

## Blast destroys building, hospitalizes workman

One person was injured and a municipal sewage pumping station on Robert St. was completely demolished when an explosion, just after midnight Saturday, blew out brick walls and lifted the roof of the small building. Damage was estimated between \$10,000 and \$15,000.

George Prior, a works employee, suffered second degree burns to his arms and legs and 30 per cent of his body. His face was also scorched. He had been on duty at the station since a Saturday afternoon rain dumped up to five and a half inches on the area. He is reported in satisfactory condition at Milton District Hospital.

The sound of the post-midnight blast rocked dishes in adjacent houses and frightened neighbors from their beds in the central section of the town. It smashed out the solid masonry walls and raised the roof of the building which did not settle back evenly on its supporting walls. Fire followed the explosion and Milton Area Fire Brigade was summoned to extinguish it. Milton Hydro crews were also on hand to cut the power to three transformers beside the building.

Mr. Prior was operating auxiliary pumping equipment at the station, because of the downpour and the flooding of sewage lines. It is thought the explosion may have been caused by the gasoline powered equipment.

Works Superintendent Bruce McKerr said the auxiliary equipment would have been discontinued in about 15

minutes because the effects of the storm had been overcome. The pumping station serves the central west end of town.

### Transformers knocked out in \$15,000 lightning strike

Damage was estimated at \$15,000 as lightning knocked out two 750 KVA transformers at P. L. Robertson's Milton plant Saturday, and shut down the Sunday midnight shift until power could be restored.

Plant manager Geoff Dreger praised the work of the maintenance crew in locating a 1500 KVA transformer and restoring power by 5 a.m. Monday morning to allow a return to work on the day shift.

receiving sewage from that area and pumping it into other lines to flow to the treatment plant on Fulton. Workmen quickly

installed portable pumping equipment and utilized a fire pumper to minimize any flooding which could result if the Robert St. station was left out of service.

Early Sunday the demolition of the threatening walls of the building was completed and workmen began the clean-up of equipment. The auxiliary equipment was restored and motors were removed for repair as members of council and the mayor joined in assisting workmen.

By Tuesday evening a rebuilt pump house with motors repaired and a new transformer installed, was back in action.

Mayor B. Best praised the local contractors and electricians as well as those responsible for repairing the motors, for their prompt co-operation in restoring the essential service.

### Rescue 50 head of cattle lightning fire claims barn

Fifty head of Holstein cattle were rescued when the barn on the farm of Charles Baynton, north of Campbellville was destroyed by fire during the electrical storm Saturday evening.

Destroyed in the blaze were 5000 bales of hay and 1000 bushels of wheat.

Firefighters raced to the fire with visibility hampered by the heavy rainstorm but were able to save an adjoining pig pen and auxiliary buildings on the farm.

Mr. Baynton reported he was preparing to attend a wedding when he heard a sharp crack of thunder and looked out to see flames in the barn. Attempts to extinguish the fire were unsuccessful and assisted by his son Howard they led the animals to safety.

The cattle had been placed in the barn earlier after a previous rain storm.

Chief A. E. Clement had not estimate of damage immediately available but he noted the loss was partially insured.

### Better deal for farmer

Fruit and vegetable farmers are being discriminated against by government laws on assessment said a township of Chinguacousy representative at Thursday's 'dialogue' between four cabinet ministers and municipal representatives at Norval.

Claiming he was being assessed three times as much as an ordinary farmer for his land, the fruit and vegetable man asked the Minister of Municipal Affairs Darcy McKeough if the province intended to do anything about it in the new Assessment Act.

Mr. McKeough agreed that farmers were being assessed too high — \$1,500 an acre — but assured the questioner that fruit and vegetable land was worth three times as much as ordinary farm land such as pasture. He said the government hoped to afford some relief for farmers but there was no indication of what form it would take.

The minister said he preferred to assess farm land on the basis of market value but felt the government had been worrying too much about getting speculators and taxing their profits and not spending enough time on taxation.

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ONE PERSON WAS INJURED and the solid masonry walls were destroyed when an explosion at the Robert St. pumping station rocked the area early Sunday morning. The force of the blast blew out the masonry walls and raised the roof of the small building. Firefighters are seen here controlling the fire that followed the explosion.—(Staff Photo)

## Storm drenches area floods roads, basements

A blinding rain Saturday flooded ditches, and basements, overran culverts and stream banks, undermined railway banks and mired heavy construction equipment while lightning blew fuses, started a barn fire and knocked out transformers.

An afternoon rain gained intensity dumping an estimated four to five and a half inches on the Milton area.

The Sixteen Mile Creek by the Fulton St. treatment plant went over its banks flooding the road to the plant and the municipal works building.

Water cascaded over the entrance road to Johnson Bros. Trucking, off highway 25 and Main St. east of Martin accumulated inches of water across its width while vehicles splashed through.

Mill St., east of Bronte was flooded and works crews moved in large pumping equipment to relieve the problem there.

Heavy equipment, silent for the weekend on the trunk sewer project, was mired where it rested between the CPR tracks and Woodward Ave. A generator was swept into the stream by the force of the current and on Sunday the heavy equipment was winched out.

Where the construction crew on the sewer project was boring under the CPR their 14 foot deep work hole as well as their 55 foot tunnel was completely filled with water.

At Millside Drive the stream exceeded the height of the road and ran across the surface.

A 100 foot section of the bank on the main line of the CPR at Kelso was washed out as

well as a section of the siding in the same area.

Mayor Brian Best estimated there must have been 100 basements flooded during the storm, many for the first time. He noted that some usually flooded were dry. On Monday at Milton Council he reported former Deputy Reeve C. Menefy on Bell St. had a completely dry basement. Mr. Menefy had experienced considerable water problems in earlier years from sewer back ups.

Main St. stores in the area from Milton Department Store to Ledwith's suffered water damage and Milton Hardware reported about six inches of water in their basement.

Brancier's Jewellery reported a foot to two feet in their basement after water gathered in an unused basement entrance,

forced its way into the lower level.

Johnson Bros. on Main St. at the junction of the two branches of the Sixteen was hit with water in the basement.

In the rural areas a small bridge was washed out on the fifth line in Esquesing just south of five sideroad and a portion of the Base Line Road west of Tremaine Road was closed to traffic because of washouts.

One of the worst areas was on Derry Road and the Sixth Line in Oakville where more than four feet of water, up to 300 feet wide flooded a portion of the Trafalgar Golf course and nearby farm lands.

At Homby Park flooding caused considerable damage and park benches carried by the high water crest through a culvert under highway 401 were found three miles from the park.

### Minister admits

# GOV'T. APPLIES BRAKES ON REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

It was billed as a dialogue on municipal government reform with discussions on the new Assessment Act but the emphasis at last Thursday's confrontation between four Ontario cabinet ministers and 200 municipal representatives from Halton, Peel, Wellington and Dufferin counties was on regional government proposals.

Most of it was a reshuffle of previous meetings with little new information but it was obvious the deadline for regional government in the Peel-Halton area was substantially slowed down by events of the past few months.

A warm, humid, summer afternoon at the Riviera club in Norval was the setting for the meeting which turned into a series of individual complaints from several municipalities and very few references to the Assessment Act. Several people left before the two hour meeting at the three-quarter mark.

Provincial Treasurer Charles McNaughton, Municipal Affairs Minister Darcy McKeough, Education Minister Bill Davies and New Energy And Resources Minister George Kerr represented the cabinet while almost 200 mayors, Reeves, councillors and administrators threw questions, which the ministers fielded.

Also present in a supporting role for the government were M.P.'s John Root, Jim Snow,

Harry Worton and Rev. A. W. Downer.

Questioners were free to pick their own material, step to the microphone and ask questions which the different ministers answered in respect to their own departments.

Darcy McKeough took over at second base, fielding most of the questions. He insisted the province wants to shift some of its decision making powers back into the hands of the municipalities and modernize the municipal structure designed 120 years ago. The difference between town and country are only marginal today, he claimed.

"We should be strengthening local government," Mr. McKeough said, "and get the decision making out of Queen's Park and back into local hands.

Therefore we need a stronger community. We now have too many," the minister asserted.

Mr. McKeough defended his regional government proposals as being closer to the principles of "rep by pop" than present division lines. He said the municipality which is in the 8-10,000 figure can afford professional help and start to



MAYOR BRIAN BEST of Milton waits for an answer after asking Energy and Resources Minister George Kerr what he intends to do about the erosion on the Niagara escarpment.—(Staff Photo)

become an efficient unit of administration.

He told Mayor Brian Best of Milton that there was no time table for the establishment of regional government in Halton and Peel. "The counties want to look further at the relationships between the two. They are also awaiting the results of the Steele report which is expected ahead of time table, probably in October. It will make some important recommendations on the advisability of Burlington joining Hamilton-Wentworth or staying within the Halton-Peel orbit.

"We haven't been pushing because the atmosphere has not been conducive to talking about regional government in the last two or three months," McKeough admitted.

The Milton mayor also asked Energy and Resources Minister George Kerr when positive action on the Niagara escarpment was going to be taken and what form it would take.

Mr. Kerr concurred with Mr. Best that the Milton area had been hit hard by quarry operations. A report has been submitted to the department, he said, and the committee would

soon be making recommendations. He thought conservation authorities, local municipalities and his department could acquire land on the escarpment to prevent erosion. He promised to visit Mayor Best soon to investigate the problem more thoroughly.

Mayor Best declined to give Mr. Kerr the names of offending quarries. No plans to extend the vote to immigrants here less than five years were contemplated Mr. Best was also told.

Mr. Kerr also answered the Milton Mayor's question on central incineration by stating that the government had no plans to assist municipalities to purchase incinerators.

"It's another area where regional government will help," Mr. Kerr felt. "We're fast running out of land fill sites and I think incineration is the answer."

Mr. Best criticized the government's policy, drawing up rules which the municipalities could not afford to act on, referring specifically to legislation prohibiting dump burning.

Jim Archdekin, deputy-reeve of Brampton, was told that fire

development might take place over which the municipality would not have any control.

A by-law provision prohibiting the parking of a house trailer and boat trailer in a drive way for more than 72 hours each month was drawn to council's attention by Councillor Smillie. He maintained it was discriminating against the individual who owned both.

Slight amendments were approved removing any time limit on parking a trailer in the rear yard but retaining it for side or front yard parking.

Tighter control was approved for buildings to be built facing highway 25 and highway 401 so council would have an opportunity to consider the appearance of proposed construction and its harmony with the area.

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TORRENTS OF WATER washed the bank under a section of siding on the CPR main line at Kelso Saturday. A section of the main line bank 100 feet long was also eroded and had to be replaced Sunday morning after the four inch downpour hit the Milton area Saturday.—(Staff Photo)