

# of Long Island

## Pro:

by Craig Johnson and Daniel Saul

During the late 1970's, the Long Island Lighting Company (LILCO) proposed the opening of a nuclear power plant at the end of Long Island in the town of Shoreham. This plant was the solution to Long Island's energy needs. It provided a cheap, efficient way to produce energy without dependence on foreign nations. Today, Long Island's future sits in the closed buildings of Shoreham.

Opponents of Shoreham continue to mention concerns as to the plant's operational safety, the lack of a decent escape route, and how to dispose of the nuclear waste. Although all of these concerns seem valid, they are based on ignorance. An understanding of the nuclear power situation leads to one conclu-

sion: nuclear power is the only alternative.

To the question of operational safety, Shoreham is safe. A two week inspection by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission this month found that Shoreham, with the exception of a few minor problems, "is ready for a full power license." The Commission found the Shoreham plant to be safer than most in the area, stating, "It's programs are sound; the quality assurance program and the operation staffing programs are among the best we've seen in the region."

The lack of an escape route should anything happen to Shoreham is of little consequence. The chance of a nuclear meltdown on Long Island is virtually nonexistent. Since 1957, when commercial nuclear power plants started operating, there

has been no fatal nuclear accident in the United States. Studies of the country's most serious accident, the Three Mile Island meltdown, proved that those living by the plant have no higher chance of contracting cancer. Still, to prevent a similar accident from occurring again, changes such as stricter operator training requirements and improved monitor of reactor conditions have been mandated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The final opposition to Shoreham is the disposal of nuclear waste, again, of ignorance. Low-level wastes are disposed of by shallow burial. As for high level waste, the waste is temporarily stored in a pool of purified water at the site. Both of these methods have proved safe in holding radioactive materials for the pas-

thirty years. In addition, the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 has called for the Federal government to build even safer repositories for high-level waste which should be in effect within the next decade.

Clearly, every fear one might have about nuclear power is explainable. It proves that the only economical solution to Long Island's energy future is to open Shoreham. The Long Island energy users have already spent enough money building Shoreham. Governor Mario Cuomo's deal would not only allow LILCO to close Shoreham, but also to raise electricity rates eleven times within the next ten years, including two increases - one 5.4% and one 4.9% - this year alone! Instead of educating citizens as to the benefits of nuclear power, he is using it to gain votes.

Governor Cuomo is not against nuclear power; he has never tried to shut down Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant in an even heavier populated area. LILCO benefits more from a closed Shoreham than an open one. Governor Cuomo's plan was so appealing that the LILCO shareholders voted almost unanimously to accept the Governor's first deal this fall. Nuclear power is cheaper than coal in actual operating costs; after the major investment has been already paid closing Shoreham would be economically impractical.

The 21st century is closing rapidly, and we are slowly poisoning ourselves to death. By opening Shoreham, we would help our environment by using less pollutant fuels. Nuclear power is the way of the future, a way to preserve our society.

## Con:

by Carrie Markowski

Thanks to LILCO, we have our very own Chernobyl in our back yard: Shoreham. There are lists and lists concerning improper construction of the Shoreham facility and poor inspection of it, all of which point to one thing - the corruption of

LILCO and the need to close Shoreham.

The main reason Shoreham should not be opened deals with the lack of an adequate evacuation strategy. The \$600,000 study conducted by Suffolk County led to the conclusion that Long Island could not be evacu-

ated quickly enough due to its shape and population. It's clear and simple that should something happen to the Shoreham plant, there is no escape for the Long Island population. The exact location of Shoreham leads to an additional threat: it is situated on water-filled land which is susceptible to earthquakes. In fact, a 1981 earthquake was centered only 26 miles from the Shoreham plant.

In 1979 a two year investigation was conducted as a result of the findings of more than 1,000 documents in the Southold Town Dump, regarding serious construction problems of Shoreham. Among these papers numerous faults were recorded, which nothing was done about; it was casually covered up or denied. These cover ups could result in a core meltdown, which, according to a

1982 Nuclear Regulatory Commission report, could leave Long Island with 40,000 immediate deaths, 75,000 immediate injuries, 35,000 cancer victims, and \$157 billion in damages.

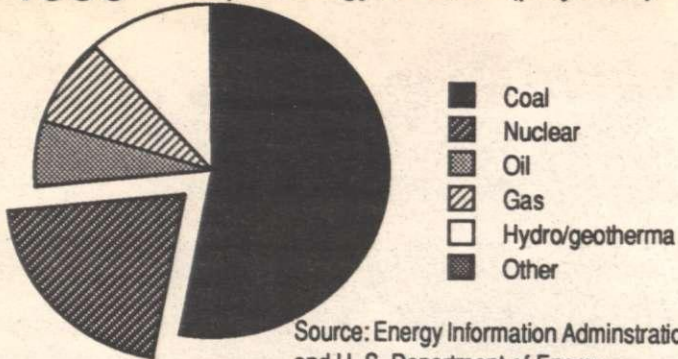
Inspectors at Shoreham have testified how the Code of Federal Regulations has been avoided throughout the building process. Reports suggest that those who have made a conscious effort to raise the safety conditions have been dismissed, including an inspector who claimed, "I was suspended, in my view, for being outspoken, honest, not playing an improper game - for doing my job as an inspector." [Power Crazy by Karl Grossman: Grove Press.]

For those who still believe in Shoreham, what about the radioactive waste which must be dealt with for thousands of years?

There are safer forms of energy which surround us every day and prove to be more economic. Investigations have concluded that electrical power produced by Shoreham would not be needed with energy-saving equipment which would lower peak power demands. If solar collectors were connected with wind energy generators and co-generation systems, we would conserve energy while creating employment. If every citizen tried to conserve energy we could get rid of Shoreham.

There are no magic solutions to our ever increasing demands for more energy. We must learn to respect the earth and live compatibly with it. The answer lies within LILCO itself. By replacing it with a public entity, rates would drop and interest in Shoreham would fade.

1990 Principal Energy Sources (projected)



## Should Shoreham Nuclear Plant be opened?



Jen Goldberg  
10th Grade

No, because it's endangering the lives of future generations, as well as those living now.



Jim Vincent  
9th Grade

No, because if there was an accident on Long Island it would be hard to get out. We should be basically trapped. There have been so many other nuclear accidents that it's too risky. It also costs too much money.



Mike Bobelian  
10th Grade

Yes. We need the energy. Nuclear energy is essential for our energy needs.



Zack Goodman  
9th Grade

I don't think it should be opened because it would endanger the citizens who live around here in such a highly populated area.



Flora Huang  
11th Grade

No, because it's dangerous. Unless it's one hundred percent fail proof we shouldn't put the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in danger.