

Region's biosolids program moving ahead

By RICHARD VIVIAN
The Champion

Halton Region is moving forward with plans to expand its biosolids program, despite calls from one property owner to nix the preferred option.

Regional council approved a motion Wednesday, authorizing staff to advertise a request for proposals to expand the biosolids program to include incineration, pelletization or alkaline stabilization.

At present, regional staff's preferred option is alkaline stabilization.

"The evaluation of the options looked at a variety of factors, including the environment, our ability, safety and cost. Alkaline stabilization is the most cost efficient, environmentally effective and marketable solution," said Patrick Murphy, Halton's commissioner of planning and public works.

Alkaline stabilization involves the adding of lime dust to biosolids, both killing pathogens and reducing its acidic nature. The end product could then be sold as a fertilizer.

However, area resident Laurie Eagles believes alkaline stabilization to be an inappropriate option. She also objects to the consideration that such a facility be located at the W.A. Bill Johnson Biosolid Storage Facility on Burnhamthorpe Road in Oakville, should that option be ultimately approved.

"I believe an alkaline stabilization process at this site will escalate the health issues our community has had to, and continues to, endure," she said, adding the lime dust would be hard to contain, leading to health issues.

"I also believe the environmental impact on the sensitive and protected Sixteen Mile Creek conservation area, Sixteen Mile Creek and the Trafalgar Moraine would be

catastrophic."

Ms Eagles and her family reside on Burnhamthorpe Road and are currently involved in a \$2 million law suit against the Region, Azurix North America and Terratec Environmental Ltd. over the operation of the biosolid storage facility.

In response to these concerns, Mr. Murphy stressed no option has been selected and the approved motion would allow staff to consider a wider range of options as the proposals come forward.

Specific health and location concerns would be addressed through an environ-

mental assessment process implemented prior to the project moving forward, the commissioner added.

For more than 20 years, the Region has been spreading liquid biosolids on local farm fields. However, as the population continues to grow, the available land is shrinking, resulting in a need to expand the biosolids program.

In 1999, Halton had 2,350 acres of land for spreading, compared to 1,200 acres last year and 769 acres at the end of October of this year.

If land supply is maintained at the cur-

rent level, Halton will run out of space for spreading its liquid biosolids in about 10 years, projections indicate.

Halton's supply of biosolid, including hardened caked and liquids, already surpasses that which could be spread on available land.

According to a regional staff report, the reduction in available land is due to competition with other municipalities for spreading and a reluctance of farmers to participate following the Walkerton water tragedy — which wasn't associated with biosolids.

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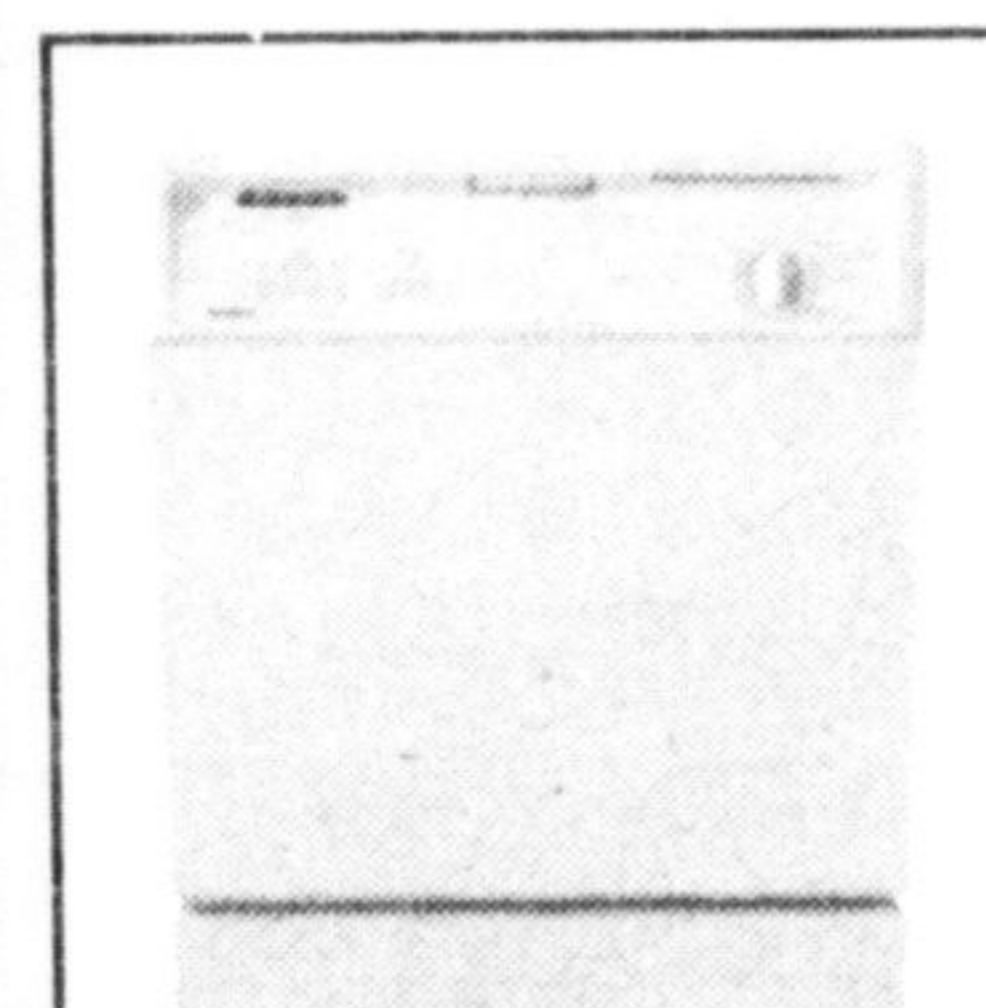
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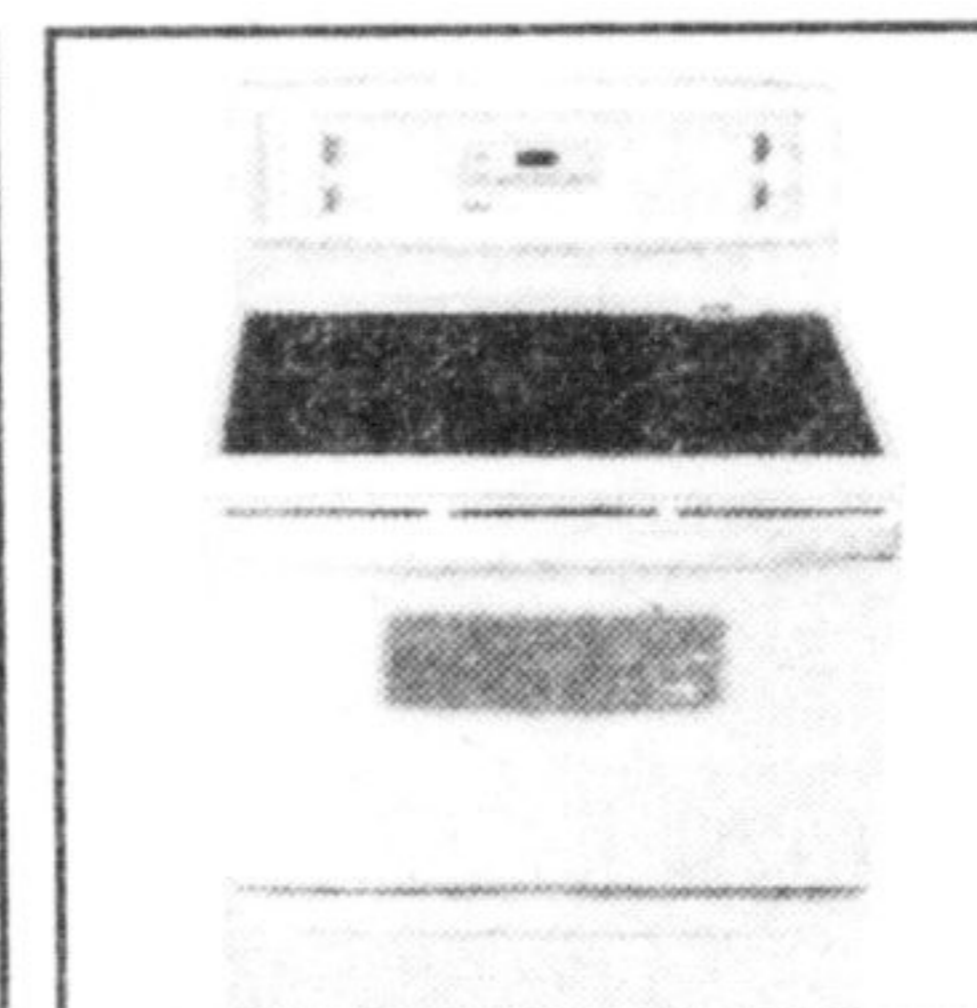
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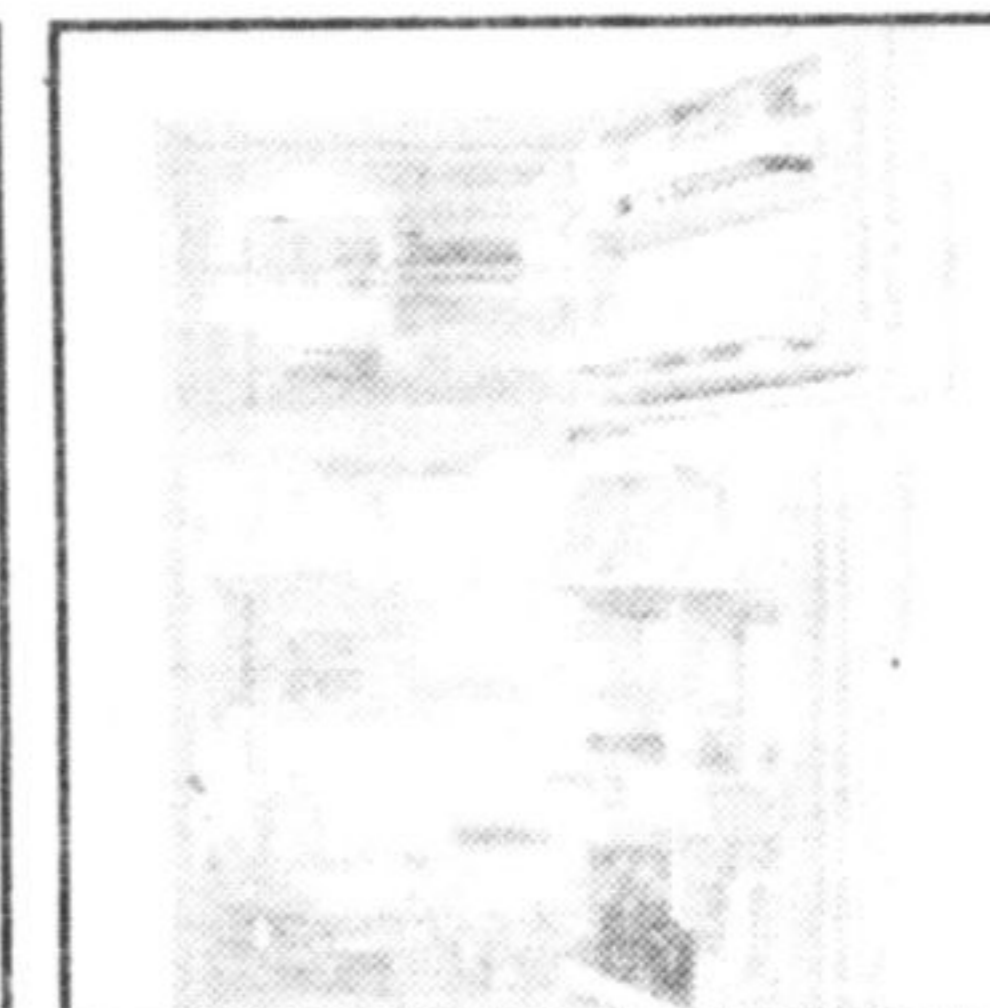
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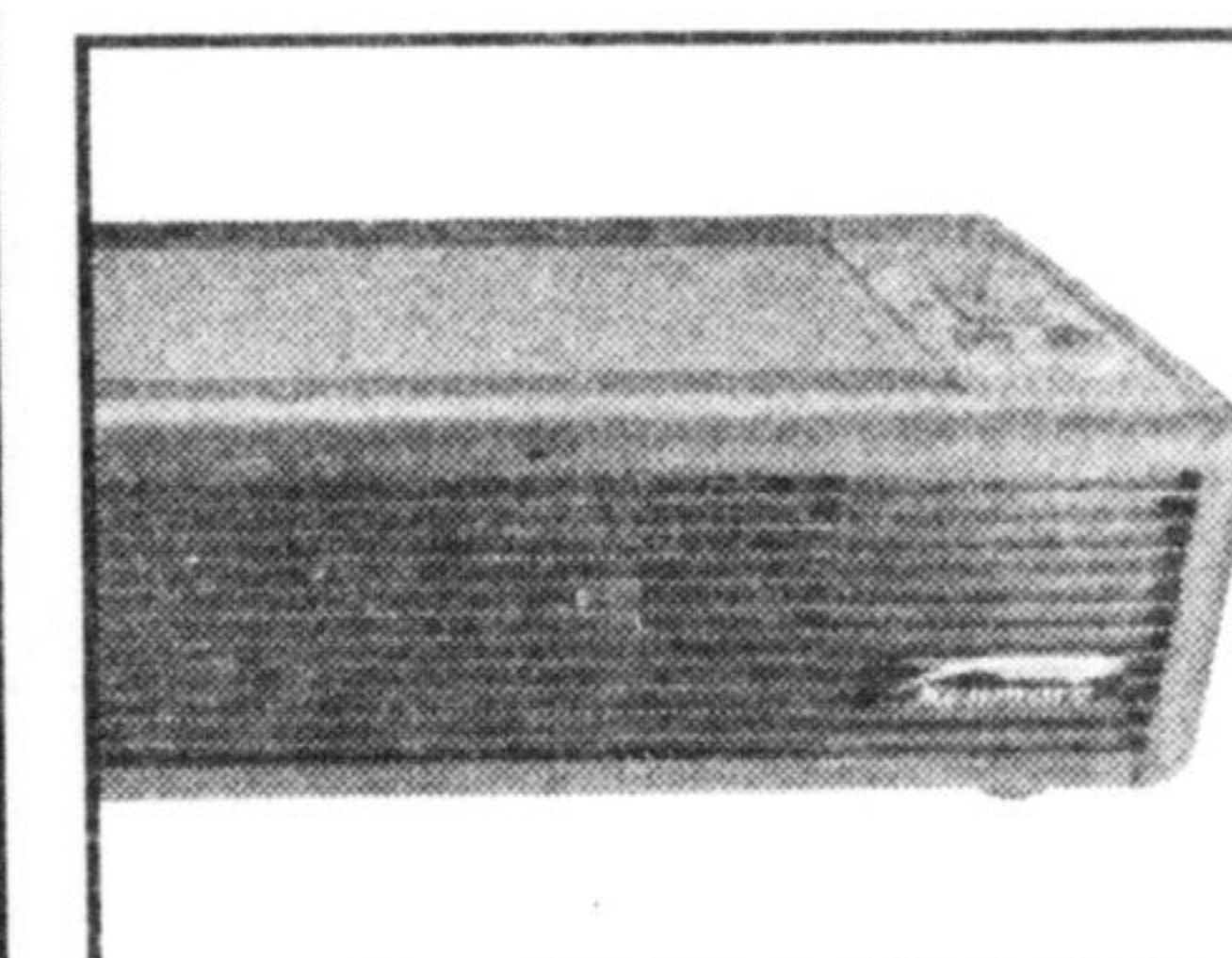
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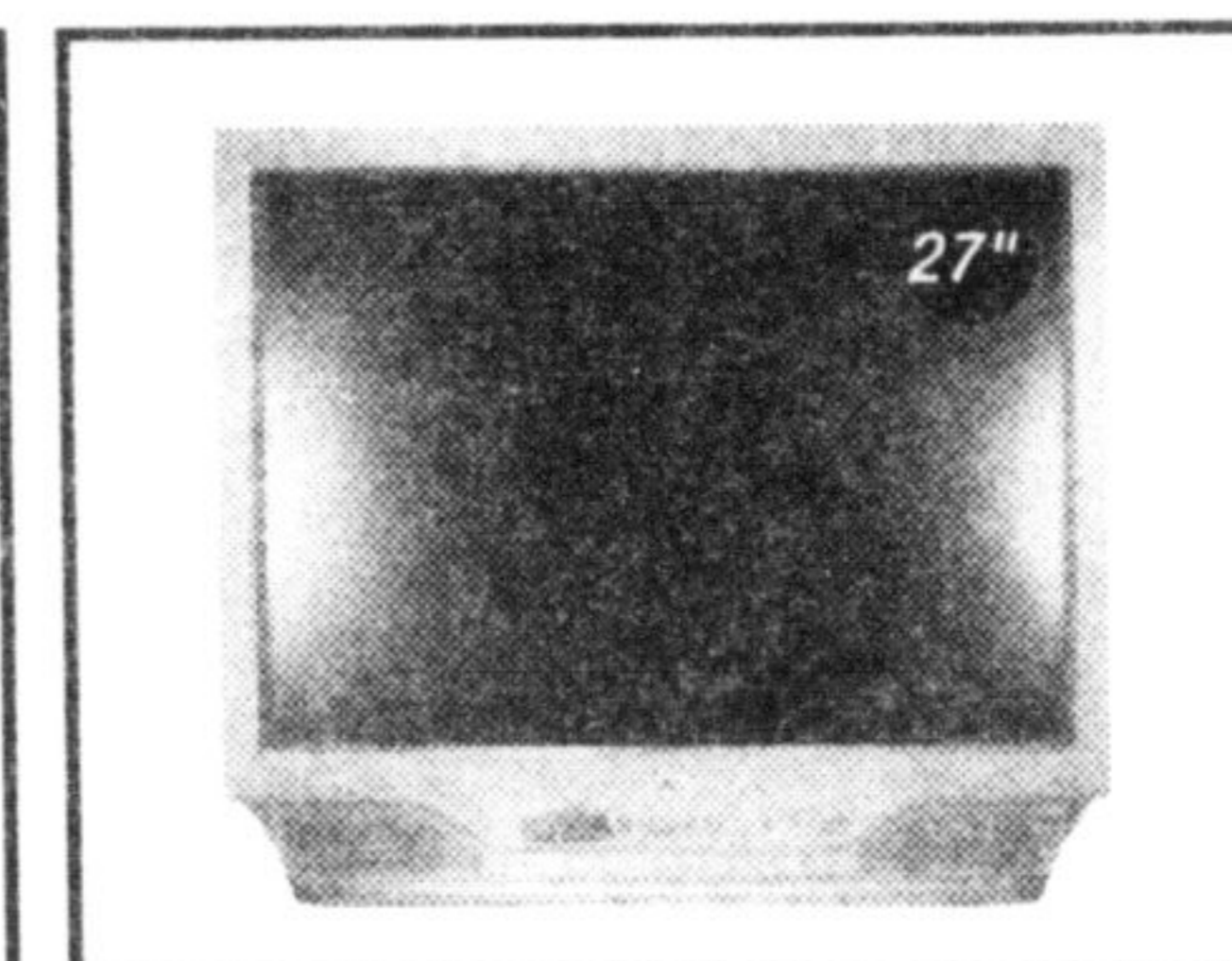
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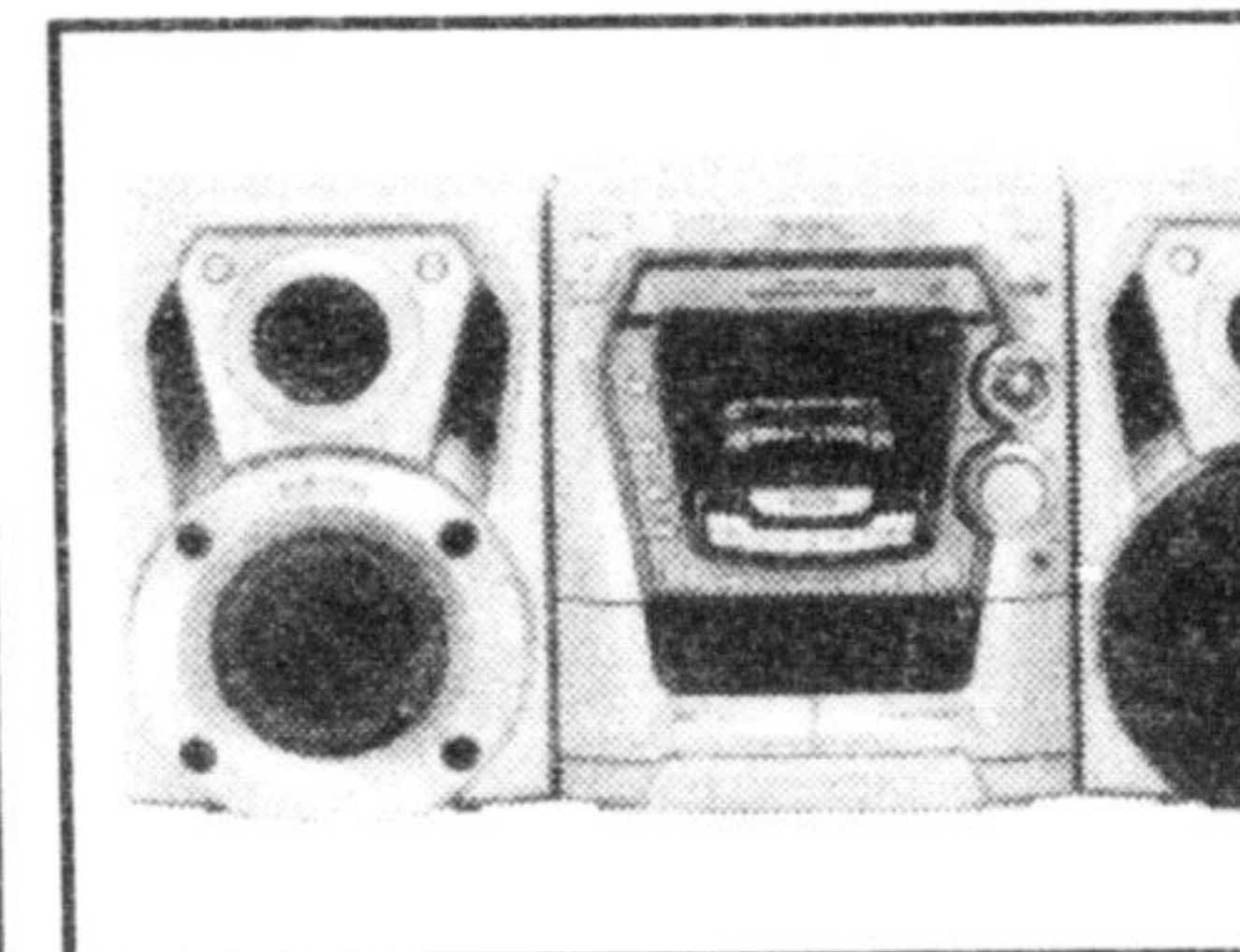
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