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Friday, July 17, 1981

Won't 'entertain' proposals about pulling out of regional government--Bennett

# Tough talk from housing minister

By CHRIS AAGAARD

Herald Staff Writer The province has no intention of allowing individual municipalities to opt out of regional government, Halton's counciliors were told Wednesday.

Making a "goodwill" visit to regional council and introducing the new municipal affairs portfolio attached to his houssaid regional governments are ton's threats to withdraw from province has opted out of

a "positive force" in deliver-

ing services to the public. "I don't feel that regional councils have any more problems than do tocal councils," Mr. Bennett said. "Regional governments have served very well the problems of municipalities in Ontario."

The ministers' message was seen as a warning that the ministry, Claude Bennett province is tiring of Burling- ist efforts, claimed that the

Halton region. Roly Bird, the city's mayor, has repeatedly protested that Burlington's ratepayers are paying more for regional services because they are subsidizing works projects in Milton and Halton

But even regional chairman Jack Raftis, who has long opposed Burlington's secession-

Housing and municipal affairs minister Claude Bennett fielded questions from regional councillors Wednesday afternoon during a "goodwill" visit. While covering a wide range of issues, the minister warned that the province will likely turn a deaf ear to any proposals from individual municipalities to opt out of regional government.

(Herald photo)

# MOH declines Site F funds commitment

Provincial housing and municipal affairs minister Claude Bennett declined to make any firm commitments to the region toward additional studies needed for Site F, a proposal landfill site in Millon.

Replying to a councillors' question, during his visit to regional council Wednesday, Mr. Bennett said "there were complications with the Site F proposal which exceed even the authority of the minis-

In its ongoing battle with Milton town council and a powerful citizens' lobby opposed to having a garbage dump on agricultural land at the northwest corner of Tre-

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maine and Britannia Roads, Halton had hoped that public hearings on the proposal would be heard under the more limited terms of the Environmental Protection Act (EPA), Evidence presented for or against the site proposal would have to relate directly to the site, rather than on the surround-

ing area. The ministry of environment announced in February that public hearings on Site F would have to be held under wider the terms of reference of the Environmental Assessment Act (EAA) forcing the region to bring in evidence on other proposed

'dump sites throughout Hal-

Shortly after the ministry's decision, regional council voted to press the government for the funds necessary to carry out further studies on other possible sites.

Tentative examinations of other areas for the new dump, including a site near Ashgrove, as well as a detail led study on the 246-acre Site F, have cost the region about \$3.4 million, Halton's chief administrative officer Dennis Perlin told councillors.

Recently, Milton council was charged with contempt of court for failing to comply with an Ontario Municipal Continued on Page 2

MIDBLEBROOK

## Region's growth 'excellent'

Halton region is enjoying "an excellent level of growth" which is expected to continue for "quite some time", regional business development director Matthew Fischer stated

recently. Of the ongoing projects with capital costs exceeding \$500,000 in southwestern Ontario, Halton has approximately \$40.3 million worth of new growth which could generate as many as 586

By the end of April, more building permits were issued in Oakville than in any of the region's other 'three area

municipalities. Permit sales there for industrial, commercial, institutional and residential building projects amounted to over \$22 million, \$7 million more than Burlington's

About \$4 million in building permits were issued in Halton during the January to April period, \$1 million less than

Meanwhile, the region's finance and administration committee has agreed support the City of Cambridge in its bid to have a microelectronics development centre established in its area.

funding responsibilities at the expense of the larger tax base In Oakville and Burlington.

Asked by Halton Hills Mayor

Pete Pomeroy about the pro-

vince's apportionment grants

- money given to individual

municipalities to help fill in tax

assessment disparities with

their neighbors - Mr. Bennett

announce the grant amounts

closer to the town's budget

time. Mayor Pomeroy had

complained that the timing of

the appointment grants made

Meanwhile, Mr. Bennett at-

tacked the federal government

for pulling out of the communi-

ty services contribution prog-

ram (CSCP) which helped pay

for servicing projects in the

The federal cabinet's sudden

decision to drop its major

share of the program last

March will make Ontario think twice before entering into sim-

ilar agreements in the future,

Mr. Bennett said. However, he

assured council that the prov-

ince would continue paying its

25 per cent share of the CSCP

Earlier Mr. Bennett mentio-

ned the possibility of a comp

lete review of the province's

funding.

grant structure.

budgeting difficult.

The grants, Mr. Raftis complained, either do not continue long enough or are two small to begin with: He warned Mr. Bennett that the bitterness & said his office would try to which has often prevailed in regional council meetings between northern and southern municipalities in Halton will continue unless the provincial government does something to get the "financial monkey" off

the region's back. However, Mr. Bennett told council that inflation is affecting government funding, stressing that municipalities must "face reality" and live . Canada's municipalities. within the inflationary rate. In fact, he said, municipal grant increases are often more than the ministry's own budgetary

"I think in today's world," Mr. Bennett said, "we are doing a fairly adequate job of keeping abreast of inflation. We both have responsibilities and should not singularly point to the province."

Mr. Bennett added the province would continue to "defend the best interests of the municipalities" and would try to keep the grants geared to the same level of inflation faced by

the provincial government. During a half-hour question period, the minister described municipal councils as being a ultimately being responsible for information given to them through staff or provincial

reports. Councils, be said, must answer for their decisions and not necessarily point the finger at the province or their own staffs for improperly handled issues. And there isn't likely to be a public inquiry into the affairs of Halton region, a possibility which arose last year followingthe revelation that faulty accounting had left the region with a \$700,000 shortfall in its

1980 operating budget. Mr. Bennett explained that the province is confident in the region's own efforts - the \$75,000 Hickling-Johnston management study - for more efficient government and is "no prepared to satisfy the political whims" of some councillors by holding a hearing which could alienate consultants and regional staff already trying to make administrative adjustments.

#### About the Hill

**FREE PARKING** 

### Satellite library closes

The Halton Hills satellite library in Georgetown, set up last spring in the back room of Penniesworth, thanks to the Main Street shop's proprietors, will close July 24. Downtown area residents who've been using the satellite service, to which books and other materials were transported several days a week, are invited to again use the library's temporary facilities at Guelphview Square until the new library-theatre complex opens at the Church Street site in September.

#### Crafts for kids

The Kids' Craft Club continues to meet at the Acton public library through the summer. For 50 cents each, your youngsters can dive into a creative pool of activities and get to know several artists' media. The next session is July 25, at 2 p.m. Please register before that date.

#### Adventure-bound

The Georgetown YM-YWCA's Summer Adventure Tours for six to 14-year-olds begin July 27, taking young people on exotic bus trips to area locales like Ontario Place and the Metro Zoo. The July 27 session continues until July 31, while two other sessions are planned to start Aug. 4 and Aug. 24. Please register well in advance at the Y office on Mountainview Road South, or phone 877-6163.



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CHAIRED FARM COMMITTEE

Halton Agricultural Advisory committee, says the committee "made headway" in encouraging

regional politicians and staffers to understand the problems farmers face in Halton. In an interview with The Herald (the first of a two-part series beginning Wednesday), he reflects on the industry's future, the rented land Issue, urban sprawl and Guelph University's Rural

Harold Middlebrook, the Burlington farmer who until recently served as chairman of the

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