

Letter to the Editor

# Coverage poor, panelist claims

To the editor of The Herald: I wish to express my concern with regard to your newspaper's (November 25) coverage of a panel discussion at St. John's United Church on the subject of formula feeding and the presence of the Nestle company in the third world.

The headline given to the story is, to say the least obscure ("Ads. Misleading, Consumers Say"), and at best itself misleading. At no time in the course of the discussion did anyone even make reference to ads, nor could one by any stretch of the imagination consider the audience a "consumer group". They were a group of concerned citizens who attended to better educate themselves on the subject of formula feeding versus breastfeeding, particularly in the third world content where formula companies such as Nestle are responsible for the illnesses and deaths of thousands of infants and children.

I would like also to correct several statements attributed

to me by Ms. Taylor. Human milk is not just a "good" source of nourishment for babies, it is the best source and one which has no equal in any commercial product. It is not a source of nourishment for "the first six months" only but for a minimum duration of one year with "other foods" introduced at six months. Families in the third world spent not "40 to 80 per cent" of their income to buy formula but "a minimum of 80 per cent".

May I clarify also that, as I

stated, infant formula is dangerous and carries risks for all North American babies, not just the Inuit, Metis and Indians as reported by Ms. Taylor. I explained during my presentation, many of these risks - gastroenteritis, allergies, otitis media, chronic lung disease, diarrhea (marasmus), dehydration, iron deficiency, infant botulism, infantile obesity, respiratory infection, protein related ailments, etc. I stated also that sudden infant death syndrome and

child abuse occur significantly more often where the child is bottle fed. I would be happy to explain and expand upon any or all of the above at your newspaper's convenience.

It would have also been useful for your reporter to have noted the recommendations made by the paediatrician Dr. Makhele, who was a member of the panel. These recommendations are contained in the Statements of the Canadian Society of Paediatrics and the American Academy of Paediatrics and deal with practices apparent in maternity hospitals where mismanagement of lactation is the

norm. A great deal of preparation and conscientious concern was evident on that Sunday evening. It must surely be disappointing for many others as it was for me, to see such poor coverage given to the forum.

Yours truly,  
Patricia Stuart-Haggle

## About the Hills River Street closing

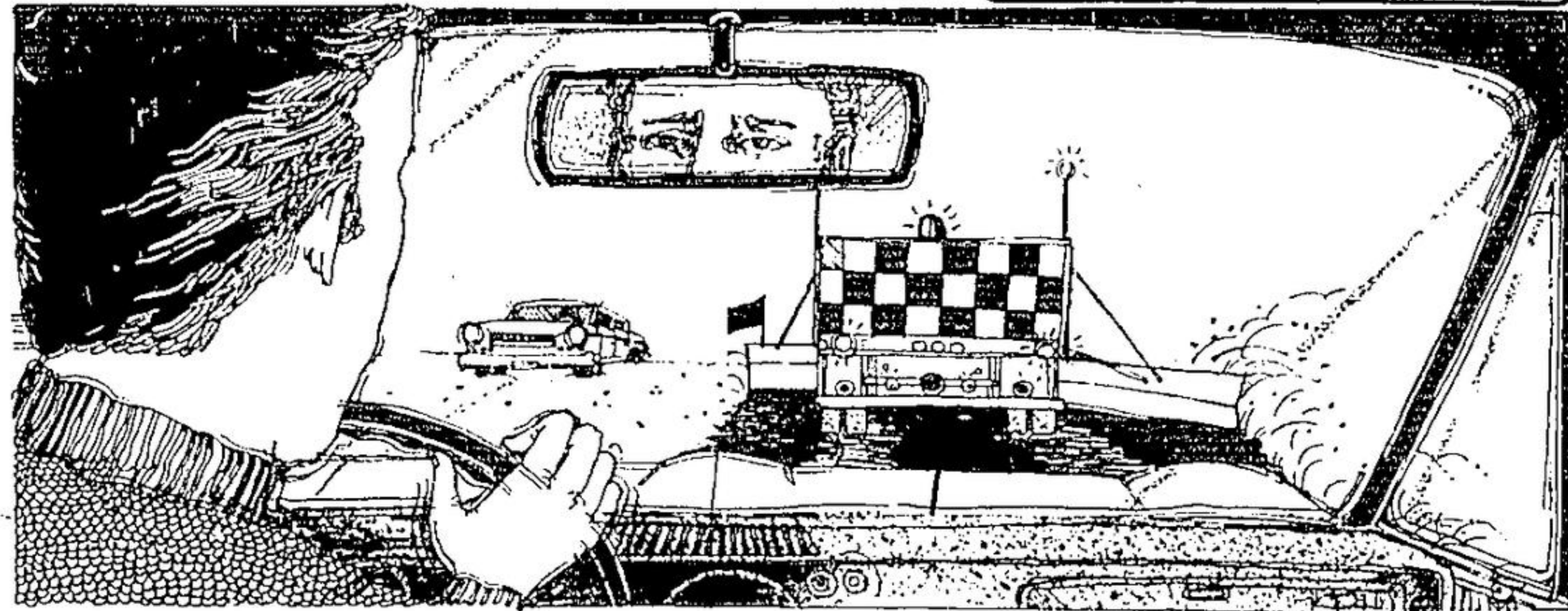
The town's general committee has endorsed a proposed bylaw to close River Street in Georgetown. The street is an unopened road allowance between Ontario Street and Ewing Street. The property will be offered for sale, upon adoption of the required bylaw, to the abutting property owners.

## Back taxes cancelled

The town's general committee has endorsed the cancellation of due taxes totalling \$8,400.14, of which \$2,871.42 is the town's share, which deputy treasurer Grant Fisher has deemed uncollectable. The majority of cancellations were for businesses that have either moved to a new location or ceased operation.

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William Davis, Premier  
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