

Lessons from Aggregate Companies

Our Readers Write:

As President Trump's 25% tariffs kick in today, Canadians are learning what can happen when our neighbours no longer act in a neighbourly way.

Good neighbour relations are important in civil society whether they involve the people who live in the house next door, the person who occupies the cubicle beside yours or the president of the country that shares your border.

It is also important for companies involved in Canada's aggregate industry. Which made me think: Who taught whom? In the recent gravel battles that have rocked Caledon and neighbouring communities, aggregate companies have taken an aggressive adversarial stance. Their proposals usually involve digging or blasting every last bit of grey gold out of the ground regardless of what that does to the environment, community spirit or their new neighbours.

A stand of old-growth maple trees ? clear it.

A century farm ? demolish it.

Farmland ? strip it.

A village ? mine as close to it as possible.

We're learning the hard way about what happens when neighbours are out for themselves only. Canada is better than that and our aggregate industry should be too.

So, I publicly ask that Votorantim/St. Mary's Cement, the aggregate company that plans to blast a quarry that would be seven stories deep and occupy 800 acres between the villages of Cataract and Alton, to be neighbourly. To be neighbourly enough to attend their own public meeting in person. Despite community requests, the aggregate giant has opted instead to 'meet' with their possible neighbours from the safety of their offices, separated by a video camera.

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