



in the Ramapo Reservation in Mah-r a few hours.
grapher: Cyndi Avedon of Park Ridge.

phs to Insight. Pictures of New Jersey subjects have ven to abstract photos. The Record pays \$35 for one ay. Please furnish some information on the story be- why the subject compelled you. Include your Social be returned; they become the property of North Jer- em. Send submissions to: Insight Editor, The Record,

any semblance of justice to the 375 peo- ple at Guantanamo.

Although he is considering closing this disgraceful facility, over the objections of Cheney and Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez, he would still deny a trial for- ever to 50 of what he calls hard-core prisoners on the grounds of national se- curity and would relegate many others to military courts. The bulk of the detainees for whom there appears to be no evi- dence of a crime would be sent home to their native countries after having spent five years in prison with no charges.

I am puzzled by the seeming contra- diction. Great Britain has captured "ter- rorists" and within 28 days has either let them go or begun to try and convict them without compromising their na- tional security. But when a member of the Bush administration blocks an inves- tigation into leaks of national security, that person has his sentence commuted. Could this be a way of making sure Scooter doesn't tell the whole story about the lies used by Bush and Cheney to get us into the Iraq war? Unfortunately, I think the answer to that question is yes.

Linda Cetta
Demarest, July

George W. Bush, during his six years as governor of Texas, presided over 152 executions, more than any other gover- nor in recent history - and he denied 30 pleas for clemency in his first 28 months as governor.

One was Karla Faye Tucker, whose execution sparked a wave of outrage around the world. Among those who had supported her plea for clemency was televangelist Pat Robertson, a supporter of the death penalty, who reportedly said, "This thing is vengeance, it makes no

sense. This is not the same woman who committed those crimes." While on death row, Tucker had educated herself and become deeply religious. She never denied her involvement in the two mur- ders for which she was convicted, and spoke of her desire to help others learn from her experience. Yet Governor Bush not only denied her request for clemency but he actually ridiculed that request.

So I was understandably skeptical when Bush in 2000 said he was running for president as a "compassionate con- servative." Since then, his brutal and un- necessary invasion of Iraq and his ap- proval of torture reaffirm my skepticism. After he commuted the sen- tence of Scooter Libby, it seemed obvi- ous that the true definition of a Bush "compassionate conservative" is a per- son who only has compassion for his friends, and to hell with everyone else.

Marvin Levitt
Fair Lawn, July 4

Welcome back, Father Bill

I want to applaud The Record for running the story about the Rev. William Dowd's exoneration by the Vatican and his return to ministry ("Priest survives scandal's whispers, returns to thunder- ous applause," Page A-1, July 2). So many times, stories are run on the front page accusing a person of alleged wrongdoing, but, when the truth comes out and he is cleared of all accusations, the story is either not printed, or is buried inside in a small article.

The Record not only printed the story on the front page, but ran a picture of Father Bill with some of the people who attended his Mass at St. Luke's. Not only was the church filled with many parishioners from St. Luke's and other parishes that Father Bill was associated with in the past but many priests from the archdiocese, including retired Arch- bishop Peter Gerety were there to wel- come him back.

Welcome back, Father Bill. God bless you.

Cathy Ryan,
Waldwick, July 2

County hides behind doctrine

I found it interesting that on a day when we celebrate our independence from the king of England, you have an article, "Border skirmish" (Page A-1, July 4), about a state Superior Court judge ruling in favor of Bergen County and say- ing "time runneth not against the king." The king he is referring to is Bergen County, which is in a property encroach- ment dispute with the property owners.

The county claims that it owns a small parcel of land that the property owners contend they have paid taxes on for over 50 years. The property owners claim they should be allowed to use the

small parcel because they've maintained it for almost 50 years. Government should not be able to come in after such a long period and claim it as theirs, espe- cially after the property was maintained solely by the property owners. This is akin to theft by deception and fraudu- lent conveyance.

The small parcel of land in question is unusable and does not affect the county bike path built behind it. Yet the courts of New Jersey are using old doctrines to protect the sovereignty of the king. The county can bring an action against its own citizens, but when the citizens fight back, the county runs and hides behind old English doctrines of immunity.

This is America, not England. Time does run against the king. It has done so for 231 years. It is no wonder that New Jersey residents, and Americans in gen- eral, despise the court system in this country. The courts are resorting back to old English doctrine to give themselves and their government patrons fraudulent immunities. Judges and government offi- cials should not have the right to use doctrines of sovereign immunity because they were outlawed by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. The only sovereigns in this country are the people; not government. It's time to immediately abolish these old doctrines through legislation.

Bruce Eden
Wayne, July 4

Commerce Bank's clout

James Ahearn missed two items in his encomium to Vernon Hill, the imperial CEO of Commerce Bancorp ("A cau- tionary tale of corporate success," Opin- ion, July 4): The Ramsey helicopter of- fenses, and the bank's success in amass- ing government deposits.

On Oct. 18, 2002, The Record report- ed that Commerce ferried top executives to Ramsey "for 15 years. ... The bank never notified municipal or state author- ities about the flights and never sought their approval for the makeshift heli- port." It withdrew a doomed application for a heliport later that year.

On May 21, 2003, The Record wrote, "Looking at Commerce's success another way, its North Jersey consumer and business deposits increased 348 percent in six years, but its taxpayer-based de- posits increased by 2,407 percent. One- third of the Bergen County govern- ment's deposits are now with Com- merce." This makes it clearer why Ahearn commented, "Hill has been very active politically."

Before retirement, Ahearn and I both worked in different seven-day-a-week businesses. Before you enjoy being able to bank on Saturday and Sunday too much, consider that one day soon, your own employer may go "24/7." Be careful what you wish for.

Timothy H. Buchman
Wickoff, July 4