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'HOMETOWN PAPER, NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS!'

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10, 1996

Citizen lays charge against Acton quarry

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
The Acton Tanner

In what one lawyer called a classic David and Goliath battle, north Halton environmentalist Rita Landry has laid a charge of illegal quarrying against United Aggregates Ltd. (UAL) at its Acton quarry.

With advice and money from the Sierra Legal Defence fund, Landry launched a private prosecution against

UAL last Tuesday alleging UAL is quarrying without a Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) development permit.

At a quarry-side press conference Friday morning, Landry said she laid the charge because the citizens were "getting tired with almost every level of government not being to help us any more."

"Something has to be done

with all aggregate operations," Landry said as aggregate trucks rumbled past the quarry, which straddles R.R. 43 south of Acton.

"There are rules to follow and you just can't take nature into your own hands and do whatever you feel like," Landry argued, noting that the Niagara Escarpment, including some of UAL's lands, has been designated as a World Biosphere Reserve.

Sierra Fund lawyer Tom Heintzman said it will be a David and Goliath fight, but that the law is on the citizens' side.

"Earlier this year UAL asked the court to rule that quarrying on the south side of R.R. 43 did not require an NEC permit, but in March the Ontario Court of Appeal disagreed," Heintzman said.

"Yet, UAL continues to roll out the trucks and desecrate the landscape and this is illegal quarrying that is ruining a protected landscape."

Quarry neighbour Pat Woode explained that 22 per cent of the Niagara Escarpment land is within Halton Region and 55 per cent of the aggregate (material for making concrete) produced in Ontario comes from the Region.

"In 1988 Halton Hills quarries provided 10 of the 15 million tons of aggregate produced in the province," Woode said.

"We believe that the provincial interest is in protecting mineral resource extraction and protecting business and we are the ones most under attack."

Dr. Len Landry, Rita's husband, drew cheers from the small crowd gathered at the quarry when he asked several questions concerning the quarry and plans by Reclamation Systems Inc. (RSI)



HEADING OUT: A United Aggregates Limited truck is shown hauling a load of rock out of the Acton quarry. (Submitted photos)

to use part of the mined-out quarry on the north side of R.R. 43 for a massive landfill.

"Is it possible that this represents a rape of the Niagara Escarpment? Is it possible that there are business connections between this operation [the quarry] and the landfill operation proposal on this side of the quarry?" Landry asked.

"If there is a link and you sleep with the devil, you are no better than the devil."

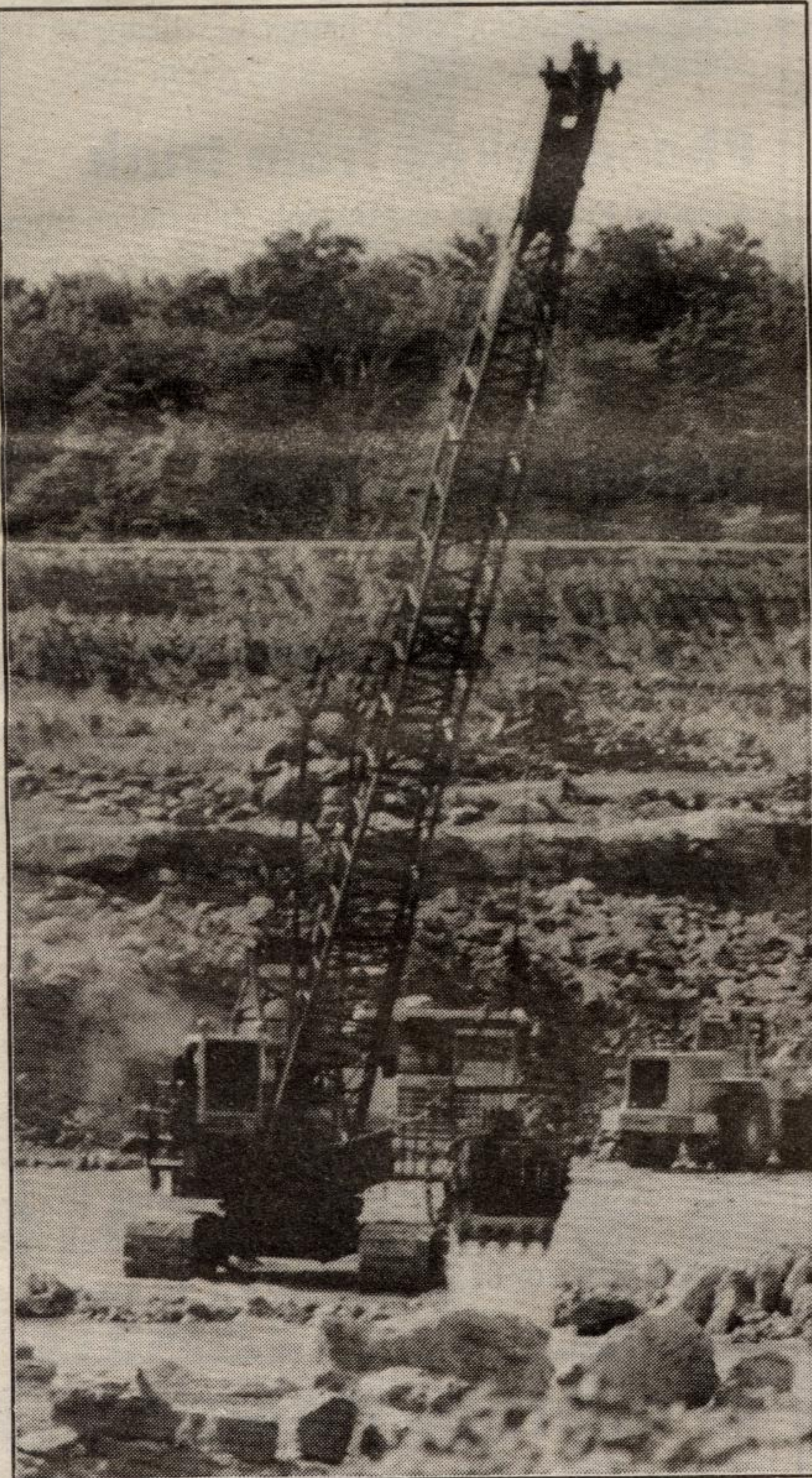
NEC spokesman Keith Jordan said "he was not aware" of any development permit application made by UAL.

Repeated calls to UAL officials went unanswered.

The first court date for Landry and UAL is Monday,

August 12 in Milton.

In a related issue, motions by the Town, the NEC and Ministry of Energy and Environment to have RSI's quarry-dump application dismissed by a consolidated board have been rescheduled to Friday, Sept. 6 at the Acton Legion. The meeting scheduled for Thursday, July 18 has been cancelled.



AT WORK: United Aggregates Limited machinery shows the company in full scale quarry operation recently.

Councillor wants CTC charged

The Canadian Tire Corporation should be charged after leaving its propane tank unsecured at its abandoned Acton store, an angry Acton Councillor Rick Bonnette argued on Monday night at Town Council.

At 7:47 pm Sunday, a male suspect cut a hose leading to the company's propane supply pump, attempting to steal a brass nozzle and spewing propane into the air.

"It could have been a very dangerous

situation and the investigation should include making Canadian Tire pay for that [fire] call," Bonnette said.

"In my opinion, and I don't know if we can do it, I think charges should be laid," Bonnette said, noting that this was not the first time a company had left dangerous goods unsecured when they pulled out of Acton - the first being the cancer-causing PCBs left at the Beardmore Tannery site.

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