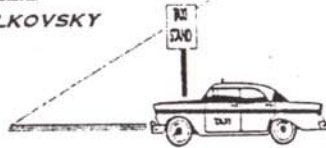


WILLIE'S CORNER

BY
WILLIE
TALKOVSKY



Well, it looks like it's a done deal! Slowly but surely the T.L.C. is being eliminated as an independent body regulating the taxi and livery industry. Now the Police Department and Consumer Affairs are going to be expected to perform the functions that were performed by the T.L.C.

Needless to say, one function that will not be overlooked is raising money for the city coffers.

Beyond that, one has to wonder how this major change will effect industry-wide regulation. What about the judiciary? Will the industry courts be better or — yes, it's possible! — worse?

I fear that the people pulling the strings will create some sort of Frankenstein monster by delegating industry enforcement and regulation to inappropriate, unqualified city personnel.

The city has had a knack of creating Frankensteins, and the Giuliani Administration is no ex-



ception. The prevailing philosophy appears to be replacing one big headache, i.e. the TLC, with an even bigger one.

This is precisely what they did twenty-five years ago when they scrapped the old Hack Bureau and replaced it with the TLC, which now is going to be scrapped itself. Isn't it amazing how history repeats itself. There are some interesting parallels between twenty-five years ago and now. In both cases, we had a conservative mayor coming in and making major industry changes, as if he and all his cohorts know exactly what is going on.

I think ego is a big problem with these types who think they know all the answers. The truth is, they usually aren't interested in the questions posed by others and so couldn't possibly have the answers, having been blinded to a solution with their know-it-all attitude. And

their plans are so twisted and distorted that everyone loses sight of the main goal — and this goal is to improve the running of the industry.

Let's just say that, having been through this sort of thing twenty-five years ago, I am very doubtful that things will improve with this re-shuffling. On to something else.

Some people in this fair city tend to think of cabbies as Joe-Schmoe types with little more to offer than plying a steering wheel.

The truth is you never know who it is behind that wheel of the cab driving you to your destination.

Case in point. A few weeks ago I got a call from my medallion lessor. It seems that his driver was doing some new and interesting writing, and so the lessor wanted me to meet with him. Well, I'm always interested in people's writing, so I made an appointment for 2:00 PM at my home-away-from-home — a luncheonette where I love to hang out.

That's when I met Mr. Clodomiro Giraud, Jr. He has worked for my lessor for four years. He is about 5'2" and 145 pounds, with dark hair, dark brown eyes, and a dark complexion. Mr. Giraud anxiously showed me a children's book he had written, called *Meeting the Coconut Family*. It had

these beautiful colorful pictures in it that, to my surprise, he said he drawn himself! I took a copy of the book and read it later in the day. It was a wonderful fairy tale, very good for children up to thirteen years of age and even past.

But to get a really informed opinion, I went to my favorite hang-out the next day. The owner of the luncheonette has two children of the ages of 9 and 11 who agreed to read the fairy tale. The next day they said they liked the book and that they'd buy it if they saw it in the bookstores.

Well, Mr. Giraud, I think you have a winner here! Lot's of luck and it's great to see another cab-driver excel.

Oh, by the way, I understand that the Coconut Family may become a movie, too!

Like I said, when you get into that back seat, you never know what kind of interesting character you might find behind the wheel. In my thirty-five years of driving I've met chemists, engineers, accountants, and even a few lawyers who have driven yellows. So be careful what you say! You might be screaming "You idiot!" to a nuclear physicist.

On that note I will shut my big fat mouth.....until next month!

M&R AUTO REPAIRS