

FINE PRINT

The Newsletter of the
Ecology Action Centre

Room 20-A, Forrest Building,

Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S. 422-4311

QH
540
F5
N.1
SP.
Coll.

April 12, 1973 No. 1

This paper contains recycled de-inked fibre.

Transportation Scheme

A relatively detailed transit scheme entitled "Halifax Public Transit Proposal and future transportation" was presented to Halifax Committee of the Whole Council last week. The 51 page document was tabled for discussion for a period of two months while public input is sought. The Committee voted to "make the report available to the public and interested groups and organizations throughout the city", and to request that written reactions to the report be submitted to Council.

The report originated in the Halifax Traffic Engineering department and considers such radical alternatives as monorail, special bus lanes, and a high speed transit loop connecting the city's major activity generators. Unfortunately, it is all too clear that the report's author - apparently city traffic engineer Bob Cheboyer - "considers any of the extreme transit positions unjustified and can see little room for middle-ground positions between the auto and transit."

Nevertheless, the report does bring to light a number of possibilities for the future of Halifax. Also, it should help provide a climate for long awaited discussions on transit with the City Fathers. Copies of the report are, presumably, available from the City Engineering Department.

The E.A.C. Transportation Team expects to have a written brief concerning as many aspects of the proposal as possible within a few weeks. We are interested in meeting with any individuals or groups concerned with the adoption of an effective proposal.

Energy Forum Transcript

On Friday, April 6, at Dalhousie University, Premier Regan, Eric Kierans, Mel Watkins, David Furlong, and Roland Harrison debated the issue of energy resources in Nova Scotia and Canada. Many points were discussed. E.A.C. taped the proceedings and we're trying to prepare a transcript of the evening. Time and money permitting, written copies should be available within a few weeks. The transcript will be of interest to anyone concerned about the future development of our energy resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION KIT FOR TEACHERS -- Produced by Pollution Probe, Ottawa, and adapted for Nova Scotia by the E.A.C., the Kit is for teachers of grades 4,5 & 6. It is available from the Centre for \$2.00.

ENVIRONMENT ACT

Nova Scotia's long overdue Environmental Protection Act cleared its final hurdle before third reading and subsequent proclamation on Tuesday, 3 April, when it was reviewed by the Law Amendments Committee. This draft of the Act gives far less power to the citizens' council (Environmental Control Council) than does the original version considered last year. Although more than one dozen briefs were presented to the Law Amendments Committee by the public, requesting a restoration of the powers in the Environment Department for the E.C.C., this plea went unheeded by the Committee. The Act was returned to the House virtually unchanged.

It was pointed out in the briefs that the provision for compulsory consultation with the Council before important Ministerial decisions, and publication of the Council's recommendations to the Minister, would better enable the Minister to make decisions based on a total understanding of any issue and, particularly, the priorities of the public on the affected area. These arguments were dismissed by the Law Amendments Committee.

The Act now places responsibility for the protection of our environment solely on one man. Furthermore, this man is not legally bound to carry out the provisions of the Act to meet its primary purpose. Perhaps the major result of this Act will be to eliminate private legal rights for a healthy environment and to preclude any possibility of public hearings and environmental impact studies prior to major developments. Although disappointed, the E.A.C. will work with Mr. Bagnell and will look for improvements in the Act next year.

Herbicide Study

Last year, the Nova Scotia government stopped provincial crown corporations from using herbicides as defoliants along rights of way. To determine whether or not this ban should be maintained, the Nova Scotia research Foundation has been commissioned to do a study to determine the persistence of herbicides and their possible side effects.

Should you have any suggestions that might help with the study, such as the names of people who might have pertinent data, specific examples of damage or pollution caused by herbicides, and tests which the Foundation should make on plants and soil, please write to the Nova Scotia Research Foundation, 100 Fenwick Street, Box 790, Dartmouth, N.S.

It would be appreciated if you would also send a copy of your letter to the Ecology Action Centre.



Fine Print is meant to inform people of what the Ecology Action Centre is doing, of the publications and information available through the E.A.C., and of events of environmental significance throughout the province. We expect to publish it in future only as required, rather than on any periodic schedule. You can have Fine Print sent to you free by writing or calling the Ecology Action Centre and asking to be put on our mailing list, or by becoming a member of the Ecology Action Centre.

During the past year over 250 families have steadily supported recycling in Halifax-Dartmouth by carrying 60 tons of paper to the Recycling Depot to be turned into new boxboard (for shoe boxes etc.). The Depot, open on Saturdays only, is run by a volunteer Recycling Committee with the help of one full time staff member. It is located beside the Citadel Inn in Halifax.

Nuclear Power Plant in N.S.

On April 3, a public meeting was held by the Recycling Committee for the purpose of answering questions on recycling and discussing future action to increase recycling in Nova Scotia. At that meeting several new volunteers offered to help the Recycling Committee. Two new projects may arise out of the meeting: to recycle disposable textbooks in Halifax schools, and to pressure for a provincial law to control non-returnable beverage containers.

Negotiations have been initiated between the provincial government and U. S. developers over the construction of a 12,000 megawatt nuclear power plant complex on Stoddard Island, Shelburn County, to provide electricity to the New England states via underwater cable. The plant would consist of ten American style light water reactors which, for the past few years, have been the subject of extreme controversy in the U.S. The risk of possible explosions in the reactor due to a failure in the cooling system has resulted in the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission withholding licenses from 97 such reactors.

Recycling is essential in our affluent society to decrease pressure on natural resources as well as to decrease pollution problems in our cities. Although the Recycling Committee's original goals were to increase recycling in Halifax - Dartmouth and to educate the public, extensive recycling locally has been limited by a lack of nearby markets (companies able to use material).

Despite recent statements by South Shore representative Lloyd Crouse that no formal application for such a plant has yet been made to the Atomic Energy Control Board in Ottawa, it has been confirmed that informal discussions have been held, and that feasibility studies for the project are currently being conducted.

We have learned that the federal government is in the best position to speed up recycling, but that all three levels of government can help. To date, Environment Canada has stated good intentions but has adopted no policies to promote recycling. The Recycling Committee will be recommending specific government action in the coming months.

The official policy of the provincial government has been to maintain secrecy; the citizens of Nova Scotia have been told nothing of the project. The public must be involved in the issue to determine if the project will be to their benefit. Therefore, *all information regarding the proposal must be made public immediately.*

The Depot will remain open at least until June 1. After that date it will either remain open or be replaced by periodic paper drives. It is important that a maximum number of supporters take their paper to the Depot between now and June 1.

There exists a potential for a project of this magnitude to disrupt both the economy and the way of life of the people of the Shag Harbour area. *Consequently, before the proposed project is approved, it must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of all concerned that any changes in the economy resulting from the plant would be of long term benefit to the residents of the area.*

Anyone wishing to help the Recycling Committee by manning the Depot, helping to present our requests to government, telephoning, aiding with publicity, or by working on one of the projects mentioned, should write or telephone the E.A.C. The best method of simply supporting recycling is to take your waste paper to the Recycling Depot. However, if that is impossible, phone the Centre and leave your name.

In light of the potential for extreme environmental disruption by the project, *objective studies which would consider the effects of thermal pollution on the marine ecology must be undertaken.* Particularly, approval must not be considered until it is proven that there will be *no adverse effects upon the local lobster fishing industry.*

Copies of "Recycling!", a new booklet published by the Recycling Committee, explaining background, local information and government policies, can be obtained from the E.A.C.

Finally, *a decision on the project must reflect the concern of the general public over the dangers of radioactivity.* Given the preponderance of expert opinion which questions the safety of nuclear power -- to the extent that this proposed nuclear power plant is not acceptable in the U.S. -- it is difficult for us to imagine how a decision could be made favouring its construction on Stoddard Island.

BOOK BOX

The Centre is collecting used books for resale or recycling. Books can be dropped off at the Recycling Depot, at the Ecology Action Centre office in the basement of the Forrest Building at Dalhousie, or in Book Boxes located in the Student Unions at Dal and St. Mary's.

We need your support on this issue. If you agree with all or any of the above conclusions, write Premier Regan and tell him so.

The Ecology Action Centre has prepared a policy statement on the proposed plant, as well as an information packet (No. 1) on nuclear power. It consists of a series of six articles by the Nuclear Power Study Group, reprinted from the Halifax Chronicle Herald, an article by Hatti Prentiss on the same subject, reprinted from the Scotian Journalist, as well as a bibliography of material on nuclear energy. Copies of both are available from us. If they will be of help to you or anyone you know, write for them. We must let Premier Regan know that we are concerned and that we want all information on the subject made public immediately.

All publications and information mentioned in this newsletter can be obtained by contacting the Ecology Action Centre, Room 20-A, Forrest Building, Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S. Publications are free of charge unless otherwise specified.

Much of our literature is sent automatically to our members. Our membership list helps give us an idea of the support we have, and membership fees help pay our expenses for supplies, printing, mailing, etc. You can become a member of the Ecology Action Centre by sending \$2.00 to the above address.