

## Abortion, spending cuts issues of concern at town hall meeting

From the abortion issue to "baby bonus" cheques and the Meech Lake Accord, Halton-Peel MP Garth Turner was a sounding-board for his constituents at a town hall meeting Wednesday night.

That meeting was the second in a series of riding meetings the MP describes as "accountability sessions." Over 40 people showed at the Acton Town Hall on Willow Street to air their views, and to discuss the headline news item of the nine-per-cent Goods and Services Tax, scheduled to be imposed in 1991 by the federal government.

### ABORTION

One woman in the crowd, stood holding a baby and asked Garth Turner why he had changed his stand on abortion.

"What would change your mind that the unborn baby child doesn't deserve protection?" she asked the MP. The woman said she voted for Mr. Turner partially because his is opposed to abortion.

"My personal beliefs are pro-life," he said. "But I am the representative of 70,000 voters. What I am saying now is the same thing I said before."

The MP said he will distribute questionnaires on how Halton-Peel voters feel about abortion, to give people "the opportunity to express their belief." But he added that his view likely represents the majority.

### SPENDING CUTS

People in the audience said there should be more cuts to government spending, including no more limousines for politicians, reduced aid to foreign countries and less government spending on advertisement.

The federal government spends \$90 million a year on advertising, the crowd heard.

"What would happen if for one month the federal government cut advertising. Would the federal government fold up and go away?" asked Bob Morrow of Georgetown.

And one woman in the crowd said the government should not have issued a \$100 million loan to China, where "atrocities" recently took place.

The MP said that government's move was "bad timing" but said he didn't have a vote on the issue.

The crowd at the town hall meeting said they were unhappy with family allowance cheques delivered by the federal government and then paid back at income tax time. The Canada Pension Plan was also under attack.

The baby bonus system could be changed, Mr. Turner said, but there isn't much hope for the federal pension plan.

"I'm 40 years old. When I'm 65, I will consider myself very lucky to have any pension plan in place."

### FRENCH RIGHTS

Local residents voiced concerns about the Meech Lake Accord, which some critics say favors French rights over English rights in Quebec. But Mr. Turner said the Accord would likely be changed before the provinces vote to implement it.

The closing of the Summerside army base in Prince Edward Island, with the only search and rescue facilities in Canada, concerned Georgetown resident Barry Marrow. Mr. Turner said he visited the Summerside base and realized "the government may not have known what they were doing when they closed it."

He said Summerside is the size of Acton and relies on the base for employment. "You've got to feel for that," he said, "you've got to maintain Small-Town Canada."

### HOUSING

Housing was another point of interest for town hall attendees. A housing plan, like the HOSP - Home Ownership Savings Plan - under former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, should be considered to help young people buy homes, one man said.

"All families are entitled to a piece of grass if they work for it," said Acton resident Pat Bidney. He said that without Mr. Trudeau's HOSP, he would not own a home today.

But Mr. Turner said the housing shortage in Canada is restricted to parts of Ontario and to British Columbia. Supply and demand are part of the "curse of prosperity," he said.

## Invest in peace; it can make money, HAND member says

By JANET DUVAL  
A member of "HAND"  
Halton Hills Action  
for Nuclear Disarmament

Investors: want a hot tip? Want to save the world? You can do both, with a new type of investment that will save the consciences of many investors.

It's getting harder to invest these days. Putting money into a bank or a mutual fund often means a high rate of return, but it can also mean financing corporations that do things you might not agree with: building weapons for the arms race, doing business in South Africa, or polluting the environment.

Now, Canadians can direct their capital to socially responsible companies and cooperatives through "ethical investment."

A couple of years ago, I started socking the baby bonuses into the Ethical Growth Fund, a mutual fund run by the Vancouver City Savings Credit Union. Its policy is to invest only in Canadian companies which make non-military products or services, maintain good labor relations, and refuse to do business with countries where there is racial inequality. Perhaps it was risky to put the kids' money into a fund too new to have any performance record, but I liked its style. How did it perform? Its 15 per cent of return in the first year surpassed the Toronto Stock Exchange composite index, and last year it performed better than almost every other mutual fund in Canada. Sometimes

nice guys do finish first.

An added attraction in this case is that there's no income tax on the earnings. Baby bonus money invested for a child is deemed to be hers, and she declares the income. It's also nice to show the children that the way their money is used can and does make a difference.

Other ethical investment funds include Energy Probes's Environmental Investment Fund, and funds in Edmonton and Winnipeg. You can make one large investment, or smaller monthly contributions.

Recently, a speaker on marketing told a group of executives that the bywords for the 90's will be ethics and the environment. If you want to attract customers, he said, you'll have to show genuine concern for the environment, and an ethical manner of doing business.

By the 1990's I'll be selling the Ethical Growth shares to help the children through college. If the speaker was right, there should be a tidy increase in the value of our investment. And, it's a nice way to stop the arms race, from the comfort of an armchair!

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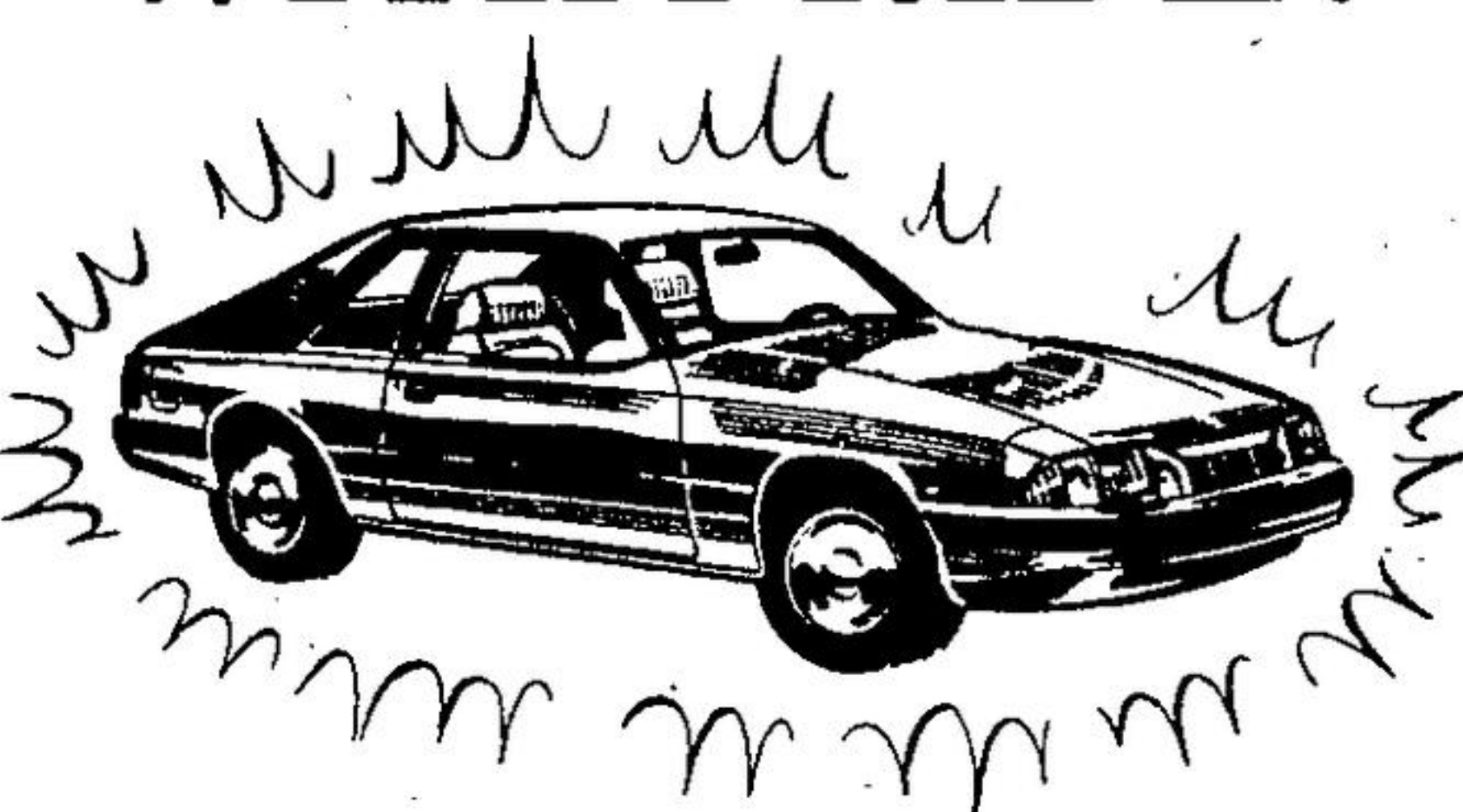
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### "Gotcha"

Georgetown resident Julia Skikavich, 8, spent a hot, lazy, hazy day looking for crayfish in the Silver Creek at Cedarvale Park last week. Here, she holds up two examples of what can be found in the creek if one looks hard enough. (Herald Photo)

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