be abused any further in this debacle. Cuomo astutely pointed out that the benefits the corporation is seeking in tax eliminations and tax reductions are nothing more than taking money out of the taxpayers' pockets and putting it into the profit-making corporation's bank account.

Cuomo mocked Catacosinos' ridiculous offer for the people to accept a \$250 million settlement on imprudent cost from LILCO. He should have, for the PSC staff and the state Consumer Protection Agency have indicated they feel, after intensive investigation only \$1.9 to \$2.2 billion of the Shoreham cost, which now is projected to be between \$4 billion and \$5 billion, came from prudent expenditures. The \$2 to \$3 billion difference was the mistake of management that must be paid for by management and the owners of the corporation. If it wasn't so serious, their offer to settle up to \$3 billion in debt for \$250 million would be laughable.

In effect what Catacosinos was saying is this: Hey Gov, hey public, we made a \$3 billion mistake, but we're willing to pay \$250 million of it. We want you folks to pay all the rest. Hogwash! Cuomo went on to point out it is one thing for the state to bail out a city or any other non-profit making entity, but it is quite another for the

state to bail out bad management of a profit making, monopolistic corporation.

We condemn Catacosinos for his absolute arrogance and misrepresentation of the truths and facts. Any credibility he could have re-established for the corporation is gone. He is continuing in the footsteps of his predecessor. And that no one can have any respect in.

We applaud Governor Cuomo for taking a positive stand on safety, and economics, for the people. His vigorous approach, his sincerity and honesty is refreshing. He has earned our respect and deserves thanks from the Long Island residents. Cuomo has placed the safety of Long Island, its health, welfare and economic well-being above that of the corporation, the banks and the speculators who now are in possession of the company.

Catacosinos attempted to make his position paper upbeat, but on careful analysis it became very apparent he has sounded the final death wall for the corporation.

And why not?

Now, Enforce The Law

It was with mixed emotions we heard the news that the Assembly, after an emotional debate, refused to change New York State's drinking law from a minimum age of 19 to 21.

Interestingly, during this debate it was brought out that it is not illegal for someone under 19 to drink. It is only illegal for someone to sell or give alcoholic beverages to a minor.

Governor Cuomo put his image on the line for this bill. His sincerity, strong belief and convictions came through loud and clear. The defeat is a bitter pill for him to swallow as he sincerely believes lives would be saved if the drinking age is raised.

Rather than being depressed over this bill's defeat, we suggest the Governor should rechannel his energies into making sure that the 19-year-old drinking law is enforced. It is relatively easy for kids who have not reached their 19th birthday to obtain beer or hard liquor at stores and be served at bars.

A couple of years ago, one of my sons, who at the time was 13, came to me and said, "Dad, there is something I have to tell you about before you hear about it from somebody else. My

friends and I were caught drinking beer in the woods." Needless to say, I was disturbed and asked where they got the beer. It turned out, at 13 years of age with a boyish face, he had purchased the beer at a deli in my home town. The police were aware that this deli was selling to minors, yet nothing was done to stop it.

Cuomo should direct the State Police to set up sting operations throughout the state, using 17 and 18-year-olds. Have them make purchases throughout the communities, then demand that the S.L.A. close down those establishments that are regularly selling to underage purchasers. Wholesale busts with suspension of licenses would quickly get the message to dealers of alcoholic beverages that it is not safe to chance selling alcoholic beverages to minors.

Make the 19-year-old law work effectively and lives will be saved. Then there might be justification for raising this age limit. It's hypocritical to ask for an increase in the age limit when we are not enforcing our current standards. Cuomo could do it, and he should.

And why not?

Readers' Opinion

David J. Willmott:

Keep up the good work on LILCO and County employees contract abuses.

Brendan J. Palmer

Cutchogue

heard of any at their nuclear plants or submarines, or battleships—no accidents of any kind. They must be doing something right, or are using grade A material.

The people of Long Island should wake up as to what is going on here. If LILCO wins this case in the courts, I feel sorry for the future generations of Long Island. I am only 78 years old, and will not be around when this happens. The future children growing up here will have to bear the cost of LILCO's mistake. God help Long Island.

Name Withheld

Shirley

Dear Mr. Willmott:

Only one way to say it:

Long

Island

Lighting

Cost

Outrageous

Yours truly,

Lenny Tornake

East Patchogue

SUFFOLK LIFE

VOL. 23 No. 41

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and Suffolk County Life

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Stop The Sales Tax Increase

As we editorialized last January, Peter Cohalan, county executive of Suffolk, true to predictions, called into session the Suffolk County Legislature and ramrodded through a home rule message supporting an increase in Suffolk County's sales tax to bail out the South West Sewer District.

A political deal was cut with the blessings of the Republican leadership and the county executive last January. The deal calls for the home rule message from Suffolk, the negative response from Suffolk County's state officials, with the deal finally being pushed through the legislature by the Nassau delegation, which is controlled by the Republicans.

We were surprised that Cohalan and Blake were able to twist some of the arms of legislators outside the sewer district. We were more disappointed than surprised at Patrick Heaney, for selling out the people of the 16th legislative district. Heaney, a freshman legislator, pretended to be an arch conservative whose only interest was the people of his district. How miserably he has failed them.

Rose Caracappa, another phoney conservative, voted to increase the sales tax, the very issue her party had been founded on.

Donald Allgrove probably didn't even understand the ramifications and did as he usually does, as told.

Mike D'Andre, who gained recognition in Smithtown as a fighter for the people in battling against rising school taxes, has his priorities mixed up since becoming a legislator. He went along with the sales tax hike hoping to trade off that vote for some

political goodies somewhere along the line. Apparently he hopes his constituents won't realize they are really picking up the tab through higher sales taxes.

Gregory Blass, John Rosso, John Foley, Steven Engelbright, James Morgo, Wayne Prospect, Jane R. Devine, Robert LaBua did not cave in and stuck with the people that elected them.

Cohalan, who engineered this deal, has been a bitter disappointment. And again, he reneged on his word to the people of Suffolk County that they would come first.

We do not have great politicians of courage or conviction here in Suffolk County, let's hope we have them on the state level. The state legislators, both assemblymen and senators from outside the sewer district, must unite to stop this unconscionable rip off of their constituents. They must repudiate this deal.

The voters outside the sewer district were never given the opportunity to vote on the sewer district. The sewer district is a special use district from which they will receive no direct benefit. It's unconscionable to force these residents to pay for a political boondoggle they never approved and will not directly benefit from.

Call, write or better yet, go see your legislator, to forcefully protest this injustice. Write to the minority and majority leaders. Let them know how the people feel. There still may be an opportunity to short circuit this political deal which is an injustice to the people.

And why not?

principles of law are built into the State Constitution and also Public Service law.

The state Public Service Commission wrongfully ignored these laws in past decades. Newsday would have you believe that they have been constitutionally stricken, but this is not true. The Attorney General attempted to have the law applied in the Sterling Case, which involved a proposed nuclear power plant that did not get off the ground. The Public Service Commission, we believe wrongfully, allowed the utility to build the preparation cost into the rate base. The Attorney General sued but lost on a technicality as they had missed the filing date. As a result, the constitutionality and the legality of the law was never clarified.

The used and useful principles of law in rate making are in effect throughout the country. Their constitutionality has been affirmed all the way through the Supreme Court. The law is there to protect the people, the ratepayers. It basically says that when a utility has a monopoly, it cannot build a facility that is not needed (useful). If it builds a facility and it doesn't work (useable), it cannot charge the ratepayers for its mistakes. It's the burden of the investors, the

owners and the profit seekers of the corporation to pay for such mistakes.

This law is based upon logic, common sense and protection of the public. The Governor's stand on the implementation of this law is honest and forthright. He is saying that the businesses and the residents of Long Island should not have to pay for the management decisions made by the profit making corporation LILCO, even if it causes the corporation to become insolvent.

The corporation made the decision to make the investment, to make a profit. The ratepayers had no say, will receive no benefits and therefore should not be made to assume the corporation's obligation. This stand is the only proper stand any fair minded, honest individual could take.

We find it deplorable that Newsday, the only daily newspaper published on Long Island, could so blatantly support LILCO's position which can only hurt and damage its readers and citizens of Long Island.

Maybe we have a jaded sense of journalism in today's world, but we believe a newspaper must first, foremost and always be responsible to its readers, and not corporate profits. And why not?

Give Us A Choice

Using the Initiative and Referendum law, citizens are petitioning Suffolk County for the right of county residents to make a choice whether they wish to continue with the current system of the County Legislature, or be represented on the county level by the town supervisors who will vote on the County Board in a weighted vote plan.

Petitions have cleared the county attorney's office and the Board of Elections. They are now back at the Legislature where the proposition, as proposed, can be accepted and placed on the ballot this November. If rejected by the County Legislature, citizens will be required to raise in excess of 20,000 signatures, or 5 per cent of the people who voted in the last gubernatorial election. A large job, but not insurmountable. A project the sponsors are already organized for and ready to accomplish.

In essence the only thing the sponsors are asking for is the right to choose, through ballot, the form of government they wish to be represented by. Now is not the time for rhetoric, either pro or con. Now is the time for our county legislatures to act as statesmen. They have before them a legitimate proposition, a legitimate question which a substantial number of people are seeking an answer for. They are asking through Initiative and Referendum to be given the opportunity of choosing their form of government. This is the democratic way. We are people who believe in freedom of choice. Nothing could be more American than allowing the people of Suffolk County to choose the method of government they wish to operate under.

No legislator who believes in the democratic form of government, the people's right to choose their own form of government and their leaders,

should have any qualms about voting to put this proposition on the ballot. Only a fascist, a Communist or a dictator would dare say to the people: "You do not have the right to choose how you wish to be governed." Surely, no American citizen who believes in the constitution would have the audacity, sitting as an elected official, to deny the people this inalienable right.

The petition is now before the Legislature and as painful as it may be, or despite how their little fiefdoms might be jeopardized, we hope and we pray that there is not a single legislator who would be un-American enough to say that for my own personal, vested interest, I denied the citizens the right, responsibility and the obligation to choose the form of government authorized under the constitution to be governed by.

Some legislators will attempt to turn this question into an argument on the pros and cons of Supervisors vs. Legislators. That argument has no place in making the decision to give the people the right to choose. Once the initiative is on the ballot, full scale debate should take place. The pros and cons of both systems of government should be brought out so that every voter has an opportunity to decide which type of government best serves them. You can be assured both sides will be impassionately debated.

The media will devote an inordinate amount of space to this issue. Already, both Suffolk Life and Newsday have taken positions opposite from each other and have written extensively about the issue.

We encourage the legislature to act expeditiously by approving this ballot question at the next meeting of the legislature. It's the only decent, right and American thing to do.

And why not?

People Are Important Too

There has been no question in our minds and in the minds of many Long Islanders that Newsday has been in the hip pocket of LILCO with their vehement support of the Shoreham nuclear power facility and of LILCO as well.

Their true editorial wisdom came out last Thursday with their front page headline, "Gov's Plan Tough on

LILCO." They wailed, they cried that the big bad wolf, Cuomo, in sticking up for the people, was denying the corporation unjust and undue profits. Cuomo's stand is a stand for the people, the ratepayers and the citizens of Long Island. It's a stand based on constitutional law which Newsday and LILCO have willfully chosen to ignore. The "used" and "useful"

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Volunteers Needed

It appears that next Tuesday the Suffolk County Legislators will throw democracy out of the window by voting to deny the citizens an opportunity to choose our form of government.

Using the Initiative and Referendum procedure, over 2,000 citizens petitioned the Suffolk County Legislature to put on the ballot a question for the voters to decide: whether they wanted to continue with the County Legislature or be governed by a weighted Board of Supervisors.

The legislators are in love with their job, they are so filled with their own self importance that it appears they will deny this Initiative, forcing the citizens to collect over 20,000 signatures throughout the ten towns of Suffolk to force a referendum.

The Initiative and Referendum law was designed by the legislature to fail. If every party takes the time allotted, the cumulative number of days are more than the law allows for the process to work. The law is further complicated by statutes that forbid a term of office or the budgetary procedures from being interfered with. When all the technicalities are imposed, the procedure effectively cuts down the citizens' 180 day time frame from gathering the second set of petitions to less than six weeks.

According to counsel, we, the citizens, must have the petitions collected and filed by the first week in August in order to appear on this

November's ballot. The legislators know this and they are counting on the people to fail and, therefore, the question will be put off for at least another year, possibly three.

We hope you are as incensed as we are about the denial of your rights as a citizen to choose the form of government you wish and would like to actively become involved by helping to gather the necessary petitions. It's not going to be an easy task, or a task for a few hands. But we the people, united together, working together, can do it.

We ask for volunteers from throughout Suffolk County to go into your neighborhoods and collect signatures. The more people carrying petitions, the better chance we have of reaching our 20,000 signature goal before the deadline of the first of August.

If you would like to volunteer, if you would like to help, call Ann Fegley at 924-7403, or you may send your name, address and telephone number to Post Office Box 278, Yaphank, N.Y. 11980 and a representative of the citizens' group will get back to you with all the details.

It's time that we the citizens take control of our government. Let's take it out of the hands of the self-serving legislators who, by their votes, have proven they do not believe in democracy.

And why not?

anyway. Robinson said then, as did PSC Commissioner Edward Larkin, who is part of the Nassau County crowd that has strong ties to the utility, that the people's ability to pay has little bearing in such matters. The needs of the utility get top priority, both said.

The Public Service Commission was created as a regulatory body because of the monopolistic nature of the utilities that serve the crucial energy needs of our society. Without regulation, the utilities, having a captured market, could increase the rates as high as they wish. For the most part, however, that is exactly what is happening because most of those appointed to sit on such regulatory agencies have strong ties to the utility field. Their sympathies lie not with the public they were appointed to protect, but to the utilities they are supposed to be regulating. One need only look at the track record of the state's PSC to determine the truth of those words.

In New York State, the PSC has, in our view, violated the law time and again in granting LILCO Construction While in Progress (CWIP) funds to cover a portion of the Shoreham costs before that plant is "used and useful" as the law stipulates. The governor himself has said the PSC has read the law wrongly in the past and has proposed legislation to clarify the current law to prohibit utilities from collecting for plants abandoned or unlicensed. The clarification is vitally needed to prevent the abuses of the past, to prevent the PSC, as it has, from permitting LILCO to receive more than \$35 million (as of last October) for a plant that may never operate.

And there should also be stipulations in law that would prevent utility-involved individuals from being appointed to the PSC for at least five years after that involvement or, working for a utility after serving on the PSC. Such loyalties apparently die hard for those who come from the utility field, and once seated on the PSC they merely parrot the views of their former associates.

There have been efforts in the state legislature to abolish the PSC and replace it with a workable regulatory

agency that would protect the public from exorbitant rates and utility waste. But those efforts have died because of strong lobbying from the utilities, who, quite understandably, like the system as it now exists. It is time for a new effort to abolish the present utility-oriented PSC. And the Governor should strongly support such an effort.

In the meantime, however, the governor should demand an immediate investigation into the PSC to determine how much of a stacked deck the public has working against it. He should also begin a search for a new PSC chairman to replace the current chairman, Paul Gioia, under whose leadership the PSC — with one exception — has given every indication of being in the pockets of the utilities. The one exception, the lengthy investigation by the PSC staff of imprudent management during the construction of the Shoreham plant, is a rare instance where the public's protection against unjust costs resulted. But even in that instance there is no assurance the PSC staff finding, that LILCO should receive no more than \$2.3 billion for a plant they estimate now will cost at least \$4.2 billion, will be accepted by the full PSC commission, considering its pro-utility record.

Gioia is currently serving as a "holdover" appointee, and can be replaced at the discretion of the governor. He should be, immediately, and a new chairman, one who could whip the PSC into shape to become a regulatory agency with integrity, one which would serve to protect the public rather than be a mere echo for the utilities.

The governor has shown himself to be a fighter for the people in fighting to protect them from a questionable nuclear plant, exorbitant rate increases for electricity, and against arrogant utility officials. He could reinforce that record in a very meaningful way by insuring, now, that those who serve on regulatory bodies live up to the true responsibilities of their positions. It's time the public is protected, and not ignored, by the Public Service Commission.

And why not?

Weeding Out The IIs

Governor Mario Cuomo has asked that comments attributed to a member of the state Public Service Commission be explored to determine if they should disqualify that member from further rate-making decisions concerning the Shoreham nuclear power plant. The commissioner, unidentified in press reports, reportedly said the ratepayers would be stuck with the costs of Shoreham if it goes on line or doesn't.

The governor is absolutely correct in launching an investigation of the commissioner's comments because they indicate, as the Governor pointed out, a pre-determined decision on that vital matter before the PSC has even heard the arguments in the case. Potential jurors are excused when they

admit to having an opinion in a case about to go to trial, why shouldn't a PSC commissioner?

But the governor's examination of bias in rate making decisions should not stop with this one instance. The governor should also investigate the past decisions of PSC Administrative Judge Frank Robinson who, just recently, ruled that LILCO should receive the full \$281 million it is seeking in higher rates, and even worried this amount "could prove inadequate." Robinson's decision is no surprise. We remember all too well how he sat and listened to the pleadings of the public, during a previous rate increase request, that they could not afford higher bills, and then went and ruled in LILCO's favor

Sales Tax Support Weakens

It looks like we hit it on the head last week when we said Donald Allgrove voted as he was told. According to published reports, Allgrove's wife became angry at his vote and Allgrove is reported to have told Cohalan that he is going to change his vote to appease his wife.

This is good news but for the wrong reason. He's still being told how to be a legislator, but by a different person. Allgrove's vote was one of the key votes needed for the home rule message. Without it, Cohalan's plan to have the entire county subsidize the South West Sewer District is in jeopardy.

Somebody should also talk to Patrick Heaney, the freshman legislator from the 16th Legislative District. Heaney pledged, while running for election, not to raise the sales tax. In our interviews he was vehement in his opposition to having the people on the South Fork of Long Island pay for the special use sewage plant of the residents of the South West Sewer District. Heaney was either an outright liar at our interviews, or he has

allowed himself to become a puppet of the establishment.

We had thought Heaney had some backbone and independence. It appears he is just as bad as many of the other politicians who forget that they are public servants, elected to represent their district's wishes. Both insiders in the Republican party, and voters in general, had turned down Heaney for a number of offices he has run for in the past. On the surface we could not understand that denial, as Heaney appeared to be quite logical, independent and hard working. Obviously, the people who know him the best had the right opinion about him. The man cannot, apparently be trusted. His word is a jelly fish bond. The likes of Heaney do not deserve to serve on the Legislature or on any other body of government.

Heaney can redeem himself by reversing his vote and voting in the best interests of the people of his district. Or he can face their wrath the next time he has to ask for their approval.

And why not?

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The Foundations Have Been Laid

Relief, over this past weekend, was expressed G-R-A-D-U-A-T-I-O-N.

Years of hard work, dedication and doggedness came to an end. Whether it be high school or college, the foundations for many men and women have been laid. A foundation and a development of thought processes that will effect their lives is now in place.

When the spirit of exuberance begins to abate, in many young men and women it will be replaced by the emotion of fear. Fear of the future, but more, fear of the unknown.

Many years ago we felt the same fear. How can we ever earn a living? Would the job we ended up doing be what we really wanted? Although no one may be on the horizon, the concept of a spouse and a family was. The responsibility of putting our own feet under our own table, without Mom and Dad to be there to bail us out or pick up when we faltered.

Self doubts developed about our abilities, our intelligence and our path in life. All these concerns are legitimate but not something we should be overly concerned about. For, the future holds in store for each of us

what we make of it, rather than what is made for us.

There are few lucky breaks that come along. Instead there is a mundane world filled with exceptional opportunities for those who have vision, determination and a willingness to dare to be different and better.

The best advice we can give any graduate would be to look at the world as a challenge. Problems are really only opportunities in disguise. Your determination and imagination are the only things that will hold you back. Dare to be different, dare to achieve what no one thought was possible. Be willing to work harder and smarter, to grab your piece of the golden dream. Have faith in a power stronger than yourself, fear not asking for guidance.

Most important, set a goal, a big one and a series of little ones and then go for it.

Congratulations on your hard work and your achievement. Make the class of '84 the one that everyone wants to follow.

And why not?

Killing Democracy

How pathetic it is when people elected to serve through the Democratic process in a free society, turn their backs on that process and the very principles that are the foundations which allow them to achieve elected positions.

Suffolk County Legislators, faced with a dilemma of allowing the voters to choose the form of government they want, in a free election, are denying these voters the ability to express this opinion.

We can understand the fear Suffolk County legislators have. They know well that the majority of the residents of this county consider the Legislature an inferior form of government, and, if given a choice, would opt for a weighted board of supervisors instead.

One would think that out of a sense of fairness, and a responsibility to

allow the Democratic process to operate as it should, the legislators would permit the people to express their choice in the polling place. It is only the opportunity to have this question placed on the ballot, so the issue of which form of government the people want, is settled once and for all. That decision will come only after much debate and discussion, and that is as it should be.

But our legislators lack the courage to even bring the bill out of committee. From what we understand, they are keeping the bill bottled up to the very last day allowed by law, which would deny the citizens necessary time to gather the 20,000 signatures on petitions mandated by law to bring it to a vote. The possibility of gathering these signatures is really an impossibility, but we are willing to try.

We would not like to be any of these

legislators looking themselves in the mirror for what they must see is a body, frightened of itself. A face, without character, courage or conviction. A free mind that cherishes its right to think but, is so selfishly perverted, that it denies its fellowman the same privilege.

These legislators know that the public has petitioned their elected officials for this right to choose. Given the time that is necessary and allowed by law, the 20,000 signatures would be gathered which would result in the people being given the right to choose.

The people should not even have to go through this exercise if the

legislators would live up to their primary responsibility of representing their constituents, and let democracy work as intended.

The same frustration we feel as petitioners must have been akin to the frustration our forefathers felt when they petitioned England for due process of law, and were met with silence and abuse. The issue is the same, allow us to pick the form of government and our rulers. This current, sitting Legislature may well beat us on technicalities, they will not ever kill the spirit of freedom.

And why not?

A Law No One Will Like

The New York State Legislature has passed a seat belt law. By the end of the year, it will be mandatory for all front seat passengers to wear a seat belt.

Although it has been mandated for all cars to be equipped with seat belts for a number of years, it is estimated that only 10 per cent of the public buckles up.

Even states and countries that have mandated seat belt laws experienced an estimated 40 per cent rate of non-compliance. We all know the

statistics prove the logic behind a seat belt law is proper. If we are wearing a seat belt, statistics indicate, we will be hurt less severely, or our lives may be saved. For this reason, it is probably good we are being forced into the inconvenience of wearing seat belts and, eventually, buckling up will become second nature.

Sometimes, we have to accept laws we do not like, as being good for our health and welfare.

And why not?

Extend the Deadline!

Legislation is currently pending in the New York State Senate which would extend the current deadline for instituting a suit because of injury resulting from exposure to a toxic substance. Similar legislation has already been approved in the State Assembly, and the Senate should follow suit without delay.

The legislation stipulates that an action for personal injury or injury to property caused by the latent effects of exposure to a toxic or harmful substance may be commenced within two years from the date of discovery of injury, or within two years from the date such injury, with reasonable diligence, should have been discovered, whichever is earlier. The legislation also provides that time barred claims, except those against the state or its political subdivisions, are revived for one year from the effective date. The only question we have about these provisions is why the

state should be exempt from responsibility?

Under present state law, the statute of limitations begins to run from the date of exposure. Thus, if the harmful effects of a toxic substance are not known until three years after exposure — as is the case in many instances — the victim is out of luck and the responsible parties are off the hook.

But its passage is not certain because of the strong lobbying effort expected from the chemical companies and the insurance companies who insure them. There'll be lots of arm twisting and political contributions going around before this issue is settled.

Our senators, however, should fully realize that fairness to the victims must have a far greater priority than the financial implications of big business. They should approve this legislation without delay.

And why not?

Readers' Opinion

Dear Mr. Willmott:

I have listened to and read all the pros and cons, and heard all the what if's since the accident at the Grucci factory last November. I am a Bellport resident and I reside less than one mile from the Bellport site. I for one support the rebuilding of the Grucci's fireworks business, be it in Bellport or some other place in Brookhaven Town. I would much rather have their business behind my house rather than the dirt bike track that exists there now.

How many of you Bellporters have said after one of the Grucci's magnificent shows, "I live in the same town as these people," or "My children go to school with the Grucci children." I know I have. I was proud to say and I am still proud to say that I am a neighbor of these world famous artists!

You Brookhaven Town officials who stood at Lake Ronkonkoma during Suffolk's Tricentennial with your chests bulging with pride over your famous residents, where are

you now? You have swept it under the rug along with other things that you do not wish to deal with.

I say give the Grucci's a chance to prove themselves, their past safety record has to speak for something. Do you really believe that they are willing to risk more of their family members' lives by rebuilding their business? I don't.

The Grucci's are community-minded people. They live here, they worship here and they pay taxes here. It's not like they have their business here and live miles away; they have lived near their Bellport site since 1929. They were here before many of us Bellport residents, including Maple Avenue.

I for one applaud the ZBA's decision to lease the East Moriches property to the Grucci's for one year. I say give the Grucci's back their livelihood and give us back the beauty of their art!

Patricia Connelly
Bellport

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