

**Public meeting**

# Turner won't take a position until September

By BEI DUMMETT  
The Herald

Quebec should either compromise its position or leave the country.

That's the message approximately 40 people gave Halton-Peel MP Garth Turner to take back to Ottawa, during an emotionally-charged meeting last Thursday night at the Georgetown Lions Club.

A round of applause followed after one audience member shouted "the only way to bring Canada together is to stop giving more of it away (to Quebec)." The man then went on to say, "Clyde Wells should run for prime minister." Mr. Wells, as the Premier of Newfoundland, was an outspoken critic of the accord.

In an attempt to sum-up the feelings of the audience Mr. Turner said: "I'm hearing Quebec has to heel its demands or get lost," to which most of the audience responded with a resounding "yes."

But at least one person suggested the people attending the meeting were being too intolerant of Quebec and its proclaimed needs.

"I feel there is too much antagonism and hatred here and it doesn't fare well for the country," the man said.

Both during and following the meeting, Mr. Turner wouldn't offer a specific solution that the government should carry out to overcome the current constitutional impasse. He would only say that he didn't want Quebec to separate. "A quarter of the country would be gone," he lamented.

Mr. Turner said he wouldn't take a position until September. And to arrive at that decision he will, "keep your (the audience) thoughts in his pockets and Canada in my heart, to do my small part to keep us together."

This fall will be an explosive time, said Mr. Turner, because that's when the Quebec commission will hold a series of public hearings to determine Quebec's future. He predicted that Quebec's demands to stay in Canada will be much greater than those in the Meech Lake Accord.

Speaking briefly on the commis-

## OUR LANGUAGE

by Jeffrey McQuain

Use GOSSAMER ("GAH-suh-mur") to describe something that's light and delicate or filmy. You may also see GOSSAMERY, but that adjective sounds heavier than GOSSAMER.

FERITY indicates a state of wildness or savagery. Here's a wild hint: It's not an eternal verity, but FERITY rhymes with VERITY.

Q. What kind of word is WHOOP-EE? When I was a boy, people said that whenever there was excitement

A. WHOOP-EE is an interjection, the part of speech that includes other emotional exclamations such as PHOOEY and OUCH! The interjection WHOOP-EE has existed in various spellings for more than five centuries; it comes from the excited sound represented by the word WHOOP. For other spellings of WHOOP-EE, you may want to ask Whoopi Goldberg.



Halton-Peel MP, Garth Turner, points to the Canadian flag to emphasize a point during last Thursday's emotion-packed meeting with the public at the Georgetown Lions Club Hall. (Herald Photo)

sion, he said that Lucien Bouchard, now a self-declared separatist and independent MP, should resign his seat because he is a member of the commission.

Mr. Turner's comments were spurred on by the audience's demands that Mr. Bouchard be charged with sedition. To become an MP he first swore allegiance to the flag and the Queen, audience members called out.

Mr. Turner predicted Mr. Bouchard and the other MPs who have recently declared themselves as independents will soon form a new party with Quebec separation as its mandate.

In an interview following the debate, Mr. Turner said he wasn't surprised by the people's negative reaction to Quebec, saying, "They are sick and tired of the French/English hassle. The negative feelings are pretty ingrained in people. I don't want to see anti-French sentiment, but I'm not surprised at the backlash."

Several people called Quebec a "bully" and said the more English

Canada concedes to Quebec the more they'll demand. They were referring, for example, to the federal government's decision to give the CF18 jet contract to a Quebec company instead of one in Manitoba.

Canada has to start standing up to Quebec, meaning if it can't accept what it has it shouldn't be prevented from separating, a speaker said.

But if it does separate it should be on the condition that it sever all ties with Canada. That means it has its own military, currency and postal service, people said. And they predicted if faced with this situation Quebec would back down.

But Mr. Turner responded, saying "I don't believe they are bluffing." And "anyone who believes the rest of the country wouldn't suffer economically if Quebec separated, is crazy," he added.

The Quebec people believe they have said yes to Canada at three different times during the past 10 years, said Mr. Turner, but in the 11th hour we said no to Quebec. Mr. Turner said the three times Quebec said yes to Canada were in 1980 when the majority in Quebec

voted no to sovereignty-association, in 1986 when the majority voted out the Parti-Quebecois and in 1987 when Robert Bourassa signed the Meech Lake Accord.

Mr. Turner suggested that maybe the old Canada, in which bilingualism and biculturalism have defined the country for the last 20 years, doesn't make sense anymore. Instead, the country may be moving to a regional situation, in which French is the sole language of Quebec and English is the sole language spoken in the rest of the country.

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