

## NEWS

# Connett fans flames of incineration debate

BY JOEY GOODINGS

Metro Authority's decision to build an incinerator must be reversed, said Dr. Paul Connett, a professor of Chemistry from New York in speech at Dalhousie last Thursday.

Incineration of garbage releases hazardous chemicals such as mercury, hydrochloric acid, and sulphur dioxide into the air, and the remaining ash is considered hazardous toxic waste. Plans to build incinerators have been blocked through protests throughout North

America and Europe, and the Ontario government has issued a moratorium on municipal waste incinerators.

Connett said the decision to build an incinerator was undemocratic. "[Metro Authority] set up a citizen's advisory council and then proceeded to ignore their advice," he said.

"That isn't democracy."

The Solid Waste Management Public Advisory Committee advocated improved recycling and composting programs and rejected incineration.

"The sensible political strategy is to put this decision on hold. There is no opposition to recycling, composting, and sort separation. Why not go ahead with that and five years from now reconsider this decision?"

According to Connett, building an incinerator is not economically sound. Concerning waste management, Connett said, "...the approach of people is changing. The approach of industry is changing. Yet you are prepared to consider putting up over \$120 million—probably more like \$250 million—into a project which ties your hands for twenty years."

Connett says recycling and composting solutions make more sense in economic terms. "While operating costs may be high, the capital costs are low. Therefore, if something goes wrong with that strategy, you're not totally com-

mitted, you can still build an incinerator. But you can't do it the other way around."

Connett said incineration competes with recycling, and even if the waste stream is reduced, Metro would have to import garbage to maintain the operation of the incinerator. He believes the monetary benefits of selling power from the incinerator to the Nova Scotia Power Corporation are negligible when compared to the high costs of incineration.

Connett told the audience they should not accept Metro Authority's statement that the decision to build an incinerator is irreversible. In support of that view, a member of the audience said that the citizens of Orillia, Ontario overturned an "irreversible decision" to build an incinerator two years ago.

"It is preposterous to ever get yourself into a situation where you

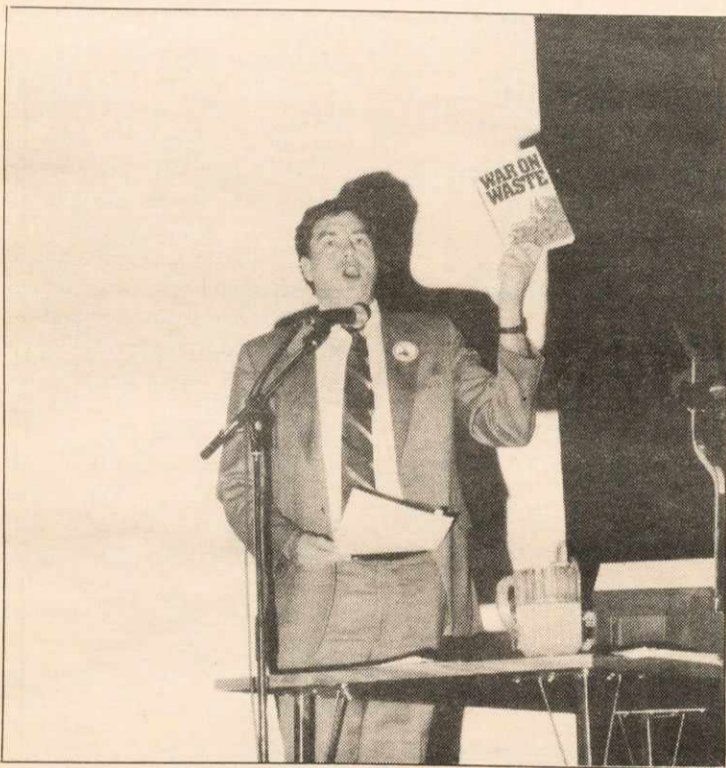
feel constrained to do what you consider to be the wrong thing," said Connett.

Connett believes the challenge of developing a sustainable society is the most important task for society.

"You cannot build a throw-away society on a finite planet," he said.

"I believe it is this question which will dominate our children's lives: How do we move towards a society which retains some of the good aspects of technological and scientific development yet still be sustainable?"

Dr. Paul Connett was sponsored by the Ecology Action Centre (EAC) in cooperation with Dal-PIRG. At the end of Connett's speech, the EAC encouraged people to volunteer to help stop incineration. Dal-PIRG is forming a working group concerned with incineration



Preaching against the evils of incineration.

## This ain't Clyde Wells country

BY JERRY WEST

Newfoundland Premier Clyde Wells faced a large and occasionally hostile crowd at Dalhousie's Law school on October 10.

Wells came to talk about the constitutional reform proposal, but ended up being a lightning rod for political discontent.

The Premier said "Newfoundland should not hold up the constitutional development of Canada."

He was greeted with groans of disbelief from the obviously parti-

san audience.

Wells' talk focused on the economic disparity between provinces and his promotion of a veto for Quebec on all motors affecting culture.

On senate reform he said that the second chamber of the house was supposed to be a place of "sober second thought."

"As its right now," he said, "we just try to keep them sober and hope they all have sober thoughts."

When Wells was finished speaking a large line of law students

formed at the microphone to ask some lengthy questions that bordered on speeches.

One of the views aired was that the overwhelming majority of Canadians believe that Wells acted underhandedly in stopping the Meech Lake Accord. Another law student asked him "how are we to trust you again?"

Of the large group assembled, very few seemed to be pro-Wells, and even fewer of those wanted to express their opinion in the hullabaloo surrounding the Premier's visit.

## Breakfast of champions

BY LARA MORRIS

Over 100 people, mostly women, gathered for breakfast at the Halifax Sheraton last Friday. They were celebrating what most women take for granted, that they are persons.

Friday marked the anniversary of what has come to be known as Person's Day. It was on October 18, 1929 that the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council decided the word "persons" in Section 24 of the *British North America Act* included women, thus making women eligible for appointment to the Senate.

Until then, the Canadian government and courts had read "persons" in Section 24 to mean only men. Canada's first woman Senator was Cairine Wilson, appointed in 1930.

The Person's case was the result of a court action initiated by five Alberta women lead by Emily Murphy, Alberta's first woman judge.

Murphy's role as judge had been challenged on her first day in court

when the defense lawyer stated "women are persons in matters of pains and penalties, but are not persons in matters of rights and privileges."

His challenge was rejected by the Alberta Supreme Court on the grounds of "reason and good sense."

### advancing women's equality

The breakfast was hosted by the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) in order to raise money for LEAF's litigation efforts. LEAF lawyers act as counsel or interveners in cases concerning women's equality rights.

The guest speaker at the breakfast was Anne Derrick, a well known lawyer and feminist.

Derrick spoke about the Supreme Court of Canada's recent decision in the *Seaboyer/Gayme*

case in which the Court struck down the so-called "rape shield" law, section 276 of the Criminal Code.

Derrick stated that the old law was "not about protecting women's privacy, but about advancing women's equality." She sees rape and the fear of rape as "a mechanism of social control over women."

She also commented on the confirmation hearings of Judge Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court of the United States and the negative treatment of Anita Hill after she raised allegations that Thomas had sexually harassed her ten years ago.

She was enraged by the way in which Hill's credibility was attacked by the use of myths about women. She noted how it was suggested that Hill was being malicious, or sexually frustrated, or fantasizing, or crazy, or all of these things.

Continued violence against women is seen by Derrick as a reflection of society's "smug tolerance of women's abuse."



Clyde Wells speaks to the media following his presentation

DAL PHOTO: MARIA PATRIQUIN

DAL PHOTO: ANGEL FIGUEROA