

willmotts and why-nots

David J. Willmott, Editor

Where the service is

We were arguing over our conference table recently about which service to readers is the most important that a newspaper provides.

Generally, if that question is asked of readers, the answer comes back, "You tell us the news."

I always like to think that those marvelous, superior, wonderful editorials that appear on page three are the things which makes a newspaper important to you.

The display advertising people tell me I'm crazy. "It's the ads that save so many people so much money that deliver the best service to the reader," they say. "How else would you know what's on sale where?"

Our news people reply, "The newspaper is an institution which provides that check upon government which no constitution has ever been able to provide."

And then we all got our comeuppance when our want ad manager said, "You're all wrong. A little ten-word want ad which reaches thousands of readers for as little as \$2.88 is by far the most important service we offer."

And we all instantly knew she was probably right.

Think about it for a minute. For \$2.88 you can send ten words to 45,000 homes. For twice that amount, just \$5.76, you send the ten words to 183,000 homes! That's less than one-third cents to reach each 100 homes! Less than 3 cents to reach each 1,000 homes.

More important, in spite of the incredibly low low price, the want ads in Suffolk Life really do produce fast results. You can sell a house for less than ten bucks sometimes. Or a car.

Want ads in Suffolk Life really do work wonders.

So the next time we put on our stuffed shirts, allow ourselves to think pompous thoughts about how "meaningful" our news is, how "great" our advertising has grown, or how "important" our editorials are, we'll remember that the lowly want ad is probably still the best service we offer to our readers.

That will knock us out of our ivory towers, back down to earth, and get us back to work. Trying to achieve the power of a 10-word want ad. And why not?

Leather instead of cloth

In last week's Suffolk Life, we revealed as part of the Suffolk County Police contract settlement, the County Legislature had agreed to replace all officers cloth jackets with leather ones. This will cost us, the taxpayers of Suffolk County, \$300,000 this coming year.

Nobody seems to bat an eye at this outlandish demand by the police or ask how we, the citizens of Suffolk County, are going to get better police protection for that \$300,000.

This wastefulness points out just how well the County Executive and the legislature are looking out for our welfare. What kind of austerity or



You own it all

If you remember anything about Watergate, you'll remember that the Nixon "defense" was that the tapes, the records, everything involved as evidence was secret stuff. It was supposed to be too dangerous to be seen by us common slob who paid for the stuff and actually, therefore, owned it. We later learned who was endangered by the "secrets."

There's a "Freedom of Information" law on both the federal and state books which states that the public should have the right to see what it owns -- public records.

Last week, Supreme Court Justice Leon D. Lazer reconfirmed the law in a case which involved a Huntington lawyer and the Huntington Town highway department.

Judge Lazer said the town's contention that the lawyer couldn't have access to the highway department's files because the files are "part of investigatory files compiled for law enforcement purposes" was not in accordance with the Freedom of Information law.

He explained that the intent of the law was to

shield only the investigative files of criminal justice agencies, as prescribed by a 1974 amendment to the law made at the request of district attorneys.

We applaud Judge Lazer for his decision. And we remind those who decide, after being elected by the public or appointed by somebody who has been elected by the public, that the public records and files can be withheld from those who paid for them (you and me), to wake up and take notice.

The public buildings, the people who work in them, the files, the whole works belongs to YOU. You paid, and continue to pay. They're yours! You have a right to see anything, anytime you wish. And why not?

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Congratulations President Carter

Four years ago, Peggy Johnson, a former reporter with Suffolk Life, brought the name Amy Carter to our attention. Peggy was an expatriate of Georgia. She spoke in glowing terms about the Southerner and his driving ambition to be President of the United States.

We watched Carter's name appear with more frequency in the news, but we still did not give this Georgia peanut farmer much chance of becoming President of the United States.

The rest is history.

He entered 30 primaries, went to the Democratic convention in New York and won it. He had yet to upset a sitting President, and in the wee hours of November 3rd, it became apparent he was victorious.

Carter ran a hell of a campaign and the victory is his. We congratulate him.

Now that he does not have to be all things to all people, we hope he will be true to himself. Hopefully, he will return to the principles and beliefs he had as governor of Georgia. In those days Carter opposed big government and believed solidly in the work ethic.

Carter will bear close watching by the people. If he turns out to be the people's President, as he has projected himself, he will welcome your suggestions and ideas for making America a better place for everyone to live.

We hope Republicans, Democrats, Liberals and Conservatives will join hands in supporting this new President. And why not?

Article 12, The United States Constitution

Suffolk County will not have the President it voted for sitting in the White House. But, we will have a President elected by the majority of the people of the United States.

This is right and just.

Suffolk County came very close to having a President it voted for in the White House who was not elected by the majority of the people of the United States. This would have been disastrous.

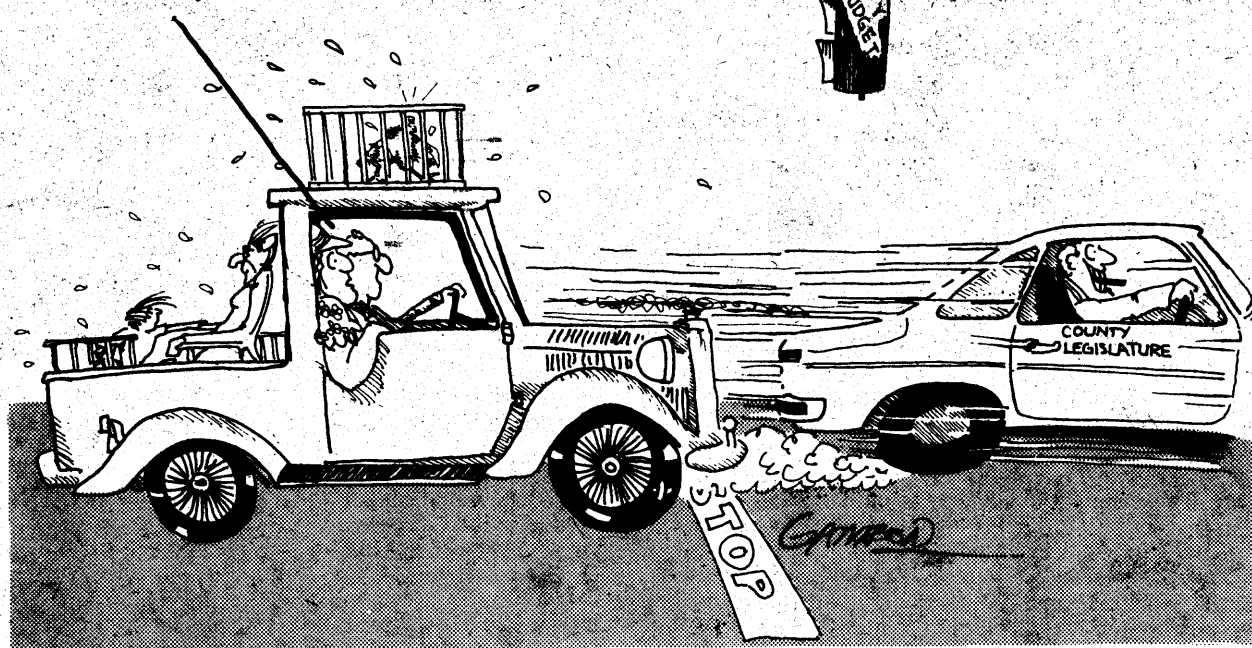
As we wrote in last week's editorial, we have been fearful since last Spring this condition might have happened. Today, there is no valid reason to continue the electoral college to elect a President.

The founders of the constitution intended that the President be selected by electors who represented each state. The number of electors would be the same number as members of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

The founding fathers anticipated the electors would be free agents who would act deliberately and recruit the most eminent candidates. A majority vote was required to elect the President and the runner-up to the successful candidate would become Vice-President.

If the electors failed to cast a majority vote for any one candidate, then the House of Representatives would delegate the person most qualified for office among the top five candidates

I THOUGHT THE
LIGHT WAS RED, PA!



Must like new models

Suffolk County government is on austerity, right?

Wrong! Wrong, that is if you go by the actions of the Suffolk County Legislature. A straw vote on the County budget was passed last week by the legislators that included nine new cars for themselves. This had been recommended by Executive Klein, his idea of an austerity budget. Legislator Robert Mrazek, a Democrat, from Northport felt this expenditure was unjust and offered a resolution rescinding this action.

The legislature voted the resolution down.

Legislators who voted in favor of receiving new cars are:

- Joyce Burland
- Floyd S. Linton
- Mildred Steinberg
- William C. Richards
- Joseph R. Caputo, Sr.
- Michael J. Grant
- Anthony Noto
- Joseph F. Bassano, Sr.

Louis T. Howard
Claire Sauer

Legislators who voted against receiving new cars are: (i.e. to delete from County budget)

- John T. Donohue
- John J. Foley
- William Carney
- John C. Wehrenberg
- Richard G. Lambert
- Martin J. Feldman
- Robert Mrazek

Absent:

- Elaine E. Adler

You might like to say this was just partisan politics and when the legislators need new cars, they should be supplied.

Wrong again.

The legislators' old cars which are not worn out, are still in pretty good shape and will now become staff cars for their aides.

Pretty high living for what was intended to be a part-time job! Don't worry folks, this will only amount to a few pennies on your real estate taxes. Besides, who counts pennies anymore?

Why don't you send a card of congratulations to your local county legislator, and put a postscript in it telling him to enjoy it because you may not be able to afford his car or him next year. And why not?

selected by the electoral college.

As the system now works, voters do not vote directly for the President and Vice-President, rather we choose between slates of Presidential electors designated by the selected party originally. The electoral college today simply acts as a sort of automatic voting machine to record votes cast at the polls.

The Commission on Electoral College Reform of the American Bar Association is quoted in "The Politics of American Democracy," "The electoral college method of selecting Presidents of the United States is archaic, undemocratic, complex, ambiguous and dangerous." We agree wholeheartedly.

Article 12 of the United States Constitution should and must be changed to simply provide that the next President of the U.S. be elected by popular vote. This will require a constitutional amendment. It will have to be passed by two consecutive sessions of Congress, then approved by a majority of voters in the fifty states.

There is no logical reason in this day and age to maintain the electoral college system. We hope our Congressmen and Senators from New York will introduce a Constitutional Amendment to repeal the electoral college as the first priority of business when they go to Washington on January 6th. And why not?

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Open letter to First District Legislator Joyce Burland

Why are we wasting wood?

Dear Joyce:

For three years you have lamented how bad and how unfeeling the Republicans were.

You went from one end of Eastern Long Island to the other telling people you had a better way. You showed what we thought was a sincere concern for people. You told us how your background, desire, drive and ambition would improve the life of Eastern Long Islanders.

We believed you. We elected you legislator to represent the first district. When you entered office, and the Democrats took control of the legislature, you were appointed the Chairman of the Parks, Recreation, and Conservation Committee of the County Legislature. We expected good things.

Frankly, you have been one of our biggest disappointments.

As chairman of the committee, you obviously condone the bureaucratic decision to deny local Suffolk County residents the right to remove wind-blown and dead firewood in our county parks and woods.

There are literally thousands of cords of firewood in these areas rotting and going to waste. Many of your constituents, Suffolk County residents, enjoy going into the woods and cutting their own firewood. They don't cut live trees, but harvest those that have been wind-blown and have died. This is dried, seasoned, aged wood. This is a form of healthy recreation in which whole families can participate. It also saves people a few dollars and even a couple of gallons of fuel oil because the thermostat can be lowered.

It is ecologically sound to remove the dead wood from the forest, allowing new growth to rejuvenate the woods. Even the New York State Conservation Department has recognized the value of selective clearing. This year they are allowing residents to go into their leased land and take up to a cord of wood a day. They are even making a little money. They charge a nominal fee of \$5.00 for each cord removed.

I know you are not particularly interested in money, but those of us who will be faced with paying an increased real estate tax bill next

month are.

Joyce, where is that people-oriented person who sat in my office for an interview before her election?

You have fallen right into bed with the arrogant policies possessed by your predecessors. I guess there isn't much difference whether you are Democrat or Republican, male or female. Your vision for people's needs has been blinded by the need for bureaucratic rules and regulations. Was your sincerity and concern for the people just an act?

I thought you were too smart to be buffaloed by the bureaucracy. Maybe I gave you more credit than you deserved. I thought you would demand a rational explanation for legislative actions concerning people and not just complacently sit back and accept pat answers.

Joyce, you can, as Chairman, open our parks and woodlands to Suffolk residents if you were so disposed. That's up to you, as it will be up to the voters of the first legislative district whether they send you back to office a year from now or not. And why not?

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National welfare system

One of the key questions in this last campaign was the advisability of having a national welfare system. Currently the federal government pays 50 per cent of the cost of welfare, the state picks up another 25 per cent and local government the balance.

For its 50 per cent, the federal government sets certain standards which the states must adhere to. The states, for their 25 per cent set additional standards. Local communities or counties pay the balance for the pleasure of adhering to these rules and regulations.

This system allows industrial states like New York to pay outlandish benefits to those on welfare. The reason for these benefits is not altruistic. The politicians know the welfare vote is an enormous bloc, they have to keep them happy in order to keep them voting their way.

This past Presidential election is the case in point. Carter and the Democrats did exceptionally well in the big welfare states, particularly in the cities, where welfare is a way of life.

In states where the work ethic is still ingrained in people, they lost. In the suburban areas surrounding the cities they lost.

But, they had the numbers in the cities and in the welfare states to carry them over the top. The Democrats now control Congress and the Presidency. The welfare bloc will demand a price for their support, and a national welfare system looms as a reality.

We actually are not opposed to a national welfare system with a sound base. We could support a national welfare system based on the concept of the minimum wage, whereby the maximum welfare grant to any individual or family would not exceed the minimum wage for forty hours a week, less the normal deductions taken out of a productive worker's pay check.

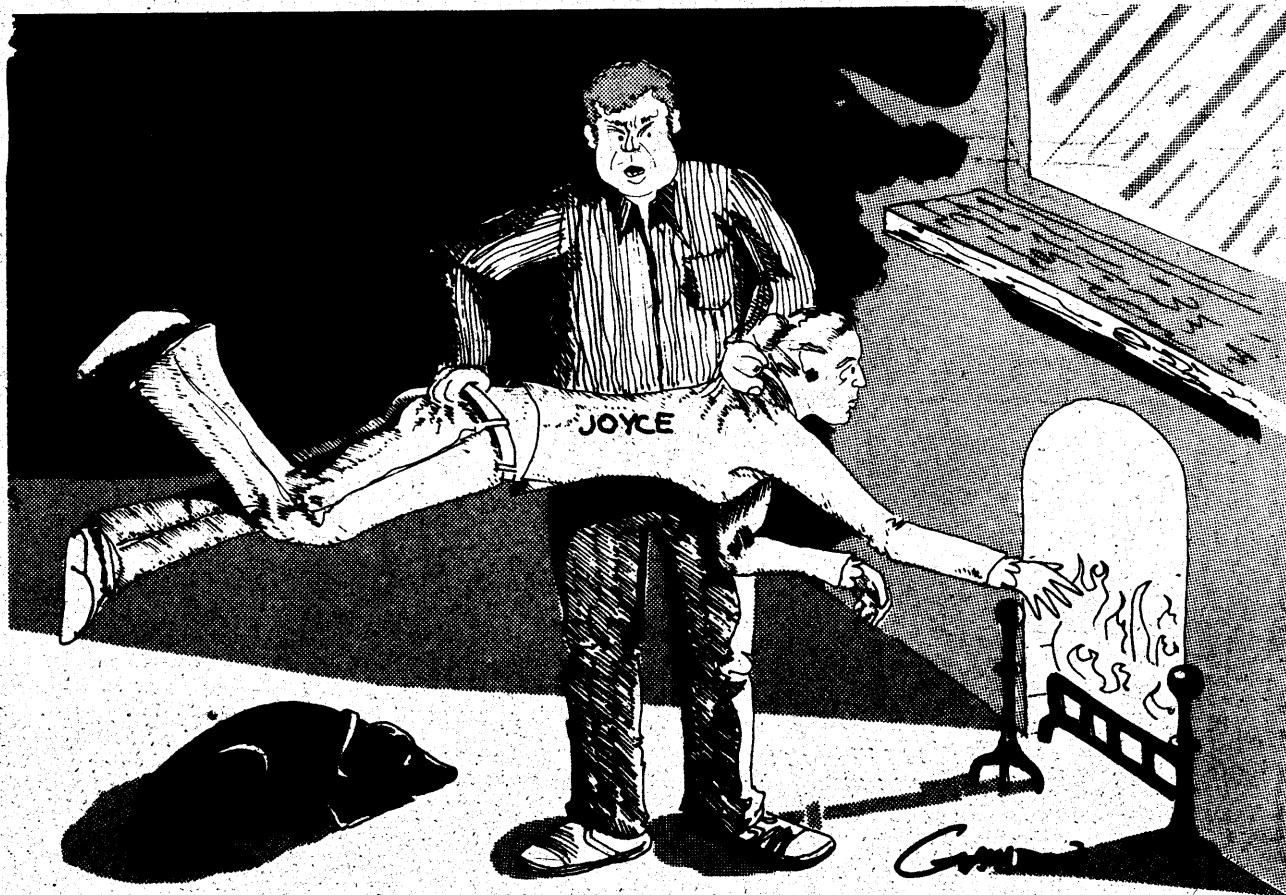
This minimum wage should be based on states' minimum wage, rather than the federal

minimum wage. This would allow adjustments in the cost of living from area to area. There would be no further grants or allocations above the minimum wage for any other need or use with the exception of medical. Medical needs would have to be handled by federal clinics or hospitals. Welfare recipients would have to manage just as productive workers must on their salaries.

This system would reintroduce the incentive to people with skills and talents to go back to work. It would no longer be advantageous to remain on the dole.

Our present system of welfare encourages recipients to take advantage of it. There is no incentive to get off. The system is setup to encourage parents to have more children instead of restricting the size of their families. Welfare in the United States has become an enormous drain on the taxpayers and producers in this country.

There is need for change. We support it. But change must be based on a fair and just standard. And why not?



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Lulu's coming to Suffolk?

In the state legislature a "lulu" was accepted payment in lieu of itemized expenses. Starting during the Al Smith era, lulu's grew into a bonus system by which legislators could be kept in line. Eventually they ended up part of the patronage system: a chintzy way to rip off the taxpayers. In the early 1970's, the state legislature allegedly did away with the lulu's and instituted a per diem expense allowance program to compensate the legislators on a blanket basis for expenses they incurred while being in Albany. The legislative leaders who missed this bonus system snuck the lulu's in again through the back door, using semantics and calling them stipends.

A stipend serves the same purpose as a lulu -- richly rewarding those who play the ball game according to the rules.

This questionable practice has upset the taxpayers and voters because it enables the legislators to garner monies in addition to the salaries they accepted as just compensation when they ran for office.

Not to be outdone by the State Senate, Lulu made her debut in the Suffolk County Legislature last week.

Joseph Caputo, a Republican from Islip Town, introduced a resolution which would pay him \$110 per day in addition to his \$16,000 part-time salary whenever he is performing his duties as a trustee on one of the three special pension boards on which he serves. He based his resolution on the argument that he is forced to give up income he might earn on the outside when he has to serve on these committees.

This resolution is considered by most insiders a trial balloon, and probably will not be passed. But, if there is not a public uproar, you can bet your sweet bippy the rest of the legislature will quickly enact this type of resolution at a later date, then sit back and rip the pants off the taxpayers. The legislators have never been known to be lacking chutzpah.

Under the old county board of supervisors, the total cost of governing the county was under \$100,000. Members received \$6,000 for serving, and there were only ten of them.

Under the "new" legislature there are 18 members and their salaries range from \$16,000 to \$24,000. In addition, their staffs, automobiles, offices, etc., run upwards of another \$50,000 each. The legislature's cost now runs over \$1,000,000.

Taxpayers have been pleading with these legislators to find ways to reduce their tax burden. It seems we have 18 deaf men on this board and they have not heard a word their constituents have said.

This year they will raise the cost of our County government almost \$75,000,000: a better than 20 per cent increase over last year. They add insult to injury by even suggesting the legislators receive additional compensation for performing the services for which they were elected.

If any one of the 18 legislators don't like the job they have, or the pay they receive for the services that they render, they can resign. There will be no tears shed nor any noticeable loss of talent.

If Mr. Caputo can get \$110 per day for his services in outside employment, he really owes it to his family to resign and provide the standard of living that double his county salary can provide. And why not?



Oiling Eastern Long Island

Until now most of us have been concerned primarily with the ecological aspects of off-shore oil drilling. We have concentrated on the effects this will have on our water, sea life and beaches.

But while we have been involved with ecology, others have been busy concentrating on the economic aspects and how it would affect them.

Eastern Long Island is in a prime geographic location to play a major role in the production of liquid gold. Our close proximity to the Atlantic's Baltimore Canyon make us the most logical site for a staging area. We could also serve to store and refine oil brought in from the rigs.

We have been aware for over a year of the closely guarded interest in the Suffolk County Airport and the role it could play in the development of off-shore oil drilling.

Last Wednesday, at a Citizens Advisory Committee on the Suffolk County Airport, this information was made public. John Pereira, Committee chairman announced the F.A.A. was interested in the committee's reaction to the airport being used as a staging area. The F.A.A. will meet with representatives of the thirty-one oil companies this week to discuss this site among others.

The development of the airport as a staging area would only be the first change to be felt because of our involvement with oil.

A staging site for the development of off-shore oil wells of the scope planned for the Atlantic would have to be a massive operation. Enormous quantities of materials and personnel will have to be ferried back and forth to this area on 24 hour basis, using large cargo helicopters.

The Suffolk County Airport is ideal for this. It has runways capable of handling large cargo planes. It has hundreds of acres of land waiting to sprout storage and warehouse buildings. The dormant buildings at the airport could quickly and easily be converted into offices, service and supply shops.

The Long Island Railroad tracks run along the southern end of the airport and would facilitate a freight operation. To the north of the airport is the modern, divided, four lane Sunrise Highway, which interconnects with the Long Island Expressway.

Suffolk County has a large ready labor market available comprised of both unskilled and semi-skilled workers; many in the construction trade have been without regular employment over the last few years.

It is estimated as many as 5,000 jobs will be involved in this operation. Millions of new dollars would be poured into the economy on a

year round basis. These facts make for a persuasive argument in favor of Suffolk Airport being developed into a staging site.

Before we jump at this seemingly profitable proposal, we should also look at its ramifications. Oil is notorious for giving nothing while getting something in return.

If the oil companies are to use Suffolk as a staging site, will they then also require we provide a land area for unloading oil and refining it?

Will the County residents be the beneficiaries as owners of the Suffolk County Airport of landing and land use fees, or will the County government jump at some offer to turn the facility over to a private corporation and settle for a small pittance in return?


Will our involvement with oil appear to be so attractive and profitable we can be encouraged to set up an authority to run the airport and deep sea ports needed by oil? How would this authority be run and governed; who would control it? Would this authority have powers of eminent domain only over the air and sea ports or would they be able to override the public's desires, wishes, planning and zoning?

Oil is a devious business. Oil companies are not known for their ethics, morals or concern for communities' best interests. As economically attractive as a staging site might look in 1977, let's have foresight instead of hindsight for the years that follow. And why not?

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Must WE resort to vigilantes?

John Russo, a resident and major landlord in the Bay Area, stopped in our office to chat last week. He told us residents of the Bay Area are about to take the law into their own hands.

After several months of being victims of a crime spree and pleading for additional police protection, residents and businessmen are now talking about setting up citizen patrols to defend themselves.

Russo rattled off statistics that would make your hair stand on end. In the last two weeks, there were over a dozen burglaries, three armed robberies, two suspicious fires, plus numerous other crimes.

Russo said the community has its suspicions of who is responsible; the police tend to agree, but lack the manpower to break the ring.

Russo feels the latest crime spree is masterminded by a few older individuals who have a group of about 30 late teenage to early 20's leg men doing the actual stealing. He feels this is an organized group, drug motivated, using the latest sophisticated methods of radio communication and executing these hits with almost war maneuver precision.

The county police department's fifth precinct, which covers the Bay Area is operating with less manpower than they did six years ago, while the population has increased by thirty-three and one-third per cent.

Russo has been out speaking to civic and business groups trying to rile the people up enough to demand additional protection from the county. He has encountered constant talk from residents about developing citizen patrols because the county cannot provide adequate protection.

He is fearful innocent people are going to get hurt. But as he said, "If our government will not protect us, we have to protect ourselves." Vigilante groups have played their part in law and order since the early days of America's history. But almost everybody agrees vigilantes are a last resort.

Protection should be left to the police, the professionals.

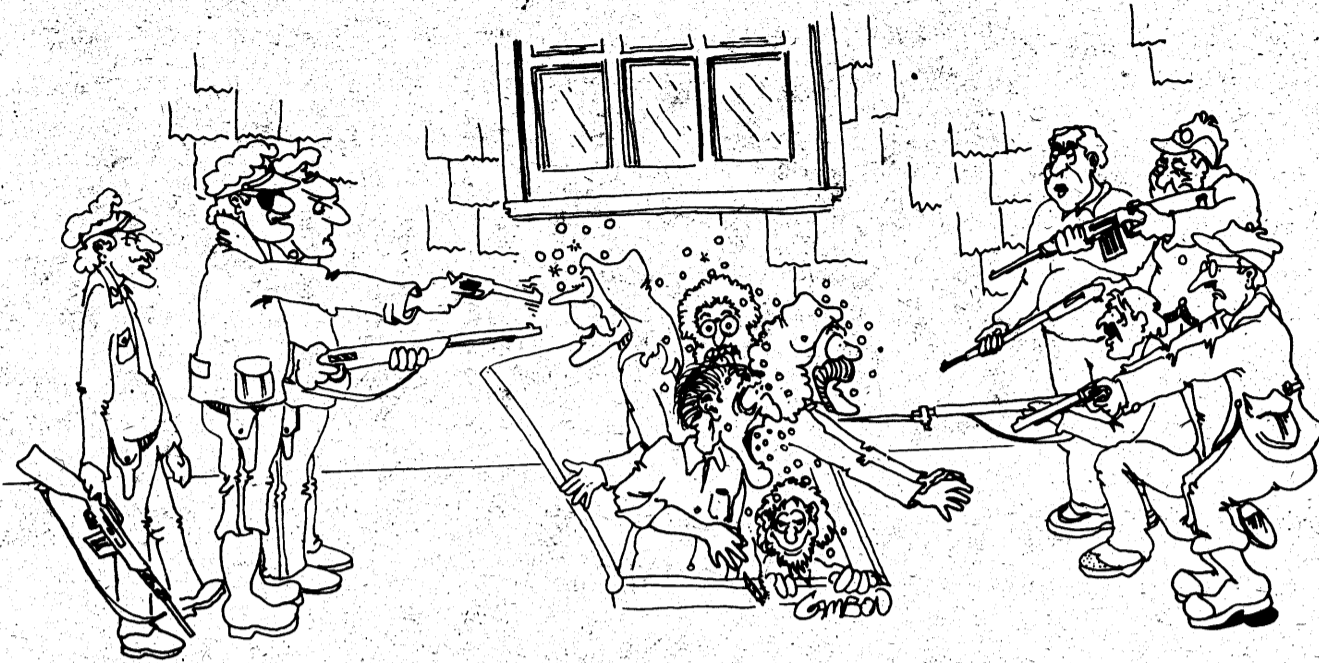
Russo hopes to alert the county to the desperation of the Bay Area residents.

Time has run out, and the only thing that will prevent the citizens of the Bay Area from taking the law into their own hands will be fast and effective action by the county. It must provide the area with enough police officers to break the back of this area's latest crime spree.

The next move is now up to the elected officials and the police commissioner of Suffolk County. And why not?

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Tax delinquents up 47 per cent - County's answer... raise taxes

In 1976, the number of people who could not pay their real estate taxes rose 47 per cent over 1975, which itself was not a good year. This tremendous rise in tax delinquents has been primarily caused by average homeowners being pushed over the economic brink by increased real estate taxes, inflation and unemployment. It was predictable.

Last year, when we interviewed candidates for the county legislature, they were unaware almost to a man of the big problem facing the constituents. It was the people's inability to stretch their incomes and their need for tax relief.

Now their constituents' tax problems are no longer hypothetical reality, borne out by the 47 per cent increase in delinquency. They still refuse to address this problem and will further complicate it by attempting to pass a 20 per cent increase in the size of the county budget. Forty-seven per cent, an enormously high figure, will probably seem considerably smaller next year when the full impact of the delinquents of 1977 becomes known.

According to statistics, we have seen, mortgages throughout the Suffolk area are falling further and further behind. More people are unable to meet their tax bills.

This is not a make-believe situation or an exaggerated claim. The residents of Suffolk

County desperately need a reduction in taxes this year.

A reduction could have taken place if the county executive and legislature had joined hands and cut back county government.

Instead, both sides decided to play politics.

Klein presented a budget filled with fat but minus a few items that were deliberately designed to cause the maximum amount of public anguish.

The Democrats, as to be expected, responded to their outcries and re-established most of Klein's cuts. They ignored the obvious areas that could have been cut without seriously affecting the overall operation of Suffolk County.

The cruelty of this will be felt by those least able to afford it. It will be the hard working lower middle income families who have struggled for a decade to hang on to their homes.

They have no other income alternative left. Some will go on welfare, others will move from Suffolk.

We only wish the 18 legislators and the county executive would have listened and had the courage to act. They didn't. And why not?

Swine flu debacle

It is predicted this country will be hit with a swine flu epidemic by winter. To head off this catastrophe, the federal government has set up a nation-wide program to inoculate Americans with swine flu vaccine.

The program has been controversial from the beginning.

Drug companies refuse to accept liability for the vaccine they will be producing. Suspicions were created when the inoculation program first started, because several elderly people died after being inoculated. We have been told since then, their deaths were caused by other ailments and not by the flu shots.

To further complicate the system of mass inoculations, the public has been confused as to where and how to go about receiving these shots.

The health department announces only a day or two ahead of time where clinics will be set up, instead of listing in advance when, where and how the shots can be obtained.

The National Health Service is now talking about developing an advertising campaign to encourage people to receive voluntary inoculation. Most people we have talked to have already decided to take part in this program.

The county health department should undo some of this confusion by providing information on where and when clinics or stations will be opened over a month, rather than a day or two. Most newspapers will carry this information free of charge as a public service.

We encourage everyone to be inoculated and to do it as soon as possible. And why not?

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willmotts and why-nots

David J. Willmott, Editor

Thanks Charlie

150 paraplegic children from St. Charles Hospital attended the Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus last Tuesday.

According to Flora Garsten, the coordinator of the BOCES School at St. Charles, it was one of the most heart-warming and sensational experiences in which she has ever been involved.

None of the patients had ever attended a circus before. They were able to go because of the generosity of one of Suffolk's leading retailers, Charlie Bonaparte (better known as Woody Woodfield of Woodfield's Furniture).

About a month ago, Woody was in our office and going over future advertising plans when a phone call came in from Irwin Garsten of Garsten Motors. Irwin's wife had asked if it would be possible for Suffolk Life to supply the tickets for the kids at St. Charles to go to the circus.

Even though we had originally 5,000 tickets, all but a few had already been committed, and we had to turn down the request. Woody overheard part of the conversation, and generously said he would donate 100 tickets so the kids could have at least one big day in their life. Suffolk Life was able to contribute the other 50.

Mrs. Garsten reported the evening was a smashing success: the Coliseum provided special seating and floor space for the children, even those in wheel chairs. The manager of the Ringling Brothers Circus joined in the spirit and invited the children to participate in the parade which capped off a tremendous experience for them.

We join the children thanking Charlie Bonaparte for his generosity in making all this possible. And why not?

letters

"Abolish county government"

Dear Dave:

I see that Linton's looters want to impose the highest county taxes in history on us long-suffering senior citizen taxpayers. (I thought the 7 per cent sales tax was supposed to reduce our real estate taxes).

I suggest that the solution is to abolish county government, as Connecticut has done so successfully. And why not?

Yours sincerely,
Ed Lapham
Wading River

"Give us poor taxpayers a break"

Dear Editor:

Why must we provide any cars for our Suffolk County legislators? I'm sure they are well paid for their part time jobs or they wouldn't run for office.

If legislators must use cars for county related work, may I suggest 15 cents a mile for expenses?

So please, legislators, give us poor taxpayers a break. Drive your own cars to and from work - the same as your constituents that vote you into, and out of, office.

Mrs. Mary Konigsberg
Coram



Time for citizens to bite back?

Biting the hand that feeds

Suffolk County has the highest paid police force in the United States of America, and probably the world.

They are not the highest paid police force because we have the lowest crime rate in the nation, or the lowest accident rate -- They are the highest paid police force because they are organized into a powerful union.

This union has dealt with a weak-kneed County Legislature and a County Executive, who, in the past, has found it more expedient to say "yes" than fight.

The County was able to raise the policemen's income to the present salary rate because Suffolk's economy was booming, and the assessed valuation was climbing at a faster rate than was needed for tax revenues.

We have the reverse condition in 1976, and by all projections 1977 will be worse.

When County Executive Klein submitted his 1977 budget, he was faced with granting the police substantial increases through binding arbitration.

To offset some of these expenses, Klein recommended to the Legislature that they reduce the detective force by 25 per cent, eliminate a few non-essential programs, and not fill 143 vacant positions, left unfilled because of the County's austerity budget.

The County Legislature passed Klein's budget, but restored these cuts. Klein since then has vetoed their expenditures.

In retaliation, the County police union called for a job action. The union wants all officers to follow the rule book to the letter, doing no more than absolutely mandated by law and to take advantage of every loophole to cause confusion and disrupt the normal workings of the force.

The attitude of the police union is reprehensible. What the union is advocating is to make the public suffer enough to capitulate and demand the Legislature give in to their latest demands.

The police union's actions reminds us of an old friend who bought a broken down carnival horse at the end of the season. The horse was half-starved and lame. After a few months of constant care and attention, the horse was restored to health.

One day, while the owner was mucking out the stall, the horse bit him on the butt. We suppose that was to show his gratitude for having been saved from the glue factory.

The owner promptly summed up the situation and the horse soon found himself in an Elmer's glue bottle.

The police union is acting just like this overfed, pampered horse. For the police department to survive, it must have the cooperation and respect of the people it serves and who are paying its freight. You can't get respect and cooperation from somebody you are biting just for the hell of it.

The police union and its members must come to grips with today's economic realities. There just isn't anymore money to pay their demands. They will have to be willing now and in the near future to work harder and accept what they have and be thankful for it.

We encourage Klein to continue to stand up to the police pressure. We hope the County Legislature will find the guts to act responsibly and we anticipate the public will support both Klein and the Legislature. And why not?

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willmotts and why-nots

David J. Willmott, Editor

**Klein
won't ever listen**

Last week Suffolk Life revealed a consortium of thirty-one oil companies which will be drilling for oil in the Atlantic off our shores had inquired of the F.A.A. whether the County would be interested in having a staging site in Suffolk.

The Suffolk County Airport has been looked at favorably because it is more centrally located in relation to the Baltimore Canyon than many of the other sites under consideration.

A staging site of the size needed by the oil companies will most likely produce 3,000-5,000 jobs annually and dump literally millions of dollars into the economy.

Suffolk Life has been from the start and still is unequivocally opposed to off-shore oil drilling. It is our belief the oil companies have not developed fail-safe methods of drilling and there is great potential for oil spills.

We value our shore and its environs. We fully recognize how valuable it is from both ecological and economic standpoints. We do not want to see it disturbed or destroyed.

But we are realistic enough to realize our wishes are not going to be considered. The federal government has already held auctions and leased some sites for drilling.

We have had an energy crisis. This crisis has wreaked havoc with our economy and because of it, if there is oil in the Atlantic, it is going to be sought and found. We took this into consideration when we wrote last week that the oil companies were looking at Suffolk as a staging site, and we encouraged the County to at least listen with skepticism to the oil companies' proposal.

County Executive John Klein's answer was he wasn't interested in talking to anybody. He is totally opposed to off-shore oil and has a totally closed mind about anything to do with it.

This is typical of Klein and one of the facets of his personality that has made him an ineffective County Executive. We had hoped he would show at least a degree of common sense and listen to what the oil companies had to say.

We are sure 3,000-5,000 families living in Suffolk who are without jobs would want him to do this. But Klein refused to listen and has closed the County Executive's office door.

The Legislature should pick up the ball and inform the F.A.A. they are interested in weighing the pros and cons.

Klein may think he runs a dictatorship, but he doesn't.

Suffolk County government is a system of checks and balances. The legislature is supposed to act independently of the Executive.

This issue would give the Legislature an unusual opportunity to exercise their independence and they should act accordingly. And why not?

Please renew my subscription to Suffolk Life Newspapers for 1976. Enclosed is \$4.99 for a one year subscription.

Enclosed is \$6.88 for a two year subscription.

Enclosed is \$8.77 for a three year subscription.

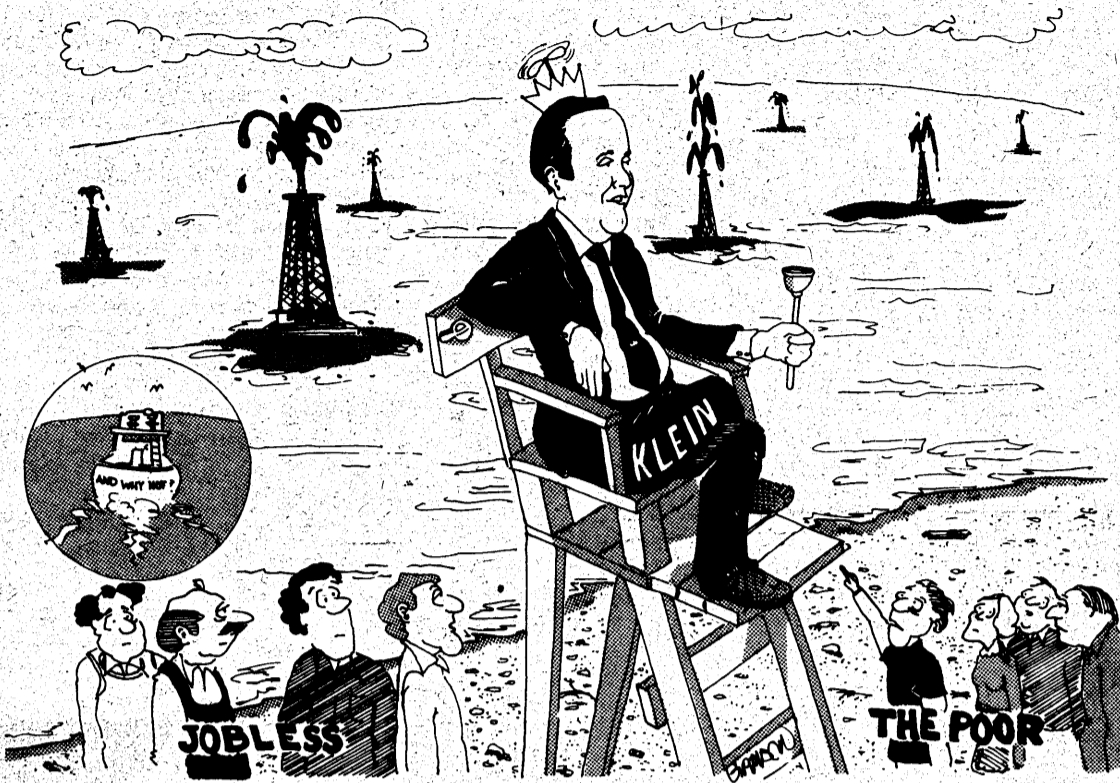
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letter

"Positive opinion for wrong reasons"

Dear Editor:

In your editorial, "Vote 'Yes' on Gambling" (October 31, 1976), you expressed a positive opinion on the "Las Vegas Night" amendment for all the wrong reasons. A brief quote from the editorial should point out some of the absurdity, "We encourage you to make legal what is already commonly being done illegally. And why not? Why not! With this sort of logic, mugging in New York City should be legalized, political corruption should be legal, and so should dozens of other common crimes. Surely you must see the danger in this type of argument. Your entire argument rests upon the fact that we all gamble anyway, so why not make it legal for charitable organizations. Why can't "Suffolk Life" face the issue on its merit as an issue and support it for positive reasons rather than "left handedly" endorse it? I agree that gambling should be legalized but not for these reasons. There is no reason why the state should legislate morality, in fact many victimless crimes like gambling should be legalized. However, the legalization of gambling for charitable organizations must be just a beginning and hopefully the state will soon control gambling much in the same vein of OTB. State control would mean less organized crime involved as well as reducing the burden of our taxes.

There is one naive point you make and should be dealt with by the public. You say, "Legalizing these forms of gambling will put a crimp in organized crime." Who are you kidding? The public should keep a sharp eye (as well as the press) on the charitable institutions that run "Las Vegas Nights" because they will become subject to a plethora of organized crime.

A last point to make is the irresponsibility of a newspaper

that prints election editorials in the last issue before the election without giving the public a chance to respond. And that is why not!
Daniel J. Jacobs
Rocky Point

Ed. Note: You're entitled to your opinion as we are to ours. We faced the gambling squarely on its merits. Sorry you do not see it this way. We made 95 per cent of our editorial endorsements on Wednesday, giving ample time for comment.

Let us give thanks

Tomorrow is Thanksgiving. It will be a day of feasting and festivities. It is a day also for recollection, a day to examine the gains we have made and to be thankful for having had the health and the ability to have been able to succeed.

We also should remember that the good life we have come about only partially through our will and determination. We thank the Power stronger than ourselves who created the opportunities.

We wish our staff and our readers a bountiful and happy Thanksgiving. And why not?

'77 subscriptions due

This year we will run our 1977 subscription renewal drive between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

We ask you who receive and read Suffolk Life to voluntarily renew your subscription for the coming year.

Will you please send in \$4.99 now. This will cover your subscription for '77. It will enable us to continue to produce a quality weekly newspaper.

This year we spent over one-half million dollars on the news portion of Suffolk Life. We were able to do this and remain in business because many people like yourself recognize the importance and the value of Suffolk Life and last year renewed their subscription.

Won't you join your neighbors and friends and renew your subscription today for this coming year?

Please fill out the form and enclose your check for \$4.99. Thank you. And why not?

Clip this coupon and mail to:
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Drug Medicaid payments need revision

Most individually-owned drug stores are refusing to fill Medicaid prescriptions. These stores are not heartless and do not have any grudge against Medicaid recipients. They are losing money on most Medicaid prescriptions. The system used by the state to calculate payment has brought this about.

Formerly, all drug stores were compensated for filling prescriptions on the basis of their wholesale cost of drugs plus \$1.80 service charge for each prescription filled. This system had been in effect without change for the last seven years.

Currently, the state is reimbursing stores on a basis of the wholesale drug cost of volume of multi-store chains plus the old \$1.80 service fee.

Large multi-chain stores buy drugs in big quantities. There are substantial discounts for big purchases.

Small drug stores cannot buy drugs in these quantities. They cannot take advantage of the discounts. Independent operators do not have the kind of capital to buy in large quantities.

Small drug store proprietors are also concerned about the quality of drugs they dispense. Packaged drugs, once opened, deteriorate rapidly. Independents must, therefore, only buy in quantities they know they can sell within a reasonable period of time.

The \$1.80 service charge they are paid is the same they received seven years ago, but runaway inflation in the last seven years has caused their overhead to increase the same as everyone else's.

Independent drug stores currently face rentals in excess of \$500 per month. To staff an independent drug store properly, it costs over \$1,000 per week. A few years back, an independent drug store could be capitalized for \$25,000 to \$35,000. Today, a minimum investment of \$70,000 is needed to have a proper drug inventory on hand to meet the community's needs.

These economic realities, coupled with the state's new payment procedure have left local druggists with no choice other than to refuse to fill Medicaid prescriptions, or lose money by doing so.

The state's answer to this dilemma is for these

drug stores to charge their paying customers higher mark-ups to compensate for the losses on their Medicaid customers.

This is traditional bureaucratic illogic. It is also ethically and morally wrong.

The Attorney General has threatened to bring anti-trust action against local drug stores. This is outright blackmail.

The simple solution to this predicament would be to allow individual drug stores to add the surcharge they deem necessary to cover their cost. This surcharge would be paid in cash by the Medicaid client and the prescription would be paid for by the state. But, druggists are forbidden to do this under law.

The alternatives are either to revert back to the former system whereby the cost of the prescription would be based on the wholesale cost of the drug to that store plus a service charge for filling the prescription; or the state could raise the present service fee to a realistic rate that represents today's cost of doing business.

The state has acted arbitrarily in setting the current rules and regulations. They have caused the local drug stores to balk at serving Medicaid recipients, an action most find distasteful. The state must correct this situation immediately. And why not?

willmotts and why-nots
David J. Willmott, Editor

Cops make good offer

The detectives of the Suffolk County Police Department have offered to sacrifice half their overtime in order to keep the detectives at full strength.

Because of the cost of the '77 police budget, County Executive Klein had ordered the detective force reduced by 25 per cent.

The detectives made this move not only to save the jobs of their fellow officers, but also so that the department may uphold their standards and continue to provide the police protection residents of the county need.

Suffolk Life commends the detectives for this move, and hopes the county responds expeditiously. It will only be through cooperation such as this that Suffolk County will be able to survive financially in the future. The taxpayers are carrying far too large a burden at present and cannot possibly sustain additional real estate tax increases.

The police department in Suffolk is the highest paid in the nation, and is responsible for a large part of the enormous taxes the residents have to pay. The residents have shown a willingness to pay the police the wages they receive because they felt they were getting their money's worth of services.

If services are cut back while the taxes remain high, there will be rebellion and resentment.

The detectives' efforts to increase their productivity in order to maintain the size of the force is a step in the right direction.

Let's hope it's a start for building a relationship between the police, the government and the citizens. And why not?



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Suffolk Life is delivered to your home fifty-one weeks of the year.

You do not have a newsboy banging on your door every week or once a month asking to be paid. Instead, we run an annual subscription drive once a year.

This drive lasts from Thanksgiving until Christmas. You are asked voluntarily to pay \$4.99 for your subscription. The money you pay for your subscription supports the news portion of Suffolk Life.

We ask you to clip the coupon below and mail it off to us with your check for \$4.99 for your 1977 subscription.

Won't you do this today and help keep a strong independent voice in existence. And why not?

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