

## Sales Tax Bail Out

County Executive Peter Cohalan this week proposed to the legislature an increase in Suffolk County's sales tax by 1/4 of 1 per cent to bail out the Southwest Sewer District.

The indebtedness for the Southwest Sewer District is over \$1 billion dollars. During the next seven years, because of the structure of the financing, according to Cohalan, residents within that district are facing almost doubling of sewer tax assessments. On an average house, \$50,000 assessed valuation, taxes are projected to go from \$300 to over \$600. At that time, sewer taxes will steadily decline until they revert back to the \$300 level in about ten years.

John Klein, seven years ago, promised the people of the sewer district their assessment would not go over 60 cents per hundred, or the \$300 level. This was an empty promise by a hollow politician. Currently, there are sewer districts throughout Suffolk which are assessing their users more than 60 cents per hundred for the service provided by the sewer district.

Cohalan's proposal is for everyone throughout the county to be assessed 1/4 per cent more in sales taxes for a five year period. At the end of five years, the 1/4 per cent tax would cease, or at least cease to be assessed for the sewer district. The revenues from the sewer tax would be used to stabilize the taxes in the Southwest Sewer District as well as in other sewer districts which are currently paying more than the 60 cents. If sewer districts are not charging their users more than 60 cents, a formula has been worked out to grant these sewer districts part of the sewer tax for improvements and upgrading.

There are some things about Cohalan's proposal that bother us. First, of course, is that the Southwest Sewer District, as well as other sewer districts, are special use districts, designed and built to serve specific homeowners and intended to be funded by these landowners within the district. Is it fair, is it just, for people who do not live in the sewer district, do not benefit from its use, had no say in its creation, to be expected to subsidize its cost? Nowhere in Cohalan's message is there a cap, or a corresponding subsidy for the building, emptying and maintenance of cesspools or private sanitation systems that the great majority of the people of Suffolk County must maintain and pay for.

Cohalan uses as an argument that

the assessed valuation within the sewer district will only rise by 2 per cent per year, yet Cohalan, in arguing for the passage of the county contract, stated that the county anticipated a 4 per cent to 5 per cent increase in the assessed valuation throughout the county as a means to fund the county contract. How can you have 2 per cent now during a promising economic time, and have had 4 per cent to 5 per cent less than a year ago? Are Cohalan's projections honest or just convenient?

Nowhere in Cohalan's proposal do we note an anticipation of the effect of the expansion of the sewer system to encompass Route 110, its heavy industries, heavy users and heavy taxpayers.

Currently, less than half of the people who will be serviced by the system are hooked up. We understand during the next five years the county anticipates a 90 per cent hook up rate, which will spread the base, substantially reducing the individual rates that are projected.

Cohalan is hanging his hat on the 60 cent political pledge made by Klein, some seven odd years ago. We are sure that Cohalan has heard of inflation, which ran up to 15 per cent per year during the past seven years. If the 60 cents was factored for inflation, the same 60 cents would be close to \$1.20 today. The 60 cents a gallon gasoline, seven years ago, today costs us \$1.30 at the pumps. Why should sewer taxes based on political promises be exempt from inflation?

We sympathize with the people of the Southwest Sewer District. They were lied to by politicians, they were conned by the daily media, they were robbed by corrupt contractors and engineering firms. The system cost over four times what they were promised it would when they voted on it. But, it was their system, created for their benefit and intended to be paid for by their assessments.

Unless Cohalan and the legislature can come up with a cap on the cost of building and maintaining private cesspools, retroactive to 1977, and an equal subsidy to the county-wide municipal sanitation systems as is being granted the Southwest Sewer District, the Southwest Sewer District's problems should not become a burden to all county residents.

The county legislature and the state legislature should send Cohalan back to the drawing board.

And why not?

## Drinking Age Compromise

Governor Mario Cuomo wants to raise the drinking age from 19 to 21 in New York State. The aim of this move, and the justification for changing the law, according to Cuomo, is the number of alcohol related deaths of people in this age group. We have mixed feelings.

Personally, we would much prefer that alcohol had never been invented. There isn't one of us, drinker or non-drinker alike, who has not been

personally affected either individually or through association by drinking. We tried prohibition here in this country and it was a dismal failure.

Up until about a year ago, we allowed 18 year olds to drink. We supported the change from 18 to 19. At least, it was an attempt to get the booze out of the high schools. It will be ten years before we know whether this program has been successful. Personally we think it will be a disaster

because it will not be enforced.

We believe there is a solution to teenagers and young adults driving and drinking. Currently, our laws allow a driver to drink in moderation. Drivers can have up to .005 of alcohol in their blood and be considered "not under the influence" of alcohol. Between .005 and .01 they are considered impaired. Over .01 they are considered drunk.

Why not add another category for drivers between 18 and 21. A .002 reading, which is the equivalent of less than a single beer. Young drivers who are found to have more than .002 in their blood would automatically have their licenses suspended until they reach their 21st birthday, no plea bargaining or special deals allowed.

Effectively the law would say; "You have your choice. You can legally drink at 19, or you can legally drive at 18, but you can't drive and drink any quantity of alcohol until you are 21." This three year hiatus might well set patterns that could be carried over into adult life, and may achieve the

ultimate objective of stopping driving and drinking.

Of course, whatever the law is it must be backed up by enforcement. When we had an 18 year old law the lack of enforcement made it a snap for 15 year olds to buy not only beer, but hard liquor. The lack of enforcement, currently, makes it easy for 18 year olds to obtain all the booze they can consume. Raising the drinking age will not improve the enforcement. This can only be done by the government that develops the laws and is charged with enforcing them.

Why not try a realistic program of planned enforcement, combined with a modified drinking-driving law that gives the youth the opportunity of choice.

We firmly believe that laws and a program based on this concept could achieve the desired results, while possibly pleasing, to some degree, most people on both sides of the argument.

And why not?

## Fire Sale!

We are all familiar with the unethical retailer who marks up his prices 20 per cent, then lights a cigarette in his store and because of the smoke begins putting up fire sale signs, proclaiming a 20 per cent discount of the inflated prices to make it look like a legitimate sale. It's a con, pure and simple.

LILCO is having a fire sale! Charlie Pierce, the dethroned head of LILCO was making \$230,000 per year for mismanaging the corporation. His replacement, William Catacosinos, who had been a member of the Board of Directors but who never has had hands on experience with running a utility or a nuclear power plant, took over the helm of LILCO. For his on-the-job training, Catacosinos, the board of directors decided, would receive \$275,000 a year in salary.

Low and behold, LILCO decided to run a fire sale. Catacosinos announced he is going to reduce his salary from \$275,000 to \$220,000. Big deal, mark

up, mark down, switch the shells and guess which one the snake is under.

But hold it folks, in this age old con game, while good old boy Catacosinos is taking his magnificent mark up, mark down cut in pay, he tells the honest, hard working people of LILCO: Because I am doing it, I want you to do it too. Those of you who are making up to \$35,000 and who are putting food on the table, paying rents and mortgages as well as utility bills, and are probably struggling to keep your heads above water, like the rest of us, must sacrifice too. You will have to take a 10 per cent cut in pay. If you don't like it, you can join the unemployment lines with the 900 or so other LILCO employees who are not as fortunate as you are to be kept.

When will the management of LILCO be honest with the people of Long Island? Obviously, Catacosinos offers no hope in this department.

And why not?

## Response from Senator D'Amato

Dear Dave:

Needless to say, your editorial of February 29, 1984 ("Forgotten His Roots?") was disappointing to me. Disappointing because it does not properly represent my position on the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant.

Let me immediately clarify some points:

--Make no mistake about it, Al D'Amato

does not and has never advocated opening Shoreham without qualified assurances for the health and safety of all Long Islanders.

--An evacuation plan that reflects the cooperation of all levels of government is the only acceptable plan.

--The ratepayers of Nassau and Suffolk counties cannot be expected to shoulder

Cont. on page 4

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## And why not?

# Response from Senator D'Amato...

cont. from page 3

the economic consequences of a company that for too long has been mismanaged. Every effort must be made to reduce such costs to the ratepayers. That's why, more than a year ago, I demanded that LILCO take concerted action to reduce its rates. Subsequently, I convened a meeting with representatives of the Governor, Nassau and Suffolk counties to discuss what I determined, even at that time, to be a potentially serious economic problem facing our region.

What resulted was my initiative to save residents upwards of \$150 million by allowing LILCO to refinance its debt through tax-exempt bonds. Unlike so many other utilities that could go that route, LILCO was prevented from doing so because of a quirk in regulations. Senator Bob Dole and Senator Russell Long, Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Senate Finance Committee, respectively, have joined me in this effort to refinance the debt and lower costs for LILCO customers.

Another proposal I have pursued was termination by LILCO of its involvement in the upstate Nine Mile Point No. 2 nuclear power station. It took seven months and a change of LILCO management to realize that objective.

Finally, I have advocated the expeditious construction of the "Marcy South" transmission line to bring inexpensive Canadian hydropower to Long Island. By doing so, we would save about \$165 million every year.

Dave, you were a friend and counsellor to me during the dark days of my supposedly hopeless bid for the U.S. Senate. I appreciated it then and even more now. I have not, nor will I ever forget the families I represent. In a world that's tough enough, you can bet that I understand the concerns of middle class New Yorkers struggling to make a go of it.

That's why the threat of skyrocketing electric rates disturbs me. It would mean economic chaos for all Long Islanders. Businesses would pull up stakes and head south. Jobs would be lost and unemployment would soar. Families already laboring under high electric bills would be unfairly asked to kick in even more.

LILCO broke faith with the people of Long Island by mismanaging its affairs. But we cannot allow that misfortune to wreak havoc on the families of Long Island. I am working to protect their interests and that has always been my first and foremost concern.

Sincerely,  
Alfonse M. D'Amato  
United States Senator

### Editor's Note:

In your letter you make the point that Al D'Amato does not and has never advocated opening Shoreham without qualified assurances for the health and safety of all Long Islanders.

Al, that is a nice political statement but, who are you looking to for this assurance? To LILCO? They'll tell you that the plant is perfectly safe, they built it. To the N.R.C.? They will not guarantee the design or construction of this plant, by their own testimony at Governor Cuomo's Shoreham Commission which you failed to have someone monitor.

If you had been paying attention to the people back home, you would have heard some of them raising serious questions concerning the N.R.C., and would have heard them asking for you to intervene on their behalf with the N.R.C.

Conceptually the N.R.C. cannot give comfort or assurances to anyone as it is both the propagator and the regulator of atomic energy, which are diametrically opposing charges.

You have it within your power to correct this weakness of government. You have had it within your power in the past.

The second point you make in your letter is an "evacuation plan that reflects the cooperation of all levels of government is

the only acceptable plan." Suffolk County government, Al, spent over \$1,000,000 of its hard-earned taxpayers' money to develop the best plan that money could buy. In trying to develop such a plan, Suffolk County officials reasonably concluded that it would be impossible to develop a plan that could get all the people out of the area without killing some of them. Because they could not guarantee, nor can anyone else, including a United States Senator working in Washington, the safety of the people of Suffolk County, they lived up to their obligations, their oath of office, and declared that a safe evacuation plan could not be developed.

Al, "cooperation of all levels of government" cannot make an impossibility into an acceptable plan.

The state under Governor Cuomo's administration looked at the facts and joined the county in not imposing an unworkable evacuation plan on the public.

The third point you make is the ratepayers of Nassau and Suffolk cannot be expected to shoulder the economic consequences of the company that has been, for too long, mismanaged. I agree with you 100 per cent, and that is why I find your attempt to bail out this mismanagement a dichotomy.

The people who must shoulder the responsibility for this financial debacle are the investors in the corporation. These investors in the corporation willingly purchased shares in the corporation and knew fully that in doing so they were taking some degree of risk. In addition, these shareholders had control over the company as they elect the board of directors. At the last annual meeting, when ballots were sent out, the shareholders were asked the question by the board of directors, "Should the company close the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant?" The results were never announced but, we can assume, the owners, the shareholders, of the plant supported the continuation of the Shoreham fiasco and therefore assumed, rightfully, full responsibility of the economic liabilities associated with their decision.

I considered it a pleasure to have been active in your successful quest for the Senatorial seat from the State of New York. I believed then that you genuinely did come from the people, and would always remember your beginning. I asked in the editorial for you to become personally involved, to direct your staff to ascertain for you all the facts concerning LILCO and the Shoreham plant. I again ask you to listen to the people, to ferret out the facts and both sides of the issue. Once you have done this, I am sure you will come out strongly on the side of the people and be willing to champion the people's cause in Washington.

You may become as incensed as I am at Senator Alan Simpson's interference in this local issue in your state. We both know that it is an unspoken but cardinal rule of the Senate, as well as the House, that a Senator does not become involved in a local issue in another Senator's district. The only way a Senator will become involved in a local issue is with the explicit or the tacit approval of the Senator from that district.

Al, aren't you aware of Senator Simpson's proposed legislation which would impose upon our local area, with federal intervention, an impossible evacuation plan? Will you sit back and do nothing while a Senator from the west imposes a very real threat upon the safety of your constituents - and Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's constituents as well - simply to favor a utility? Will you permit him to impose such legislation through the Nuclear Regulatory Commission Authorization Act, which effectively cuts off any public debate on his proposal?

Will you stand firm and fight for the people, the very people who helped elect you to office? Will you join our fight to protect the public, at all costs, and be a champion of the people rather than a protector of the utility?

And why not?



**HUNGRY WATERFOWL** — Ducks and geese in the Seatuck Creek pond in Eastport get a meal from a family out for a Sunday afternoon walk. The bold waterfowl fought amongst themselves for scraps of bread. Photo by Bob Chartuk

## letters to the editor

### "If anyone is in need"

Dear Editor:

I would like to thank the Hampton Bays volunteer firemen and the Police for their skillful, swift work in controlling the fire which occurred in our Thrift Shoppe on January 24. I am sure the Lord was with us since no one suffered any injury on that dreadful morning.

The shop served a dual purpose, it was a source of fund raising to assist us in giving free health care and it was also a place the needy could obtain clothing. We will continue to accept clothing at the office of the Dominican Sisters Family Health Service.

216 East Montauk Highway, Hampton Bays. Our second shop in Sag Harbor remains open and all are welcome to visit there. If anyone is in need and unable to obtain the necessary articles due to the closing of the Thrift Shoppe, please call 728-0180 for assistance. The Lord has again blessed us by allowing us to continue to serve those less fortunate.

We will keep you informed regarding our future plans.

Sincerely,  
Mary Carnicelli, R.N., M.S.  
Health Service Coordinator

### "We are not surprised"

(The following is a letter to the editor sent to The New York Times.)

Dear Editor,

In response to your editorial of November 23, 1983, entitled "Open Shoreham," let us admit right off that we are not surprised. The "we" in this case represents the Group For The South Fork, an organization that has diligently represented the environmental concerns of its over 5,000 members of Eastern Long Island for the past decade. We say with some pride that we took an active role in the defeat of LILCO's proposed nuclear plants at Jamesport and for essentially the same reason we will make every effort to defeat LILCO once again at Shoreham.

The New York Times' general indifference to ecological issues has long been recognized by the environmental community so that a condemnation of Shoreham on environmental grounds by the Times could hardly be expected.

However, your "double think" editorial which predicates Shoreham as "an economic error", and then blithely insists that there is "a strong economic case for operating the plant" is just about as Orwellian as anything we've encountered other than LILCO's own press releases on the subject.

The facts are:

1. That LILCO is broke because of a \$4 billion cost overrun.
2. It has a defective plant on its hands. Its own inspection team of "Torrey Pines" found a million dollars worth of flaws after having inspected only one per cent of the plant hardware!
3. Its management has proven—if only by its false projections of construction cost and electric need—to be about as reliable as its fractured back-up generators.
4. The ratepayer faces a 30-year term of bondage to LILCO beginning with a 100 per cent rate increase if the Shoreham turkey should operate.
5. The Nassau-Suffolk economy must inevitably suffer curtailment, if not serious

regression, with the Shoreham monkey on its back.

6. A ratepayers' revolt is in the offing that quite possibly will keep LILCO and its major accomplices, the PSC and NRC, in the courts until the ratepayers' unnecessary and unjust burden is lifted.

We merely refer to the above as significant issues which, because they were excluded in your editorial, represent further evidence of the superfluous and narrow text of your proposal.

In closing, I should like to call attention to the real or unwitting bias reflected in your argument, and that is not only a neutrality toward the environment, but an equal lack of concern for the plight of the ratepayers. This, obviously leads one to wonder about just who the New York Times speaks for in this case. The only major contestants in the game, other than Shoreham opponents, the ratepayers and the environment, are LILCO and its backers.

If this be the case, then the N.Y. Times is backing the wrong horse(s). The ratepayers have had it! And I'm sure that I speak for a great many of them in saying:

"Shoreham has no right to exist!"  
"It should be shevled now on safety and economic grounds!"

"We, the ratepayers, will not pay another dime for Shoreham!"

"Let those who goofed pay, namely, the investment community, the Feds, because of the NRC's advocacy of nuclear power, and the State, because of the PSC's acquiescence to LILCO's demands."

We ask you, dear editor, to double think what we say here and to reconsider your double talk about Shoreham. You might even begin to pay some attention to your major support system, the environment, before it's too late.

Hopefully,  
Charles Raebeck  
Executive Consultant  
Group For The South Fork

## If In Doubt

Congressman William Carney has long been silent about the problems at the Shoreham nuclear power facility. When criticised for his lack of action on behalf of his constituents, he has often said, "If the N.R.C. expresses any doubts about Shoreham, I will take a strong position on the matter." That time is now!

N.R.C. has quite surprisingly for that pro-nuclear agency, expressed severe reservations about the faulty Transamerica Delaval diesels at Shoreham. Not only at Shoreham, in fact, but at other nuclear installations throughout the country. The N.R.C. also has expressed doubts about the attempts being made to by-pass their regulations, and the plans submitted by LILCO for usurping governmental powers in an evacuation plan.

This brings Bill Carney's stonewalling of the Shoreham issue back to square one, his lap and his responsibilities as the district representative in Washington.

Carney has refused, up to this point, to take any kind of active interest in the Shoreham project, maintaining steadfastly by his silence strong loyalty to the Long Island Lighting Company. A congressman's first responsibility is to be knowledgeable of all issues pertaining to the safety and the welfare of his constituents that involve federal jurisdiction or control. The Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant clearly fits into this category, yet Carney has maintained an eerie and irresponsible silence on the subject. He has maintained that whatever the N.R.C. does is fine with him. He has ignored the pleas from thousands of his constituents for direct involvement in the issue. He has turned down opportunities to meet with concerned citizens and, from what we can see, has refused to listen to anyone but LILCO.

Maybe Carney does not have the capabilities to understand more than one side of any issue. This often is the problem with political extremists whether they be Conservative or Liberal. Maybe it has not been in his own best interest to listen to anybody but the corporate special interests that have handsomely financed his congressional campaigns.

We are now coming into the eleventh hour on Shoreham, and it appears that Washington may be the place where the final decision is made.

Rebuffed by county and state officials who have knowledge about Shoreham and its problems, LILCO officials are making every effort in their last ditch battle to keep the plant alive by soliciting help from federal officials, and politicians from afar. Safety matters are being shunted aside by LILCO and its allies to keep the plant alive, and thus in the rate base, for one reason only — the survival of LILCO.

Long Island's only hope for survival from an accident at Shoreham was the development of an evacuation plan by local levels of government. Local emergency response would be vital for any sane evacuation effort. But in the development of such a plan, county officials realized that because of the geography of this area, and the limited number of roadways, an evacuation which would guarantee the safety of the public was not possible.

Now there is an effort underway in Washington, at LILCO's urging, by Senator Alan Simpson of Wyoming to utilize a limited number of federal employees to give LILCO's evacuation plan some credence. This is nothing more than a blatant attempt to offset the legal concerns about LILCO's authority to regulate traffic and other evacuation requirements. Simpson's efforts are a farce, and his plan is a sham, a very dangerous one.

There is no way the federal level would be able to adequately mobilize forces in the event of a rapid sequence of events. There is no way Simpson and his federal proposal could insure the safety of the public. And what's worse, is he really doesn't care one iota about the public's safety, simply LILCO's welfare.

The Shoreham diesels continue to suffer from a variety of problems daily. The N.R.C. has said LILCO cannot be licensed for low power operation until these problems are resolved at Shoreham and the other nuclear facilities. N.R.C. officials have, indeed, expressed doubts, Congressman Carney. Will you continue to sit back, silent and seemingly unconcerned? Or will you now keep the promise you have made in the past, to "take a strong stand" to protect the safety of the people you represent?

Where is Bill Carney hiding? Why is Bill Carney hiding? Why is Bill Carney refusing to be our representative in Washington?

And why not?

## Unfair Share

Governor Mario Cuomo has shown to both fan and foe alike that he is a man who strongly believes in fairness. While one can perhaps argue with his political beliefs, fairness would dictate an admission that he has shown time and again he harbors a concern for the people and a keen desire to be fair. There is now before the governor an opportunity to display this side of his character again.

Cuomo's predecessor, Governor Hugh Carey, enacted a regulation which effectively was a cap on the sharing of federal aid to localities on the 1970 census. This was not fair and demands correction.

The state aid formula, which is based on the 1970 census, directs funds away from growing areas toward those which have stabilized populations or, even, declining populations. This is particularly meaningful to Suffolk County, particularly the East End which has grown substantially over the last 14 years. Many of our towns are being unfairly

discriminated against. Because the formula is based on the 1970 census, some towns are losing up to 50 per cent of the aid they should be receiving. In Brookhaven Town alone, the difference is almost \$2,000,000 a year.

Five of Suffolk's supervisors went to Albany this past Monday to plead their case. Their case very simply is, as growing communities our costs are proportionally higher than those of stabilized areas or areas with declining populations. For the formula to be equitable, meaningful and fair, it must be based on current population, or at least at the 1980 census level.

The town officials are hoping that their Albany political counterparts are fair and just people, and will recognize and correct this injustice. Fairness must be based on more than words. Cuomo could show his sincerity by taking the lead and bringing justice to Long Island on this issue.

And why not?

## Follow The Thruway

Quebec's hydroelectric generating plants are producing far more electricity than can be consumed by its current users. But Long Island is blocked from buying this cheap electricity because of a lack of transmission lines which could bring the electricity from Quebec to Long Island.

A proposal has been developed to construct a new transmission line known as Marcy-South. This proposal, as expected, is being steadfastly and emotionally opposed by upstate interests. They are using the environment as their argument, maintaining that the high transmission lines will spoil the aesthetics of the country and cause a disruption for wildlife and peace and tranquillity of the area.

There is some legitimacy to their concern, but what really is behind their vehement opposition is economics. The transmission lines would allow Long Island to enjoy the benefits of low cost authority-produced power, which they currently have all to themselves under the current arrangement.

Power generated by the Power Authority of the State of New York was supposed to have been spread

throughout the state. But because their politicians and their power company management were smarter and better than ours in the past, the juice was kept upstate and the rates were kept artificially low at the expense of the metropolitan area and Long Island.

Having this low cost electricity gives upstaters a competitive economic edge because they are more attractive to industry and commerce.

One of the questions we have often asked is why spoil any more of the environment than we already have? Why not run the transmission lines along the right-of-way of the New York State Thruway. The public already owns large tracts of land on both sides of this highway which would allow for the construction of the towers and the running of the lines. We have been told it can't be done and yet, last week going to Albany we noted that for a few miles around Kingston the high-power lines paralleled the thruway. If it can be done for a small section, why can't it be done for a whole section?

Is this proposal too simple and cost effective to be implemented by big spending politicians?

And why not?

## Letters to the editor

Dear Mr. Willmott:

I'm surprised you wondered why nobody during a street interview, favored Mr. Reagan. It did not surprise me. Many people have expressed dislike of Reagan to me.

As for freedom of speech and the press, please adhere to these principles even if you don't like to hear adverse criticism about him.

He is busy himself breaking these amendments along with freedom of religion.

You have to be naive to not realize that these are the first steps to dictatorship along with military buildup.

Fanaticism has no place in a democracy. Lack of diplomatic knowledge and how to get along with other races and nationalities is a poor qualification for a man in high office.

A man who is quick on the draw and ready to jump into any fray at the drop of a hat, is a war monger, not a patriot upholding the prestige of the U.S. Who needs hot heads in a nuclear age?

The congress tries to do its duty and is at every turn opposed by a stubborn, conceited, self-opinionated leader, always ready to fight.

If you think we the people, enjoyed the last four years, you have been deluded.

You can fool some of the people, some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all the time.

America is made up of many classes, races and religions. To refuse to recognize the rights of all of them is not the American way!

Sincerely yours,  
Mrs. Mildred Cleary

Sound Beach, N.Y.

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## Shinnecock Death Trap

Suffolk County has just spent millions of dollars to build a commercial fishing dock to the west of the Shinnecock Inlet. A dock that is supposed to attract a new fishing fleet and improve the economy.

Typical of county planning, they have put the cart before the horse. They built a marina before they planned for the stabilization of the inlet. The inlet, a cut in the dunes created by the 1938 hurricane, is a treacherous trap for commercial and sport fishermen. The shifting sands and bars in front of the inlet create a situation where the depth of the water will change from 45 feet or more to as little as 3 or 4 feet. Where there is a hole one day, there is a bar the next.

Currently, boats must go substantially to the west in order to approach the inlet with any degree of safety. The winds and the tides sometimes make this approach extremely dangerous. Many of the commercial fishing boats, laden with a full load, have to wait out the tide before making their approach. Recreational fishermen often leave the inlet on a flat sea only to return to white water. The inclination is to try to get through. Boats and lives already

have been lost with the rapidly deteriorating conditions, more will be.

The Inlet this year is in the worst condition it has been in a decade. Those who have studied the science of oceanography, old time sea captains as well as recreational boaters, have been asking for attention to the inlet for years. It has been long recommended that a sand bypass system be installed, and that the jetties be refurbished.

The commercial and the recreational marine businesses, as well as the fishing industry, are dependent upon this inlet. These two industries produce tens of millions of dollars in income for the Hampton Bays, Southampton area. The inlet deserves attention.

This Thursday, March 29, at 1:30 p.m. and at 7 p.m., there will be a public hearing held at the Southampton Town Hall. We encourage all who are connected with the inlet in any way to turn out and speak. This situation must be corrected, and unless those who have it within their power to correct it know the feelings of the public, they will not act.

Remember, it's the squeaky wheel that gets the grease.

And why not?

## Patient's Rights

There are a couple of bills coming up before the New York State Legislature, legislation of grave importance to the public, which have received very little attention. They pertain to the rights of a patient to know what is on their chart, what is wrong with them and how they are being treated. What the doctor and the nurses really think, and the actual medication being given.

Currently under New York State law, the patient, the guardians or those who might have power of attorney over the patient, can be denied this basic knowledge.

I never realized the importance of it until my Mom went into the hospital for some routine tests and subsequently became extremely debilitated, which finally resulted in her passing on. During her confinement I kept asking questions, but received little but platitudes. She

weakened considerably and became very disoriented.

Finally one evening I bullied my way into seeing her charts. On the charts I found they were giving her a particular type of tranquilizer. From my past experience I knew she could not handle this type of drug. Her system had an adverse reaction to it. I spoke to the doctor and reminded him of this fact. She was taken off this medication and improved substantially. What they had thought was senility and a deterioration of the mind was a reaction to their doctoring.

On subsequent hospitalizations I was denied the privilege of sitting down and reading her chart. A doctor would tell me what was in the chart, or what he wanted me to know, but would not allow me to read for myself their observations or medications.

I conferred with New York State

Health Commissioner Dr. David Axelrod, who affirmed that the patient or the family is denied the right to see the charts. His office has proposed on a number of occasions, and currently has before the Legislature, bills that would grant the patient, or a responsible member of the family, the right to read the charts. The Medical Association does not want the patient or the family to have this knowledge.

There are some legitimate reasons to withhold this information from the patient himself. There are also some illegitimate reasons, and that is the doctor's paralyzing fear of a malpractice suit. We suggest, all too often, doctors are practicing medicine with more concern for the legal aspects than for the patient's well-being. Their denial of the patient's right to read their chart is a case in point. This whole denial process is preposterous. After all, it is the person who is being treated who should have first hand knowledge of the treatment that is being given. Who knows the patient better than an intimate, responsible member of the family? How often do doctors neglect to put down in their

records the allergies or the reactions patients have to various drugs and procedures?

I, myself, am a victim of this kind of neglect. Several years back I had been prescribed Valium. I realized my system could only tolerate a minute amount. I discussed this with my physician, who neglected to put this information in my records. A couple of years later I started to suffer from uncontrolled nose bleeds. I was shot full of Valium, and other drugs, in large quantities. If it hadn't been for a close personal friend remembering my having mentioned this experience, they would have continued to fill me with these debilitating substances which might have led to my demise.

Patients have a right to know what kind of medication, and for what reason, is being practiced upon them. We encourage everyone to call their Legislators and ask for the passage of the bills that are pending. They may mean nothing to you now, but the approval could save your life, when under a doctor's care, in the future.

And why not?

## J. Robert Fisher

Again I find myself with the unpleasant task of writing about a person who has gone home. Someone who had directly affected me and the residents of this county and this country.

J. Robert Fisher was one of the most unusual men I have ever met in my life. He was the son of a Jewish immigrant, raised on the lower East Side of New York in what is commonly called Hell's Kitchen. He was one of the first Jews to be accepted as an employee in the chemical industry. He knew discrimination first hand. Working as a clerk, he took 14 years to put himself through college, graduating as a chemical engineer.

Using his abilities, his brains, his determination and ambition, he went on to found Fisher Chemical Company and three other chemical concerns. Subsequently, the business was merged with Ashland Oil and J. Robert became a member of their Board of Directors.

He brought to this corporation the sensitivity and an honesty rarely found in the board rooms of big American corporations. He will be long remembered by the business community for his particular brand of ethics and honesty, as well as business acumen.

Having risen from poverty to wealth, from discrimination to being sought out for his intelligence, mind and social graces, he had come full circle within his lifetime. Coming full circle gave him a burning desire to help others to do the same.

J. Robert Fisher was not only a Horatio Alger of our time, but gave meaning to the word volunteerism. He had a feverish desire to share himself, his abilities and his wealth with others.

He was a member of the International Board of Hebrew University, a trustee of Franklin and Marshall College, a trustee of Suffolk County Community College. He believed that education was the sure way out of poverty and was the answer to many of the world's problems.

In most of the scholastic endeavors he was involved with, he set up scholarship programs specifically

designated to those of genuine financial need so that there would be a hand there reaching out long after he was gone.

Bob served as one of the more astute members of the Suffolk County Industrial Development Agency. He believed in entrepreneurship, that given help, not a handout, businesses could succeed, create more jobs and more wealth to help finance the needs of the country.

Bob was also a member of the Board of Directors of Southampton Hospital and chairman of the Planning Committee. For a number of years, the Quarterbackers, those members of the Southampton community who agreed to donate \$125 per quarter to the Southampton Hospital, were the guests of J. Robert Fisher at an annual cocktail party given in their honor. Up until just recently, no one knew who the benefactor was, who sponsored this affair. Typical of Fisher, he chose anonymity. He wanted no recognition for he felt it would take away from those who were being honored for their volunteerism, which he wanted to encourage.

There were many other activities which he was involved in, way too numerous to list, but there is one I would like to reveal and feel I can now. Several years ago, we carried a small article that some members of the staff at Social Services were attempting to put a toy under the Christmas tree for every kid in Suffolk County. Bob called and said, "How do I do it?"

Anonymously he has provided a toy for every kid at Christmas time. We often chuckled about Santa Claus being Jewish.

Personally, I feel a deep loss for this man was not only my closest friend, but he gave me wisdom and counsel and a strong living example to mold my life after.

Bob has gone home but, as a friend said, no one really dies when their memory lives on. His wisdom, his teachings and his beliefs are an im- pregnable mark that can never be forgotten.

Shalom Bob.

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