

A Very Sick Game

During the recent battle for elective positions, there was another kind of campaign going on, a very organized campaign to convince the Suffolk County Legislature to discard your mandate that a cap be placed on county spending. The campaign, which still rages, urges legislators to pierce the cap, allowing unlimited spending by government officials.

The game is sick, very sick. Probably as dirty a political game as we saw played in this year's campaigns. Organizations and facilities that offer human services to the people of Suffolk County have been used to apply pressure to give our legislators a license to spend, spend, spend.

Here are the facts: The 1987 Suffolk County budget was \$1,120,000,000, which was \$33 million dollars more than legally permitted under Local Law 21, which places a 4 percent cap on county spending increases. The 1987 budget exceeded the cap because legislators were subjected, and succumbed, to pressure from unions and others seeking to protect jobs and services. Several legislators brought a suit against the county, and Supreme Court Judge William Underwood upheld their contention the cap was illegally pierced. He ordered the legislators to legalize the excessive spending with the required 14 votes—an escape clause contained in the law to permit emergency expenditures—or cut the entire \$33 million out of the budget. The legislators were able to put together the 14 votes on \$13 million of the over-spending, and maneuvered funds from one category to another to make up the difference.

The 1988 proposed budget was presented in two options: The first adheres to Local Law 21, which permits an increase of 4 percent in spending over the budget figures of

last year. The second calls for an increase of 7.8 percent in spending, which would require passage by the required 14 votes. In the first instance, however, the budget figures presented are those of the budget ruled illegal by Judge Underwood. Following his decision, acting County Executive Michael LoGrande sent letters to county departments detailing additional cuts that were to be made in each department.

There has been an organized campaign by Suffolk County employee unions and the bureaucrats who run Suffolk County to force the legislature into approving the 7.8 percent spending increase called for in the second budget option. The campaign is one of the lowest, most despicable we have ever witnessed. The bureaucrats who have control of their budget have arbitrarily and capriciously eliminate from their budgets those funds used for people services. They have told people who are affected that needed services will be discontinued unless the budget is pierced.

The reason for their action is simple. Arouse the people, get them to demand the legislators pierce the cap.

We have receive numerous letters from health related organizations and people who utilize these services, as well as those who are in the arts or use recreational facilities. All plead for their own area of interest. All speak of massive cuts if the cap is not pierced.

One group, in particular, caught our attention. The organization is "Response," a psychological health related organization whose 88 volunteers reach out to help those in need, including the operation of a hot line where people who are despondent or possibly suicidal can find help. An official from Response wrote that if

the cap is not pierced, their budget would be cut back to \$14,305 next year, which would force an end to their activities. Last year their budget was \$82,530.

Response had requested \$88,076 for 1988. Under Local Law 29, which limits county tax rate increases to 4 percent, they would receive that entire amount. Under Local Law 21, which puts a 4 percent cap on spending, they were slated to receive \$85,831.

If the budget proposal under Local Law 21 would allow them \$85,831, where did the \$14,305 figure come from? In a letter received from a deputy commissioner of the Suffolk County Department of Health Services, Paul O'Brien.

O'Brien told Suffolk Life that the Health Services Department was ordered by LoGrande, following the Underwood decision, to reduce their \$91.9 Local Law 21 budget allocation by \$2.8 million from the amount allocated under Local Law 21. These cuts were not made across the board. Instead, the department eliminated mandated items from possible cuts, he said, and then assigned a priority to certain funded operations. Those considered more important by the department suffered lower, if any, cuts. Others not as high on the department's "priority list," such as Response, were dealt the larger reductions.

One example of a higher priority cited by O'Brien was inspection for water quality, including the inspection by health department employees to ensure a new well is not placed too close to an existing cesspool. The funding for this and other water inspection activities were not cut as much as other operations.

One health center did not fare too well. The Bay Shore Family Health Center, for example, would have received \$1,356,625 under the LoGrande Local Law 21 proposal. The health department eliminated all but \$200,000 of that amount, which is to be used to phase out the center over the next two months. Health center employees and officials have been telling callers the center would be phased out unless the cap is pierced, and they should call legislators to urged them to approve the increased spending.

Why weren't all operations, all health centers, impacted by a like amount rather than cutting some drastically and others hardly at all? Chief County Deputy Executive Gregory Munson said health department officials have said it would be better for some centers to operate up to speed, eliminating one to make

that possible. The question we have is, better for whom?

If the bureaucrats felt that Response was an unneeded program, they should have the guts to say so rather than use the 88 volunteers as pawns in the unethical fight to get the legislature to approve unlimited spending. If they felt the Bay Shore Health Center is unnecessary, they should say that, rather than use the cap as a guise to incite pressure from the people who use it.

LoGrande early this week expressed concern when questioned about the method cuts were made. He explained there was not sufficient time after the Underwood decision was handed down to revise the budget figures, and so departments were given the authority to make the cuts themselves. Based on the cuts related to him, LoGrande said he would take a close look at those cuts, including the loss of the Bay Shore Health Center. He should. Immediately. And act to bring fairness back into the budgeting process.

The bureaucrats are making a mockery out of the budgeting system. If they had deemed organizations or facilities were unnecessary and could be eliminated, why were they not taken out of their budgets to begin with? We suspect they are using these organizations as hostages to their own reckless spending ways, and are using those organizations, staff positions and services as a ramrod to pressure their legislators to buckle under and continue their spending spree. In our mind, too many bureaucrats in Suffolk County are operating within a very sick mentality, using the poor and the indigent to do their dirty work.

As Abraham Lincoln once said, "You can fool some of the people all of the time, all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time." We, the taxpayers, are fools if we do not contact our legislators today, before a scheduled budget vote set for 10 a.m. Friday at the William Rogers Legislative Auditorium in Hauppauge. The legislators must know that we do know what is going on, that it's a sham and we unequivocally want them to stay within the cap and not fall victim to this despicable trickery.

We, as taxpayers, must apply our own pressure, pressure to cut out the rampant waste that exists in our county government, waste that robs people of needed services and government of its integrity. Our rallying cry should be: Cut waste, not services.

And why not?

Continued on page 4

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Russia, U.S.A.

Ignoring the wishes of the people, and the safety of the public, officials of the governmental agency imposed their will upon the populace last week. No, this didn't happen in Russia. It happened in Washington, D.C., the capital of this land. In the year we mark the anniversary of our Constitution.

The members of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission changed the rules governing safe evacuation in the event of an accident at a nuclear power plant. Those rules required that local governments be involved in any evacuation activity. The participation of local governments is a vital part of any evacuation activity. Utilities do not have police powers, which are reserved under the constitution specifically for the government. Without governmental participation, a utility does not have the ability to safely evacuate the public.

Suffolk County spent about a million dollars to devise an evacuation plan. In the final conclusion, however, after the expenditure of that money, testimony from experts, and expressions of concern from the public, county officials realized that a safe evacuation would not be possible. Participation in an evacuation that would not insure the safety of the public would be wrong. The county refused to participate. New York State officials also refused to be a part of false assurance to the public that they could be safely evacuated.

That posed a serious problem for LILCO, which scrambled to come up with its own plan. In this fiasco, utility workers would be "guiding" traffic in an attempted escape from disaster that would lead the public into a massive gridlock.

With the help of a pro-nuclear administration and regulatory agency (the NRC) and a high-priced former presidential aide, Lyn Nofziger, LILCO got the NRC to conduct a paper exercise, which plays make-believe, with the lives of people at stake.

And now, the NRC has gone one step further. In an action that can only be considered corrupt, the NRC has changed its rules to eliminate the requirement that government must be involved in evacuation. Instead, the NRC will "assume" governments will respond in the event of an accident.

This assumption theory flies in the face of reality, even in the minds of officials from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) who declared in a letter to the NRC on April 28, 1987, that in any emergency exercise in which stand-ins play the roles of state and local officials, "the preparedness of the state and local governments is not demonstrated in any meaningful sense." Emergency response under such conditions would largely be "ad hoc" making it "highly unlikely that any

response will be uncoordinated." The lack of exercises with state and local government participation would, FEMA said, "increase the risk to the population of the affected emergency planning zones."

But FEMA has received its marching orders from the NRC. A recent NRC memo to FEMA directs that agency to "assume in an actual emergency, state and local officials will (1) exercise their best efforts to protect the health and safety of the public, (2) cooperate with the utility and follow the utility offsite plan."

While FEMA apparently will blindly follow this edict, it is undoubtedly still worried about the impact on safety. The memo concludes: "As we further agreed, any FEMA findings on the adequacy of utility offsite plans will necessarily include the caveat that FEMA was requested by the NRC to use the above assumptions in evaluating a utility offsite plan." Why the caveat? As a cop out when disaster comes? Will FEMA then point their finger at the NRC and say "They made us do it."? But how will that help those who have suffered the consequences?

Insisting to the public and congress that it is "not the intent" of the NRC to impose additional risk to the public, the NRC has been talking differently behind closed doors and in official documents, and ultimately in its decision last week. The proposed rule change adopted unanimously by the NRC commissioners, including one who is the subject of an investigation for passing confidential information along to a utility, is different from the one that was posted in the Federal Register on March 6. In a strategy document outlining options on the rule change and pros and cons for each option, two NRC officials, William Parler of the office of general counsel, and Victor Stello, executive director for operation, the author of the initial rule change proposal, advised the adoption of the rule described in the Federal notice presented some "very serious drawbacks."

"For example," the pair said in their memo, "the proposal sent to the commission for its consideration included an environmental analysis indicating that the proposed rule would if adopted place the public at somewhat great risk by diminishing public protection." To eliminate that drawback, the NRC simply modified the rule change, discarding the environmental analysis in the process.

If the disaster at Chernobyl proved one thing it is that greater safety is required, not less. And yet here is the agency responsible for regulating the nuclear industry changing the rules to protect that industry at the expense of the public. The public. That's you and your loved ones.

The county and the state will very likely take this matter to the courts. In the meantime, we hear the officials of our land criticizing the rulers of other countries for unjustly imposing their will upon the populace, for interfering with their human rights. Here's a message for our nation's leaders:

Stop being hypocritical, and start practicing what you preach in our

own country. If you have such a low regard for us and our human rights—which includes protection of our health and safety as a top priority—you are no better than the others you condemn. When you do not have government of the people, by the people and for the people, you have a breeding ground for anarchy. And for an uprising of the people.

And why not?

Campaign '87 Concludes

As this editorial is being written, it's anybody's guess as to what the outcome of the election contest will be.

We at Suffolk Life are breathing a sigh of relief, for our job is done and, I might proudly say, well done.

Our coverage of the campaign, I believe, was outstanding. Probably the best political coverage in America.

It started last spring and concluded with our endorsements of the candidates. It was our intention, and I hope we succeeded in your eyes, to present every relevant fact and issue that was developed during the campaign. We were particularly proud of the edition that contained the questionnaires and the issues and the responses by the candidates.

Suffolk Life has a rather small staff for the job it undertook. As

publisher of Suffolk Life Newspapers I would like to personally thank each and every employee who took part in this process, from reporters and advertising counselors to production, the printers and distributors. They put their very best forward. They personally sacrificed time from their own lives to be sure you received the maximum coverage, so you could make an intelligent decision when you went to the voting booth.

A number of Suffolk Life staffers gave up their nights, their weekends and in a few cases, worked around the clock, to meet the deadlines. To all members of the Suffolk Life staff, I am proud of you, and I am sure the public recognizes your efforts and contribution.

And why not?

"Please ask yourselves these questions"

Dear Mr. Grasso,

The following letter being submitted to you was written on behalf of the roughly 7,000 people who depend on the Bay Shore Family Health Center for their ongoing medical needs. As you perhaps know, the center is in danger of being closed down due to lack of proper funding. This would be, to say the least, a travesty for all concerned. Please find room for my open letter to our politicians in your next issue. Perhaps it will result in nought, but we can only try. We must try.

Dear Local Leaders and Politicians,

I had occasion to visit my doctor yesterday and was appalled and distressed to learn that the Bay Shore Family Health Center is in danger of being closed.

Until now, I have silently questioned some of the decisions and motives of our local politicians. Perhaps I feel some guilt in not voicing my opinions sooner. We don't know what we have until we lose it, and I realize now that I and many others cannot wait for that realization to hit home. We must speak out now!

Are we a nation of people and leaders who merely give lip-service for our own convenience?

Do we believe in health care, in education and the social stability which each helps provide? What will we tell the families, children and pregnant women who depend on the health center? Are we again giving the less fortunate and elderly a slap in the face? Please ask yourselves these questions.

We desperately need such institutions as the Bay Shore Family Health Center for the care of those who will, with proper care, hopefully contribute to our society: our children. We also need it for the mothers, fathers and grandparents whose own health is vital to a child's security and development. We need it as a society.

There is nothing more damning to the fabric of life than illness and ignorance. The Bay Shore Family Health Center is doing an excellent job concerning our illnesses. The question is, will our local politicians succumb to ignorance? I pray not. I beseech you, on behalf of myself and the many other patients, not to close the center. I and many others would be left with little or no adequate health care. It will be a sad legacy indeed.

Sincerely and sadly,

Charlotte M. Osterhoudt Central Islip

His years of service

Cont. from page 2

Koppelman replied, "I'm not Robert Moses and I don't pretend to be."

On the housing issue, Koppelman said "if there's anything more frustrating...I don't know what it is."

He would not accept blame for the current housing crunch, saying the "ultimate decision-maker" on the issue has been the public. Biases and other interests, such as a desire to protect the lifetime investment in their homes, have weighed heavily in residents' considerations, Koppelman said.

Koppelman pointed out that, in the 1960s, a study panel he chaired made

sweeping recommendations for the provision of more affordable housing. Although he tried to convince elected officials of the vital need for implementation, it largely fell by the wayside.

Asked if he could have spoken out more on the issue and taken the elected officials to task for their slow response on the vital subjects, Koppelman said perhaps too much has been expected of him through the years.

"I'm the planner for Suffolk County, not the United States," he stated. "Maybe (the high expectations) are because of my personality." Koppelman was on a roll.

"I'm not supposed to be a one-person super-government. It's more like the job of a prophet," he said.

Twenty-eight years on the job as Suffolk's chief planner seemed to race through Lee Koppelman's mind, as he translated thoughts into words.

"While elected officials are looking ahead two or four years, it's only the planner who is crazy enough to look ahead 20 years, and say to them: 'what you do today is what we'll get tomorrow.'"

After 28 years of 'today's,' Lee Koppelman is certain to leave a fascinating legacy for many tomorrows.

Veto The Budget

Acting County Executive Michael LoGrande may have lost his bid to be the elected county executive of Suffolk, but he should not lose his self-respect by allowing the 1988 Suffolk County budget to be adopted as it now stands. LoGrande has a chance to perform one more major act of public service by very carefully scrutinizing the self-serving actions of county legislators who displayed a total lack of fiscal responsibility recently in driving county spending to a new height.

Just three days after the general election, the Suffolk County Legislature met to decide the fate of the 1988 county spending plans put forth in LoGrande's budget proposals. LoGrande gave the legislature several options. One was a budget which adhered to County Law 21, which restricts spending to a four percent increase over the previous budget. The second was a spending plan which exceeded the four percent spending cap, but conformed to County Law 29, which limits a tax rate increase to four percent. The legislators approved expenditures that soar \$75 million over the 1987 mark.

The approved budget represents a spending increase of 9.5 percent, far above the four percent spending cap of Local Law 21. Legislators were able to do this by utilizing an escape clause put into the law for emergency purposes which permits exceeding the cap with 14 votes. The legislators bragged they were able to increase spending while delivering a substantial tax cut at the same time.

What they didn't say was the tax cut results from a budget surplus from last year, a surplus made possible by the receipt of more sales tax revenue than had been anticipated, and unexpended personnel salaries. The legislators also utilized a tax stabilization fund-- which was supposedly established to protect a repeat of LILCO's defiance in not paying Shoreham taxes--to cover their reckless spending ways.

In a marathon budget meeting, the legislators played loose with common sense. First they okayed a proposal put forth by Don Guren, head of the legislature's Budget Review Office, which added lots of money and pierced the cap. Then they started adding goodies of their own, including a \$500,000 slush fund to fund pet legislative projects. The added expenditures took some legislators by surprise. One grumbled later, "I've been betrayed, I didn't know what was happening." Others wondered, "How much did we finally end up spending?" They just kept adding, not worrying about totals because, after all, it wasn't their money, it was yours, and they could boast they still cut taxes. They didn't worry about tomorrow.

The legislators had a lot of help in ignoring the spending cap. They receive pressure from organizations and groups who stood to lose some funding if spending was kept under control. These people were used by bureaucrats who picked and chose very carefully in making departmental cuts. They didn't focus on waste, or non-priority expenses. Instead they targeted on people services, knowing full well the people who would be impacted would rise up with a storm of opposition. They did.

In driving spending up by \$75 million, the legislators drove up the budget base upon which any future spending cap would be applied. That means when the 1989 budget--that's a legislative election year, remember--is prepared, they'll have more bucks to spend to make more people happy. And they totally ignored the current dubious financial climate which has caused the stock market to crash and clouded the future financial picture.

What happens in the next budget when there may be no surplus from higher than usual sales tax revenues? What happens if the sales tax revenues do not reach expectations? What happens when they keep dipping into the tax stabilization fund

and there's nothing left there? What happens if the Shoreham issue is finally settled and there is no more tax windfall from that plant? Unable to control revenues, the legislators will have only one place to go to fund their reckless spending ways: you, the taxpayer.

There is an effort underway to eliminate County Law 21 because the legislators don't like restrictions on the way they spend money. The "financial experts" of this county complain that the four percent cap does not take into account the growth of the county. Consider this: In the four year span between 1984 and 1987, county spending increased 30 percent while the population grew only four percent.

Mike LoGrande made his mark on county government with a land preservation plan that was overwhelmingly approved by the voters at the polls. He has an opportunity now to leave behind a sense of fiscal responsibility by vetoing the spending spree budget recently approved by the legislators, insisting that public officials must consider the financial implications their actions have on our future. It's high time our legislators look beyond their self-serving political desires and start putting this county on a sound plan of spending for the future, eliminating waste and dependence on revenues that may not be there to finance their reckless spending.

And why not?

Seeing Is Believing

On Saturday night, November 7, as we walked to dinner, the near-full moon was rising over the mountain. It was like a brilliant bulb in the blackened sky, surrounded by millions of shimmering, glittering stars. We weren't here on Long Island. We were in upstate New York, about the same distance from New York City as eastern Long Island.

Sunday morning we arose to a new phenomenon we had never seen in this area before. The sky had a pale cast to it that turned everything yellowish. We had never seen smog in these parts and wondered why we were seeing it now. As we drove home that afternoon, the day had an eerie sense about it. The sun was there, but you couldn't see it. Arriving back home on eastern Long Island, it felt like a fog, but it wasn't. Turning on the marine weather radio we learned the reason, but it was hard to believe. Forest fires in the South were the culprits. The recurring ash and smoke had travelled thousands of miles and were blanketing the east coast from the Carolinas to Maine.

Monday morning we awakened to the same condition. We were surprised, but, in retrospect, shouldn't have been, for we have studied, read and written about the effects of wind on radiation poisoning from a nuclear power plant out of control. Somehow, the smoke from the Southern forest fires that reached New England put everything in such a logical, understandable lesson. The smoke we can see, and smell, but radiation from a nuclear accident cannot be smelled, seen, or immediately felt. Yet it can have more devastating consequences. It is why the Wash 800 Report said, in its conclusion, that people from Boston to Washington could be contaminated if Shoreham had an accident.

It is why fast, rapid evacuation, not only from the immediate areas surrounding Shoreham, but the entire metropolitan area is imperative if an accident does happen at Shoreham.

This past weekend, we went to dinner under crystal clear skies and awakened to smoke-filled air from a source thousands of miles away. No warning, no evacuation possible. There is a lesson to be learned from this phenomenon. A lesson that demands sincere concern from those who dare to weaken evacuation requirements rather than strengthen them. Seeing is believing. The smoke that blanketed the northeast provided a warning. It must be heeded. Now.

And why not?

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Leadership Change Needed

The Republican Party was left in a shambles after the various losses on election night. Many of the rank and file of the Republican Party are looking to the leader, William Blake, to assume responsibility for the deterioration of the party's strength. Since Blake assumed the leadership from Anthony Prudenti three years ago, he has suffered major defeats in every election year. He has never

been on the winning side, inter-party or in the general elections.

We have had a number of telephone calls and conversations with people who have broached the idea of a leadership change, in fact, of bringing Prudenti back. In their quest for a qualified leader, however, they have failed to ask the most important question--would Prudenti come back?

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Leadership Change Needed

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Prudenti, a Brookhaven political power, was instrumental in securing the original primary victory of former County Executive Peter F. Cohalan. This led to his being chosen as county leader. Upon taking office, he found the county organization in disarray, from a party divided to pertinent records pertaining to the party missing.

The party was \$1.5 million in debt. Huge interest payments wiped out fundraising efforts. This left the county organization with little more money to spend than their Democratic opposition. Additionally, Prudenti had to face some very heavy baggage: entrenched old guard Republican politicians and their families who have been used to milking the government for generations for every cent they could get, legally and illegally. Prudenti immediately started a campaign to wipe out the party's debt, which he was successful in doing. As Cohalan had been elected on a campaign of cleaning up corruption and free-loading politicians, Prudenti set about cleaning up the party and returning it to the rank and file.

As his successes became apparent, pressures built on the Cohalan side to undermine Prudenti. The split between Prudenti and Cohalan led to dissension in the ranks. Even while fighting these internal battles, Prudenti was able to fund and orchestrate Republican win after Republican win. He was the leading force and probably the only reason why Al D'Amato is a United States Senator today. He successfully backed Lew Lehrman's efforts to become the Republican candidate

for governor, and produced for him a Suffolk majority that would have put him over the top if other county leaders had worked as hard.

On town and county levels, the Republicans held their own and, in fact, gained ground. While he was keeping his eye on the political ball, his detractors, many of the old guard, were fighting a guerrilla war to unseat him as leader. They wanted their hands back in the cookie jar of government. When it was time for him to seek re-election four years later, he counted the prospective votes and bowed out gracefully. The old guard was back in control.

Many of us on the sidelines hoped they had heard the message, but were soon dismayed to find out they hadn't. Ignoring the voters, election after election brought them defeat after defeat. Now in utter defeat, many who had castrated Prudenti are calling for him to reemerge as leader.

But why should he? To be an honest county chairman, the position cost him over \$100,000 a year of his own money. If you have the money to spend, that's one thing. But what about your health? Prudenti paid a price here too. Ego? Sure, Prudenti's ego has been bruised by being ignored and cast aside. But how many political leaders in Suffolk's history can look back at their own record and see the accomplishments he's made. If Prudenti is wise, he would list the reasons why he should return as leader, and the reasons why he shouldn't. If he is honest, which the man is, he'll say 'no.'

And why not?

Letters to the Editor

"Maybe his death is not in vain"

Dear Editor,

In response to Mr. De Names' letter, he failed to mention preventive medical care.

Vietnam veterans, I strongly urge you to seek a good medical checkup; one has only to go to the library to learn of the effects on humans that the chemicals used in Vietnam, and here also, have done.

One has only to go to Calverton National Cemetery, walk down one row and see the number of young men who are there; men in their prime of life are now gone.

I watched my brother die a slow and agonizing death; he is at peace, I am not. I believe that chemicals used in Vietnam were the cause.

I hope this small message is reaching some of you, for your sake. I hope some of you and those who love you will be spared the pain we have to endure. Now maybe I can find some peace, knowing I have said my piece and maybe his death will not be in vain, if it will help save others.

Trudy McNair
Medford

Department did a good job

Dear Editor:

I'm sure that it was through your intervention my plea was finally heard, for which I am grateful. I had to send the letter to Mr. O'Neil though, in hopes that with some luck, the workmen will get "a nod of well-done."

It's going to be good having you around.
Charlie Schimpf

An Open Letter to the
Huntington Town Supervisor

RE: Our letters of 6/19 and 8/7/87 - Dangerous Tree Condition.

Please accept my thanks for the expert job done on the tree outside my house on 8/24/87 by the Highway Department staff. Not only was the tree taken care of professionally, but the

clean up of my lawn and the street was most laudable.

Believe me when I say that not only was I relieved to see that danger disappear but also

many of the neighbors and their children.

Thanks again.
Charles R. Schimpf
Huntington

Legislators should serve constituents

Dear Editor,

For the past 10 years I have been active in a number of civic organizations. Meeting with so many of the candidates that aspire to a public office, I have one positive fact to announce.

Just as one of these has been known to remark, quote: "Before I run for election, I'll kiss your behind, but after I'm elected, you can kiss mine." We see them coming to us at affairs, begging for support and kissing all the babies. After election, they disappear into the woodwork. I'm beginning to believe that in order to become a politician, you have to take a course in acting. You have to develop the talent of concern for your constituents. Temporarily.

I have had good people come to me asking for advice, such as: "Who shall I vote for? -- I'm confused, they all seem to be so dedicated." I wish I knew the best reply to such a complicated question. I'm not that qualified. Though there are (possibly a few sincere candidates), the best overall reply I can suggest is vote against all the incumbents. A very few will suffer a loss that is not deserved. That's regrettable. This may serve to prevent one or

more groups from controlling the political corruption that exists.

Another fact that needs to be corrected is where many of our elected legislators are serving on a part time basis. Every public servant should be employed solely for the best interests of the office that the trust was placed for them. Conflict of interest has to enter into many of the contracts that have to be bid on.

We have 18 Suffolk County legislators. All of them have interests and investments in other enterprises. Do we need 18 Suffolk County legislators on part time? How about six legislators on full time. With only one purpose, to serve their constituents only. We'd save on salaries, their secretaries and offices. There is too much duplication of services. It explains the high taxes imposed on homeowners that are migrating from the county to areas where they can buy a home and pay off the mortgage.

Again, I suggest if you do not understand which way to vote, then dump the incumbent, and break up the hold they have on corruption. It can't get any worse. It's worth a try.

August Egelhofer
Shoreham

Riverhead Country Fair-goers'

Dear Mr. Willmott:

On behalf of the Riverhead Country Fair committee, I would like to thank you for the publicity you provided for our endeavor.

In particular, the special reports by Jonathan Willmott attracted a great deal of favorable attention as did the follow-up story on Richard Reeve's giant pumpkin.

Despite the weather, fair-goers seemed unanimous in their pleasure at the fair.

Many thanks for your help in making the day a success.

Sincerely,
Laurel K. Sisson
For the Country Fair Committee

"Strike a blow for clean water"

Dear Mr. Willmott,

The people of Suffolk County can't afford to allow the dumping of ash on Long Island without some type of regulation. Such as testing the ash for toxicity.

So called "resource recovery" garbage incinerators generate enormous amounts of ash on a daily basis that is contaminated with toxic chemicals, including lead, cadmium and dioxin, proven to be the most dangerous to human life.

Resolution #1704-87 requires garbage incinerator ash to be managed as hazardous waste unless testing determines the ash non-hazardous.

I urge everyone to call or write their legislators now, in support of this much needed bill. Strike a blow for clean drinking water.

Sincerely,
Peter Quartararo
Hauppauge

"Who answers these questions?"

Dear Editor:

Patient's Patience Palpable

Bewildered, concerned, anxious, overwhelmed? Sickness evokes these emotions; hospitalization adds to it, affecting patient and family alike. The financial concern erupts when the prognosis of patient is good.

The primary concern is for the patient. What's wrong? What is diagnosis? What are all the alien named tests the patient is undergoing or will be subjected to? Is the probing of another area of the body related to initial hospital admission? Who answers these questions in terms understandable to the 'lay man'?

The doctor, who lives in a world outside our comprehension, tolerates limited questions. After the first few questions he becomes annoyed and assumes a condescending attitude and unapproachability.

The next step is to visit the nursing station where the floor nurse is busy checking charts and absorbed in conversation with another nurse. By this time the member of the family has reached the stage of either temerity or aggression. The nurse, sensing the approach, is prepared for either emotion by either smiling her welcome or becoming deaf and blind depending on the inquirer's emotional attitude. Her response is brief usually concluding with the enlightening statement "Why don't you sit down with your doctor and he'll explain everything to you."

The family member now retreats with the atom of information he has dredged from these professionals, attempting to explain to the rest of the family while dodging their further questions.

It then becomes incumbent on this unfortunate member of the family to vow eternal health for himself and the rest of his family or visit a charlatan who may not perpetrate a cure but will certainly extend explicit details of the malady and the treatment he plans to adminis-

ter, in respect of the fee he plans to expunge from your bank account.

Available also are: witch doctors, medicine men, and soothsayers. The choice is yours - the knowledgeable professional with no compassion nor patience - or the compassionate unlicensed fakir with patience to spare. One problem - the latter group is not covered by insurance.

Cynthia E. Griffin
Wyandanch

Traffic light

Dear Editor:

On October 13, 1987, Mr. Marvin Adler, assistant principal, and 10 student council representatives attended a legislators meeting to witness the approval for a traffic light to be installed in front of the Longwood Junior High-Middle School on County Road 21.

At the beginning of the school year, Mr. Adler wrote Legislator Edward Romaine requesting the installation of a traffic light in front of the school to help control the speed of travelers as they passed by the school.

The following students attended the legislator meeting with Mr. Adler: Melissa Abola, Ron Cianciulli, James Crenshaw, Scott Groeper, Jennifer Keller, David Levine, Lisa Napoli, Michael Tauriello, Rick Torres and Leslie Viola.

The Longwood Junior High-Middle School staff and Student Council are grateful for the legislators' support of the students' safety.

Sincerely,
Mary Grace Lazzaro
Public Relations
Longwood Central Schools
Middle Island