

Halton closer to gaining more NEC power

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Ms Johnston freely admitted she only employed the tactic because she hoped to turn the vote around when more councillors sympathetic to her cause, absent for the initial ballot, returned to the council table at a subsequent meeting.

In the meantime, the NELC cause received an unexpected boost with the release of a hearing panel report on Niagara Escarpment Commission operations.

The panel recommended development control be delegated to regional and county governments along the 725-kilometre escarpment.

Support status quo

Since the hearing panel text was released two weeks ago, POWER and others supporting the status quo with regard to the NEC have scrambled to control damage, saying the panel had overstepped its bounds because the issue of development control was not part of its mandate.

Only one regional councillor changed his vote in the interim between the early March meeting and last Wednesday, Oakville's Stephen Sparling. But that was enough.

The votes of all three absent councillors — Halton Hills Mayor Russ Miller and Burlington councillors Ralph Scholtens and Doug Greenaway — gravitated to the pro-delegation side.

That, plus Ms Johnston's reversion and Mr. Sparling's conversion, guaranteed Ms Johnston 13 votes in the 24-member assembly even though Burlington councillor Bob Brechin, who supports delegation, was absent.

"I believe the real issue we have here today is one of fairness, accountability, objectivity and duplication of service," Ms Johnston said.

"The lives of the people who are landowners on the escarpment have been made very complicated and exceedingly difficult" because of the NEC, Ms Johnston added. "They have been forced to live with an extra level of government that the rest of us don't have to live with."

Burlington Mayor Walter Mulkeiwich said one could find fault with the decision making process in any government organization with some research, as the NELC has attempted to do with the NEC. But it is "an illogical jump in thinking" to propose abolishing an agency's control powers

because of that.

Mr. Mulkeiwich also warned that having Halton take over a large share of the NEC responsibility would mean tapping regional taxpayers for more money (the NEC is largely funded by the provincial government).

Adds to tax bill

"This automatically adds to the tax bill," Mr. Mulkeiwich warned. Among elected officials, "everyone who is talking about bringing taxes down is going to have to do some pretty fancy footwork. It does not make sense and it's going to come back to haunt you."

Halton is but one of many lobbying stops for the NELC, which hopes to eventually present the provincial government with documentation stating that the majority of regions and counties within the shadow of the escarpment favour delegation of development control.

Provincial Minister of the Environment Bud Wildman is on record as opposing delegation, but Halton Regional Chairman Peter Pomeroy said he feels the minister will probably want to reconsider that in light of the hearing panel report.

Youth charged with threatening witness

A Milton youth faces charges after a witness who was to testify in a trial was threatened.

Regional police say the witness, a Mississauga youth, received a phone call from another youth who threatened him with bodily harm if he testified in a trial.

A 16-year-old Miles Street youth has been charged with uttering threats and attempting to obstruct justice. He's also currently facing break and enter charges.

Counsellor took in teenager, says woman

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thought I would have a lot of fun." The woman said she first started feeling uncomfortable around Mr. Hackett at his home when he came into her room to comfort her after she had a bad dream.

"He sat down in my bed and we were talking. He encouraged me and comforted me, and rubbed my back."

But she became confused, she testified, when Mr. Hackett moved his hand under her pajamas, touching the skin of her back while they were hugging. That winter, his advances became more intense when he tried to teach her to French kiss, court heard.

"He kissed me and touched my breasts. He gave me a French kiss. You know, the tongue. That was my first kiss. I had never been kissed before," she said.

"At first I was shocked, and then I liked it. Then I was shocked. My feelings kept going back and forth."

One time, Mr. Hackett asked her get undressed and put on a robe, she said. Then, he asked her to open it in front of him.

"He looked me up and down. I was so embarrassed but I didn't say anything. I just had to take it. He was bigger, my guidance counsellor, and a Christian. I was chicken."

Another time, he pushed her down on a bed in a spare room and kissed her, but said they couldn't have intercourse. Mr. Hackett told her to "save yourself until you get married," she told the court.

In his car and swimming pool, he often fondled her breasts and genital area, court heard.

"He never asked me if he could touch my body," she said angrily. "He was just being a pig — using my body."

"He never asked me to touch his body," she continued after questioning from Crown Attorney Katherine Livingstone-Pickett. "I never touched his body."

The woman testified she was afraid to tell people about the fondling and didn't think they would believe her.

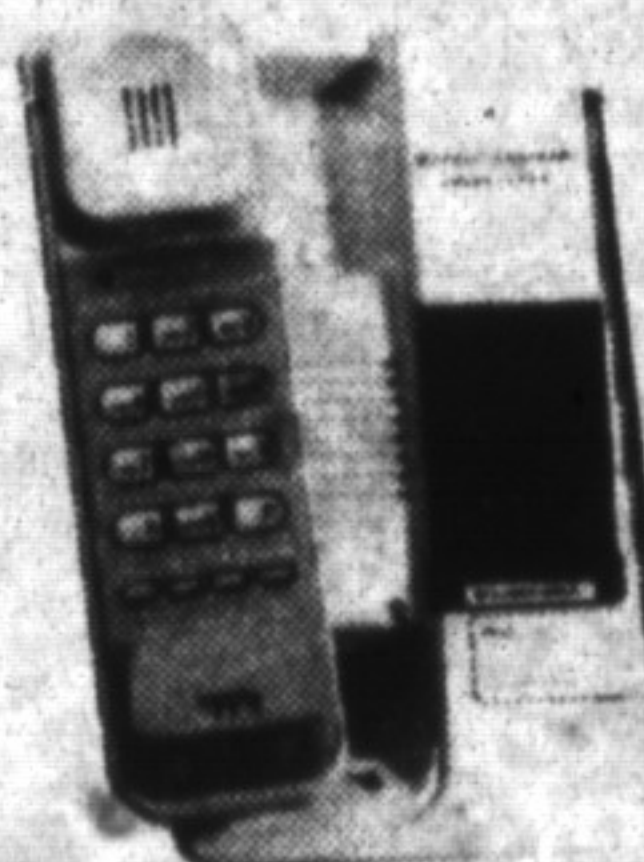
"He was a friend of my family. I didn't know what to do," she said while fighting back tears. "I kept it to myself before letting it all go about two years ago."

She moved out of Mr. Hackett's home in June, 1972 to go to a different school, court heard.

A gross indecency charge also laid against Mr. Hackett in the case was dropped last month. The trial continues today and is expected to last two weeks.

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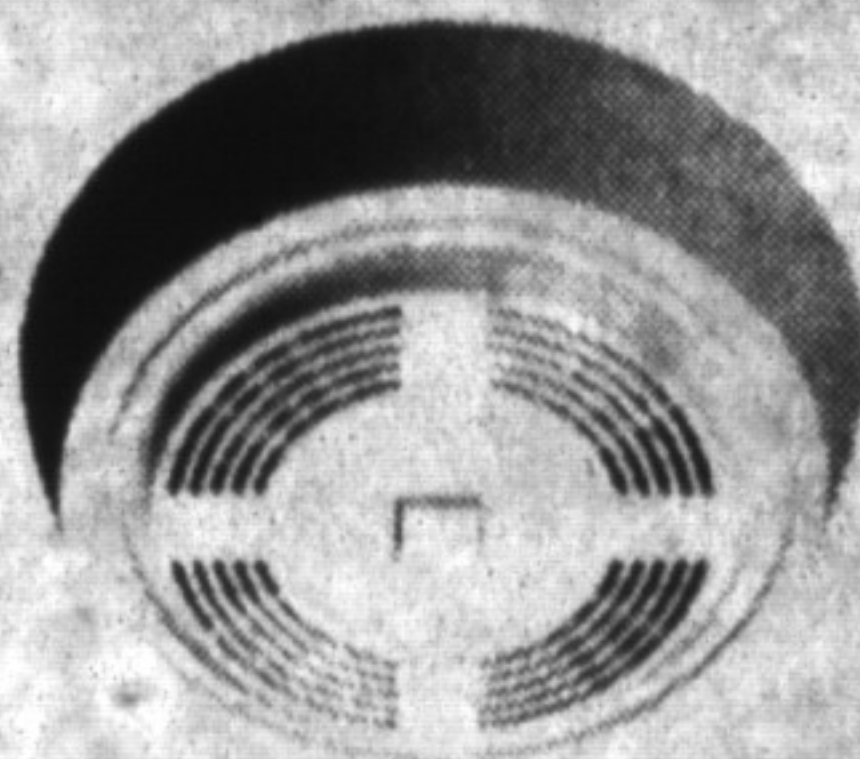
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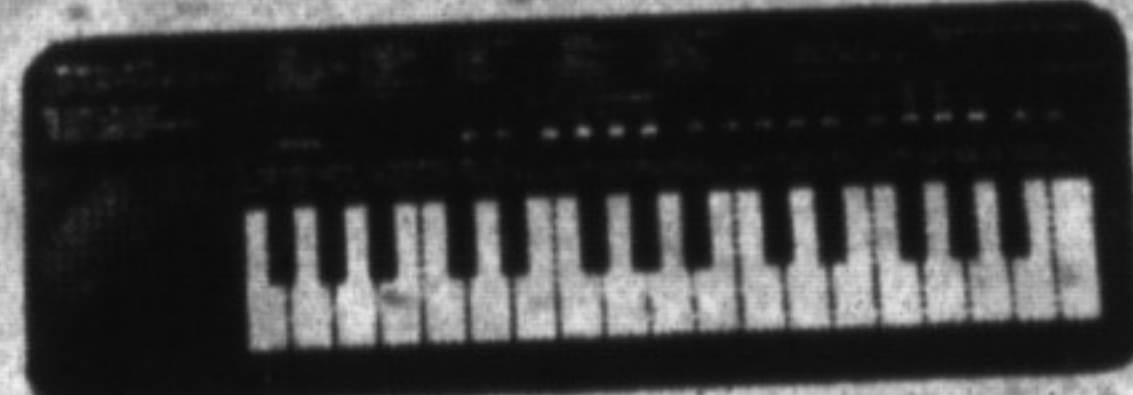
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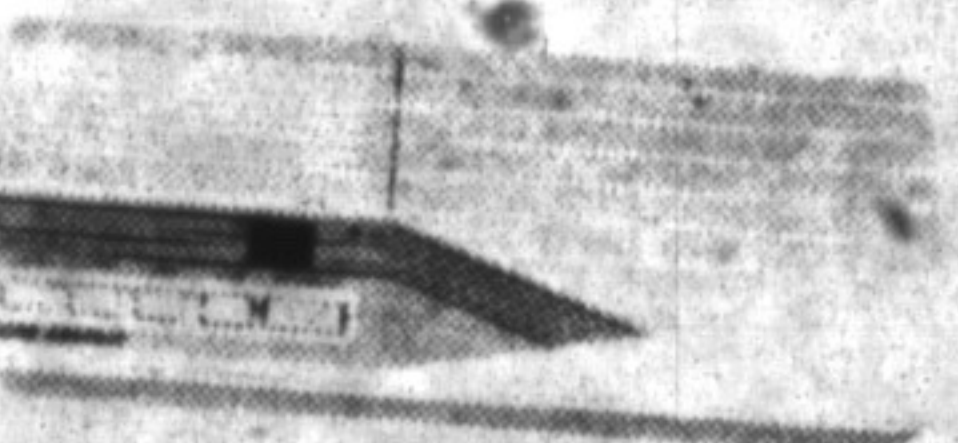
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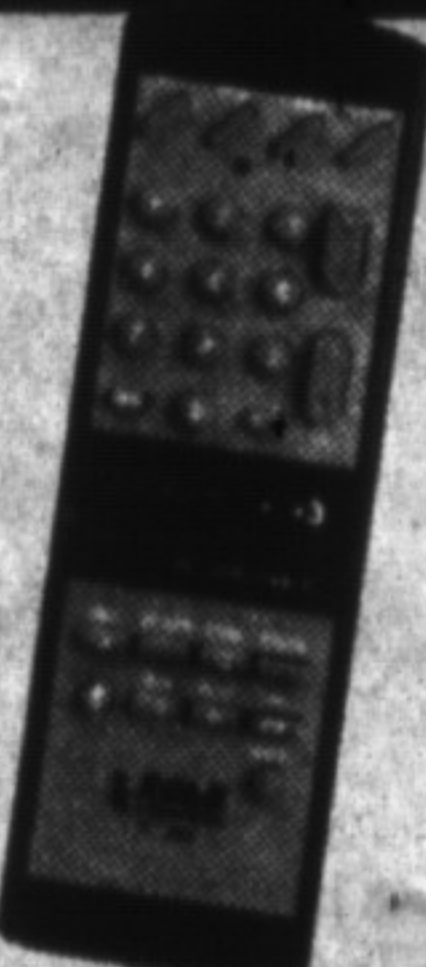
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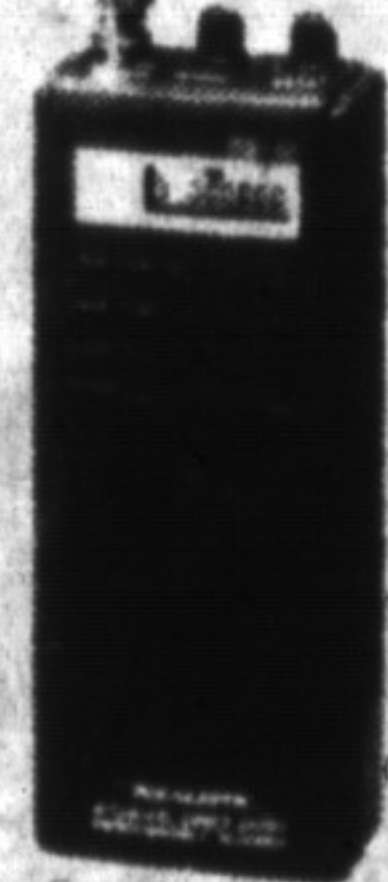


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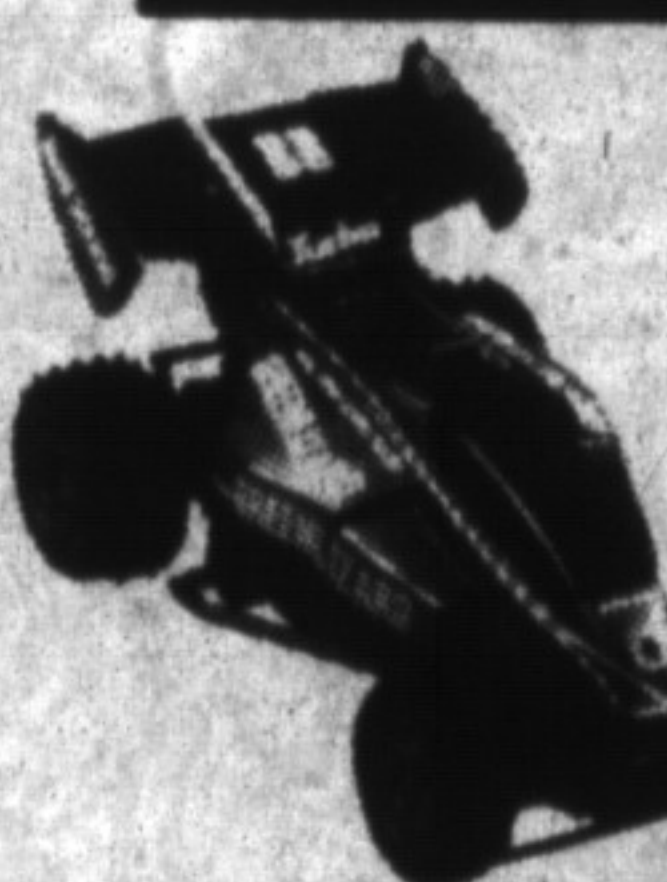
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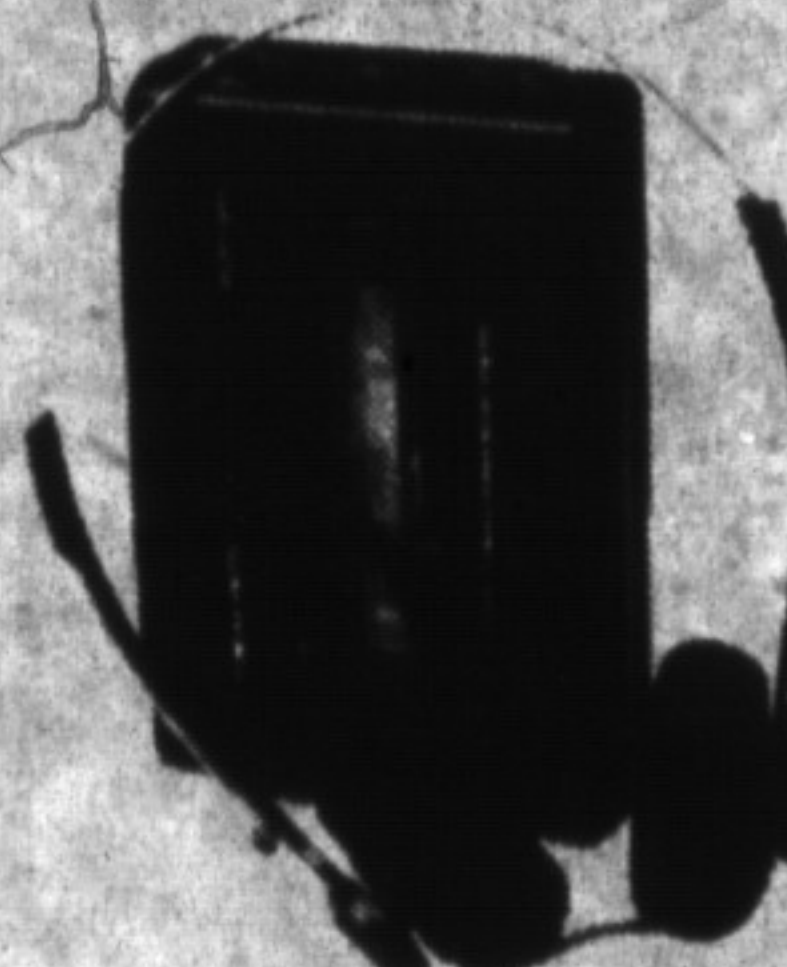
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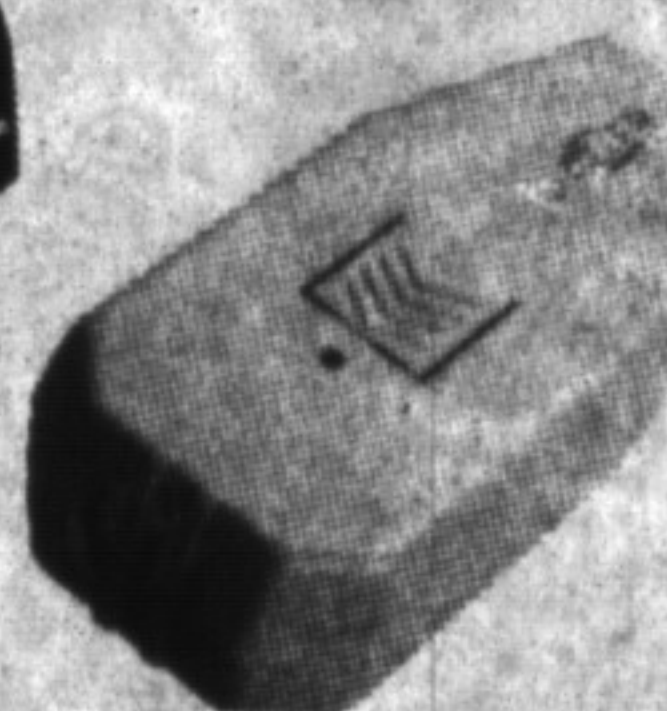
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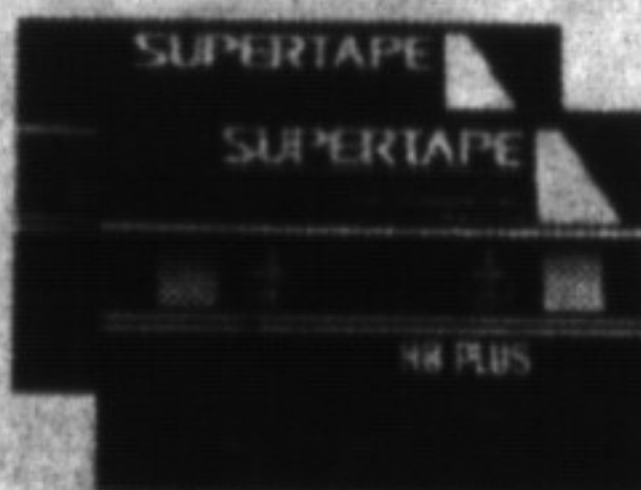
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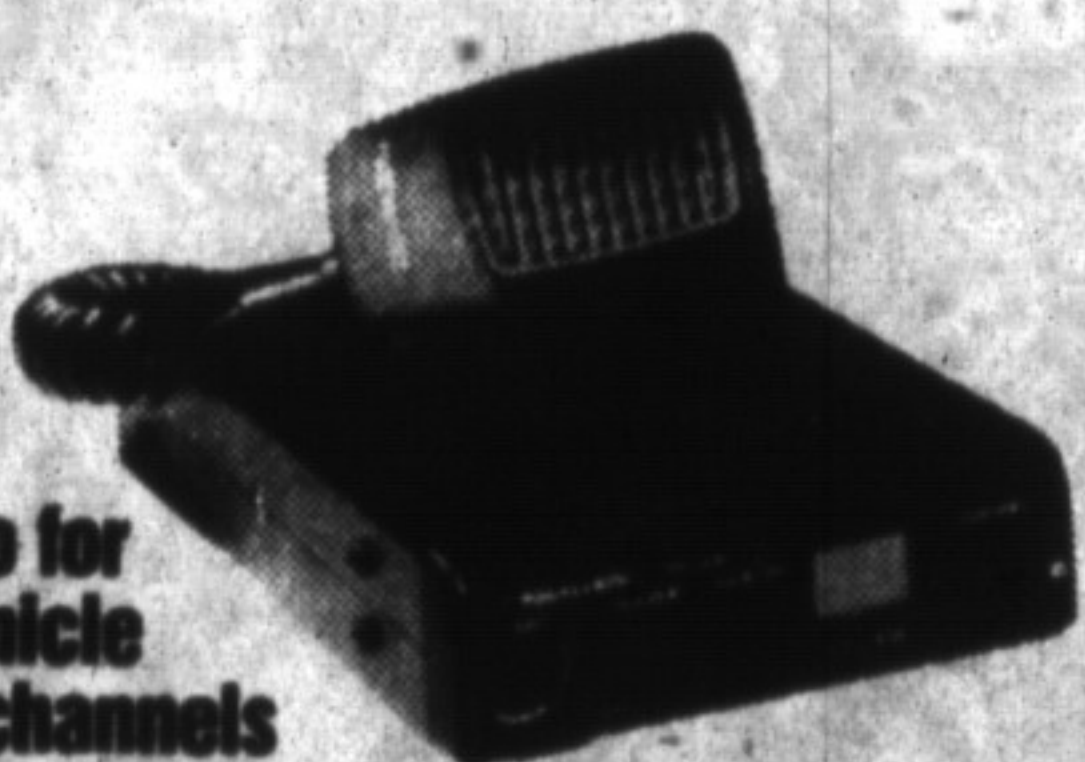
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