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August 23, 1983

Ministry of the Environment
135 St. Clair Avenue West
Toronto, Ontario M4V 1P5.

Attention: Andrew Brandt, M.P.P.
Minister

Dear Mr. Minister:

Re: Solid Waste Disposal

At a recent Ontario Waste Management public meeting, we met representatives of your department and discussed with them some of the problems that are currently facing us in Halton Region. At that time, they suggested that our committee submit a brief to you regarding any suggestions we might have toward reaching a long term solution to the handling of solid waste in the Region.

Our committee evolved not simply as a parochial protest group but from widely shared concern about problems which were piling up just as the waste was:

- 1) a heavy concentration of landfill disposal sandwiched between the escarpment and a prime residential area on Burlington Bay
- 2) although the site appears to be designed and operated well, with provision for future care, the prospect of future problems looms large as experience from other sites has shown
- 3) we are currently facing major problems and costs regarding an adjacent site closed in 1972, in which leachate is advancing on the residential area.
- 4) The Region of Halton is caught without any established alternatives as the present landfill site is approaching its capacity limit. While planning efforts began about nine years ago, they were stymied by lengthy procedures and failure to anticipate obstacles. Meanwhile, other landfill sites in the Region have reached their capacity and closed, leaving the present site in our area as the only one receiving all of the solid waste from Halton Region. It is slated for closure in March-June, 1984. We are afraid that for lack of alternatives at that time, we will see an expansion of this site into areas over which there is concern - e.g. another groundwater slope. In addition, we are faced with the opening of yet another landfill site, adjacent to the present one, if National Sewer Pipe is successful in gaining approval. We are long past NIMBY.

On the positive side, we are actively helping in the search for a suitable long term solution and are strongly in favour of an Energy from Waste approach

which we consider to more promising than yet another landfill somewhere: the social costs are lower and the dollar costs not prohibitive over the long term. Besides, the required capital outlay does not necessarily have to be provided by the public purse. There are successful EFW projects operating now which are mainly corporate enterprises with governments having helped to smooth the way and/or by assisting with the development of technology.

In conjunction with EFW, source separation of materials for recycling is not only desirable but to some degree necessary to lower the processing costs. We advocate a serious and continued effort to establish it as a normal routine in population centres. Currently, a selected group of households in our area is taking part in a pilot project and is reporting a 77% success rate.

The EFW technology deals almost exclusively with incineration plus steam production. The newer designs have overcome initial problem areas and trend has changed from those of increasing complexity to simpler and more reliable designs and even greater flexibility in work load. A major obstacle is finding suitable steam users in fairly close proximity. In that regard, a single large facility is harder to place than a number of smaller, less complex ones that could serve heating, air conditioning and low power users. Small units do not require a large waste transport network. One could certainly not compete with Ontario Hydro with electric power, however, there could be industrial plants that would find a fuel gas of low heating value useful. In this case, the waste could be pyrolyzed, i.e. gasified by the heat generation. Accordingly, we see the smaller EFW plants as having a better chance of finding application and general acceptance than the larger plants.

We have some comments with regard to the role that government might play in the search for alternatives. Elected representatives are being faced with the multiple hurdles of a) pioneering something new, b) justifying costs in a long term commitment containing uncertainties, c) dealing with complex technological decisions. Although the Ontario government is committed to other forms of disposal rather than landfill, we can foresee a decision being made to do just that. Leadership, guidance and assistance by the government are clearly needed to break the ice as well as to coordinate projects that may not fit within regional boundaries. Such action is needed now.

As you are no doubt aware, the options regarding EFW are growing rapidly. One that has recently come to our attention would be most suitable for this area. Burlington has been noted for market garden capabilities although the land is fast disappearing under urban sprawl. An EFW facility could be built to serve large greenhouse growers with heat in winter and cold storage refrigeration in summer. There is no reason why this could not be profitable when one compares the cost of imported fruits and vegetables - not only are we losing because of the exchange on the dollar but transportation costs will continue to rise. Such a plant is now operating in Manitoba and homegrown tomatoes are available in the winter for the first time. Other government ministries, both provincial and federal, could provide input for ventures such as this: agriculture, business development, consumer and corporate affairs, commerce and trade, etc.

The point to be made is that the Region's government obviously needs this coordination to launch projects such as this, and the provincial government is just as obviously the one to provide it. This should include financial

assessments to be used for attracting private capital as industrial initiatives account for most of the successful EFW projects in the U.S., large and small.

Thank you for this opportunity to state some of our views. We hope that they will provide some additional input toward the solving of the monumental problem currently facing Halton Region and ultimately many other communities.

Yours truly,

Sid Chumley
Chairman

Solid Waste Management Committee

West Burlington Citizens Group

Hans Kreplin, P. Eng.

Solid Waste Management Committee

cc: W. Mulkewich, Ward I Alderman

J. Cowman, Ward I Alderman

M.H. Boggs, C.A.O., City of Burlington