GRANVILLE, N. Y.
SENTINEL
W. 2,500

JAN 22 1976

EDITORIAL COMMENT

People VS Fish

A cheer for the Washington County Board of Supervisors in general and Kingsbury Supervisor Leon Layden in particular. Layden lighted the verbal fire aimed at Environmental Conservation Commissioner Ogden Reid and the supervisors as a board fanned it profusely with a resolution declaring in so many words people employed by General Electric's Fort Edward and Hudson Falls plants are far more important than fish which prowl the Hudson River!

This business of environmental protection is good to a point but when it threatens hundreds of jobs these days it's just not whistling Dixie. In essence, the situation merely boils down to the state putting the heat on GE to reduce its discharge of polychlorinated biphenyls into the river by zero come September of this year. Meanwhile, the company is doing everything possible to comply but admits it can't perform a miracle, which is required in this particular case to meet the State's demand. The alternative is closing down GE operations laying off and retiring its employees.

There are times one wonders about people in high, influential government posts. Too often they seem obsessed with trying to make life tougher and rougher for businesses and workers, both of whom contribute generously through taxes to the lofty salaries dished out to administrators, directors, specialists, et al. Why, for example, should peoples' jobs be expendable in favor of fish? The only conclusion is we must have some avid and dedicated fishermen running environmental projects in Albany and Washington. Instead of seeing the unemployment rate in Washington County, they must visualize themselves decked out with rod and reel, a fancy cut sportsman's attire, dark glasses to shade the eyes, along with a can of worms, as they traverse the Hudson River in search of a fish absolutely void of polychlorinated biphenyls. The fact that GE's payroll pours out $15 million annually with county, village and school tax revenues amounting to more than $308,973 amounts to nothing compared with an environmental good fishing day on the Hudson River. Is it any wonder why people are losing confidence in government and its leaders?

It will be interesting to see what happens. Senator Ronald Stafford and Assemblyman Jerry Solomon should be howling like wolves at the state capitol. Certainly the resolution of Washington County's Board of Supervisors should inspire the two gentlemen to raise unshirted hell in their respective chambers. As for Ogden Reid and his sporting companions, it might be well for the supervisors to chip in and buy a few angler's licenses validated by the State of Vermont where, we're told polychlorinated biphenyls is found only in the men's room at the state capitol where an illuminated sign reads, "No fishing allowed!"

MONS 032933