

## Suffolk to Eye Planned Sale Of Scout Camp

Suffolk County plans to study the proposed sale by the Nassau County Council of Boy Scouts of 50-year-old Camp Wauwepex on Suffolk's Wading River following protests by many scout leaders that the sale would mean the "end of monthly camping trips," County Executive Klein said yesterday.

Klein said the county approached the council about the possible purchase of the 550-acre camp site for park land about a year ago. He said he was unaware of the recent storm of controversy over the council's March 20 decision to begin discussions for the sale.

### "Innocent Bystander"

"The county is an innocent bystander," Klein said. "We presumed the council was speaking for the Boy Scout organization when it notified us of the intention to sell."

"The county would not move in to acquire the land without the blessing of the council. We are not in the business of putting the Boy Scouts out of business."

He added that "before we go any further the county will look into the controversy."

John Bulms, chairman of the council's land committee, said the camp was only used by 4,800 of the 12,000 Boy Scouts in Nassau County last year and that its use has been steadily declining. In fact, he said, the summer program is being cut from eight to six weeks because of poor attendance.

The council is \$900,000 in the red and another \$100,000 is needed to refurbish the camp, which he said is not "vital to the camping program in view of extensive holdings upstate."

He cited 5,900 acres the council owns in the Catskills and the desire by scouts today to "go camping in the wilderness."

But Jules Bernstein, a member of the newly formed Ad Hoc Committee to Save Camp Wauwepex, said that just because the council is in debt is shouldn't "sell the crown jewels first."

He maintained that discussions for the sale of the camp were all conducted secretly and that no fund-raising drives have ever mentioned that the camp's future was at stake. He said he is confident a fund drive could save it and said all scout leaders in the county plan to sign a petition to ask the council to reconsider the sale. Scouts in Queens have also thrown their support behind the committee, he added.