

Chamber of Commerce looking for input

By DOUG PENRICE
Herald Special

It has been some time since I wrote about Chamber of Commerce events in Halton Hills or other issues that concerned the business community. It's not that I didn't have a lot to say, but rather the time to write a column. However, two recent events have caused me once again to get on my soap box.

The first was the recent provincial election and the campaign tactics that were used. The incumbent Liberals led by David Peterson extolled the virtues of their good financial management and told us how - through their

good management - Ontario had a \$23 million dollar surplus. After their defeat the new NDP Government stated that this surplus had suddenly become \$2.5 billion deficit. Quite a change in eight weeks.

There is an Ontario law called the Business Practices Act which was enacted to protect consumers from unfair practices by businesses. The act states that no person shall engage in an unfair practice and they are defined as such:

"a false, misleading or deceptive consumer representation, and

"and unconscionable consumer

representation made in respect of a particular transaction"

The Act provides for fines and jail terms upon conviction.

The way I see it the Liberals were trying to sell us a service for five years, and in retrospect, they did use false and misleading statements to get us to "buy or vote" for them. How come they weren't charged?

Just something to think about.

Now let us move onto the Federal Government who are using much the same tactics in their advertising campaign for the GST. I was reading an information bulletin published by

the feds which showed what prices were going to come down and which would go up. It is a coincidence that the majority of prices are going down! Ha! Ha!

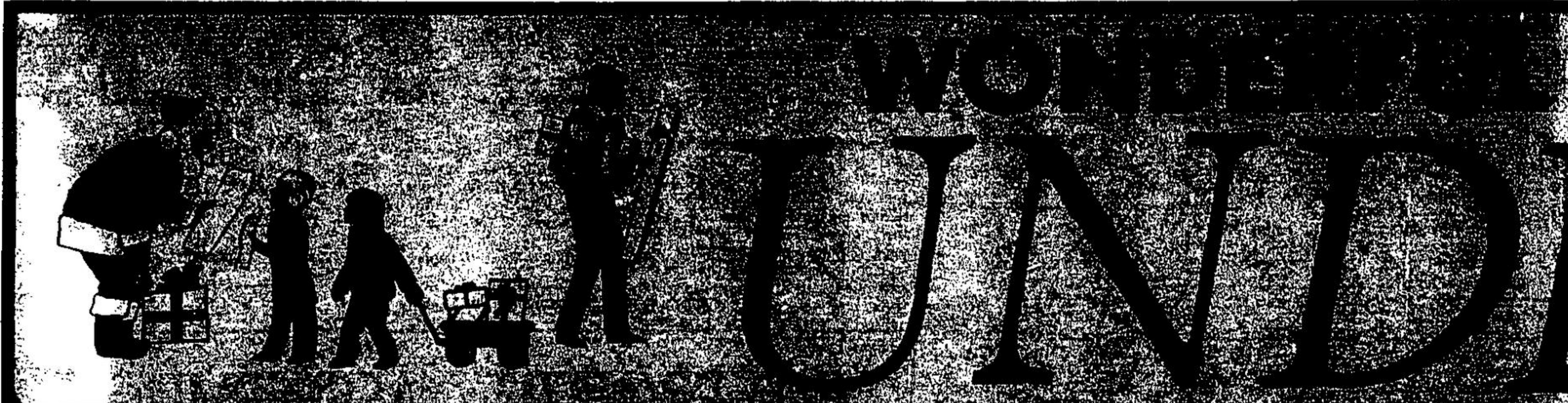
The one item that really sticks out in my mind is the example of the price of a haircut. It shows that a \$10 haircut will go up .54, it assumes that the barber will pass on any input credits that he may be eligible for. Is this reasonable? I say no way. Do the feds believe that the barber will price his service at \$9.84 and then apply the GST on top of that to come to \$10.54.

Come on Garth, give your head

a shake - of course he won't.

While I agree that the present Manufacturer's Sales Tax must be changed this type of false and misleading information serves no purpose but to alienate ordinary Canadians. The same week as I read about the haircut I also noticed that a watch importer was fined \$75,000 for false and misleading advertising in regards to savings on his product. It seems that our laws to protect the consumer are enforced by the government, I ask who will protect them from them?

The Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce is here to help - we appreciate your calls and input.



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