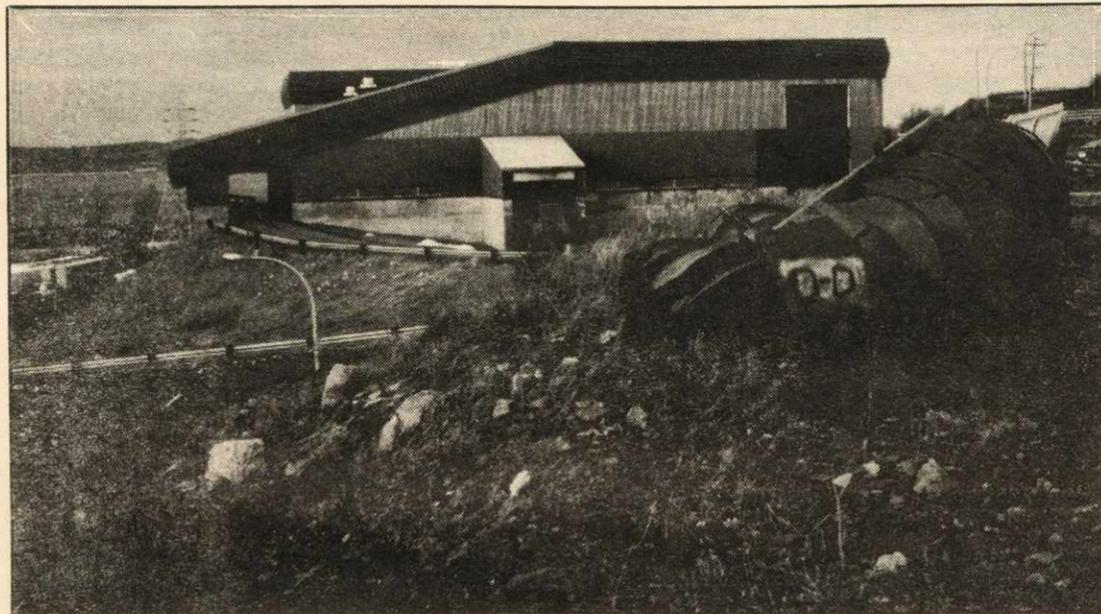


continued from page 1

Lawrence said the danger in the incineration process is dependent on what is burned and how close one is to the incinerator.

Lawrence's assurances were contradicted by members of the "It's Not Garbage" coalition, a citizen's group opposing the incinerator. According to their "Five Good Reasons Not to Burn", incineration has been formally opposed by the American Public Health Association (APHA). The APHA reports "evidence of increased emissions of heavy metals into the environment, their concentrations in the food chain and the danger to public health."



Dal photo: Rochelle Owen

## Incinerator

*This is where your garbage is collected to go to the landfill. Unfortunately they seem to have missed a few small pieces.*

Steven Salwell, an environmental scientist with Environment Canada, spoke about the incineration process and the National Incineration testing and Evaluation Program. Established in 1984, this program examines the impact of incineration on health and the environment. It advocates an optimum incinerator design which is expected to limit emissions.

Salwell described the four emissions a typical incinerator for solid waste will release: acid gases such as sulfuric dioxide, (the largest contributor to acid rain), combustion gases including carbon dioxide, (the greatest of the Greenhouse gases), particulates such as mercury and lead, and trace organics such as purines.

In terms of the products of incineration, Salwell said that bottom ash, the residue of the incineration process, "is a benign substance, it isn't a problem, it can be landfilled." He admitted, however, that the much more toxic fly ash, emitted during incineration, "is a problem."

The third speaker the MA had invited was Ron Albrecht, an American waste management consultant.

According to Albrecht, there are four parts to an environmentally sound waste management process: waste reduction, composting, incineration and landfilling.

"The way you are approaching composting is right," Albrecht told the audience. "It's one of your options."

Environmentalists who attended the meeting disagreed with Albrecht. In an open-mike question period following the presentations, many audience members expressed the sentiment that composting is not just one alternative to be included with incineration, and seemed to doubt that incineration must be part of the new plan at all.

"First and foremost we must do waste reduction and resource recovery," said John Gordon, with the Ecology Action Centre and a member of the Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee.

Gordon called incineration a "quick and easy way out" and called for a twenty year moratorium on the plans for the incinerator.

The environmentalist's complaint against the incinerator is grounded in doubt that it is really needed. Those who oppose the city's plan sat that integrated, city-wide composting and recycling, education and legislated waste reduction are the environmentally sound alternative to the MA's plan.

Realistically recognizing that some material will remain after recycling and composting, it is highly doubtful that Halifax will generate enough of these materials to necessitate an incinerator.

The second point of contention in the incinerator debate is the accusation that the MA has been underhanded in their handling of the plan. The community Advisory Board presented their suggestions to the MA in July. The Authority is accused of sitting on the report until now, and announcing the incinerator plans only days before the decision deadline.

"Our report was delivered in July, 1990," said an angry John Gordon. "This is the first opportunity as a result of that report for any public dialogue on the recommendations made by that committee. The final decision on whether we incinerate or not is going to be made in 12 days. That leaves no time for consideration or to get our thoughts together. It is totally inappropriate."

Dal photo: Rochelle Owen



*Garbage carriers strike causes pile-up outside trash station gates.*

The incinerator is being partially justified on the grounds that it will generate power. This did not soothe one angry member of the audience, who called to Isenor, "This incinerator will generate 16 megawatts of power. OK, we'll do this, if you sell the power to Nova Scotia power and shut down Point Aconi!"

Other points raised by the audience included the idea that the resources irretrievably burned in the incinerator were needed; that composting has no adverse health affects; that the bottom ash generated is going to have to be landfilled anyway; and that other cities, including Seattle, have reduced the volume of their landfilled garbage by 25 per cent in one year by recycling and composting.

If such a program were attempted in Halifax, it could potentially extend the life of the Sackville landfill sight for many years, but cost far less than the incinerator and avoid the health and environmental risks posed by burning.

"We are committed to finding a waste management plan that meets our priorities of human health and environmental protection," said Isenor.

The angry crowd, which left the meeting having had an opportunity to address complaints to the people responsible, had considerable cause to question this commitment.

• continued from page 3

troops were sent to the Gulf. "The Prime Minister consulted only his war cabinet: contrast this to the fact that George Bush actively begged Congress for a majority vote [on the decision to send troops to the Gulf]."

• A group of thirty concerned Halifax students and community members raised \$3000.00 to produce and publish a review of issues involving the war.

*Perspective*, according to spokesperson Sandi Creighton "will be ready for distribution on Saturday. We're printing 30 000 so there'll be plenty of free copies for people. It includes a feminist perspective, an economic analysis, an historical synthesis, a literary analysis, a fact index and bibliography and a lot more very serious input. A wide range of groups on and off campus came together in this. DAL-PIRG, the Pearson Institute, The Gazette, the Dalhousie Student Union, the Canadian International Development Agency, Veterans Against Nuclear War, representatives from the black and micmac communities and many others contributed time and money".

• Tuesday night John Foster, National Secretary of OXFAM Canada, spoke at the Henson auditorium about the Gulf War and Poverty, as part of International Development week at Dalhousie. Foster discussed the plight of refugees fleeing, or trapped in the war zone. As well, he talked about the environmental impact of the war and its overall impact in draining world development aid resources into war expenditures.

Foster notes that before the war began the Persian Gulf was already forty three times more polluted than any ocean waterway in the world. His assessment of the ecological impact of the war suggested permanent, extensive ecological damage. The destruction of nuclear, chemical and biological facilities "would release intense plumes of toxic vapours, if these facilities have in fact been destroyed".

Workers' remittances disrupted and lost due to the war, Foster said, will have a "dramatic impact" on the economies of Sudan, Egypt, Bangladesh, Turkey, Egypt and Jordan. Bangladesh relied on remittances from workers in the Gulf region for one third of its income before the war. "These countries" he said, "are suffering tremendous impacts from the war. They consequently are in need of aid more than ever".

Foster stressed that twenty million or more people currently face famine in Africa. "Their needs are pushed out of our attention by the war" he said. Perhaps the most directly effective of the overwhelming statistical and factual perspective Foster gave of the war came when he said "the cost of twenty minutes of the U.S. war effort would be sufficient to introduce a literacy program to all of Central America".