

# Thousands of day care centres of some kind exist in Halton

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umbrella of the Milton Community Resource Centre, which is a recent amalgamation of Milton Community Information Services (MCIS) and the Milton Children and Youth Centre (MCYC).

"We are trying to get the message out and develop a comprehensive database of all child care in Halton," said Nicky Pearson, program supervisor for the registry.

Ms Pearson admitted the 138 day care providers currently registered barely scratch the surface of the potential thousands of day care operators in Halton. She said research suggests that 60 per cent of children under five years of age, and 73 per cent of children between 6-12 are in some kind of day care situation.

Only about 10 per cent of children are in a regulated environment, she said.

"Other registries are impressed with the methods we use and want to study us," said Ms. Pearson, citing Haldiman-Norfolk, Cambridge and London. "It's very successful, especially with home care providers."

The organization also offers training to providers such as health related certification programs, and workshops on dealing with misbehaviour, stress management and a basic caregiver package.

Registration costs home care providers \$50. Licensed operators pay \$60 for a basic listing and have about \$115 in service options they can choose.

"We help parents ask the right questions before placing their children in care," said Ms Proctor.

Ms Pearson added that parents have been pleased with the screening program.

The registry initiative started in January, 1997 after about two years of planning and study co-ordinated by Halton Region, Ms Pearson said. Thus far the registry has received about 10,000 calls with requests for more than 45,000 individual day care searches.

Child care requirements can be wide ranging, including the need for all-day supervision, or just for care during specific times. The age of the child also plays a substantial part in determining the cost. Ms. Pearson said the average cost for care is about \$3 per child, per hour. Families with more than one child can often negotiate rate reductions.

Infant care is in high demand with only 11 registered locations in Halton taking babies. It can cost more than \$40 per day for infant care.

While only a small number of all child care providers are registered, Ms Pearson said time will bring many more into the fold as parents start demanding their day care meet the standards of other registered centers. However it is important to remember the agency is not a regulatory body.

"Some licensed centers hold out because they are already licensed by the province and feel that designation is certification enough," said Ms Pearson. "Others are full and don't need the promotion we provide."

The registry is also promoting itself through the business sector. Good day care helps business because it lowers absenteeism and increases productivity, according to Ms Pearson. She cited Magna, which recently put day care facilities into its headquarters in Aurora.

The organization has also received requests for other information regarding children's activities such as camps, and daytime summer activities.

"Parents are scared when they try to find responsible, reliable, quality child care," said Ms Proctor. "We try to quell fear and calm people down a bit. It can be pretty traumatic when you leave your kids for the first time."

The Halton Child Care Registry can be contacted at 1-800-665-0256 or locally at 875-0235.

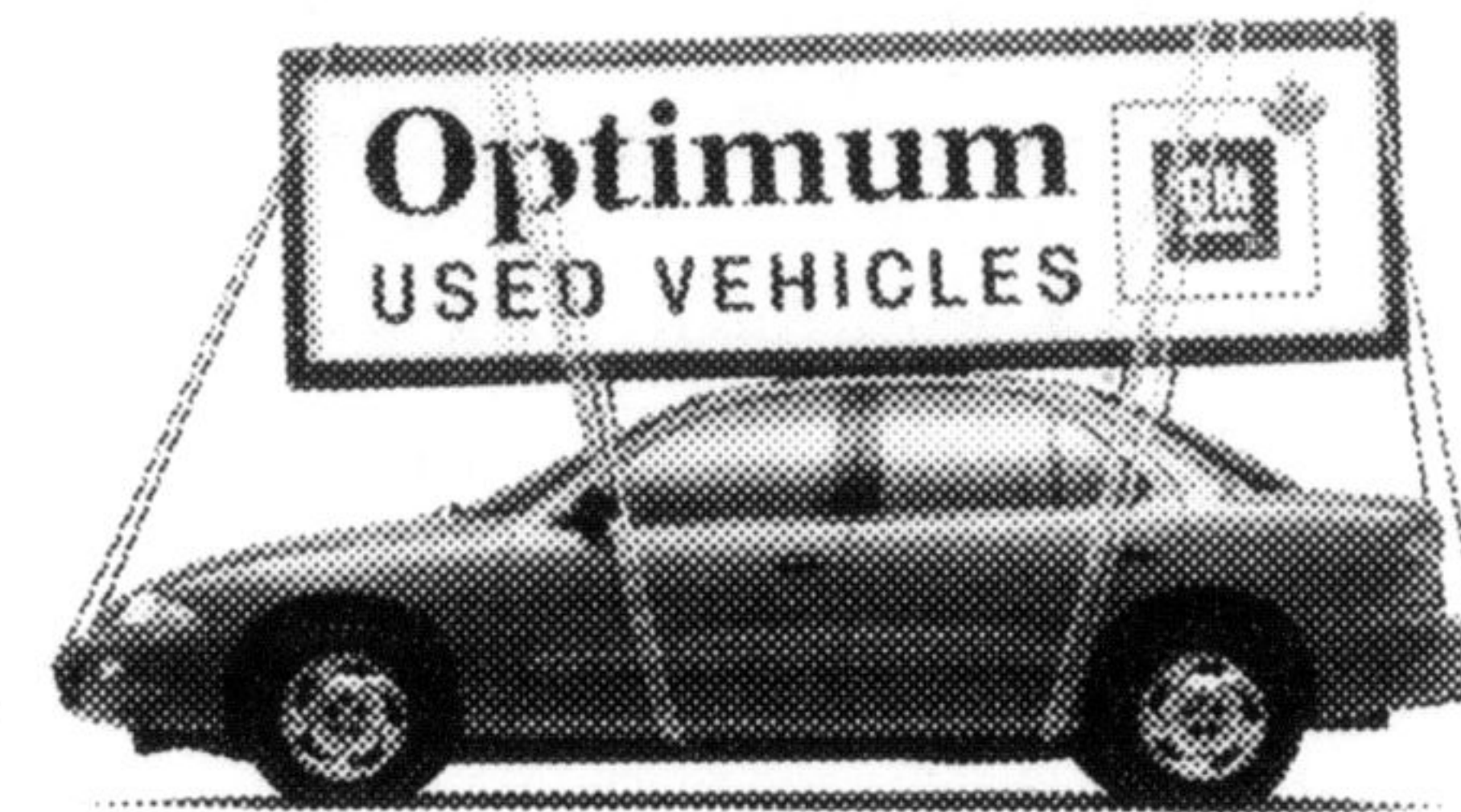
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The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is warning people with egg allergies not to eat certain pastry products sold under the Notre Traiteur brand name. They contain egg, which is not declared on the label.

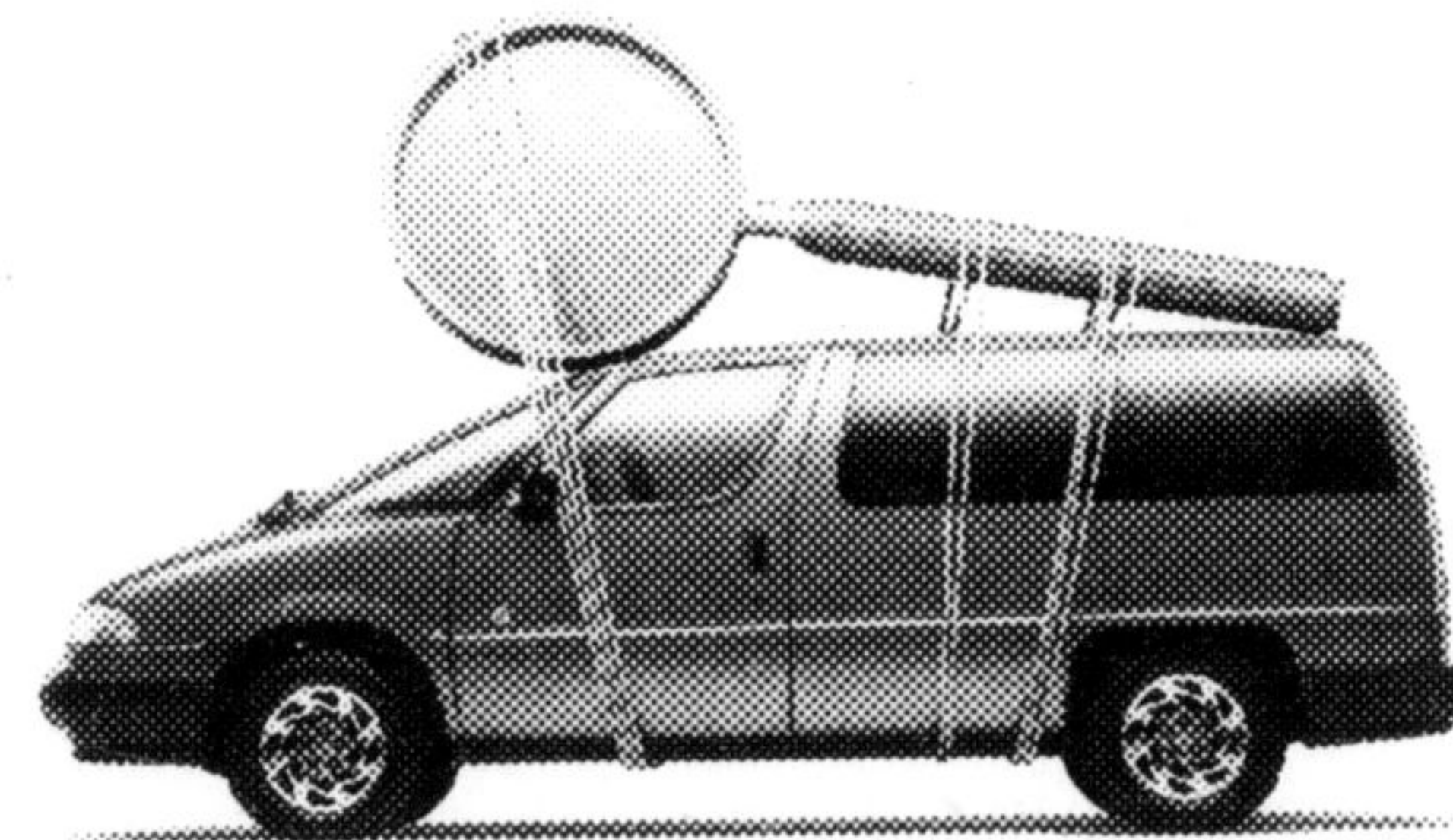
The products are sold four to a 340 gram package and are as follows:

Asparagus and cheddar cheese; Cauliflower, broccoli and cheddar cheese; Broccoli and cheddar cheese. The products have been distributed in Ontario.

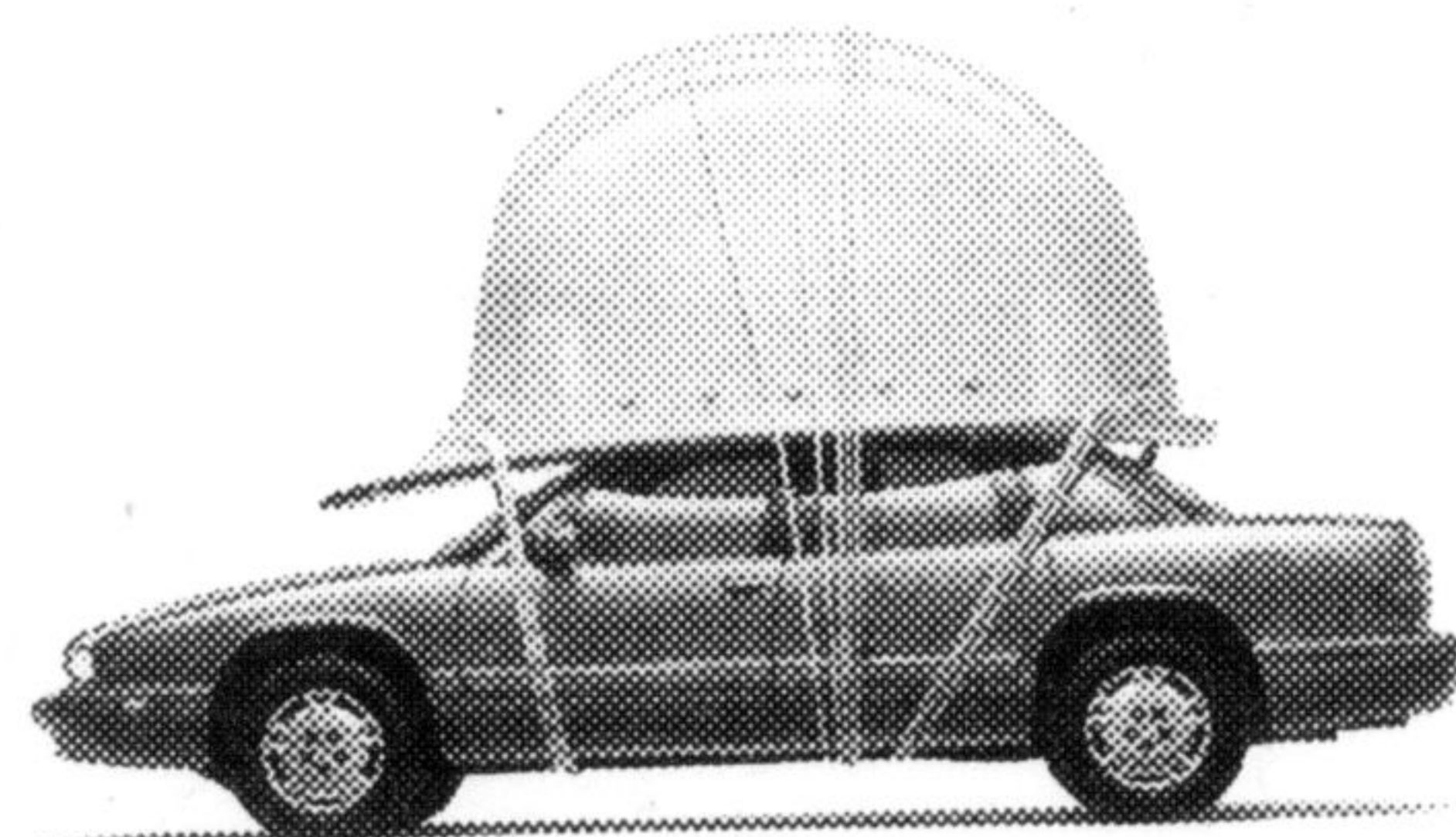
The manufacturer is recalling them, with the federal food agency monitoring the recall.



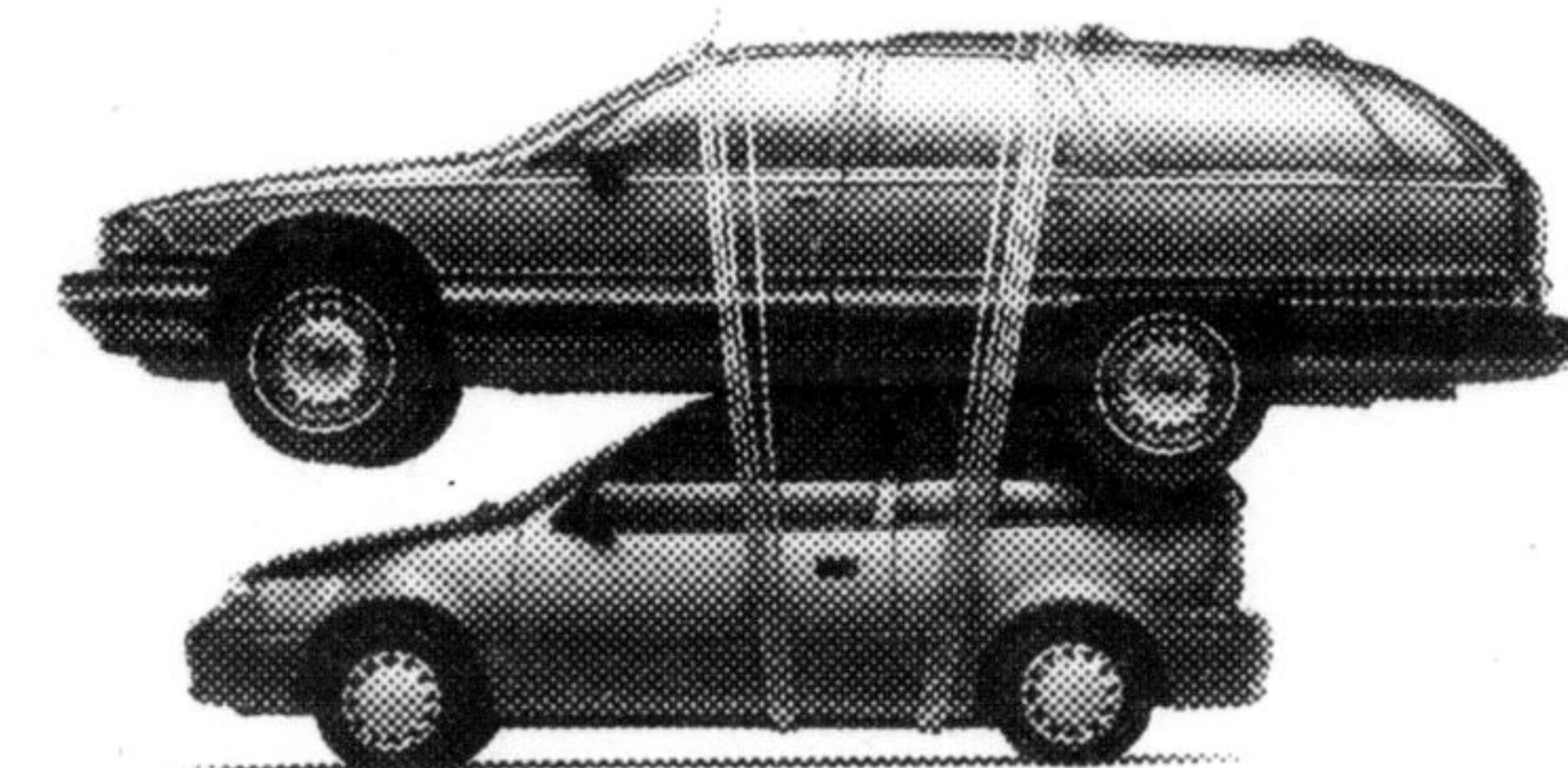
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