



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Linda Setlakwe of the Bank of Canada Currency Education Program shows enlarged presentation versions of the new \$5 bill, while highlighting the security features of the currency.

# Mall merchants learn to detect counterfeit bills

By FANNIE SUNSHINE

The Champion

Sometimes it's difficult to tell the difference between a counterfeit bill and the real thing.

But retail employees should now have an easier time detecting phony bills thanks to the Bank of Canada's Currency Education Program.

Linda Setlakwe, Currency Education Program representative, met with two groups of Milton Mall employees Thursday to discuss typical signs of counterfeit currency.

"There's been an increase in counterfeit currency since the mid '90s," she told the small group of a dozen people gathered in the mall's board room. "There's been a lot of advance in laser technology."

### About 130,000 bills circulating

In 2001 alone, there were 130,000 counterfeit bills in circulation, she continued.

"That's relatively low, considering that's out of 1.4 billion notes. That's about one in every 10,000 notes. It's important people handling cash know what to look for (in detecting counterfeit currency)."

In the late '90s, there was a sharp decline in producing counterfeit bills because of the colour patch that appeared on the \$20 and \$100 bills, she said.

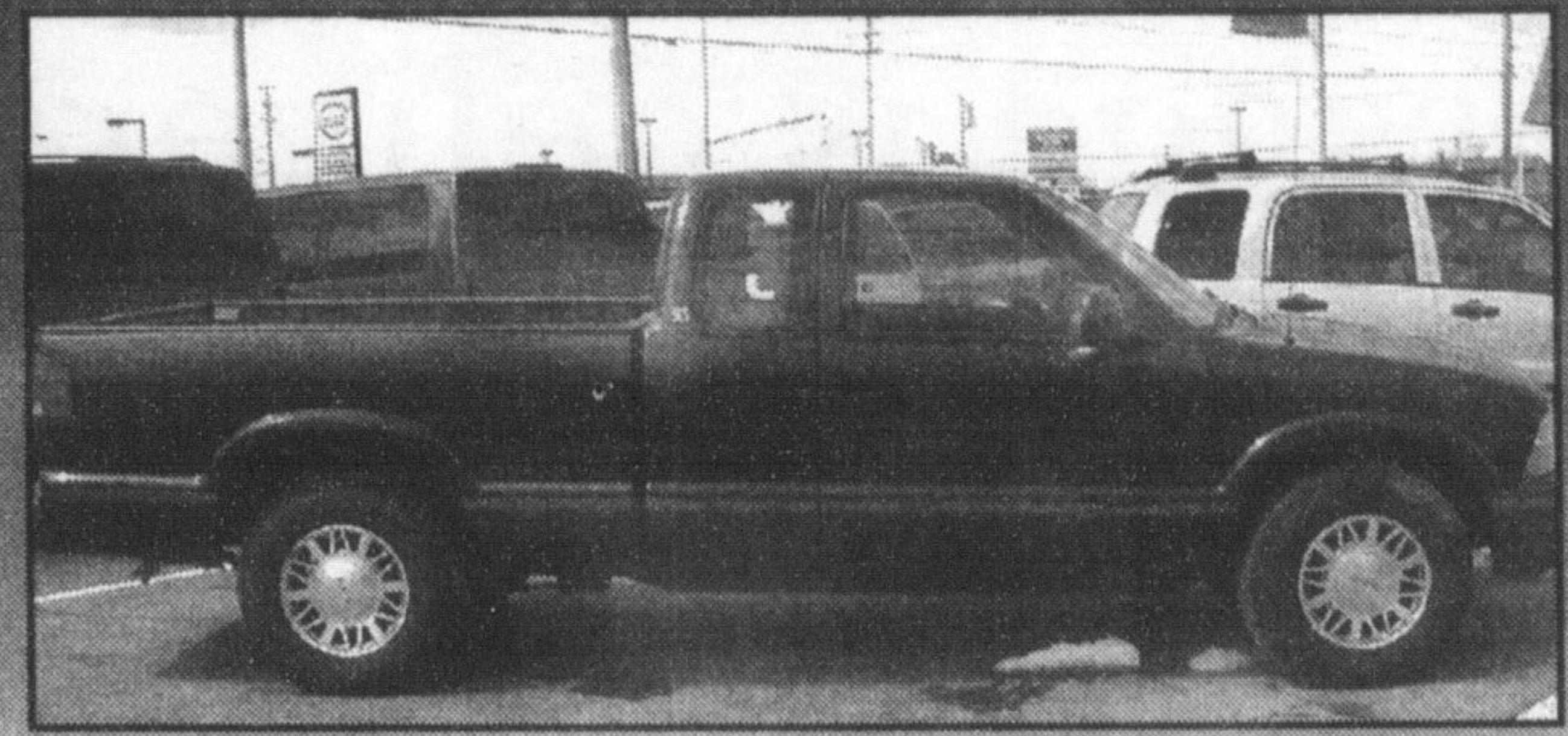
"The \$100 bill is the one that's counterfeited the most, followed by the \$10, then \$20."

Step by step, Ms Setlakwe took the group through the security

• see DON'T RELY on page 10

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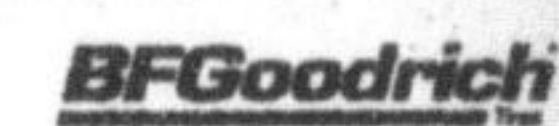
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