

Next issue:  
July 31

WELCOME  
FIREWORKS  
VISITORS!

# The Main Street WIRE

Roosevelt Island's Community Newspaper

in association with Website NYC10044



**Roosevelt Island Day 1999** Two Island youngsters get up-close-and-personal with one of Joe Castine's dancing marionettes. More photo coverage of the June 19 event is being held for a future issue of *The WIRE*.

## Human Rights Unit, Now Under Blue, Rejects Complaint Against Blue

"Processing the complaint would create the appearance of a conflict of interest."

Thus has the State Division of Human Rights rejected a complaint filed by Tami Campbell against Jerome Blue.

Campbell is a former RIOC employee. For three years starting in

RIOC. Her complaint alleges, among other charges, that after she helped a fellow employee with a task, she was told not to do that in the future, and to stay in her office with her door closed because Blue said he did not wish to hear her voice.

Campbell says she was suspended in April, 1999, without being given a reason, after consistent scores of 4 or higher on a personnel rating scale with 5 as the highest score. Her formal complaint says, "Dr. Blue speaks to me and other female employees in a more harsh manner than to male employees. He curses at me and [other] females, but not at males."

Campbell told *The WIRE* she plans to pursue the matter through legal action, the media, and "everything else I can think of." She said, "This one, I'm not going to let drop."



Tami Campbell

November of 1995, she was the first RIOC employee visitors would meet when visiting the RIOC office at 591 Main Street. She often notarized documents for residents or provided strangers with directions.

Blue, of course, is the former President of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) who is now State Commissioner of Human Rights – the very unit of State government to which Campbell's complaint was referred.

Campbell provided *The WIRE* with papers in the case, dating back to April, when she wrote Governor George Pataki asking that his office refer her case to the appropriate State agency. She charged Blue with employment discrimination for talking to female members of his staff with "four-letter words."

In the materials, she points out that she was one of only five administrative staffers retained by Jerome Blue after he took over

## Self-Governance Plan Ignites A Debate; Legislation on Hold

### Maple Tree Effort Survives Stewart Challenge, 17-3, in RIRA Common Council, But Is Stalled for Further Scrutiny

Self-governance is stalled, at least temporarily. The legislation sponsored by the Maple Tree Group (MTG) is on hold, for now, in committees of the State Senate and Assembly. Whether it will be released for action by the two houses of the Legislature, and how that will happen, is the subject of discussions expected to take place over the next two to three weeks both in Albany and the City.

Residents Association President Patrick Stewart mounted a challenge to the current form of the legislation after reading it in the last issue of *The WIRE*, primarily on financial grounds (RIRA President's Column, page 3). Stewart called two emergency meetings, one of the RIRA executive committee, consisting of the body's Vice Presidents, and one of the full RIRA Common Council. The meetings, held Monday and Tuesday, June 14 and 15, resulted in a 17-3 Common Council vote in favor of moving forward with the legislative effort. (The vote had been mistakenly announced as 17-4, until it was learned James Kaufman had not left a "no" proxy.)

The story of MTG's two-year effort to change the way Roosevelt Island is managed is the subject of a special pull-out section of this issue of *The WIRE*. Meeting weekly, and sometimes more frequently, the

(RIOC). That Board would then be empowered to hire professional management.

There have been two basic versions of the MTG legislation – the so-called "Grannis bill," essentially a rewrite of the current law that established RIOC, and the "Mendez bill," crafted by Mendez aide Jorge



Members of the Maple Tree Group's "Defense Team" as they spoke to the RIRA Common Council Tuesday night, June 15. Right to left: Lee Edelman, Linda Heimer, Ron Vass, Matthew Katz, Frank Farance. A member of the Common Council, Joan Matula, listens at far left.

Vidro with extensive input from the administration of Governor George Pataki. The Mendez version is the one under most recent active consideration, and the one Patrick Stewart continues to oppose as "foolish."

Because the legislative process has produced several last-minute alterations of the Mendez bill, Stewart has said the June 16 Common Council vote is no longer valid; MTG members claim instead that the June 16 vote was an endorsement of the process MTG is managing, rather than of a specific bill.

Pataki is believed to favor resident-based management of Roosevelt Island at this time for any number of reasons, with speculation ranging from a desire to relieve the State of a moderate-income housing development not in synch with his ideas about housing, to wanting a strong Republican-compatible position on local rule as part of a bid for nomination for the Vice Presidency if George Bush of Texas becomes the GOP Presidential nominee.

Last month, Pataki relieved the controversial President of RIOC, Dr. Jerome Blue, moving him to the State Commission on Human Rights, and replacing him with Robert Ryan (RIOC President's Column, page 3).

(The bill, the process that led to it, and the debate over it are dealt with in an advocacy article and editorial [page 2], the RIRA Column [page 3], and in letters [page 6], plus a four-page pull-out section.)



Zakieh Wazani, a member of the Common Council, congratulates Linda Heimer after the 17-3 vote supporting the MTG effort. Looking on are Joyce Mincheff, Ron Vass, and Laurence Brodsky.

group worked first with Assemblymember Pete Grannis, then with Senator Olga Mendez, in crafting a bill which, if it became law, would allow Island residents to elect five members of the Board of Directors of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation

## Islanders

### Gianni Picco Recounts Hostage Rescues in New Book

by Mary Camper-Titsingh

He took on the very dangerous secret assignment of traveling to a hostile country in the Middle East to rescue eleven hostages and 91 other prisoners.

He tracked down the terrorist captors, who blindfolded him and drove off with him at gunpoint to an unknown destination.

He knew that the last man who had attempted to rescue them was himself abducted and had already been incarcerated for five years.

The ninth time that he was snatched from the streets of Beirut he offered himself as a hostage in exchange for the release of the others.

This may sound like the plot of some fictional thriller, but it is actually a true story. And it happened to Giandomenico Picco, Gianni to his friends and neighbors on Roosevelt Island. Gianni was the hostage negotiator for the United

Nations who traveled to Beirut and Teheran over several years between 1984-1992 and succeeded in obtaining the release of the hostages from four different countries, in the face of extreme danger to himself.



He tells this suspenseful story in his book *Man Without a Gun*, just published by Random House. It reads much like a cloak-and-dagger thriller, yet it is much more. It is the real life account of one UN diplomat's attempts to add peace-making to the peacekeeping efforts of the United Nations.

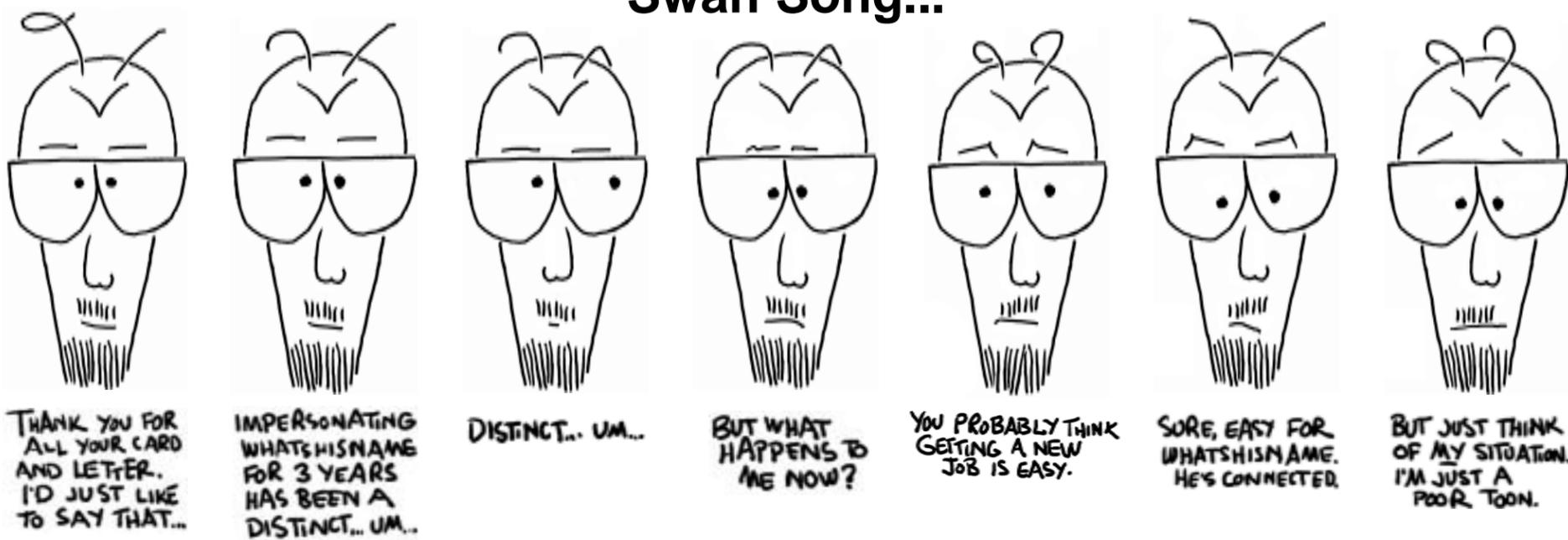
"It's a terrifying feeling to be blindfolded and at the mercy of abductors who you are not even sure are the right people with whom to negotiate the release of the hostages. During one scary night I asked myself whether I had the right, as the father of a son, to put my life at risk in the pursuit of my professional life. I came to the conclusion that my private life, like my professional life, is committed to the search for justice, stopping violent conflicts, and to saving human lives. There is no higher commitment one can make than to put one's life on the line for that. We

in the West are taught to defend our own life above all and we tend to have the perception that the Islamic world has less respect for individual lives. But isn't value added to one's life when one is prepared to sacrifice one's life for the benefit of neighbors and children?"

Picco was born in 1948 in a small village in the Italian Alps. He speaks Italian, French, German, Spanish, English, and Romansch, the dialect commonly spoken in that region of Northeastern Italy. "It's an area where we used to have four to five months of snow," he recalled. "I love snow and try to ski in Canada or the Western Rockies as often as I can." He joined the United Nations in 1973 after completing his education at universities in Padua (Italy), Santa Barbara (California), Amsterdam (Holland), and Prague (then in Czechoslovakia).

See Picco, page 8

## Swan Song...



## A Legacy of Mistrust

As Island leaders look at legislation brought forth by the Maple Tree Group after two years of research and quiet (though public) effort, there's a distrust in the air.

Residents find themselves asking, *Why is the Governor suddenly so willing to sign off on self-governance for Roosevelt Island?*

The premise behind the question is that the Governor must so dislike Roosevelt Island that he's willing to use his office to hurt us.

No wonder there's distrust. For three years, the Albany administration of George Pataki was utterly unresponsive to complaints about Jerome Blue – just as unresponsive as Blue himself. Furthermore, Blue's every move seemed designed to alienate concerned residents, and the paranoid secrecy at Bunker RIOC created a gnawing suspicion that residents' needs were low-priority – perhaps even that residents were expendable in Blue's eyes.

But the Governor's reasons for sticking us with three years of Blue were his political debt to Al D'Amato, almost surely, and the cries of pain were probably ignored because, after all, we're not only New York City, but we're mostly Democrats, and in the grand scheme of things, we're small potatoes.

And the Governor's motives for signing on to the self-governance idea are probably not as dark as Blue's seemed to be. Whether Pataki moves on to a Vice Presidential nomination or stays in Albany, he serves himself best if he pacifies this Island. He's not likely to do that successfully by programming self-governance to fail.

We would do well, then, to examine the self-governance plan, and the Governor's contribution to it, at face value, as hard as that may be. There are enough difficulties in evaluating a substantial change in the Island's route into the future without viewing Albany through Blue-colored glasses.

### Advocacy

## Self-Governance or Not?

### What Are the Real Risks?

by Lee Edelman of The Maple Tree Group

After reviewing the most recent changes in the proposed legislation being considered by the State Senate and consulting with several people, some residents have become concerned that the Governor is setting us up to fail at self-governance, that the legislation as it is drawn is unacceptable, and that we must start anew. Unquestionably, before we embark on such a project it is very important to evaluate judiciously exactly where we are.

First, we should certainly examine each change in the legislation and consider carefully what it actually will mean for the Island. We should also look very carefully at other concerns that could impact on the viability of self-governance – in particular, financial viability, given what we know about existing cash flow, and insurance costs.

Without a doubt, such an analysis will not produce an absolute guarantee of success, but rather some degree of confidence in success. We cannot avoid risk completely. There are two questions: How great is the risk? And will an elected RIOC Board of Directors, composed of residents, and the professional management that Board will hire, have the funds and the tools to deal with the risk effectively?

Second, we have to consider the consequences of hesitation. How will a delay affect the chances of obtaining self-governance in six months, in a year, or ever? What consequences might this bring in unwanted development and other commitments we would be forced to live with – things that would forever change the nature of our community?

Third, we have to compare the risks of accepting and moving with the present legislation to the risks of what we might be saddled with as a result of leaving

the current governance structure in place for six months or more.

It is only after such analysis that a considered and rational decision can be made. To do otherwise is to abrogate our responsibility to the mandate we were given by residents with a 92% vote for self-governance, and repeated endorsements by the Roosevelt Island Residents Association.



Lee Edelman makes a point at a recent Maple Tree Group meeting. Listening, left to right, are Sherie Helstien, Joyce Mincheff, Ethel Romm.

#### The Concerns

As I see it, the first step is to examine the concerns, point by point, that recent examination of the legislation have brought forth. These include:

- How does the elimination of indemnification of officers and directors affect us?

- How will the removal of section 12, which would have authorized the State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) to provide the

new Island governance apparatus with technical assistance in return for payment affect that apparatus?

- There is a question whether the general insurance coverage carried by RIOC is sufficient, and in particular whether insurance coverage for the Tram is secure.

See **Self-Governance**, page 8

## Letters on Self-Governance

A summer blizzard on the subject appears on page 6



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## Letters

### To the Editor:

Since the change in government in Albany, Roosevelt Island has seen many changes. One very significant one is the loss of the very strict street parking rule enforcement that governed this Island from the late 70's to 1996.

The lax enforcing of rules has now reached the point where residents are virtually unable to find parking to load/unload their vehicles.

This failure of RIOC to enforce longstanding rules designed to benefit the majority of residents might be turned into an advantage for the Island's senior citizens.

An enterprising person could establish a call-in system whereby a

resident leaving Motorgate or approaching the Island would call ahead and have a senior citizen meet the car in front of a specific address. The senior citizen would then sit in the double-parked car while the resident unloaded the vehicle.

Fee for the service would be a nominal amount, say \$2.00. Should the resident miraculously find a parking spot, and not need the car-sitting service, the resident would pay, say \$1.00, to the waiting senior citizen.

Since residents would be pre-registered, any who refused to pay would be canceled and thereafter at the mercy of the current parking conditions.

It would be a boon to seniors to have this source of extra income (though small) and would save drivers the frustration of waiting for someone to pull away, or the risk of a parking ticket from the same agency that refuses to enforce its own rules.

**Frustrated Resident**

### To the Editor:

I discovered that the free transfer between the 63rd Street Lexington Avenue MTA station and the 59th Street Lexington Avenue station has been rescinded due to the halt of the shuttle and reinstatement of the Q line. It may be of service to your readers to publish this information, however late.

**Joan Robbins**

## ...And Debut



As some of you know, I am vehemently opposed to the severely revised version of the Grannis Bill, as it was recently altered by the New York State Senate and the Governor's office. I believe the changes to be fiscally irresponsible, and that the bill, as revised, puts all Roosevelt Islanders at far greater risk than any form of self-governance anywhere within the United States would (or could) ask of you. That being the case, it becomes incumbent upon me to make my position clear to those of you who elected me.

I was, and am, in favor of the original Grannis bill, and I have nothing but admiration and respect for the work done by the Maple Tree Group in creating it, and for the skilled support Pete Grannis and his office provided in assisting them to do so.

### RIRA President's Column

RIOC is and what RIOCI does. All else remained the same. The bill changed the composition of the Board of Directors from nine persons to seven. It left in place two current positions: the Chairman's role to be played by the Commissioner of DHCR and a second seat to be filled by the Director of the Budget or his designee. Most importantly, the remaining five seats were to be held by the five residents of Roosevelt Island who gained the most votes in an Island-wide election. So far, so good.

The second change was to be that this Board would be empowered to hire a competent General Manager for RIOCI, whose responsibility would be first to this resident Board, and only secondarily to Albany. I admit that I did not personally believe that this second change was likely to survive in Albany, but I did believe, and I still believe, that a resident-controlled Board of Directors would be enough in itself to effect the changes that this community needs and deserves.

All other changes in the original Grannis bill to the existing laws which now govern RIOCI were either in direct support of these two items or were modifications needed solely because the new Board was no longer to be a State-appointed entity directly responsible solely to the Governor.

While I thought there were genuine risks involved in our assuming responsibility ourselves for running the day-to-day operations of the Island without a guarantee of adequate funds to do the job required, there were enough prudent safeguards built into the Grannis bill to make those risks worth taking, especially since there were in the bill clear and formal connections between the State's historical role on the Island and the newly-created entity, including the retaining of Line Item status in the Governor's budget, which in the State of New York is the means by which any entity is recognized as potentially deserving of year-to-year funding.

Unfortunately, every single one of those safeguards in the legislation (whether those in the existing laws or as outlined in the Grannis bill) has now been stripped from the bill by the Senate, presumably at the behest of the Governor's office.

Many of the safeguards had already been removed when the new bill was published in *The WIRE* on June 11. When the Common Council met for its emergency meetings to discuss the changes to the bill on June 14 and 15, three clauses in particular remained in this capacity. On the repeated assurances of the Maple Tree Group, these three clauses were eventually considered by the Council to be adequate protection when weighed against the loss of the opportunity for self governance. And so the Council voted to continue to support the bill as it was printed in *The WIRE*.

I did not agree then, and do not agree now, but it is of little matter, since the Maple Tree Group was notified the following morning that the remaining three protective clauses had been stripped from the bill in Albany, literally during the very hours that Maple Tree was convincing the Common Council that they were enough to protect us. They had fallen to the Governor's axe as had the rest.

See Stewart, page 10

But the bill in its current form, with changes made in the Senate since the first of June, bears no resemblance whatever to the Grannis bill we voted to support last November.

The Grannis bill, as it was originally written, makes two key changes to the laws that govern what



### New Priest

At age ten, Luke McCann's boyish soprano choir voice brought him to the attention of the boys chorus of the Metropolitan Opera. For years, he sang with the Met and Philadelphia Opera companies, including a performance with Arturo Toscanini.

Now a priest, Father McCann has signed on at St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Parish. He studied at Catholic University in Washington, and he holds four masters degrees and a Ph.D. in literature. He was a Fulbright Scholar.

"As a New Yorker, born and bred, I am completely at home in this center of the City, with its vibrant people and culture, and I anticipate many years in this newest and youngest of all New York's parishes named for Frances Xavier Cabrini."

\*For Fireworks visitors (and the Island clueless): Dr. Jerome Blue, former President of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation, left that job in June, and was named State Commissioner of Human Rights by Governor George Pataki. Robert Ryan replaced Blue as RIOCI President.

First of all, I would like to thank *The Main Street WIRE* for offering space to RIOCI for a *President's Column*.

As most readers of *The WIRE* will know, I've only been on the job for two weeks. In that time I have had the opportunity to meet many Roosevelt Island civic leaders, residents and business people. All these individuals share one thing in common... a love for the Island and a concern for its future.

It's that love and concern that makes Roosevelt Island special and it's evident in so many different places, whether it's during the activities of Roosevelt Island Day, at a Capital Planning and Development Meeting, in the community garden or just running into people on Main Street.

My main focus right now is to be a good listener, so that I can better understand the concerns of one and all. Hopefully, as I grow to know the Island and its residents better, I will be able to formulate common-sense solutions to those problems that exist.

In the short term I have taken steps to address some of the little problems that residents and visitors witness everyday... the small things that create negative impressions in the mind and yet are so easy to solve. As the summer progresses, I hope anyone who has concerns or ideas will take the time to drop me a note or schedule an appointment so we can sit down and talk.

In the meantime, have a safe and happy holiday weekend and don't forget about the best place in the whole City of New York to celebrate the birth of our Nation and watch the fireworks on the Fourth of July... Southpoint on Roosevelt Island!

### RIOC President's Column



Robert Ryan

## COMING UP

Compiled by Claire Friedland - phone/fax 317-8523

Sun., July 4, Southpoint, Macy's Fireworks.

Mon., July 5, 6:00 p.m., Repertory Program in the Eastwood Amphitheatre, Country Dance Demonstration and additional event, to be announced.

Wed., July 7, 6:00 p.m., Repertory Program in the Eastwood Amphitheatre, Soliloquies from Shakespeare, plus political satire to be announced.

Wed., July 7, 8:00 p.m., RIRA Common Council meeting, Chapel of the Good Shepherd.

Thur., July 8, RIOCI Board of Directors meeting - canceled.

Sun., July 11, Repertory Program in the Eastwood Amphitheatre, 4:00 p.m., Last Days of Lincoln by Mark Van Doren.

Sat., July 17, Mother Cabrini Flea Market, Good Shepherd Plaza.

Sat., July 31, Mother Cabrini Flea Market, Good Shepherd Plaza.

Sat., July 31, next scheduled issue of *The Main Street WIRE*.

**Deadlines:** Advertising in the paper, Fri., July 23; decision on stuffers for *The Bag*, Mon., July 26; bag materials due July 28. **Future issues:** Aug. 31 (Back-to-School), Sept. 11 (Rosh Hashanah issue), Sept. 25, Oct. 9, Oct. 23 (Halloween issue), Nov. 6, Nov. 20 (Thanksgiving/Business Cards issue), Dec. 4, Dec. 18 (Christmas/New Year issue); Jan. 8, 2000, Jan. 22, 2000, and generally every two weeks thereafter. Advertisers wishing to be included in unscheduled **extra editions**, without notice at the time, are invited to call 826-9055 to make their interest known. **Phone/fax** for news, (212) 826-9055/755-2540; urgent/breaking news, 917-353-1647; phone/fax for advertising inquiries, (212) 751-8214/755-2540; phone/fax to list your Island organization's event here, 317-8523.

Wed., August 11, 8:00 p.m., RIRA Common Council meeting, Chapel of the Good Shepherd.

Thur., August 12, 11:00 a.m., RIOCI Board of Directors meeting, Chapel of the Good Shepherd.

Sat., August 28, Mother Cabrini Flea Market, Good Shepherd Plaza

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1:30 Bingo and Games

**Wednesdays**  
12:30 Games

**Thursdays**  
12:30 Movie

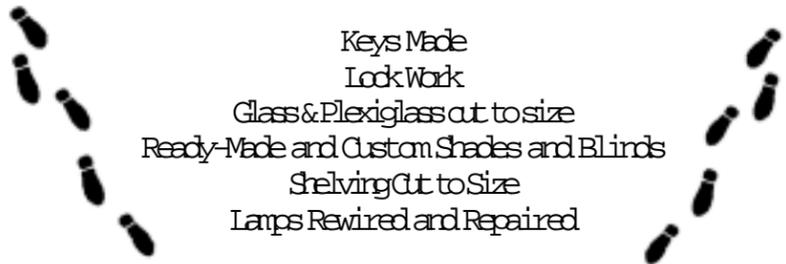
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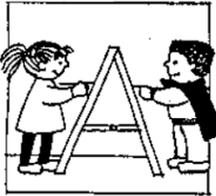
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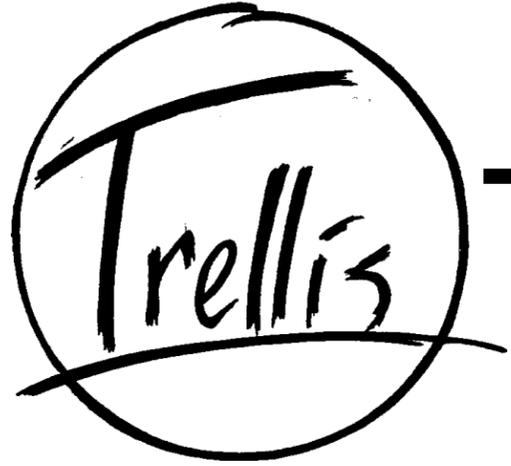
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# Letters and Thoughts on Self-Governance

## To Assemblyman Pete Grannis Dear Pete:

You have been so good representing our views over the years, I hate to raise a problem, any problem, but this is most important. Somewhere along the line the legislation to give Roosevelt Island a larger measure of self government has turned into something else altogether.

I gather that you have been dealing with David Bauer on alterations on the document. The trouble is, he has not been informing the residents. *The Wire* published the current version that wanders far from my understanding of our purpose. I, to say nothing of my neighbors, was unaware that David was dealing in substance rather than in legislative technicalities.

The changes comprise items that Islanders would never accept. No one ever dreamed of cutting the umbilical cord with the State. It has not acted well in the past three years, but it was always a safety net in case of emergencies. Now the State would be relieved of all obligations and responsibilities. The City has not agreed to pick them up. From a somewhat testy child, we will have become an orphan. Few people I know want that.

And our immediate prospects are frightening. Within 30 days – during vacation time – we are to hold an election and elect a Board. By September, we have the responsibility of running the whole place. No one on the Island has the faintest notion of the present state of our finances; no clear view of our assets, our long-term liabilities. What is needed is a reform of the State's processes, and half of the Directors elected by residents. A strong RIRA, which already got rid of Dr. Jerome Blue, is the best instrument to protect the Island's interests in cooperation with a more alert Albany. RIRA represents the overwhelming majority of the residents – and recognizes the concerns of all. Its growth and present work is, by far, the best grass roots community involvement and influence I have ever known.

Pete, you know that I would never bother you with a small problem. But this is serious. As an historian, I have heard a lot about "chaos theory", but I had rather hoped it could be tested elsewhere.

**Richard Wade**

## To Prof. Richard C. Wade Dear Dick,

I'm glad we had a chance to air our disagreements at lunch the other day. Let me reconfirm what I stated to you then: that no Maple Tree Group meeting has ever been held in secret. The public has always been invited to join us for our meetings which have been held every Monday evening at 7:30 in IS/PS 217 and previously at the Chapel on this island.

Let me refer you to *The Main Street WIRE* issue as recently as May 22, 1999, page 6, which announced our meeting time and place. And as far back as the September 12, 1998 issue, page 3, which had a full-page explanation titled *What the Grannis Bill Will Do*, and ended with the announcement of our meeting in the Chapel on the forthcoming Monday evening. Nearly every issue of *The WIRE* announced our next meeting. We did have a solid working group of 80 persons who participated for the last two years in the work of drafting the Grannis bill so, obviously, there were quite a few people who did not require personal invitations to our meetings, but came to lend a hand.

I really get very upset when people who did not lift a finger to help in this effort turn on us with criticism and recrimination. We knew we could not expect all of the 92% of the 1,566 residents who supported self-governance in the form of the Grannis bill, to come to our meetings and share the work involved. We had to assume that those who did not come were too busy or did not care to be involved. Your suggestion that they "didn't trust" us, "an unelected group," fails the test of logic when they could easily have attended and checked us out. Is it your contention that only elected individuals should be permitted to work on legislation? Many persons who are not elected are involved in the bill-drafting process in Albany, as well as here. In the end, however, all those who make a law of a bill are elected representatives, including Assemblymember Grannis and Senator Mendez, who spent many hard hours working on it on our behalf.

If you endorse the time-honored American tradition of the right of free assembly and redress of grievances, you were free to accept or ignore the Maple Tree Group's community-wide invitation to participate. You chose to ignore it. You are also free to exercise your right of free speech by carping at those who have, at least, made an effort to achieve self-governance for our community. But I see no other group publicly putting in the time and effort to investigate how that goal might be achieved. Where are those residents who were elected to look out for the welfare

of this community? Let's see them do the work involved in getting self-government for us!

**Mary Camper-Titsingh**

## Dear Mary:

Thanks for your thoughtful letter though I confess that I am not used to receiving a personal letter via *The Wire*. Especially since we also had a long talk about the bill just before I sent the letter (printed above) to Pete Grannis. I explained my objections to the bill. I also said that the processes of the Maple Tree Group were both unrepresentative and self-defeating. It assumed that a 92% vote for more self-government on the Island justified any group to solo into specifics. Very few voters had that in mind.

Hence, your group decided to convince residents that the MTG had a viable alternative to the present system. Instead of reaching out to the residents, it simply announced public meetings to join MTG's effort. Historically, any successful reform movement not only invited citizens to meetings but reached out to the affected constituency – building committees, Island associations and institutions, such as libraries, schools, hospitals, and merchants, who, after all, were slated to be the major source of revenue under the new charter. Whether left or right, effective organizations earned victory through aggressive recruiting, general mailings, and fund raisers. An important cause is not a "Field of Dreams" where announcements are made and people come.

At lunch you said that over two years about 10 to 15 residents came to monthly open meetings, creating a "solid working group of 80." There are 1,600 voters on the Island, yet hard work and the active support of *The WIRE* produced only a handful of supporters. It is no wonder there is some "distrust" from people who are not privy to MTG's activity. Its third meeting drew 33 people who were asked to fill out an "Opinion Index" consisting of 56 questions about Island conditions. These were the basis of its first lengthy report. MTG admitted that the 33 did not represent "a statistically accurate sample of the Island population." But they did include "concerned people willing to take the time" to consider the neighborhood's problems. In all of the report there is no mention of Dr. Jerome Blue, but only the "system." What was needed was a fusillade against the autocrat, not a civics lesson. And self-selected participants scarcely indicate an Island consensus.

At their founding, MTG described its "intention to look forward instead of focusing on the present Island administration or present-day problems." I didn't join because I thought it had inverted priorities. I was working to get Dr. Jerome Blue ousted as head of RIOC and felt the Island's energy should concentrate on that difficult task. After all, the Founding Fathers made the judgement to get rid of the King before creating a new governance. Thus I thought RIRA with its new leadership and elected representation was the proper instrument for attacking Dr.

Blue, and not be distracted by institutional reform. I see no reason now to doubt that judgment.

I know many of the people in MTG and like them and respect their goals. But during the last two years I never knew what it was drafting, indeed, at the end the document was altered almost every hour on the hour. The safety of our Island lies in a strong RIRA and elected representation on RIOC, lest a Blue cloud descends again.

I see no reason for "carping" or "recrimination" among Islanders, most of whom have been brought here by the uniqueness and decency of our common journey.

**Richard C. Wade**

## To members of the State Senate Dear Senators,

We are members of the Roosevelt Island Community Association and long time residents. We are aggrieved by the present legislature that is before you. Please, please, vote against this bill – vote no on S4223. Sponsored by Senator Olga Mendez.

The reasons are:

1. The minority community which represents more than half the population have not been apprised of this bill. We were taken by shock when the notification appeared in *The Main Street WIRE*, the local newspaper, on June 12, 1999, four days before the Senate will vote.

2. The minority community has not been allowed to participate in this process, as you can see from the photograph from *The WIRE* attached. An all white group and behind closed doors.

3. I am sure you have knowledge of the problem that exists in the Roosevelt Island Community. We have had a Media blitz in the last few weeks. Fox News, NY1, *The New York Times* and a Mayor Giuliani Town Hall Meeting.

Save our community by voting against this bill. We have signatures of 250 residents to date.

If it passes it will only exacerbate the racial tension that currently exists on Roosevelt Island that has existed for years and continues to increase, especially as a result of the treatment of the previous President of RIOC, Dr. Jerome Blue.

**R.I. Community Association  
Jessie Rademaker, Director  
Linda Warren, Lisa Knox,  
Nellie Velez, Dorothy Donald,  
Bruce Bell, Sharon McDaniel  
Deirdre McNamara**

## To Jessie Rademaker Dear Jessie,

*The WIRE* will be publishing your June 15 letter to 53 Senators.

To accompany it, please provide me with the names of the 250 residents mentioned in the sentence, "We have signatures of 250 residents to date."

In addition, I would appreciate having information on how the Roosevelt Island Community Association has recruited its membership; what the dues are, if any; when and where the meetings are held, if any; whether the meetings are regularly scheduled; whether the meetings are open, etc.

You can email the information to me at [dicklutz@rcn.com](mailto:dicklutz@rcn.com) (in which case please leave a message for me at 826-9055 to alert me to check email for it) or you can leave it in my name at the Rivercross desk, at 531 Main Street. I will need it by noon, Wednesday (June 30) to meet publication deadlines.

Thanks.

**Dick Lutz  
Managing Editor**

## The Proposed Changes and the Questions They Raise

by Robert Chira

With the introduction of draft legislation in the New York State Senate and Assembly to amend the current laws governing Roosevelt Island, residents, elected and appointed officials and other interested parties will be studying how the proposed self-governance differs from existing law and regulation. Set forth below is a brief description of some of the more important changes proposed, an analysis of some of the implications involved and some questions that remain to be resolved.

- First, instead of 9 directors all appointed by the Governor, three of whom must be Island residents, the Board of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) would consist of 7 residents, of whom 5 would be elected by residents and 2 appointed by the Mayor. [Any person resident on the Island for more than one year, including non-citizens, would be eligible]. Note that instead of 6 of the 9 directors being non-residents as under present law, all 7 directors would be Island residents. As a result of these changes, the Governor would have no say in the governing process; nor would the State government have any say in how the Island is run [e.g., the State Division of the Budget would not oversee the Island's budget]. As for the Mayor, while under present law he can recommend two of the 9 directors for appointment by the Governor, under the proposed legislation the Mayor would actually appoint the two.

- Second, the 7 resident directors would no longer enjoy "indemnification" from financial liability by the State as do the 9 directors under current law. Thus, any negligence in running the Island (e.g. a Tram accident) that results in a judgment would not be paid for by the State as under current law. Of course, officers and directors liability insurance can be purchased for the residents running the Island, an added cost.

- Third, contracts [perhaps above a certain low amount] would be awarded to responsible bidders by lowest price in sealed bids rather than as present awarded in the discretion and judgment of the directors. This process poses the risk that the lowest bids may not result in the best work and materials over the long term.

Some of the questions raised by the proposed self-governance legislation are:

- How would UDC's investment in constructing all of the roads, AVAC system, garage and other "public facilities" be repaid? The "public facilities debt" amounted to \$117 million back in 1987, when UDC and RIOC entered into a "Revenue Allocation Agreement" by which RIOC agreed that UDC receives all rents, tax equivalent payments and other revenues from Island housing and commercial tenants (with RIOC only allowed to keep "increases" in rents it may be able to negotiate over then existing levels). According to the Rent Payment Statement submitted by UDC

to the City [under the 99-year lease of the Island from the City to UDC], for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1998, the accumulated debt amounts to something like

\$235 million (which includes "Normal Allowances" by which UDC may deduct certain Island-related expenses from rent owed to the City). The proposed legislation is silent about the Revenue Allocation Agreement; it remains in effect, but will UDC and the State be comfortable about their investment in Roosevelt Island and the accumulated debt incurred without any input on how the Island is governed?

- How would the accumulated "operating" deficits of Roosevelt Island be paid off? Back in 1987, when UDC and RIOC signed the Revenue Allocation Agreement, these deficits amounted to over \$52 million. According to the Rent Payment Statement for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1998, the accumulated "deferred loss" in running Roosevelt Island was \$239 million (which includes the \$235 million of Debt Service and Normal Allowances discussed above).

- How would UDC's outstanding bonds sold to investors to pay for the construction and development of Roosevelt Island be paid off? Currently, payments to cover the interest on outstanding bond obligations are made from monies RIOC agreed belongs to UDC under the Revenue Allocation Agreement discussed above, together with appropriations by the Legislature to make up the balance. Presumably the State would have to protect itself from defaulting on these general obligations, but again will the Governor and Legislature be comfortable in doing so without any input on how Roosevelt Island is governed?

- Would the Island be required to purchase from UDC or the State the existing "public facilities" con-

See Questions, page 8

Attorney Robert Chira is a longtime resident who follows the relationships among State, City, and Island closely.

**pix**

**(single page  
of pix)**

**pages 7-10 are photos & are not  
ready yet**

# Scenes from the Island's Family Album



Photos  
Margery Rubin  
George Rubin  
Website NYC10044



**single page of pix**



## Questions from page 6

structed by UDC if the State no longer controls the Island's governance? In considering the independence of Staten Island from the rest of the City, the issue of paying back the City for roads, schools, hospitals, fire and police stations, etc., has been raised as one condition to allowing that Island to "secede" and rule itself.

- Would self-governance result in greater efficiency in the running of the Island? In the fiscal year ended March 31, 1998, RIOC collected about \$12.5 million in revenue from Island buildings, commercial tenants and other sources. Without "one-shot" budget gymnastics (such as using insurance settlement proceeds to pay operating costs, using capital reserve funds and stretching out capital improvements to meet operating expenses), this was not sufficient to cover the operational costs of running the Island and capital project needs to maintain existing facilities. How would the shortfall be paid for in the future? Nor does the \$12.5 million allow for payment of any infrastructure costs (such as those to extend Main Street and the AVAC system to new housing to be built) that the Island may be required to expend to obtain new development. How would the Island raise funds for these development costs if self-governed?

- Will the City be comfortable with legislation requiring the Mayor to appoint two Island resi-

dents to the RIOC Board? Since the City leased Roosevelt Island to UDC for 99 years (until 2068), would the City want to be involved in RIOC as a minority (having 2 votes out of 7) in running the Island? Would the City's involvement imply that it will be asked to make up the operational and capital budget deficits of the Island or contribute to future development costs for new housing?

One can speculate about the political motivations of the parties supporting the proposed legislation. For Governor Pataki (who appears to be supportive), it may help position him for selection as Vice President if George W. Bush of Texas is the Republican nominee. The Governor can point to his efforts on Roosevelt Island to create local rule rather than continuing with "big" government; he also does not have to act on current proposals to allow developers to use Roosevelt Island parkland and thus can appear environmentally sound. The State would still be involved with Roosevelt Island because UDC's consent is required for any changes to the General Development Plan, but it would not be required to spend further money on Roosevelt Island other than to finance the outstanding UDC bond obligations. These actions by Governor Pataki might help position him as a moderate Republican from the Northeast with appeal to the conservative Texan as a running mate.

Presumably the Republican-controlled State Senate would go along

with the Governor; as for the Democratic-controlled Assembly, it should be in favor of local self-rule, since the idea was generated by Island residents and is popular.

As for Island residents, local self-rule will not only be a challenge, but may be a way for increases in user fees and ground rents to be imposed on Island buildings, commercial tenants and others without as much opposition as if coming from a RIOC controlled by the State. Such sums, together with greater efficiencies due to resident governance, may help the Island meet its operating needs. As for its capital projects, it is hard to see how Island self-rule will result in sufficient additional revenues to meet those needs. Requests by RIOC to the legislature to maintain the Island's facilities, as well as monies to pay for infrastructure and other costs to complete its development, will still be required no matter how the Island is governed.

The legislation has been undergoing changes from the version published in *The WIRE* on June 12, and is expected to undergo further changes, and thus it is not clear at the time of this writing what the final legislation may look like, if indeed agreement is reached on it. Since the "devil is in the details," any final bill will have to be examined carefully to understand its provisions and implications. However, discussing, debating and resolving the issues raised by the originally-proposed legislation may be useful for the effort toward self-governance to be understood and promoted.

## Picco from page 1

His first job was in the United Nation's Department of Political and Security Council Affairs. He went to Cyprus in 1976 as a political-affairs officer with the UN Peacekeeping Force. It was there that his son was born and, when the family returned to New York in 1978, they decided to move to Roosevelt Island. "It seemed like a nice place for a one-year-old to grow up - all the large trees and open green spaces, a quiet, mixed community of friendly neighbors." This year his son graduated from college, where he majored in History and Economics. He will begin working at a major New York investment bank this month. Picco says, "I wrote this book mostly for my son and other young people, to demonstrate that individuals do make a difference in major world events; to encourage them to follow their dreams and never

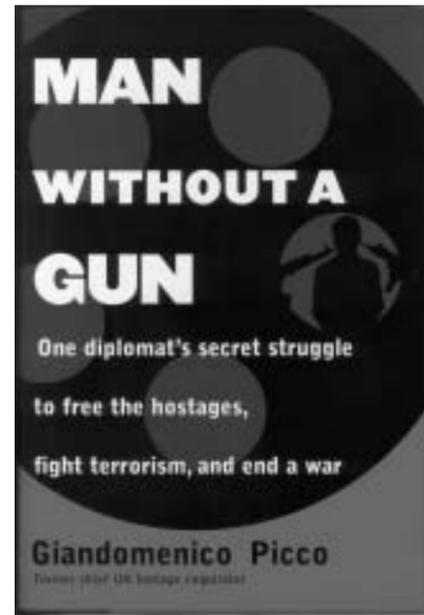
surrender their highest aspirations, no matter what the odds."

From 1979 to 1982, Picco served in the UN's Office of the Under-Secretaries-General for Special Political Affairs, where he became the assistant to Javier Perez de Cuellar, who remains his mentor and friend. When Perez de Cuellar became Secretary-General of the United Nations in 1982,

Picco was appointed First Officer in the Executive Office of Secretary-General de Cuellar. Boutros-Boutros-Ghali, who succeeded de Cuellar as UN Secretary-General, does not come off very well in the final chapters of Picco's book. "A brilliant intellectual, but a very arrogant man," says

Picco. Without consultation Mr. Ghali appointed him as chief negotiator for Iraq to exchange oil for food, a modification of the Gulf War sanctions. This was a post earlier held by Kofi Annan, who is today the UN Secretary-General. Finally, when he was able to secure the release of the

See Picco, page 9



## Self-Governance from page 2

- There is concern that income may be insufficient to cover expenses - concern, for example, that during the tenure of Dr. Jerome Blue as RIOC President, the budget may have been balanced by using previously accumulated reserves and dollars derived from an insurance settlement from the recent tram accident.

- There is concern about a change of language that pushes back the effective date of a section designed to restrain the present RIOC from entering into long-term contracts. The concern is that it presents an excessively large window of opportunity for the outgoing Board and President to push through a great deal of development without considering resident views.

There are surely additional concerns I have not listed here, and I welcome additions to the list so that The Maple Tree Group can examine and evaluate each.

### Point By Point

I would like to respond to each of the points with the facts that I have at my disposal at this point.

### Indemnification

- Elimination of State-backed "officers and directors" indemnification should pose little problem. Both my business insurance agent and Ron Vass's have assured us that the cost of such independent insurance is minimal. It's understandable that the State would want to eliminate this clause. Given that the State government will no longer have any control over the officers and directors, the State cannot be expected to indemnify them. Would you be willing to indemnify an organization or individual over which you had no oversight?

### DHCR Connection

- As to the elimination of section 12 - keep in mind that the section required that Island management pay for DHCR services, and it does not require DHCR to provide the services. It merely "authorized" DHCR "to perform such services and render such technical assistance as may be agreed upon between the division [DHCR] and the corporation [RIOC]." Even without the formalized connection originally present in section 12, there is nothing that forbids DHCR from entering into such agreements with Island management. In fact, Section 4, paragraph 13 makes it clear that the connection - and the possibility of *State as well as City assistance and aid* - remains an option: RIOC may "enter into such agreements with the state, the urban development corporation [UDC] and the City as the parties deem appropriate."

Further, elimination of this formalized connection with DHCR may be a blessing in disguise. It should widen the vision of the new Island management; whereas with section 12, there could be a tendency to turn immediately to DHCR instead of considering competing services that may be better.

In any case, I challenge those who still feel this is such an important section to list for me what consulting or technical assistance of any substance DHCR has actually provided for the Island.

### Insurance

- The insurance question is an important one. RIOC is required by the Master Lease with the City to carry insurance coverage of "at least \$5,000,000 for any one accident, \$1,000,000 for injury or death to any one individual and \$500,000 damage to property." As of the March 31, 1998 audited financial statement (the last available), RIOC paid \$435,509 in insurance premiums.

That total premium amount provided the Island's insurances. About \$200,000 of the total premiums bought \$125 million in coverage for the Tramway, presumably enough to handle claims arising from the most catastrophic accident. Still, premiums can increase, and there has always been a lurking fear that the State might close the Tramway for reasons of insurance cost or other considerations purely financial. But it seems truly clear that if the residents are in control through an elected Board, there is a much better chance of protecting the Tramway and those who use it than if the State has non-residents setting the community's priorities.

A resident-controlled Board might consider truly creative solutions to Tramway financial concerns, should they arise. The notion of a corporate sponsor - "The Sony Tramway" - might suggest a formula, an idea that might be combined with use of a Southpoint Park area for concerts. With the community's passion and commitment, and the creativity available here, Roosevelt Islanders are likely to find a way to preserve the things we all treasure, including the Tram.

### Budget

- The concern over sufficient financing is a serious one. If we look at the March 31, 1998 financial statement carefully, it reveals a flow of income over expenses that is in excess of a million dollars. Many feel that is fictitious - that Dr. Blue may have "cooked" the books. But let's discard any conjecture based on feelings about Blue's management style, and pay attention to the facts. Quite simply, the Island's income streams have come almost entirely from ongoing sources that remain relatively reliable from year to year, such as Motorgate fees, Tram and bus fares, ground rents, commercial rents, and reimbursements from housing companies. Income from these sources was sufficient to cover expenses and still leave a surplus of \$1,130,577. These funds are apparently the basis of the now-current investment portfolio of about two million dollars. Keep in mind that these figures (not including the reported investment portfolio) are from a *certified* financial statement by an independent firm that followed all the generally accepted accounting procedures for verifying all these figures.

### Stockpiles

A concern has also been expressed that, despite the scrutiny of auditors, Dr. Blue was living off previously accumulated surpluses and special one-time injections of funds, e.g., the settlement from the Tramway accident. As far as I can determine, this claim of a large cash accident settlement is only a rumor. I am working on the question, and expect to have the facts within a couple of days.

As for surpluses accumulated under previous administrations, they are speculative, and it boggles the mind to think

there has been a million or two dollars worth of z bricks, salt or paper - or whatever - used during the last three years.

In short, subject to confirmation in the March 31, 1999 financial statement due within a few days, I see no credible challenge to the high probability that cash flow is not only sufficient to maintain the operations of the Island, but actually robust enough to afford residents of the Island the unique and splendid opportunity to take the time to contemplate the future development of the Island. Of course, this becomes possible only if residents gain control of the governance of the Island.

### Effective Date

- I must admit when I first discovered the expanded "window of opportunity," I thought someone was trying to deceive us. As it turned out, I believe I was letting emotions and skepticism - perhaps even the paranoia that our three-year experience with Blue produced - get the best of me. It turns out that this change was made by The Legislative Drafting Bureau, an independent bipartisan governmental agency. Using the language "after it becomes law" while there is a separate reference to an "effective date" is not permissible under bill-writing etiquette. Senator Olga Mendez's office has suggested simply changing the effective date to "immediate," so we can close this expanded period for possible mischief quite easily.

### Conclusion

After a close examination of all the objections raised to the current bill, as proposed, unless other *fact-based* arguments are made, or substantially new information is found, it seems clear that there is little that could affect us negatively, and the risk of moving ahead with this bill as it is (with the change of effective date to coincide with the bill becoming law) is minimal.

### Risks of Present System

On the other hand, what are the risks of putting off enactment of this legislation?

The biggest risk is the strong possibility that much, if not all, of the ill-conceived development now before the RIOC Board of Directors will be pushed through, and residents will have to live with it whether or not we eventually gain self-governance.

Also, we may never again get the support and sponsorship in the State Senate that has been so crucial in moving this bill to the brink of passage. We have the Governor's support now - to the point where he issued a Certificate of Necessity to circumvent the normal three-day waiting period for passage. Is there anyone who wants to guarantee we will have that in the future? Is there any guarantee that the State will not again try to cut back on Tramway hours, or even close the Tram entirely? Without self-governance, residents will have *no* real power against such a move.

After a careful weighing of the risks in the current bill against the risks of standing still, it seems to me highly probable that we stand only to gain from moving forward. It also seems highly likely that if we stand still, we are never again likely to see the confluence of circumstances that has given Island residents the opportunity to seize the day, and with it, seize and secure the future of this unique and wonderful place we live.

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## Picco from page 12

last two remaining German hostages in July 1992, Picco, who then held the title of Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, resigned from the United Nations.

He then established GDP Associates, an international consulting firm that conducts private diplomacy with countries and corporations in the Middle East. He also continues his work in conflict resolution through the non-governmental Peace Strategy Project which he founded as a non-profit organization in Geneva, Switzerland. He writes many articles on political affairs for journals and magazines in Europe, Japan, and the Middle East.

The man without a gun is, however, no pacifist. "The use of force is sometimes justified, especially when the enemy is intolerance," Picco said. He agrees with John Hume, the Irish Nobel Laureate, that "the mindset of war is to believe that *difference* is a threat." War-mongers, he insists, have to be defeated. Picco maintains that the common enemy of all peoples is not a state, not a religion, not a race, not culture, not ethnicity, but *intolerance*. Can the fight against intolerance be the element that unites the peoples of the world in the 21st Century? Picco is one person dedicated to that fight.

Signed copies of his book, *Man Without a Gun*, are available at the Roosevelt Island Card and Gift Shop for \$27.50.

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## Stewart from page 3

My concerns for the success of self governance on the Island are each and all financial, and have never been anything other than financial. Although we don't have full access to the details of RIOC's financial affairs, we all do have ready access to enough published, audited data over the years for intelligent analysis.

For, like it or not, if Solomon himself were given the job of running the Island, his success would still depend on his having enough revenue to address the responsibilities as outlined by existing law.

First, some history... as little as possible. The bare bones are that New York State leases Roosevelt Island from the City of New York, and, under that lease, has made itself responsible for the development and maintenance of the Island as outlined by the Master Plan and the General Development Plan, which are in themselves part of that lease. The GDP calls for development of the Island up to a population base that would make the Island self-sufficient operationally... that is, the various ground rents and other revenue-generating means available to the Island after Southtown is fully developed (and particularly after the original UDC bonds mature) should then be sufficient to maintain the operations of the Island. Until that point in time, the State retains sole responsibility for supplementing existing revenues with State monies (not that they have always done so) so that the Island be maintained under the terms of the lease.

In looking at past budgets, we must confine ourselves to those for 1991 forwards, simply because it was not until 1991 that the ground rent for Manhattan Park became available as revenue to RIOC. Until then, the State had an even larger funding responsibility here, and it would not be fair to point to those numbers as reasonable under the current situation.

Suffice it to say that for the five years from 1991 until Pataki stopped funding it, Roosevelt Island received on average just under \$5 million a year for capital (infrastructure) expense, as well as another \$1.5 to cover the shortfall in operating expense.

The first two years of Pataki's first term, the Island received \$5.6 million and \$5.2 million respectively for capital budgets alone. (Totals for combined capital and operational funding for those two years were \$7.3 and \$6.2 million respectively.) Then he sent us Jerry Blue and cut the budgets to zero.

Interestingly, operating expenses have remained remarkably flat since 1991, staying within the range of just under \$8 million to just over \$9 million. Operating expenses reflect normal day-to-day expenditures, and do not reflect in any way capital monies spent for infrastructure maintenance.

Jerry Blue often announced that, under his management, the Island had become self-sufficient. What he meant was that he could maintain the place to an obviously decreased standard so long as he neglected to address *at all and in any way* any of the infrastructure maintenance that had historically cost the state from \$5 to \$6.5 million a year. He has practiced this neglect consistently for three years against the concerted outcry of RIRA, of each of our City, State and Federal elected officials, of *The WIRE* and even the Maple Tree Group itself.

As it inevitably does, the cost of abandonment of infrastructure maintenance rises dramatically the longer it remains abandoned. The problems only get bigger and more expensive when you ignore them.

Originally the Island was under the direct aegis and control of the Urban Development Corp. (UDC), and to this day all of the ground-rent income from the four original buildings goes to UDC as repayment for the bonds that were originally issued to build the infrastructure for the community.

RIOC's own revenue derives from narrowly-defined sources: ground rents from Manhattan Park, the operation of Motorgate and the Tram, commercial rents, grounds and license fees, and other more minor sources. The most conservative estimate puts their current revenue roughly at \$8.5 million (as long as everyone keeps paying their bills) and Blue's latest audited numbers put his expenses at just under that **without even minimal maintenance of the infrastructure, let**

## alone addressing the ongoing capital needs.

To quote from a public RIOC document, "*RIOC is currently responsible for insuring that all of the infrastructure built by the State is serviced and maintained in good repair. This includes the Island's public buildings such as Sportspark, Motorgate, AVAC, the 6 landmark structures, and Island systems such as sewers, lighting and gas, and the grounds, including parks, seawalls and streets.*"

Under the new Senate bill, all of these responsibilities would be passed to the new self-governing entity with not a single trace remaining of any State involvement or responsibility, and with a budget that is entirely inadequate to the job. In adopting self governance as the Senate wishes to define it, we adopt obligations that are demonstrably greater than any possible source of revenue we might have open to us.

Because they were not built to City code standards, many aspects of maintaining the streets, sewers, and lighting will remain a local responsibility, although they might otherwise be made the responsibility of the City. The seawall... far and away the single largest line item as regards costs... remains the responsibility of whoever governs the Island, and demands immediate, urgent expenditure of over \$6 million, more than two thirds the entire annual RIOC revenue. And this amount is for pressing needs for the seawall, and does not address the historical figure of \$3 million per year that has been spent in normal maintenance of the seawall every year until Jerry Blue arrived.

The still badly-leaking Motorgate remains the responsibility of whoever governs the Island. (It is leaking, by the way, into the premises of RIOC's own single largest commercial tenant, Gristede's.) Main Street, with its obviously-damaged water mains, remains the responsibility of whoever governs the Island, and its repairs are conservatively projected at \$1.5 million. The AVAC tunnel system beneath Main Street, which has been unmaintained for more than 20 years, remains the responsibility of whoever governs the Island. The projected Tram station modifications, needed to bring them up to the mandated level of ADA compliance, are projected by RIOC to cost some \$2.5 million. Badly-needed Z-brick sidewalk repairs are estimated at \$650,000. Good Shepherd was estimated as needing over \$2 million in urgent repairs over three years ago, and that was before the water damage to the foundations became so obvious, as caused by the inadequate drainage from the plaza. You don't need to be a construction engineer to see the shape that Blackwell House is in, and anyone with children who play in the playgrounds is familiar with that disrepair.

All of these infrastructure-maintenance needs, each of which requires substantial capital expenditure, are entirely *over and above* the normal maintenance included in RIOC's operating budgets. In the new bill, the Senate continues to delineate them as the responsibility of the new self-governed entity, and yet formally precludes our applying for annual State funds through the normal channel of a line item in the budget.

The Maple Tree Group believes, quite sincerely, that the State will pay for these expenses anyway (although the Senate has quite deliberately and clearly left them as the new entity's obligations) or that the needed money could be raised through grants, and/or through the application for funding by our local State representatives.

There is simply no history anywhere in the New York State Legislature of any member raising this kind of money year in and year out for a single local entity. That is exactly what line items in the Governor's budget are for. Pete Grannis has done a superb job by any standard in raising additional funds for this community over the years, but I guarantee you, not he nor anyone else will tell us we can be confident of receiving this kind of money through local member's bills when the Senate has ruled out applying for it through the Governor's budget.

Were there a potential annual shortfall of a million dollars or so, such means might possibly be adequate, but we are talking here of an annual shortfall *that we know about from published information* of an additional \$5 to \$8 million against a budget of \$9 million (to be kind) and other quite genuine expenses of at least \$9 million (to be kinder still).

## Public Safety Blotter

provided by RIOC

**5/2/99**, Graffiti, 516 Main St., Officer discovered graffiti at location, took photos of tags, notified RIHM, investigation being conducted.

**5/4/99**, Robbery, 728 Main St., Island youth stated, while riding his bicycle, two male youths took his bike away from him and rode off island with the property. A search of the island was conducted with negative results. Approximately one hour later, a female youth returned the property, stating that perp #2 left the property in front of her residence. Victim's parents and 911 were notified for a report.

**5/9/99**, Disorderly Conduct, 605 Main St., A 24 year old male interfered with PSD Officers conducting a car stop. PSD Officer issued a "C" summons to the individual for disorderly conduct.

**5/9/99**, Trespass, 200 Main St., PSD Officer on routine patrol observed a vehicle illegally parked. While notifying central the officer observed a male climbing over south gate. Individual was issued a "C" summons for trespassing and released.

**5/13/99**, Assault, 4 River Rd., PSD Officer responded to assist another officer in family dispute. Victim, step father of perp. complained of having difficulty breathing, because youth assaulted him. EMS responded, victim refused transportation. PSD Officer searched area, located perp. on bridge, placed him under arrest, transported him to 19 Pct. for processing. Victim's wife was a witness.

**5/19/99**, Open Container, 536 Main St., PSD Officer observed male resident with vis-

The Senate was as careful to leave intact the delineation of the responsibilities of the new entity as they were to remove any formal connection with the State and State funding. I simply do not believe that this is coincidence.

Nor does the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions who have currently stopped the bill in the Assembly subject to answers from the Senate sponsors. This Committee has not stopped the bill at the behest of anyone, including Pete Grannis, who was involved with the original bill, nor have they stopped it at the behest of anyone from the Island. They have stopped it because they are doing their job, and it would be irresponsible not to stop it. They are posing exactly the same questions that were put to the Maple Tree Group by the Common Council.

In the normal course of affairs, in fact as a daily occurrence, counsel from the sponsor initiating such changes respond as a matter of course to committee questioning from the opposing house. That is how legislation proceeds. In this case, there has been no such response from the Senate sponsor's counsel nor from counsel for the Governor. Without satisfactory answers, the bill will never move to be voted upon in the Assembly.

In the Senate itself, the bill has been returned to the Rules Committee. There is no signal that it will proceed to a vote within the Senate during this term. And the Senate is not likely to pass it, or even to vote on it, in the face of reasonable questions from a Committee of the house which initiated it. So long as those questions remain unanswered they will legitimately be considered as reasonable questions.

It is a basic tenet of self governance, or certainly of self governance as practiced within the United States, that a governing entity cannot take on obligations without the means to address those obligations. This is, of course, for the protection of the governed. And, thankfully, our own self governance in New York... the Assembly and the House... will protect the Island from having self governance thrust upon us in name only, so that we be doomed to fail before we have even begun. I am profoundly grateful for that.

In the United States, self-governance comes with responsibilities to those governed that are every bit as sacred as the rights thereunder. To be willing to sue for the rights while turning a willfully blind eye toward the responsibilities, you will thereby impose on your neighbors is not a form of democracy that I want any part of.

ible 40 oz. bottle of beer, he was escorted to PSD, issued a "C" summons.

**5/20/99**, Burglary, 504 Main St., Youth Center employee phoned PSD to report burglary. Upon PSD officer's arrival, NYPD was on scene. Reporter stated cabinet was tampered with, several items valued at \$3100 were missing. Further investigation revealed that entrance on second floor had been taped to prevent door from locking.

**5/25/99**, Burglary, 546 Main St., Reporter entered PSD, stated several items had been removed from daughter's apt. during the night. Daughter noticed door was open. PSD Officer investigated, there was no sign of forced entry. NYPD responded, referred to fingerprinting squad.

**5/25/99**, Harassment, 549 Main St., PSD Officers responded to Trellis Restaurant. Trellis employee stated that male had harassed him and the owner of Trellis, complaining of the prices. Victim refused EMS, NYPD report. PSD escorted perp. out of restaurant.

**5/27/99**, Criminal Mischief, 400 Main St., Male resident entered PSD stated he had parked a rented truck at commercial lot & upon returning he noticed graffiti had been written on the back and left side of the truck.

**5/31/99**, Assault, 625 Main St., Resident female youth phoned PSD, stated that she had been assaulted by another female youth. She did not wish to press charges. NYPD report prepared.

**6/1/99**, Hazardous Condition, 540 Main St., PSD officer responding to hazardous condition, observed juice bottles, etc. on floor. Upon further investigation, officer heard teenagers running up the stairs, discovered condoms, & found a black bag on the floor with I.D. of a female. RIHM porter cleaned up area. Subsequently the bag's owner claimed same at PSD.

**6/2/99**, Dispute, 540 Main St., PSD Officers responded to physical dispute between two male youths, which they ended, brought perps. to PSD, issued 2 "C" summonses and released them. Perp. #1 stated one of his friends threw an object at him, missing him and also missing perp. #2's baby. When perp. #1 went to apologize, #2 struck him in the face, physical fight ensued.

**6/2/99**, Reckless Endangerment, 625 Main St., While on vertical patrol, PSD officer saw a bottle containing liquid traveling downward from above. He began immediate search of floors 11-19 with negative results and advised doorman to notify PSD of any further incidents.

**6/4/99**, Property Damage, 551 Main St., PSD officers observed light pole at scene was down. Initially it had been reported that youths broke light. Underage youth entered PSD, stated he was leaning on the light pole when it accidentally fell. His guardian entered PSD, both spoke w/YO.

**6/12/99**, Criminal Mischief, 540 Main St., A man entered PSD, requesting medical assist. for cuts on both forearms. He stated that after visiting his girlfriend and having a verbal dispute with her, he had smashed a window in hallway with his fists. PSD, RIHM confirmed shattered window, service stated damage was \$350. Perp. was placed under arrest, PSD transported him to hospital and to 19th Precinct.

**6/12/99**, Disorderly Conduct, Northtown Park, Female entered PSD, stated that while walking her dog, a male jogger ran past her and called her a name.

**6/14/99**, Tenant-Landlord Dispute, 536 Main St., RIHM service employee entered PSD, said there was a huge water leak and that they had knocked on door numerous times to no avail. They drilled lock and then tenant opened door, stated they did not hear knocking. Lock was replaced, tenant refused to let service into apartment. RIHM administration advised, they reported emergency condition to Housing.

**6/23/99**, Assault, 546 Main St., Resident woman encountered male, female having verbal dispute, inquired if all was okay, they replied yes and left area. Approximately 1 hour later, he encountered EMS en route to woman's apartment. She stated husband struck her, she was taken to Elmhurst Hospital. He was arrested for

See **Blotter**, page 11

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**Blotter** from page 10

Assault 3 by PSD and escorted to 19th Precinct.

6/23/99, Found, 580 Main St., Anonymous female youth informed PSD officer about a pouch at scene. He retrieved same, upon inspecting same found, \$120 in currency in an envelope and several cards. PSD tried contacting owner several times w/o success. Property is at PSD.

6/23/99, Assault, 560 Main St., Female youth entered PSD stated another youth physically assaulted her. NYPD responded. Victim taken to NY Hospital. PSD arrested perp. taken to 114th Precinct.

6/25/99, Larceny, 536 Main St., VP of Island Kids entered PSD, said electronic equipment valued at \$300 was missing. She was advised of occurrence on 6/23, the event having occurred on 6/21. Reporter stated

door was left unsecured on 6/19 with no sign of forced entry.

6/26/99, Assault, 560 Main St., While RIHM employee was cleaning, unknown perp. threw a fluorescent bulb striking him on head causing a minor cut. EMS treated wound, victim sent home for day. He sustained no major injuries. Officer searched area with negative results.

6/28/99, Dispute, 580 Main St., Female entered PSD, stated her husband was verbally harassing her and ripped phone out of wall. He had called 911. PSD officers responded, NYPD at scene, filed report. Husband left with NYPD.

6/29/99, Larceny, 688 Main St., PSD officer discovered jack had been placed on right front wheel, tire had been removed, two other wheels were unscrewed. Owner contacted, said he would make complaint at 114th Precinct.

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