

David J. Willmott, Editor

## Guard Down

When the announcement the Defense Department was going to close down the Air National Guard at Westhampton was first made, our reaction was, "So what?" After having lived through the close-down of the regular Air Force at the Suffolk County Air Base (and having survived it), we had little concern about the Air National Guard being pulled out. We had always looked at the Air Guard, as we are sure most residents did, as Sunday flyboys of little consequence and little bearing on the community.

### They're professionals

Last Tuesday we met with representatives of the Guard at the base, and our opinion was changed. Some of the facts they presented are absolutely frightening. On the economic side, the Guard pointed out that they are operating a full squadron at this base, the same as was operated by the Air Force, at one-third the cost of the former Air Force occupants. The squadron is made up of all volunteer professionals. These men are absolutely proficient in their job, whether it be maintenance or fighter pilot. It is because of this proficiency and this professionalism, and the elimination of normal military red tape, they are able to perform the same function which costs the Air Force two-thirds more to do.

### Virtually defenseless

The purpose of the 106th Fighter Interceptor Group is to intercept missiles and bombers in the event of an attack and to fly surveillance

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## Mail Rates Up

As of March 2, the cost of mailing a letter went from eight cents to ten cents. With it the costs of all other classifications of mail were raised. This includes Suffolk Life mailing costs. Today it costs us between five and six cents per copy per week for distribution of our newspaper. This only covers getting the paper from our plant to your home. The total cost of publishing Suffolk Life and making sure it arrives in your home ranges from fourteen to thirty-one cents per copy, depending upon the edition you receive and the number of pages in it. The advertising portion of Suffolk Life pays for itself and provides the profit for the company. The news portion is paid for by our readers. Every edition contains on an average of 35 per cent news content made up of photos, letters, editorials, news stories and reports.

Suffolk Life is sent to every reader on a "voluntary-pay" basis. We hope you will pay for your subscription each year. The annual subscription rate is only \$3., or a cost of six cents per copy to you. This just barely covers the distribution costs. All monies received for subscriptions are actually used to support our News Department. All subscriptions were due January 1. During the first week of December every copy contained a self-addressed return envelope which made it convenient for our readers to send in their annual \$3 subscription. Thousands of faithful subscribers paid their own way by sending in their \$3. Others have not, and it is to you that we are directing this editorial.

### What we give you

We give you an awful lot of newspaper for six cents a week. We give you reporters at town and school board meetings acting as watchdogs on your behalf. We monitor the happenings of the County Board, State Legislature and the Federal government. We speak out loudly about the abuses that are being perpetrated against the average citizen. We take strong controversial stands in our editorial column designed, not to convince you one way or another, but to provide the impetus for thought and action on your part. We publish a wide open "Letter to the Editor" column that allows you to write your own editorials, unedited, as you see fit. We cover as many social and recreational affairs that our limited dollars and space allow,

coverage of affairs that would never be given recognition. We give recognition to people at these affairs who would never be recognized otherwise for the efforts put forth in support of their organizations. There are a lot of other things we would like to do with the news product here at Suffolk Life if we had the dollars, but we are limited in the paper we can publish for you because some people feel it is not necessary to send in their three dollars.

### For the average person

It is hard to put into words how important each of these subscriptions is. We can fully understand your feeling of paying for a paper that you might otherwise get for free. In a world where there is damn' little for nothing, it's good to take advantage of the one thing that appears to be absolutely free and without hitches. In reality though, the only person you are hurting is yourself, because by not sending in your personal subscription, you are weakening the one paper that has been willing, year after year, to stand up at bat for you; you are weakening the one paper that has gone out of its way to give coverage to the average person's interests and the average person.

### We need you

We need your paid subscription to continue to be able to bring you a good newspaper. Today, won't you, if you already haven't, sit down and send your check for your 1974 subscription. It's only \$3...probably one of the biggest bargains in America, particularly when you consider every cent of it is returned to you in a better newspaper. And why not?

Hi, Dave  
I'm paying my own way. Here's my 1974 subscription for our newspaper, Suffolk Life.

- Enclosed \$3.00
  - Please bill me. I'll pay at a later date.
  - New subscription.
  - Renewal subscription.
- Area edition wanted \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check or money order payable to: SUFFOLK LIFE.

PLEASE PRINT

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Suffolk Life, Box 262, Westhampton, N.Y. 11977



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# willmotts and why-nots

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## Our 13th Anniversary

Remember when you were a child and you couldn't wait to become a teenager? All those worries would be over and there was nothing but sweetness and joy in those much anticipated years? We bragged last year in our anniversary editorial about becoming a teenager. Well, we are in the process of completing our 13th year, and in the newspaper business it's just like in real life. The problems get bigger, more complex, but the joys are increased also. We are confident we have a lot of our growing pains behind us, and yet a tremendous amount of meaningful growth ahead of us. Suffolk Life, because of our readers, has become a meaningful news force capable of informing and creating an arena for public opinion.

### Not too big

Today, we are found in over 150,000

homes throughout the eastern portion of Long Island. We have become one of the largest weekly newspapers in the country and yet we still have retained the smallness that makes us sensitive to people and their needs. Our growth has been rather chaotic and has taken a tremendous amount of personal commitment and tender loving care, which has been amply provided by a fantastically dedicated staff of loyal, suffering Suffolk Lifers. Almost to a man, our staff is committed to publishing a really great newspaper that serves the community. When you come right down to it, like any newspaper, it's the loyal readership and support of the readers, the citizens, that makes a newspaper what it is. We have encouraged your active participation in our paper and hope you will continue in the future. We have a strong desire to serve and a

fierce desire to be productive. We do everything we can within our limitations to make every ad produce for our accounts, and at the same time make each inch of news space meaningful to the community.

### We've come a long way

As editor and publisher of this publication, I find it hard to realize the distance we have come in such a short period of time. Thanks are in order to hundreds of people and, unfortunately, space is too limited to mention each by name. To all of you who have, each in your own way played a part in our growth, I send my sincere thanks and appreciation. It is hoped that in the coming years we will be able to develop an even better paper for you and, with your continued support, we will. And why not?

## The Russians Are Here

A few years back there was a popular movie called "The Russians Are Coming". It was a satire about the Russians landing in New England. This past week, they were out in force less than two miles from the sand dunes of Westhampton Beach. Hundreds of boats, including mother ships manned by thousands of people, were right here in the playground of the East, taking just about every living thing they could scoop up from the Atlantic. As a pilot stated, "I flew over this fleet at night, and it was impossible for you to tell which was the sky without navigational equipment as the lights from the ships were as numerous as the stars in the sky".

### Clean us out

We used to have an asinine regulation that kept vacuum cleaner fleets of Russia and Poland at least twelve miles off our shore, but some idiot in the State Department negotiated a new agreement with the Russians that allowed them to come a few miles from our shore in pursuit of cleaning out and taking all the fish they could harvest - fish that should be going to feed American families.

Residents of the United States, particularly those on the East Coast that are affected directly or indirectly by our seafood economy and by the soaring costs at the supermarkets, have demanded that our government place a 200-mile restriction on foreign fishing vessels as many other countries have done to protect their natural reserves. The administration, which appears to be hell bent and determined to hand over this country - lock, stock and barrel - to the communist world, has not only refused to up the limit to 200 miles, but has taken down the barriers of twelve miles.

### Handing it over

Why doesn't the administration get it over with once and for all and hand over our



Constitution with a red bow to the Russians and at the same time make an agreement to send all babies to Russia to be brought up? Nixon gave them our bread basket when he gave them our wheat. We have given our treasury to them in the form of loans and outright grants. A total of \$168 billion between 1946 and 1959, has been allocated to foreign countries. We have given them our gold by not demanding repayment of loans on time or interest that has accrued. So why not just give them the land and the people that inhabit it? This would bring peace, and that's all that seems to matter - peace at any cost.


What happened to the pride this country once had - the feeling that we could, and would, stand up for our own? Why have we become shivering weaklings or fat, complacent blobs that will do anything convenient and does not cost us our six-pack of beer on Saturday night?

What is equally as frightening as the Russians taking our food from our mouths, is each one of these fishing ships is capable of launching atomic missiles. It is a known fact some of these ships never put a net in the

water, but are there for the sole purpose of surveillance, loaded down with highly sophisticated electrical gear capable of reading and jamming our radar and raising havoc with our much-diluted defense system.


### Sold out

The leadership of the United States has sold out the American people - sold them out internally by allowing shortages to occur, scandals and corruption, and externally by giving the resources of our country away to our enemies - while at the same time dismantling our defense capabilities. Our President, our Congressmen and our Senators are responsible for this travesty. At least some of them can be thrown out of office when they come up for re-election this November. They should be! And why not?



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## A Dangerous Trap

The Conservative Party of New York State is being primed to step into a very dangerous trap. We understand that the leadership of the Conservative Party is talking seriously with the leadership of the Republican Party for a cross-endorsement of Governor Wilson this coming November.

### The real motivation

The motivation behind the creation of the Conservative Party was Governor Rockefeller. Governor Rockefeller, although a registered Republican and a Republican officeholder, held and perpetuated ultra-liberal views which many Republicans could not tolerate. In desperation they, joined by Independents and disenchanted Democrats, formed the Conservative Party of New York State. One of their primary goals was to remove Rockefeller from office. Rockefeller, with his machine, was able to resist this pressure and be re-elected on a number of occasions.

### Little difference

Now that Rockefeller has resigned and his successor, Malcolm Wilson, has taken the reins as Governor, there is talk among the leadership of the Conservative Party of giving him the Party's endorsement. This would be a travesty and a sell-out of the rank and file Conservative - thinking people of the State of New York. Malcolm Wilson's initial proposals as governor have been those of an out and out liberal. From our observations, we can see very little difference between Rockefeller and Wilson as far as philosophies go. What some of the leadership of the Conservative Party seems to fail to see is that it was not Rockefeller's name that the people were opposed to, but Rockefeller's liberal philosophy that they could not tolerate. By changing the name, but not the philosophy, the problem is still imminent and must be removed if New York State is ever to return to its position of greatness.

### Not across-the-board

In addition, we have heard that this Conservative leadership has discussed with the Republican leadership, the possibility of an across-the-board endorsement of Republican can-

didates. There definitely are Republican candidates who should have and deserve Conservative endorsement, just as there are Republican candidates who deserve Liberal Party endorsement. Unfortunately, no major party has a hold on either liberal or conservative candidates. For the Conservative Party or the Liberal Party to offer across-the-board endorsements is morally and politically wrong. We had a practical example of what happened the last time this was done. In Brookhaven Town the Conservatives, then a fast-growing, energetic organization, was sold on the idea of endorsing the entire Republican slate, and did. The result was successful on the surface, as the Conservatives ended up with a Conservative councilman, but immediately we saw a rapid deterioration of the Conservative movement within the town. The people who were the backbone of the Conservative Party no longer had faith in Conservative leadership and, as a result, the Conservative Party stopped growing.

### Think first

The Conservative party can be and will be a viable force within the State of New York if they continue on their own independent and selective cross-endorsement policy. If they back a liberal Republican for Governor and give blanket endorsement to all Republican candidates, we are sure in 1974 the Conservative Party will be finished statewide. We hope the leadership thinks of this before they act. And why not?

## A New Town Hall

New town halls are the rage with politicians this season. Brookhaven Town government proposed one for \$5 million. The voters turned it down. Southold Town government proposed one for \$800,000. The voters turned it down last week. With the advent of revenue sharing funds, many of our town governments have taken a look at the cramped quarters in which they are operating and their thoughts have turned to gleaming new buildings in which to house government. Unfortunately, their ideas of grandeur have outweighed the public's practical ability to fund these projects.


There is very little argument against our various governments developing new housing complexes for themselves as long as they are functional, economical and not elaborately expensive. But, for some reason our governments have been reluctant to offer the voters economical, functional quarters that they would buy and approve. Instead, they have developed what they would like to be housed in far beyond the voters' desire to finance and, as a result, these projects go down to defeat, and the chaotic housing conditions of our government remain as they have been.

### Building monuments?

We believe our local governments will find the voters receptive to creating town hall complexes that serve the needs of the town as long as they are economical and are stripped of their non-functional aesthetics. In a discussion with a builder recently, we were comparing the cost of putting up a 15,000 square foot prefabricated 30-year-life building, complete with plumbing, heating and air conditioning that would be adequate to serve the town's needs and offer comfort and functionality. This building could be put up for about one-third of what the town was proposing to spend on a brick and mortar monument to the present town board.


### Let's be practical

As all of us have had to become more practical, our governments are going to have to do the same if they want to get anything passed. And why not?



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## Why Guaranteed Profits?

Utilities are monopolies. Utilities are private businesses. They are the only ball game in town and, therefore, you cannot take your business elsewhere if you don't like the quality, service, or the price. Consumers, at long last, are hopping mad at the skyrocketing costs of services provided by these utilities. LILCO particularly has earned, deservedly, the wrath of the consumer with its exorbitant demand for a rate increase based upon a decrease in its sales because the consumer patriotically reduced his use of electricity.

### Minimum profits?

As an entrepreneur, as a capitalist, we are darned if we can see why a utility which is a monopoly should be guaranteed a minimum profit any more than any other free enterprise. On Monday mornings when we start our work week, we have no guarantee that come Saturday night when our work week ends, we will have a profit. The only guarantee we have is that we have a certain fixed cost that can only go up, and yet we must assume the risk that our sales will be above our costs.

### Built-in guarantees

Utilities, having total control of the market, not being subject to competitive factors, have a built-in guarantee that they will do "X" amount of dollars regardless of what happened during a particular week. They have no fear that no one will buy because people must use their services. It appears these monopolies are able to accrue any kind of expenditure they want within reason, and pass it on to the consumer as legitimate cost; then go to their Public Service Commission and demand an increase in rates to cover this cost plus boost their dollar profit.

### Utility vs. businessman

The whole system is ludicrous. With a guaranteed profit, the more costs the utility can incur, the higher they can push rates, and the more dollars of profit they are able to make. In private business, the only way you are able to make additional dollars of profit is by cutting the difference between the sale

price and the cost of your operation, or by going out and increasing sales without increasing expenses. You will soon be out of business if you push up your costs and push up your price because a competitor will find more competitive ways of performing the same operation -- and the public, being free to pick and choose their supplier, will buy comparable goods for the least amount of money.

### Too many hearings?

The Public Service Commission offers almost no protection to the consumer. A letter we recently saw, sent by the PSC to a reader of Suffolk Life who had sent them an editorial in which we (Suffolk Life) criticized the PSC quite severely, revealed an awful lot. The writer, G.F. Walsh, Chief Consumer Service Section, Power Division, defends the commissioners (there are four) for not being at the hearing. He states there are literally hundreds of hearings every year and there is no way the Commissioners could attend all. This is why examiners prepare reports.

He is ambiguous and his hundreds could be anywhere from 100 to 900, so let's average it at 500 hearings a year. Although some hearings are rather lengthy, most are brief and completed in a number of hours. If there are four commissioners who are really interested in finding out what the public has on its mind and if, in fact, there is a legitimate need for rate increases, it would require each commissioner to attend 125 hearings a year for all the hearings to be covered by at least one commissioner.

### Bury them?

We also wonder if there are 500 requests for hearings each year, aren't the utilities making an exorbitant number of requests for changes? Is their tactic to bury the PSC under paperwork, knowing full well that they can never do justice to these hearings?

### We're not gullible

Mr. Walsh also stated in this letter that the appointment of the commissioners is non-political and he states a governor (Rockefeller, who was a liberal Republican), appointed a


Democrat as his justification for them being non-political. We wonder if Mr. Walsh doesn't also believe in Santa Claus. We don't, and not for a second are we gullible enough to believe that politics do not enter into the selection of commissioners for the PSC and other regulatory agencies within the State.

### Look at the facts

It is a fact that the service of utilities throughout the state has deteriorated, rates both for electricity and telephone service have skyrocketed, there has been one abuse after another thrown at the consumer, and it has been like talking to the wall protesting to the PSC. It is a fact our State Legislature and the Governor are responsible for the selection of members and creation of regulatory agencies that are supposed to be there to protect the interests of the consumer and to hold public utilities in check.


### The ultimate weapon

As things stand today, if the State Legislature and the Governor do not have the courage or the ability to appoint people to these positions who can and will act on our behalf, we are left with our only ultimate weapon, and that is to throw out of Albany its present inhabitants and hopefully replace them with more qualified, more courageous people. And why not?



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