

Maybe it is safe — but what if...

Canada has several nuclear generating stations presently in operation. The first station was built in the 1970s and, although it was recognized from the beginning that highly radioactive waste would be created, it seems the disposal problem was not a priority.

So now it's 1991 and guess who's got a whole bunch of dangerous waste to deal with? You're right, it's you.

But don't worry because the governments of Canada and Ontario have decided to develop the technology for a permanent disposal system that "...would not place the burden of managing the used fuel on future generations."

This is deep rock disposal. The idea is to

drill an underground network of tunnels and disposal rooms large enough to hold 191,000 tonnes of used fuel. Atomic Energy of Canada considers the prime place for permanent disposal to be the Canadian Shield.

After a mere 500 years, "...the penetrating radiation from a used fuel bundle will have decreased so much that people could be in the same room with it." However, some of the longer lived elements (such as Uranium 235) in the fuel waste give off radiation for billions of years. But this radiation is "...only harmful if ingested," so as long as it doesn't get into our air, water or food there will be no problem.

The most conceivable way for any of this radioactive material to reach the environ-

ment after burial in these nifty rooms, is if it dissolves and is transported through groundwater. But that won't be any problem because we can make "highly insoluble" containers that will be sure to last billions of years. Right?

Maybe deep rock disposal is the only way to store Canada's existing nuclear waste, or maybe it's not. Maybe it's even safe. But what if it isn't?

Whatever you think, you can get involved and have a say. This disposal option has been presented to the federal Minister of the Environment for review by an environmental assessment panel under. The panel has already held several public forums across the country. Apparently they were disappointed

with the lack of youth representation. (Did you hear of any such forums in this area? I certainly didn't.)

The government of Canada is developing their "permanent disposal system" so future generations will not have to bear the burden of managing nuclear waste, but I think it is about time that the future generation had some input into the decisions being made for our benefit.

The environmental assessment panel will hold more public hearings, so keep your ears and eyes open so that Canada's youth does not miss out on this phase of the disposal issue.

Lisa Mitchell

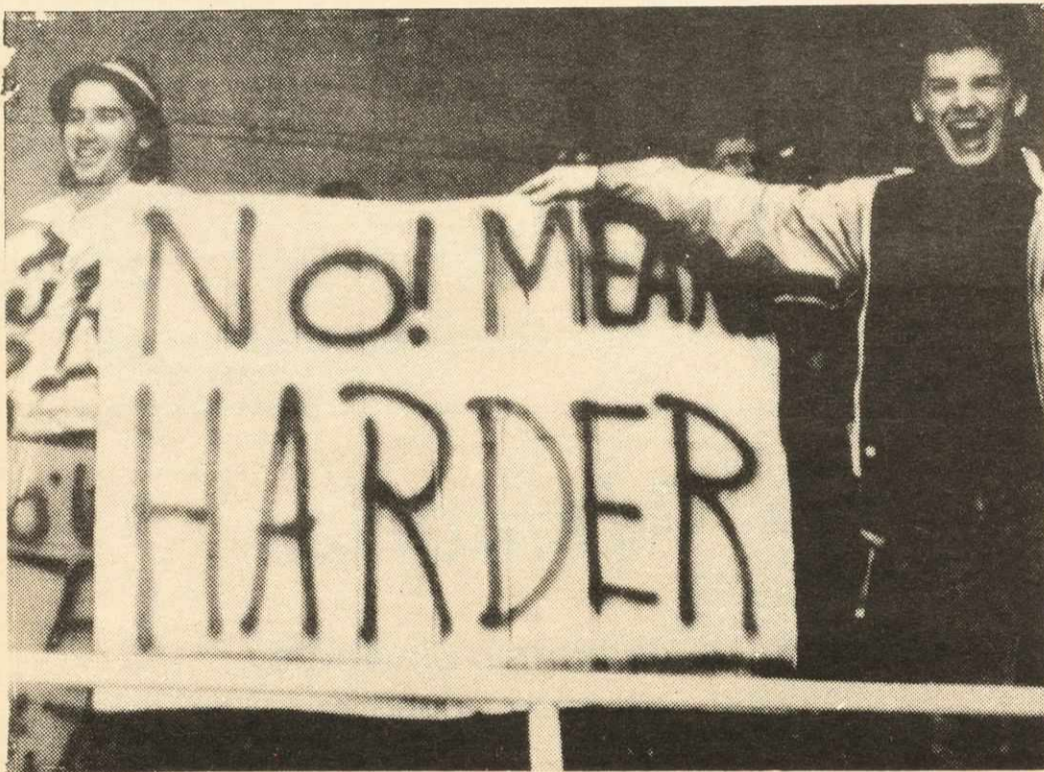


photo: Canadian Press

Sad But True — at a recent University of Waterloo hockey game, fans displayed their disdain for a campus anti-date rape campaign.

The more things change, the more they stay the same

LETTERS



Alter-Nader

To the editors:

Further to Steve Mills' otherwise excellent article ("PIRG Cleans Up", *Gazette* March 14,) I would like to make a couple of small corrections for the sake of historical accuracy.

Ralph Nader may, indeed, have denounced Ford's Edsel but, if he did, he went unheard — it was the public's studied indifference towards the Edsel which was its undoing. Nader's claim to fame (or notoriety, depending on which side one stood) came later and was based on his book *Unsafe at any Speed — the designed-in dangers of the American automobile*, first published by Grossman, New York, in 1965. This book was, without doubt, the single major factor in the withdrawal from the

market of General Motors' rear-engined Corvair and was the launching pad for Nader's subsequent career as a consumer advocate.

W.H. Lord, P.Eng.
Director
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Engineer retorts

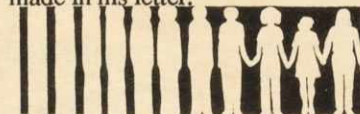
To the editors:

I would like to respond to a letter that was published in the *Gazette* on March 14/91. It would seem that John Carter, a student at the Maritime School of Social Work, felt that a "rumour" entitled him to don a halo and then pass judgement upon the entire Dalhousie Engineering Society.

To begin, I would like to state that this reply is not on behalf of the Engineering Society, but on my own accord. Secondly, to the students of the Maritime School of Social Work, I wonder why, if you

actually did, was John Carter elected as your spokesperson? Regardless, I assume that his remarks are his own and that they do not represent the entire Social Work Society.

Many people in social work, including my father, have told me that throughout their education they are encouraged not to form conclusions based on personal prejudices and never to assume things about others based on limited information. Because of this I was surprised that John Carter used the name of his society to follow such a ridiculous list of comments made in his letter.



It is because of Mr. Carter's childlike comments that I suggest that he should review the ethics of his profession. I would also suggest that, in any further communications, he leave his classmates uninvolved. He doesn't look good on them.

David Chaisson

Snowball silliness

To the editors:

I would like to take this opportunity to inform the *Gazette* of the results of the Dal/Kings Snow Ball Fight. In past years Dal/Kings have engaged in a FRIENDLY SNOWBALL FIGHT on the first snow fall of the year however, this year the results have been far from friendly.

On Jan 9 approximately 30 intoxicated Dal students arrived on Kings Campus and began to throw snowballs at the windows at approximately 2 am. On March 24 a second incident occurred. This time it included approximately 200 Dal students who threw snowballs at windows from approximately 11:30 pm to 3 am. The results of both incidents included broken windows, personal injuries, and a

feeling of terrorism was felt through out the Kings campus.

Do these Dal students not realize that there are innocent people on the other side of these windows? I am a Dal student living in Alexandra Hall. Like many Kings students, I spent many hours cleaning large chunks of glass out of my bed, clothes, and computer. Did these Dal students THINK of the consequences of their actions? If so, I do not understand their mentality.

If these are the kind of actions being displayed at Dalhousie then I am extremely embarrassed to be associated with this type of nonsense.

Lesley Evans

This is where we usually beg you to write typed, double-spaced, 250-word letters, but after this week, DON'T BOTHER, because this, alas is the *Gazette's* last issue of the year.

Adios!