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HALTON HILLS, ONTARIO - WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11TH, 1991

Business opening disrupted...

Protesters confront visiting Premier Rae

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT
The Herald

POWER protesters greeted Premier Bob Rae's visit to Georgetown Monday with shouts and placards calling for his rejection of the Acton dump proposal.

Saying that he had forgotten his promises of 1988 when he told Halton Hills residents he didn't support the dump, the Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources

(POWER) group jeered at him when at first, he refused to respond to its claims.

Two hours later, he did speak to the approximately 20 protesters after officially opening the new engineering, research and technology centre at Mold-Masters on Armstrong Avenue.

The opening was the reason the Premier was in town, and POWER members didn't miss the chance to ask him what he was doing to prevent a dump from being established on the Niagara Escarpment.

"Are you going to kill the dump proposal or kill my kids!" Rita Landry, wearing a toilet seat around her neck, asked the Premier point-blank.

In responding, Premier Rae layed all responsibility for the dump's future on the shoulders of his Environment Minister, Ruth Grier.

"Minister Grier is looking at all the material as part of the process and at some point she'll have to decide if it's in the context of protecting the escarpment and environment overall," he said.

"I don't have the authority to make the decision, she (Ms. Grier) does but she has to allow the process to unfold before she makes a decision."

Lois Fraser asked the Premier if he thought the government was being unreasonable and Premier Rae assured her it was not.

"I don't think anyone is being unreasonable. You have every responsibility to the environment and so does the government but the government also has a responsibility to the process."

"The process is always important," he continued. "The government can't be seen to be or act arbitrarily."

But the protesters kept calling for him to take action against the proposal and the Premier responded by saying "that's not my job."

He assured the protesters he would bring this demonstration to the attention of Minister Grier.

After approximately 10 minutes, the Premier left and most protesters seemed unhappy with his comments.

"It was baffle-ab" said the angry Ms. Landry. "He's a member of cabinet and he doesn't know if he has the power to overturn a decision and reject the proposal."

She said she got the impression the government just doesn't want to deal with the issue, but warned the Premier will continue to hear from POWER and next time, it will be more severe.

Fellow protester Diane van de Valk, who at first seemed thrilled that the group would have chance to speak to the Premier, was disappointed after his appearance.

"I've heard that rhetoric before," she said. "Two years ago when he was here, Rae himself said it wasn't a suitable site for a landfill and there was no reason to go further with it. Now four years later, we're still fighting against it."



Just the facts please...

Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources (POWER) protesters Rita Landry (middle) and Diane Vandevalk (right) look at Ontario Premier Bob Rae with what appears to be anger and skepticism as he answered their questions about the Acton dump proposal.

They kept asking him what he was going to do and he kept answering he could do nothing; that the decision rested with the Minister of Environment, Ruth Grier. (Herald Photo by Lisa Boonstoppel-Pot)

Quarry pumps water over legal limit

By BEN DUMMETT
The Herald

United Aggregates has been breaking the law by pumping water out of the Acton quarry in excess of the amount permitted by its provincial water taking permit, confirmed Andrew Mellary, Coordinator of Environmental Studies at the Ontario Ministry of Environment.

According to a report United Aggregates recently submitted to Mr. Mellary, the quarry company has pumped more than the maximum million imperial gallons of water per day permitted by its water taking permit on several occasions during the past two years.

When questioned about the company's water pumping practices, Mr. Mellary acknowledged the law was being broken at those times when water was being pumped in excess of the provincially permitted maximum.

Mr. Mellary concurred with the report's findings that more than a

million gallons of water was being pumped from the quarry during periods of heavy precipitation, and runoff.

Contacted Friday, Giuseppe Gori, who lives close to the quarry questions how the United Aggregates could be allowed to operate illegally?

He also wondered aloud whether or not his shortage of well water results from the company's pumping activities.

Mr. Mellary said the company won't face any punishment for

operating illegally. However it has been requested to justify its taking of more water per day than permitted.

The request comes in the wake of a meeting between officials from the MOE, Ministry of Natural Resources, the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, Halton Region Conservation Authority and United Aggregates.

At this meeting, said Mellary, United Aggregates requested its water taking permit be adjusted to allow the company to increase its maximum.

A decision concerning the request will be made sometime this spring once the company has submitted a water budget report to the MOE, he said.

The water budget report will indicate from where the excess water United Aggregates is pumping originates.

If the report shows the excess water is due to heavy precipitation and runoff the company is more than likely to increase the permit maximum for certain times during the year, said Mr. Mellary.

However, if the excess water is due to a diversion of water from 12-mile Creek, a concern raised by the Halton Region Conservation Authority, an adjustment to the permit is less likely, he explained.

Until that report is complete a rainwater gauge has been installed at the quarry to ensure any amount of water pumped in excess of a million gallons per day, must be due to heavy precipitation, said Mr. Mellary.

Female robber arrested

A Barrie woman has been charged with robbery in connection with a robbery at Arctic Charlie's frozen food store in Acton Dec. 1.

Detective Sergeant Mike Eacrett said the 23-year-old woman is also being charged with two other counts of robbery for robberies at a Mac's Milk and Super Video store in Milton.

All three robberies occurred Dec. 1 by a petite woman who threatened store clerks with an unseen gun. No weapon was ever seen.

The 23-year-old woman was arrested Monday following a bail hearing in Orillia where she was in court on robbery charges laid by Orillia OPP.

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