

On the Vineyard things are changing

Over on Martha's Vineyard a widely-distributed and highly acclaimed weekly newspaper, the **Vineyard Gazette**, has for years referred to Cape Cod in tones that can only be described as smirkingly superior. The Vineyard has watched the Cape's development over the past two-plus decades...and congratulated herself, "It can't happen here."

And yet, in recent years, the Vineyard has witnessed growth similar to that on the Cape. Now islanders see, "it CAN happen here." And their tones of voice are fearful.

Today, Martha's Vineyard Island looks across the Sound and asks, "How long before all the Cape's troubles are our own?"

A **Christian Science Monitor** reporter, Robert Kilborn, in an article reprinted in the **Falmouth Enterprise**, is mentioned in a recent issue of the **Vineyard Gazette** as having quoted David Hall of the Cape Cod Planning and Economic Development Commission. Hall, it is written, said, "Some people call the Cape the Florida of the North... other people call it the Hong Kong of the East."

When quotations are derived in such round-about fashion,

they may easily become mis-quotes, but it is true that population projections for Cape Cod, before the year 2,000, exceed 230,000.

One of Hall's associates is quoted as well: "The Cape is, in fact, a geographical entity which should lend itself to regional protection, but not all towns start from the same base or move at the same pace."

The **Gazette's** editorial continues, "Cape Cod has a sole source aquifer tapped by 130 public wells and 15,000 private wells. The sewage apparently goes into the aquifer also, sooner or later. Take Otis Air Force Base from which an underground plume of contamination has spread southward two miles toward Nantucket Sound. Each of the 15 towns has a landfill with a plume of the same kind, though smaller, easing from it. Some landfills will reach capacity in fewer than ten years."

The concern expressed in the **Vineyard Gazette**, now that the Vineyard sees itself being transformed into a miniature Cape Cod with development hurtling into its pine woods and

oak groves, across its moors and fields, along its shores and over its dunes, is the same concern thousands of Cape Codders have felt, and expressed, for a quarter of a century.

We've seen the handwriting on the wall. And we see today we were correct in interpreting the earlier omens. And gazing into a crystal ball and hearing the voices of prophets, we tremble as we read the **Gazette's** final chilling statistic.

"It is projected that the volume of solid waste [on Cape Cod] will mushroom from 158,500 tons in 1980 to 235,300 tons by the year 2,000, counting what is disposed of by summer visitors."

The year 2,000 is less than 17 years from now.

Solid waste. Sewage. Water pollution. Exploding population. Single source aquifer. Landfill disposal areas. Acid rain. Ecological degradation.

The only difference between such phrases and obscenities is that most of these are not four-letter words employed explicitly to shock the fine sensibilities.

And people worry about nuclear war?