

opinion

## Governor Jaberwocky's revenge



Governor Jaberwocky and his retinue of aides put on a masterful show of obfuscation two weeks ago at the College of Staten Island in what was billed as an opportunity for the citizens to talk to their Janus-like chief executive.

The governor of liberalism sounded more like Ronald Reagan as he lectured the audience on how government works, on how much he cares about the homeless (even though he has done nothing to help them) and how difficult it is "to make these tough judgments" on how our money should be spent.

Cuomo, for a variety of reasons, has been treated with kid gloves by the supposedly independent-minded media thinkers who pilloried Hugh Carey for not governing. He sounds wonderful, he is an eloquent and persuasive speaker and he has a sixth sense about what sort of rhetoric sells, especially if the press corps is too dumb or too lazy to compare his speeches with his record. One on one with his constituents, however, Cuomo always resorts to his sneering, preachy style so familiar to the other Democrats from Queens County hackdom. He is the master of double-talk, the wise guy who, if he tried to pull off some of his verbal stunts in a saloon, would wind up on the barroom floor.

Consider this:

--While blasting away at the Reagan administration for spending too much money on the defense budget and expensive missiles, Cuomo blithely tells the audience that the Navy homeport is a swell idea but that it was a "purely local decision" made by city and county residents. He forgot to mention his role in approving expenditures by the Port Authority, to the tune of between \$20 million and \$40 million. He also forgot to mention the letter he sent asking the Navy to set up shop on our shores. "I was assured there would be no nuclear weapons on those ships," he said. In other words, he was misled by the Navy, which now refuses to admit or deny that the ships will be carrying nuclear weapons?

--While promising to act as a mediator in the Corson's Brook Woods dispute, he sent his equally-arrogant Commissioner of Mental Health and Retardation, Arthur Webb, to the daily press with a truly insidious message: if environmentalists don't knock off the challenge to our plans, we'll sue you. This is the liberal governor, the man who saved

scrap dealers in Willets Point from the bulldozers of Robert Moses? This is the same guy who acted as a mediator when John Lindsay wanted to take over the homes of working class homeowners in Corona? The same governor who sounds oh-so convincing when crying about the indifference of the Reagan administration? The jabberwocky message is this: we will use the power of the state -- and your money -- to harass you with a lawsuit because you have the temerity to save Staten Island's few remaining natural areas from our insensitive bureaucrats. Make way for the tough guy from Queens.

--While ranting about the lack of enforcement on environmental laws by the Reagan crowd, Governor Jaberwocky allows his state Commissioner of Environmental Conservation to negotiate three consent orders with DACS Trucking Company, owned by Ted Persico, as the firm continued to ignore legal sanctions. As he signed the orders, Persico continued to dump garbage into the Kill van Kull. Cuomo's commissioner, Henry Williams, first promised to "throw the book at these guys," recommending a \$20,000 fine. He then let them off the hook with a paltry \$3,000 fine as they were saving \$7,000 per week in unpaid landfill fees. This is the record of the tough environmentalist.

--While castigating Reagan for cutting back on mass transit subsidies, Cuomo stubbornly supports the \$5 billion Westway project, which will never be built. Because he is now counting on the real estate interests and the construction unions to finance his campaign for the White House, Cuomo will not listen to reason and trade in the Westway money for use in the subway, bus and ferry system. Some mass transit advocate.

--While sounding so principled on the issue of teen-age drinking, Cuomo refuses to enforce the current 19-year-old law. He talks a great deal about the need to educate the public about the dangers of under-age drinking, but he will not increase funding for the State Liquor Authority. This is evidence enough of his hypocrisy on the subject, but his appointments of Anthony Gazzara, another member of Queens hackdom, and Anthony Papa, as the chairman and executive director was an insult. Both were active in his campaigns. Several months ago, one of our reporters spent weeks attempting to obtain public records from the SLA, especially violations issued to taverns and delis for selling beer and/or liquor to minors. She was told they were "confidential" or not available. Both reasons were rejected by the state Committee on Access to Records. Finally, we spoke to Gazzara and tried to tell him about the state Public Officers Law and his responsibility to make those records available. His reply? "I am not familiar with this Public Relations (sic)-"

# jim callaghan

Law.

The SLA is the laughing stock of the Cuomo administration. No one worries about getting nailed for serving to minors. There are at least 10 gin mills in this borough which regularly serve to teenagers and their owners are immune from prosecution thanks to the indifference of Governor Jaberwocky and his assortment of Queens polls. The kids who are drinking, naturally, could care less about the law and ridicule Cuomo for pretending to care about under-age drinking.

--As was pointed out in the Village Voice and re-printed in this column two weeks ago, Cuomo has yet to build one single unit of housing for the homeless, even though he used them at least nine/times as he explained why state government has limited resources. "We must take care of the homeless and the mentally retarded," was his constant theme. No one was impertinent enough to ask "When?"

--When Peggy Sklenar of the Chamber of Commerce asked Cuomo to reduce the personal income tax (a position recommended by his own commission) Cuomo berated her and demanded to know where she would find the money for programs for the retarded. A member of the audience having heard enough of Governor Jaberwocky's bullying, let him have it right between the eyes: "Don't play us off against one another." This got a nice round of applause from those who were tired of listening to this conservative Reaganite in liberal clothing. Cuomo denied he was trying to divide and conquer, but that is exactly how the man operates, just the way they taught him in Queens. He was sarcastic, sneering and couldn't resist the urge to lecture the audience about how government works, as if they were in a third grade civics class.

--When the president of the CSI student body challenged Cuomo on his plans to raise tuition, Governor Jaberwocky tried to turn the issue around by asking a ridiculous question: "Are you saying that the rich should not pay tuition?" Of course, that was not the point at all, and everyone in the room knew it. Cuomo simply cannot give a straight answer to any question. He would rather verbally spar with people than tell them the truth. The student body president relentlessly questioned Cuomo and had him on the ropes for 25 minutes. He was persuasive, articulate, and more aware of his facts than Governor Jaberwocky. In the end, Cuomo just gave up. He tried one last time to bamboozle the audience with the false statement that "they (the University trustees) raise your tuition, I don't raise your tuition." He admitted later, however, that he appoints "them" and "they" probably wouldn't do something that he was against. "Chances are if I

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