

# Staten Island—Last Call

In a lucid and practical report the City Planning Commission proposes basic policy and sound procedures that could halt the senseless and tragic destruction of the city's last open land on Staten Island.

This is of necessity a Humpty Dumpty operation, in which some of the island's shattered pieces would be put back together again as well as possible after speculative exploitation has taken its highly visible toll. Any firsthand examination of the current carnage, ranging from jerry-built houses on squandered land to mapping and sewage inadequacies, demonstrates clearly that action now is not quite soon enough. But it is the last hope for the city's "last frontier."

The Staten Island report stresses the need for special action and a special solution. The answer for Staten Island, as the report indicates, is appointment of a high-level city coordinator for its proper over-all development, and creation of a quasi-public body to be called the South Richmond Development Corporation, with power to acquire, "bank," and plan its best remaining open land. This is the area of greatest potential for the future.

The report is also a "policy statement," in which the city has put on record those values that should be implicit in any democratic community: that there are certain standards and objectives for city growth that should be enunciated and enforced as public policy in the public interest.

Unless this policy and the report's recommendations are carried out promptly, Staten Island is on a destruction course that nothing can arrest.