

Misdirected Outrage

A hue and cry has arisen over the fact that former Suffolk County Police Commissioner James Caples will receive over \$100,000 in severance pay based on benefits accrued during his 34 years of police service, 24 as a county officer. That criticism, however, has been misdirected. It should be rightfully aimed at the legislators who approved the benefits.

The legislators didn't have the guts to stand up to the unions in negotiating contracts, and then approved resolutions passing lucrative benefits on to the upper levels of management. Interestingly, Suffolk County Executive Patrick Halpin, who voted in favor of a resolution giving top police management the same benefits given union members, has labeled the severance pay earned by Caples as "outrageous." Halpin has tried to explain away that vote by saying it was many years and contracts ago, and that police are working fewer days and getting more salary today. He added: "I wasn't that briefed on it. We weren't as fully informed when we were legislators." If anything is outrageous, those comments are.

It has been charged that the furor over Caples' severance pay is politically motivated because he is seeking elective office. He is running for the assembly seat vacated by Halpin when he took over the county's top post. There is no doubt that controversy is political. Caples is not the first to earn severance pay under the guidelines established by the legislators, and he won't be the last. When a former Democratic police commissioner, Donald Dilworth, left the post he received \$48,900 after only

six-years service in the position. That's compared to the estimated \$120,000 Caples is to receive after 34 years. Where were the Democratic cries of outrage then?

Caples' opponent in the special March 15 election for the vacated assembly seat, Robert Sweeney, has been having a field day, voicing all kinds of political rhetoric about the severance issue. His comments do not get to the heart of the issue, weak legislators and give-away contracts. They are simply self-serving and should be discarded as such.

Are the contract terms for police and C.S.E.A. employees lucrative? Of course they are. Would the taxpayers benefit if they were pared down? Of course they would. Should they be pared down? Certainly. Hard-pressed taxpayers have been forced to shell out more and more in taxes to pay for higher salaries and overly-generous benefits for public employees. But let's be fair about it. Let's have the courage to make the changes that eliminate lucrative contract terms, not complain when someone is given what they are entitled to under the terms of the contracts the legislators have approved.

If you are outraged that a public employee is eligible for an estimated \$120,000 in severance pay, voice that anger but aim it in the right direction. This nonsense of "yeah, I said you could have it but if you take it you're wrong," is the real outrage. Target your anger at the legislators who approve the give-away contracts. Let them know that unless they toughen up, and show some courage, it's time they consider their own severance from public office.

And why not?

Let's Support Our Own

The spotlight of the world has been focused in recent times on a place called Calgary, where the 1988 Winter Olympic Games took center stage. Although our United States athletes gave their all, they didn't get much in the way of medals. They are not entirely to blame for their showing. We, as a nation, and we, as a people, did not do our share.

If we are to take pride in what our athletes accomplish, we should also take some responsibility for helping them to achieve their best possible potential through proper training, free of financial worries while they labor toward their goal. We haven't done that.

The United States Olympic Committee has recognized the shortcomings and has organized a group to study the problem and come up with recommendations. That may result in better training facilities and such, but those solutions are a long way down the road. In the meantime there is a short term need: We have athletes who will be participating in the 1988 Summer Olympic Games to be held later this year. We have a number of Suffolk County athletes who are working diligently to qualify for those games. Those efforts, however, are hampered by the lack of finances to attend qualifying meets and daily living expenses while they

strive to make the United States Olympic team.

There are a number of local athletes who are currently striving to fulfill their Olympic dream. And there are several fund-raising efforts underway seeking to raise funds for individual athletes. These efforts, however, could be greatly enhanced by an organized Suffolk County effort to support our Olympic hopefuls. By a combined effort from all segments of the county, from businesses, service clubs, athletic organizations, civic groups, and public officials. To show these athletes that we here in Suffolk County are behind them, that we're proud of their dedication. That we're with them win, lose or draw.

We envision a committee with representation from each town and from the county, and representatives of various segments of the community, involved in a county-wide effort to raise funds. Monies raised could be earmarked for the various athletes so that each may benefit from the

generosity and spirit of pride that such funds would represent.

There are two options for the creation of such a committee. One, it could be created by Suffolk County Executive Patrick Halpin, who could seek out volunteers or designate individuals willing to serve. This would give the committee an official sanction.

A second option is a "people's effort," the coming together of people from all walks of life to show that we here in Suffolk County have a lot of pride, that we're proud of our athletes, and that we're willing to show that pride in an organized effort to help our Summer Olympic hopefuls fulfill their dreams.

Suffolk Life stands ready to assist in either option. Let's hear from you. Is there interest out there? Do we have enough pride in Suffolk County's young athletes to roll up our sleeves and help them in their quest for gold?

And why not?

Letters to the Editor

Money for education belongs in U.S.

Dear Editor,

I read with outrage the article entitled "U.S. Aid to Build French Schools Questioned" which appeared in Newsday on December 28th, 1987, concerning Sen. Daniel Inouye's (D-Hawaii) successful persuasion of his colleagues to appropriate eight million dollars to build schools for North African Jews resettled in France.

Rep. William Lehman (D-Fla.) admits in this article that the money in the refugee budget "doesn't make any sense" but voted for the bill because, "this seemed to be very important to him" (Sen. Inouye).

I must ask how Inouye can send my tax dollars overseas to build parochial schools in France, a developed country? Although the North African Jews are not classified as a refugee organization by the State Department, the U.N. High Commission for Refugees, or the French government, they were given this aid of eight million dollars from the U.S. Refugee Aid Budget Program because they have lived in

France for ten years or more.

As one of hundreds of thousands of parents who send their children to private schools in the U.S., we have been denied repeatedly any kind of state or federal assistance toward tuition! Yes, I belong to a special interest group whose children attend all types of private schools. Our purpose is to restore parental rights in education and our interest is in our children! The money which should be going toward their education belongs here in the United States - not in France!

Unfortunately, there are Big Bucks special interest groups pressuring politicians who throw their moral convictions aside. How about an investigation into the legalities of Senator Inouye's pet projects?

Sincerely yours,
**Lorraine A. Ambrosio, president
Parents Rights in Education
Lendhurst**

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Actions Speak Louder

We have all anxiously awaited a signal from the governor over the L.I.P.A.-Shoreham scenario. Cuomo has repeatedly pledged that Shoreham must not open.

This past week, in a campaign swing through Suffolk, he reiterated this pledge. He made an additional pledge that has left many of us in a state of confusion. "L.I.P.A. will remain alive, no matter what."

L.I.P.A. was formed by an act of the legislature. L.I.P.A. is charged with one single mission, to provide electricity for Long Island if it can do so cheaper than the profit-making LILCO.

It is our belief, based upon information we have at hand, all economic studies performed indicate that a publicly-owned Long Island Power Authority (L.I.P.A.) can market electricity at lower rates than LILCO.

Currently, the governor's men are in secret negotiations with the top echelon of the Long Island Lighting Company. The frame and the scope of the negotiations is unknown to the public. One school says they are trying to find a way to keep corporate LILCO alive as a profit-making distribution company, while eliminating the threat of Shoreham and devising a strategy where the company is kept from bankruptcy, but the ratepayers are not made to shoulder any more than the \$2.9 billion cost they already have for Shoreham.

The second school of thought is that the governor's men are negotiating a friendly takeover of the company. One in which the shareholders and bondholders receive an equitable settlement for their stock and bonds, and the public, as called for by law, buys out the company. The veiled suggestion raised by the

governor indicates to insiders that possibly the governor's people are attempting to work out an agreement whereby the state takes over all generating capacity of LILCO and, in turn, supplies the needed quantities of electricity to LILCO to distribute, at a profit, to its ratepayers. In this scenario, the state would close Shoreham, operate the current oil and gas-fired facilities of LILCO through the New York State Power Authority, and import needed electricity to meet Long Island's demands. L.I.P.A. would be kept as a government entity to manage the procurement of electricity to meet the needs. This is all very interesting, but we go back to the first scenario.

The L.I.P.A. legislation unequivocally stated that L.I.P.A. was to take over the Long Island Lighting Company as a public utility if it could be demonstrated that L.I.P.A. could produce electricity at better rates than LILCO. Our greatest fear with the state taking over the generating capacities of the Long Island Lighting Company is that the state, instead of decommissioning Shoreham would mothball it, to be reactivated when the next oil crisis hits. Most of us who have been involved in this battle will not rest, nor cease our efforts, until the Shoreham nuclear power plant is dismantled and the radioactive materials that pose a serious threat to our health and welfare are removed once and for all. That is the only solution to the Shoreham nightmare.

The governor must understand this one certain fact: While his words in opposition to Shoreham are encouraging, actions speak louder than words. It's time for action.

And why not?

Plain and Simple

Shortly, the Republicans will elect a new leader. Who it will be is not important. What the new leader should be is. A job description for the next Republican leader should be as follows:

The person to be selected must have a spotless background. He must never have been involved in any deal that would cast the least bit of suspicion upon himself or the party. As basic as it may seem, the new leader must know the difference between honest and dishonest, ethical and unethical, moral and immoral.

He should never have asked any political leader for a favor, or have a political godfather or mentor. He must have a burning desire to clean the Republican house, and the courage of his convictions to overturn the rocks and boot those out of the organization who have fed at the trough.

He must be committed to cutting the cost of government through the efficient and effective management of all departments. This, of course, will necessitate the elimination of patronage slots, contracts and "no

show" jobs. It will mean that some people will lose the means by which they are feeding their families but producing no tangible return for the taxpayers who are spending their money for good government, not wasted patronage.

He must be committed to the concept that every job must be filled with a qualified candidate. A Republican registration, cash or in-kind contributions are not enough. Without any "freebees" to hand out, the next leader must be able to go to the rank and file and motivate Republicans who want good government, good, honest government, to come out and work for their party.

This leader must be able to instill into the rank and file a sense of pride in being Republican. That their party is more honest, more representative of the people and worthy of the time and effort they are being asked to put forth.

The next chairperson of the Republican party must be able to return the town leaders to the position of town leaders that pay servitude to the county organization. The leaders' way must be the will of the Republican party. The day has

passed when the town leaders are kings and the county leader is a puppet.

The prize of being the county leader is shallow today compared to what it once was. The glory days are past. What is ahead is hard work, unification, rebuilding, and winning the organization. The money is gone, what is left is a huge pair of shoes that need to be filled.

A withered, old, political hack who knows no new tricks, only deception and deceit, can't fill them, that is for certain. Switching chairs without cleaning house won't work.

The question is, does the rank and file Republican want to be proud of the Republican Party again? If the answer is yes, contact your committee persons, tell them not to give up their proxy, to vote in person. Contact your town leaders, tell them you want an open, honest convention. Backroom deals have brought the Republican Party to its knees, another backroom deal will bring it to its toes.

In an open, honest convention, let the best person surface and win.

And why not?

Letters to the Editor

"The people will have a say"

Dear Editor:

I felt good reading how elated Consumer Advocate Kessler and our local politicians were on the rejection of LILCO's rate increase because of their concern for we people as rate payers.

What I do not understand is their lack of concern for the same people, as taxpayers. But then, what politician or patronage person is? By the way, Mr. Kessler, I believe you and all the politicians are in favor of this so-called public takeover of LILCO. In case you do not know it, that takeover will really be a political takeover, and will become another haven for political rejects and patronage flunkies, who will do their usual good job. The same as they did with the South West Sewer Project, the Tri

Town Waste Project, and are doing with the Suffolk O.T.B., etc., etc.

How come none of these people are on trial for embezzlement and/or fraud? Don't the heads of our law enforcement departments care, or since they are also politicians and patronage people, and since it is only the people, as taxpayers, who are being robbed, why bother?

Respectfully,
Patrick J. Starace
Lindenhurst

Editor's note: Legislation creating the Long Island Power Authority calls for the election of its board of directors. Therefore, the people will have a say in who serves and who does not.

Con't. on following page

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Whose Right?

We have always conducted ourselves under the philosophy that your rights extend to a point where they are interfering with our rights, and vice versa. In personal practices, and to a certain extent in social contacts, most have not shown much concern over a person's private life or sexual orientation. With the AIDS onslaught and its frightening ramifications, many have deliberately shunned any establishment where homosexuals or those who catered to them gathered.

Most adult men and women have had to seriously rethink their lives and change their liberal ways of thinking. However, if an adult wishes to pursue a gay life it is their business as long as it does not affect ours.

Recently, the Suffolk County Legislature passed a proposed bill establishing a so called "gay rights" law here in Suffolk County. The law goes beyond common sense and, we believe, gives gays rights beyond those of the majority. In protecting the gays' rights, the legislature is infringing upon the rights of the individual to choose an atmosphere that they feel comfortable with for themselves. Why should an individual be forced to work alongside a gay person who is openly practicing a lifestyle that may endanger the

health of those he may associate with? Why should parents, by law, be required to have their child taught by an avowed gay? Doesn't the child look to the teacher as a role model? Don't children try to emulate those they are taught to respect?

We understand from opponents of this bill that the language of the law is so encompassing that priests, ministers or rabbis could find themselves in violation of this law if they preached about their churches' beliefs regarding homosexuality.

We believe this law is unconstitutional. It is neither needed or desirable. Particularly in this day and age, with the concern over AIDS, which, according to medical experts, is being spread primarily by the homosexual community. We have a right to protect ourselves and our loved ones from physical and emotional harm. Because a person chooses to be gay, they should not be given the right to impose their beliefs on others and yet, this is exactly what this law does.

County Executive Halpin should veto this law. If he doesn't, we believe a lot of voters are going to regret having selected him as their county executive.

And why not?

We Support Freedom

Nicaragua is a Communist state. The government of Nicaragua, the Sandinistas, came into power through military force. They are not the chosen nor the honestly elected government of the people of that country.

Nicaragua is a flagship of the communistic regimes of the Soviet Union and its protectorate, Cuba. It is Russia's avowed intention to turn all of Central America into communistic countries. Opponents of this communistic state are the freedom fighters, who, in the media, have been labeled the Contras. The freedom fighters have been supported by the United States, by the administration, in their attempt to stop the forward flow of communistic tyranny in this hemisphere.

The Nicaraguan government, this past week, physically invaded the neighboring country of Honduras. According to a Nicaragua spokesman on "Nightline," these troops had crossed over the border into

Honduras in "hot pursuit" of the freedom fighters with the intent of seizing their bases and destroying their dwindling supplies. The supplies of the freedom fighters have been cut off because congressmen, including our own, George Hochbrueckner, Tom Downey and Bob Mrazek, who support the Communist government in Nicaragua, refused further United States aid to the freedom fighters.

We became an adult during the onslaught of the Vietnam era. We felt from the beginning that the war was a waste. Our generals and the administration had chosen to fight this war on the other side of the world with our soldiers having one hand tied behind their backs. We don't want to see more Vietnams, but someplace you have to stand up for what you believe.

Central America is home in today's day and age, only Mexico separates us from Nicaragua's borders. There is no detente. The

communists have not changed their goal of world-wide domination.

We have no desire to see America in another Vietnam War, but at the same time, in good conscious, can any of us allow Russia to force a communistic government on a close neighbor? If the Nicaraguan people had chosen to become communistic of their own free will, we would have to accept that decision. The fact is the Nicaraguan people are held in tyranny by the Russian-sponsored military establishment. There is no free speech, no freedom of religion nor honest, free elections. We believe the administration's actions of this past week were proper and called for.

We hope the voters in Suffolk County will take the Democratic liberals--Hockbrueckner, Downey and Mrazek--to task for their refusal to aid the freedom fighters who are our last hope to stop the communist aggression close to our borders.

These congressmen should be made to answer the hard questions. Why do they oppose forces friendly to the United States and, instead, by their actions, support the continuation of a government that is firmly in the hands of Russia? If not Nicaragua, where should we stop communist aggression? Should we roll over and play dead and allow the communists to take over the world? Do you advocate peace at any price? If not, at what point do you start standing up and fighting back?

The facts are plain for anyone who chooses to see. Russia and its satellite, Cuba, control the Nicaragua government. They are not only financing the military machine, they are also supplying arms and Soviet-trained Cubans are directing and operating the communist scenario in Nicaragua. We don't know about these congressmen, but we choose freedom.

And why not?

We Want What We Voted For

On last November's ballot, Suffolk County residents voted to extend the Suffolk County sales tax which had been used to bail out the Southwest Sewer District and was scheduled to expire at the end of 1989.

Former County Executive Michael LoGrande proposed a package of environmentally desirable programs, utilizing an extension of this tax to fund them. The programs were negotiated between the county executive and the county legislature and were spelled out to the public with great detail prior to the vote. The two main cornerstones of the project were the acquisition of 30,000 acres of open space for watersheds, and a revenue sharing formula with the towns. The revenue sharing would return to the towns a per-

centage of the sales taxes on a per capita basis. The use of these funds by the towns was restricted to specific environmental needs which the towns could choose according to their individual options.

Michael LoGrande was defeated by Patrick Halpin. Halpin immediately announced that he considered his election a mandate to use these funds as he saw fit and as he discussed during the campaign, rather than use the funds as had been detailed by LoGrande and spelled out in the support papers that lead to the resolution. There was nothing wrong

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What We Voted For...

Continued from previous page

with the proposal LoGrande put before the people, and Halpin knows it. His revision doesn't make the proposal better, it does little more than put Halpin's name on it. It is an example of raw politics at its worst.

Halpin has corralled some of the supervisors in support of his program. They have worked out what they call a compromise. This compromise more tightly restricts the towns' use of the money.

Halpin wants to use these monies, which we believe he is illegally withholding from the towns, to clean up toxic waste sites and close municipal landfills. Two years ago, all New York State residents, from Buffalo to Montauk, voted for a multi-billion dollar bond issue to achieve this same purpose. Through this bonding, all New York State residents, including Suffolks', have indebted themselves for 30 years. Make no mistake, if Suffolk residents choose to pay for their own toxic cleanups, the state will spend Suffolk County residents' bonded indebtedness in New York City and other parts of the state where the local taxpayers and politicians are not as generous. We, as Suffolk residents, will be paying twice for the same job.

Halpin is dead wrong in his assertion that his general election victory was a mandate from the taxpayers to

do as he sees fit with their money. If Halpin thinks his program is better than LoGrande's, then let him go back to the voters and gain approval for it. And he should fight—as he should have done while a state assemblyman—for Suffolk's fair share of the state clean-up funds.

One of the reasons why LoGrande's proposal passed so substantially was not only the recognition by the voters that we had to preserve our groundwater but, in fact, that the bond issue made provisions for areas that would be impacted by the taking of land off the tax rolls, ensuring towns would have the funds to address the crucial problems that the county and state have for so long ignored in each community.

Before the tax can be extended, it requires an act of the New York State Legislature. We strongly urge all Suffolk residents to write to their assemblymen and senators, tell them you want what you voted for, not what Patrick Halpin has decided you will get.

We encourage those Suffolk County Legislators who know that they have been sold out to go forward with their law suit against County Executive Halpin. Let's stop him in the courts, and in the legislature.

And why not?



of Rocky Point suffer from poor drainage which makes these roads inconvenient and dangerous for residents who must use them each day. In certain areas, these drainage conditions are causing financial hardships and property damage to homeowners. We ask that the agency responsible for our road network become responsive to our community's needs.

I am looking forward to meeting with you on our scheduled date to discuss these other issues which face the residents of Rocky Point. I ask that you clear a date, in the very near future, on your busy calendar for a low-key

walk through our town with myself and a few representatives of our civic association to personally see the issues which I have outlined in this letter. As you said on a TV presentation which aired on Viacom (Wed. 2/17) called "Brookhaven Today" in response to major issues, such as a downzoning, which come before you and the town board: "I know what we're talking about, I was there."

Thank you,
Angelo Rossetti, president
Taxpayers' Civic Association
Rocky Point

Explaining the land bank bill

Dear Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to inform all concerned on what the land bank bill is, what it does, and its legislative history.

The land bank bill, if enacted, allows, does not require, towns to tax the transfer of real property within the town's borders. The amount of this tax is not to exceed two percent of the purchase price. In order for a town to do this, a townwide referendum must be passed. These revenues are then to be used exclusively for the purpose of acquiring, for preservation, open space and environmentally significant tracts of land.

The land bank bill specifically denotes nine types of lands that may be purchased. Three types of land with substantial importance are tracts that will ensure continued clean water supplies, waterfront access, and those lands with barrier beach characteristics.

This tax would be levied upon the buyer of a piece of property. The rationale for having the buyer pay is threefold. The first reason is that the seller has in the past paid taxes which were utilized to purchase lands which fall under the same guidelines as the transfer tax. In essence, the seller has paid a fair share toward preservation. Secondly, the buyer will be the beneficiary of the town-owned and preserved areas. Thirdly, it seems unfair that a seller who is leaving an area should pay a tax for which he will receive no benefit.

In order to not hinder efforts toward affordable housing and not deter first-time home buyers, there are exemptions to the tax. These exemptions are for vacant land under the sale price of \$50,000 and improved property with a sale price of under \$125,000. In cases of property priced in excess of the figures just mentioned, the first \$50,000 and \$125,000, for

vacant and improved land respectively, are not taxable. In addition, if enacted, the land bank would expire in five years or whenever all purchasable land was acquired.

The origins of this bill are in Nantucket and Block Island, Rhode Island. The tax has worked very well in these two towns. In 1983, I thought it to be a good idea for use here on Long Island and had legislation (as described above) drafted and introduced in the Assembly. I asked Senator Ken LaValle to sponsor the same legislation in the Senate.

It took a number of years on my part to educate members of the Assembly, the Senate, local governments, and the governor on the merits of this program. Now that all concerned are enlightened, we are seeing a proliferation of variations on the original bill I introduced. I still believe that the bill I introduced contains all of the necessary components.

The bill passed the Senate last year but received no support from the Democrats in the Assembly so it died in committee. In an attempt to remedy this oversight on the part of the Assembly Democrats, this year we are seeing Democratic support for the land transfer tax. Governor Cuomo has endorsed this idea as well. With the realization by the previously uninterested parties that this is a good and necessary program, it is likely that we will see passage in Assembly. I correlate this achievement to a bi-partisan effort on a bill which I have carried for the last five years, as well as the bill's inherent merits.

Sincerely,
John L. Behan
Member of Assembly

New leadership needed

Dear Committeeman:

I write this letter at the request of many other concerned and hard-working loyal Republicans.

The recent resignation of Suffolk County Republican Chairman Mike Blake is but another sign of the downhill slide of our Republican leadership. We were left "not only in tatters, but in defeat" (Newsday, March 2, 1988). The disastrous defeats suffered in the past elections make it more important than ever before that we choose new leadership very carefully. We need new leadership capable of leading our party back to its former position of strength, integrity and prominence.

You will more than likely be asked to blindly sign a proxy for the upcoming election of a new county chairman. Don't! Don't sign a proxy without knowing for whom your proxy will be used. Don't give up our right to have a voice in the selection of new leadership.

Wait and see what choices you have in order to make an informed decision. Don't accept leadership in a vacuum.

Very truly yours,
Robert H. Skigen
Committeeman
40th Election District
Town of Smithtown

Letters to the Editor

Finding solutions is critical

An Open Letter to Brookhaven Town Supervisor Henrietta Acampora

It was with great disappointment that I learned of your postponement of our scheduled meeting on February 24. Myself and other members of the Civic Association are anxious to meet with you and to discuss issues which effect and will effect the quality of our daily lives in the hamlet of Rocky Point. Among the issues we planned to discuss with you are several which are so critical I feel it is necessary to brief you now as to allow you and your staff to start immediately on finding proper solutions to rectify these outstanding issues.

Our first and foremost area of concern is the application for a downzoning to allow the construction of a 650-unit condominium complex known as "Rocky Point Meadows." By now you must be well aware of our opposition to this project. Our opposition is based on the detrimental impacts this complex would have on our community. A summary of our stand is included with this letter in the form of a statement which was sent to and read to all members of the Brookhaven Planning Board. Our observation of the potential impact is echoed by the Statement of Findings that was prepared by the Department of Planning, Environment and Development of the Town of Brookhaven. Our request to you and the other members of the town board is to follow the recommendations of your own review agency, the Suffolk County Planning Board, the Master Plan, surrounding community groups and the residents of Rocky Point and say NO to the application for downzoning.

Another issue we wish your attention on is

the Town Playground/Park located on the west side of Hallock Landing Road, 800 feet north of 25A. This park is in dire need of attention by the town which takes credit for its existence. This park is the epitome of a facility which was allowed to decay because of neglect. The condition of this park was documented in a recent newspaper article. The undesirable and dangerous conditions at this park cannot be rectified by the passing of memos and a quick cosmetic makeover. They require the attention and funds which should have been directed at this public area over the years to prevent it from deteriorating to the state it is in today.

An issue that was presented to you at the public hearings on the Community Development Funds was for a town square to be located in the Broadway area. Many dollars were spent to revitalize the business district for the commercial establishments located in Rocky Point. It is now time to allocate funds for the residents of Rocky Point who could be lured to this commercial hub if the visit there could result in a pleasurable and picturesque experience. We propose the concept of a well-planned and maintained Town Square and will be happy to share these thoughts with any representative of the town or business community.

A final issue I would like to address here is the condition of the miles of roadways which snake through the Rocky Point area. Many roads are in need of repair and periodic cleaning. It is disgraceful to see debris allowed to pile up on our roadways and little effort being made to remove it by the road crews responsible for their maintenance. Other areas

Happy Easter

To Christians, Easter is the most joyous holiday of the year. It should be, for it is the celebration of Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the redemption of the Christian soul and the opening of the gates of heaven.

To thinking Christians, it gives them a time to reflect upon the love God has for them. It enables Christians to put their life in perspective, to examine the time and energy they spend in quest of the tangible dream of glitter and temporal things.

God, on the other hand, gave us His only Son. Through the Immaculate Conception of Mary, God's Son, Jesus, was born to live the life of a human with all its sorrows and indignities.

God knew beforehand that when He sent His Son to redeem the Christian soul, He would die a cruel and unmerciful death through crucifixion at the hands of His tormentors.

In relation to God's plan and His sacrifice for us, we must examine ourselves. We must look at what we give and expect from our children. What we give and expect of our parents, our friends, our associates and, yes, particularly those we find

opposed philosophically and socially to our conception of right and wrong.

When Christians go through the upcoming Holy Days, time is put aside for that examination, that reflection and a renewed opportunity is given to each to be reborn, like the spring flowers, to burst out of our ugliness into beauty.

For those who have not visited the Shrine of Our Lady of the Island in Eastport, we heartily recommend you attend the Good Friday devotions of the Stations of the Cross, or to do the Stations yourself in a more private fashion. Each station is set in a wooded surrounding which seems to bring you closer to the Almighty. Some of the stations, such as the crucifixion and the resurrection are life-size and life-like.

Whether it be the fact that you are out in the open air, or the Godlike peace of the Shrine, many people of different religious philosophies have told us of coming away with a feeling they have never felt before.

When Sunday morning comes, we want all our readers to know that we at Suffolk Life wish you a joyous holiday.

And why not?

Wolf In Sheep's Clothing

The on-going saga of the Shoreham nuclear power plant has taken many strange twists and turns in recent years, so much so that it is pretty hard to know who is really on what side. Politicians and officials who profess to be a friend of the people often turn out to be a wolf in sheep's clothing.

A case in point: Vincent Tese, New York State Economic Development director, and the chief "negotiator" in efforts to resolve the Shoreham controversy through a negotiated settlement with LILCO.

Tese, who has been instrumental in stalling progress of the Long Island Power Authority which was created by law to consider the takeover of LILCO, unleashed a torrent of self-serving comments recently declaring a takeover of LILCO would be a bailout of the utility. Tese griped that a takeover would, in effect, be paying for Shoreham. "If you're going to pay for their stock, it's a bail out....," he has been quoted as saying.

What Tese did not note, because it did not suit his purpose, is that the

takeover of LILCO through the purchase of LILCO stock would put to an end the arrogance of utility officials who, as evidenced through their actions, have no concern for the public.

It would remove the utility's current administration and top ranking officials--and its board of directors--who have put public safety at the bottom of its priority list, and utility finances at the top.

It would, ultimately, mean an elected board of directors who would be reachable by the public. And many cost saving opportunities not available now.

Tese's bailout comments were for effect, not based on integrity. His comments were, in our view, designed to cover his tracks for being responsible for the long delay in the takeover efforts. An effort to confuse the public into thinking Tese is seriously concerned about their pocketbooks.

But let's look at the other side, the one Tese conveniently neglected to touch on in his "takeover is a bailout" tirade. In order to reach a negotiated settlement, Tese is going to have to give to get. There is going to be a hefty price for LILCO's agreement to any settlement. What, and how much, is Tese willing to give?

Although the settlement talks have been cloaked in secrecy, it has become clear that any settlement would involve keeping the company whole, the current management in place, and rate increases to improve LILCO's fiscal health. In return, LILCO would turn over the Shoreham plant to the state. How much of a bailout would this amount to? Tese forgot to tell us.

How much would the rate hikes be, Mr. Tese? With the same management in place, how would you bring an end to the arrogance that has clouded everything LILCO has done in recent years, Mr. Tese? If rate hikes would be given in order to gain ownership of the plant, Mr. Tese, isn't that bailing out the company? How does this bailout compare to a LIPA takeover? Who would decommission the plant, Mr. Tese? The ratepayers? The state? In either

case, wouldn't that be a matter of the public paying for LILCO's mistakes, Mr. Tese?

There's a lot Tese forgot to tell us. Either he has no answers, or what he knows he doesn't want the public to know.

What troubles us most is that the negotiations have been restricted to participation by three individuals, all with close ties to Governor Mario Cuomo. These three, Tese, William Mack, named by Cuomo to head the LIPA board, and Richard Kessel, state consumer affairs head who was also named by Cuomo to sit on the LIPA board, have become known as the governor's men. Why the negotiations should be limited to the governor's men is very questionable. Because of their ability? Well, Tese has been involved in negotiations with LILCO for more than a year. He has not achieved a thing. What is being bantered about in the more recent negotiations which now involve Mack and Kessel that no one else should hear, Mr. Tese?

It's getting so that it's hard to know who the public's friends are. What we do know is that LILCO would much prefer a settlement than a takeover. Two of LILCO's staunchest allies, the Long Island Association and Newsday, have taken up the cry that a settlement is better than a takeover. We know where the LIA and Newsday have long stood in regard to Shoreham--they have been staunch advocates. With Tese now spewing those same sentiments, it's becoming clear if he's a friend, we're in big trouble.

Our suggestion to Tese is to put up or shut up. Let's see the facts and figures behind your settlement efforts, and let's compare them against the facts and figures of a takeover. And one other thought: with such a biased view, Tese ought to get off the LIPA board so that the takeover issue can be settled one way or the other in an objective fashion. His recent tirade presenting his views unsubstantiated by any factual information should disqualify him from further LIPA activities.

And why not?

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GENERAL INFORMATION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR - We encourage our readers to express their views regardless of opinion through the Letters to the Editor Column. All letters must be signed with author's signature and address. We will withhold names on request and assign a nom de plume.

NEWS AND PHOTOGRAPHS - Readers are welcome to submit ideas of interest and photographs for consideration of publication. All news and photographs become the property of Suffolk Life upon submittal and cannot be returned for any reason.

ERRORS - Responsibility for errors in advertisements is limited to the value of the space occupied by the error.

Beeper Is Cheaper

Suffolk County Executive Patrick Halpin has taken a big step in the right direction by cutting back the use of county vehicles and curbing the distribution of county credit cards. The abuse in the use of both cars and cards is legend, and it is high time action is taken to cut back on the waste of taxpayer dollars.

While he's at it, Halpin should take a good look at the "standard operating procedures" of all branches of county government. Some agencies and legislative branches create their own extremely liberal procedures. One, for example, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department, permits the

Continued on following page

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NEWSPAPERS

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Beeper...

Cont. from previous page

use of a county vehicle for top aides 24-hours a day, whether its use be business or personal. This is reportedly done to enable an aide "to keep in constant touch with the department through his radio."

To which we say: a beeper is cheaper.

Smithtown Supervisor Patrick Vecchio fired off some strong words recently in a letter to Sheriff Eugene Dooley concerning this policy and an incident involving Dooley and a county vehicle. Regarding the 24-hour use of a county vehicle, Vecchio declared: "I have recently learned from press accounts that you authorized the use of a county vehicle on a 24-hour basis for the under-sheriff under the guise that he may be available on an instant's notice in the event of an occurrence. That, by the way, is the oldest trick in the book: 24-hour duty seems to be a catchall for politicians wanting to add another perk to their positions."

As Halpin continues with his county car abuse curbing efforts, he should take a long, hard look at the "24-hour" use of county cars. He should demand documentation showing the number of times it was necessary for someone to be in con-

stant touch with the sheriff's department, or any other department or agency. Why wouldn't a beeper alert and a phone call serve the same purpose? If it could be proven that radio communication is vital, the purchase of a radio for the aide's own car could well be cheaper than the deterioration—including wear and tear, and gasoline, etc.—of utilizing a county vehicle for personal use.

Halpin should also document why it is necessary for members of his own staff to have county vehicles and credit cards on a 24-hour basis. Why not have a car pool available for his staff to use for official business? That means county business, not political appearances. If he wants to set the tone for the elimination of abuse and waste, he should start in his own office.

Halpin deserves applause for his start in curbing this problem. Only time will tell if this start is mere tokenism, or if he is really serious about saving the taxpayers' dollars. His final grade about his true concern for the taxpayers will depend on what he does next in resolving this abuse.

And why not?

Letters to the Editor

Urgent request

Dear Editor:

I am writing this letter in the hopes that I can locate a very nice woman who stopped at the scene of an accident that I was involved in.

On March 7, I was driving my son Brian to the day care center where he is picked up by a bus that takes him to St. Charles Therapeutic and Rehabilitation Center. While I was driving east on Sunrise Highway in the left lane, a burgundy-colored car traveling east in the center lane made a left turn, cutting me off and causing me to slam on the brakes and collide with the guard rail.

This car proceeded on without even stopping, though the driver knew he had caused an accident.

At this time, a very nice woman came and removed my son from his car seat, stayed with him, and comforted him while staying at my

side. Had it not been for this wonderfully compassionate woman, my son would have been more traumatized watching me getting splinted, bandaged, and immobilized by the rescue squad.

She had her son in her car and possibly another child.

It is very important that I find this woman. First of all, to thank her for helping me, and secondly, although we have a license plate number, I need a witness to corroborate the whole incident. She was traveling right behind me and told me she saw the whole thing.

Please - if you are this woman or know who she might be, call and leave a message at 968-0754, and the message will be relayed to me. It is extremely urgent.

Name withheld upon request

Police officer responds

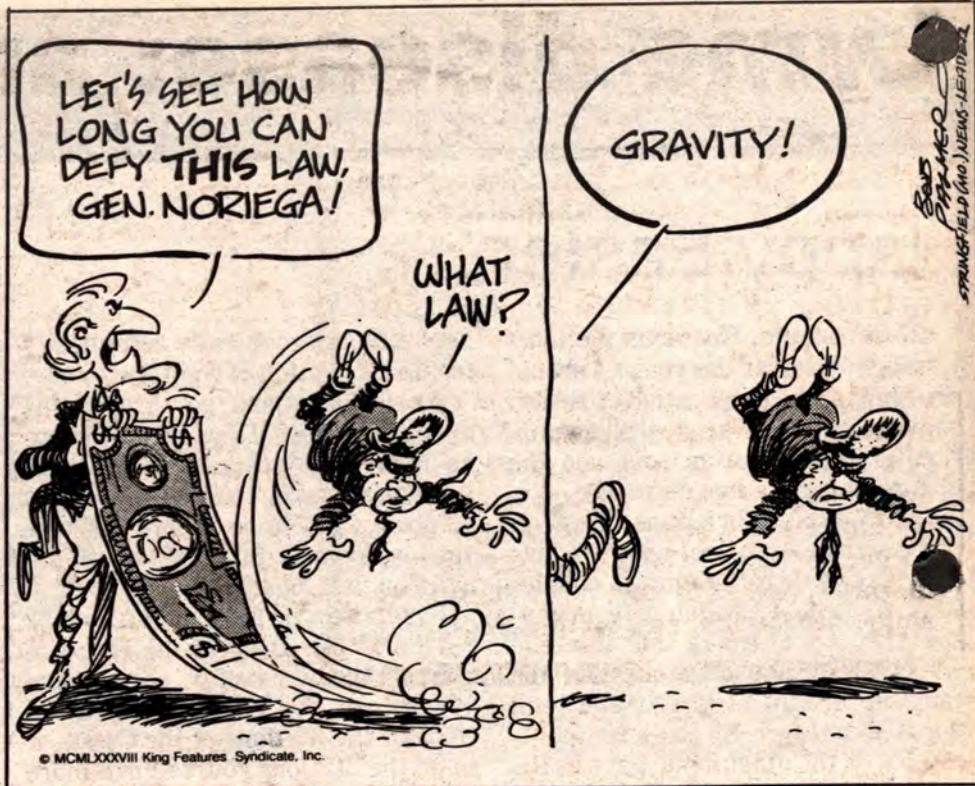
Dear Sir,

On March 9, 1988, a letter to the editor appeared in your newspaper from M. Hayden, a disgruntled citizen, unhappy how a motor vehicle accident was handled by a Third Precinct Suffolk County Police officer. M. Hayden faulted the police officer investigating the accident for omitting from his notes the fact that there was a can of beer "lying beside the feet" of the woman operating the vehicle which struck him/her. M. Hayden also raises the question as to why the police officer never administered a "Breathalyzer" test to the other involved driver. Dissatisfied with the police officer's actions at the accident scene, M. Hayden proceeds to chastise the entire Suffolk County Police Department, based on his/her interpretation of how the accident should have

been handled.

As a Suffolk County Police officer, I have handled many motor vehicle accidents. After reading M. Hayden's letter, I felt compelled to respond and explain why the accident was handled in the manner in which it was.

For every motor vehicle accident that occurs, there are contributing factors, i.e. driver inattention, excessive speed, environmental conditions, and also the possibility of drug or alcohol intoxication. As part of any accident investigation, it is incumbent upon the police officer to identify any casual factor(s) involved. A can of beer "lying beside the feet" of an involved driver is a very good reason to suspect that alcohol intoxication may be a contributing factor in the accident.



How, then, does a police officer determine whether or not a suspected driver is intoxicated? The police officer bases his conclusion on a series of observations and evaluations made while interviewing a suspected driver. The police officer is trained to look for specific indicators of alcohol intoxication which, if present, give him probable cause to believe a driver is intoxicated and, therefore, make an arrest. The absence of these specific indicators means that the police officer has no probable cause upon which base an assumption of intoxication. His determination will, therefore, be that the driver is not intoxicated.

The use of the roadside A.L.E.R.T. Breath Test is discretionary. Its use does not "replace the officer's observation and evaluation of the traditional indicators of alcohol intoxication"

and it is "only an aid in developing probable cause for an arrest." It is my opinion that in this case, the police officer felt he lacked the probable cause to believe the driver was intoxicated (based on his observations and evaluations), and, therefore, decided against administering the A.L.E.R.T. test. This decision was a judgement call made by the police officer and should be respected - not second-guessed.

Having determined that alcohol intoxication was not a contributing factor in the accident, the police officer does not include the can of beer in his notes. It is considered irrelevant and its omission has no bearing on any subsequent criminal or civil action.

John Espenkotter
5th Precinct, S.C.P.D

Concerning police benefits

Dear Editor,

Recent reports about benefits due upon retirement to members of Suffolk County police are of concern. Apparently police officers may accumulate up to 90 days of vacation and up to 520 sick days which will be paid at the time when they retire. The sick days are paid at half of their pay. Senior police officers, when they retire, may receive \$50,000 or even more (a Suffolk Police commissioner may receive up to \$120,000 when his retirement papers are processed this month.)

There are two things about this that bother me, (1) the need for so many sick days, and (2) the cost of this to the taxpayers.

Police officers are entitled by their contract to a total of 26 sick days each year. That is a lot of sick days. I consider myself an average person, yet over the past 16 years, I needed only about 20 sick days, which averages at about 1.25 days a year. Even my children, when they were wee babes in elementary school and prone to catch every bug that went around, did not spend 26 days a year sick in bed. What kind of a person has such fragile health to need so much sick time? Do I want such invalids to be responsible for my safety? Better not.

According to a chart published in Suffolk Life, police officers also get each year 21 to 30 days of vacation, five personal days, 13 holidays, one to two days for Veterans Day, and an additional 28 days off, for a total of 104 days off from a 260-day work year. (52 weeks times five days equals 260.) So they do get time off for rest and recreation.

My suggestion is that we hire police officers who are healthier and more resilient. Not that I would want to deprive anyone of sick pay in case of a catastrophic illness, but such a provision could be written into a contract. For basically healthy people, for ordinary illnesses as colds, flu, broken legs or minor surgery, five to six days a year should be adequate.

Now for the cost of accumulated pay upon retirement. There is nothing wrong with it, after all, these people have earned it - but - they have not earned it at the rate at which they are receiving it. These accumulated sick days, holidays or whatever, should be paid at the pay rate at which they were earned. So, if 10 of these days came from a period of 15 years ago, the retiree should be paid for them on the basis of what he or she was paid at that time. The next 20 days may be from 14 years ago and be

payable at the year's salary, and so on, with whatever was not used in the last year or so paid at that salary. That, I think, would be fair. Sincerely yours,

Marta Kastner
Setauket

Protecting the guilty

Dear Sir,

This letter is in response to recent allegations to the Suffolk County Police Department's "improper" investigating procedures.

It is widely understood that many of the laws regarding proper and improper arrest and investigating procedures are in place to protect the innocent. At what point do they overprotect the guilty?

Every day you hear stories of confessed killers whose confession was disallowed because his lawyer wasn't present. How about the witnessed rapist who is set free due to improper arrest procedures? This rapist not only goes free, but in turn sues the police department; and sometimes wins!

In this day and age of high technology, there are a great many tools available to investigative police officers for crime detection. Should these officers refrain from using them in the normal course of their investigations because of fear of being investigated themselves? Why should an officer put his life on the line everyday for the purpose of justice when they themselves are treated with so much injustice? I am not saying to give the police department free reign to do anything they want, but at least don't punish them for using innovative techniques.

If this trend of police department investigation continues, it will seriously undermine the confidence of the public towards those who are trying to protect us. The fear of being charged with wrongdoing will make it so the only criminals being arrested are the ones committing the crime in the full view of the police. This idea scares me!

Thank you,
Jeffrey A. Singer
Lake Grove