

TON. NEWS 8-26-95

FACTS, CANiT: Funding foes

By Joseph C. Genco
Staff Writer

A second group representing the interests of area residents on the issue of the future of radioactive waste in the Town of Tonawanda has surfaced.

The wastes were left by the Manhattan Project of World War II and are mostly buried underground at four locations within sight of the Niagara River.

For a Clean Tonawanda Site (FACTS) is a citizen group headed up by pharmacist and environmental activist James Rauch, Ralph Krieger, president of the union which represents many current Linde-Praxair employees, and retired union official Don Finch.

The group is seeking a \$50,000 grant to aid the community in the evaluation of documents related to the remediation of the four sites in the town containing radioactive waste under consideration by the Department of Energy and its Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program.

The Coalition Against Nuclear Materials in Tonawanda (CANiT) is led by politicians and political appointees has received one \$50,000 grant and applied for another.

FACTS would like to receive those funds instead.

The new group started out by publishing a newsletter hoping to disseminate and clarify information it felt was being overlooked or mis-

represented as it traveled through existing channels to the media and public.

CANiT is chaired by Richard Tobe of the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning.

Mr. Rauch and company been openly wary of CANiT, contending that when push comes to shove, the politicians involved will back down and compromise with the DOE.

An example of FACTS' differing stance was evident last week at a meeting of CANiT.

CANiT officials were discussing a meeting of an Environmental Management Advisory Board (EMAB) the DOE had formed and brought to Grand Island for a meeting.

CANiT ultimately decided to send Town Supervisor Carl Calabrese and County Legislator Charles Swanick to articulate its position.

FACTS sent its own representatives to the EMAB meeting.

FACTS officials have wondered openly why local officials do not seem to be pressing for an answer from the DOE on whether state clean-up criteria or that of the federal government, will be used in remedial work planned at Praxair.

The group contends that CANiT does not conduct all of its meetings in public fashion, and that CANiT does not represent the view of other interested stakeholder groups, most notably labor, environmental and academic groups.