· from ONTARIO on page 1 "In short, we are now facing both barrels - the exchange rate and increased labour costs."

Add to that, the "government's financial control problems" and Canadians could soon be looking at the "end to a once prosperous auto parts industry in Ontario."

The most recent figures he's aware of show that layoffs or plant closures

have affected 19,000 auto part workers in 31 plants. There have been no cutbacks in Milton yet.

"So far we've been able to keep our head above water. We went through a major restructuring in the last five years to get into that position."

There are other factors affecting the industry too, he stressed. For instance, the trend for auto giants to do more work in-house, thus further

squeezing parts suppliers.

"Ontario is living beyond reality," he concluded. 'It can't afford indexed pensions, pay equity, child care and expect to compete on global basis."

Halton and Peel for the United Steelworkers, was quick to point out another possible factor aggravating

He said a recent study pointed out that managers and executives in Canada are, on average, the second highest paid in the world, behind only those from the United States.

That doesn't exactly inspire Mr. MacPherson, co-ordinator of workers to agree they should be bearing the brunt" of current economic woes.

> Workers, he added, face a host of problems they have no control over such as the federal government's high interest rate policy, the high cost of homes and the high cost of living, particularly in the Toronto area.

Wage settlements reflect workers' desires to "stay level and catch up. I don't think that's unusual."

The labour spokesperson said a person doesn't have to be an expert to see there's a problem in the auto America. parts industry and agreed with Mr. Dolson on at least one of the root challenges - the federal government's artificially inflated dollar.

"It's clearly not in the interests of workers or employers."

However, he countered that any rationalization in the auto parts industry will 'happen as a result of

market pressures and business decisions, and not as a result of workers (wages)."

He pointed to Burlington's Tridon, which he said didn't have an excessively large wage and benefit package but still decided to move a large part of its operation to the United

As far as competing globally, Mr. MacPherson blasted the Tory free trade agreement and said it should have been done on a sector by sector basis, like the auto agreement

"The tack of government in all of our trade agreements should be to uphold and support the best interests of the citizens of this nation. We're forced with free trade to be on a level playing field with North

"Take agriculture for instance. Clearly we can't compete on a level playing field."

Mr. MacPherson suggested the current downturn would last until the

Mr. Dolson said "Ontario is in for one hell of a ride in the next five

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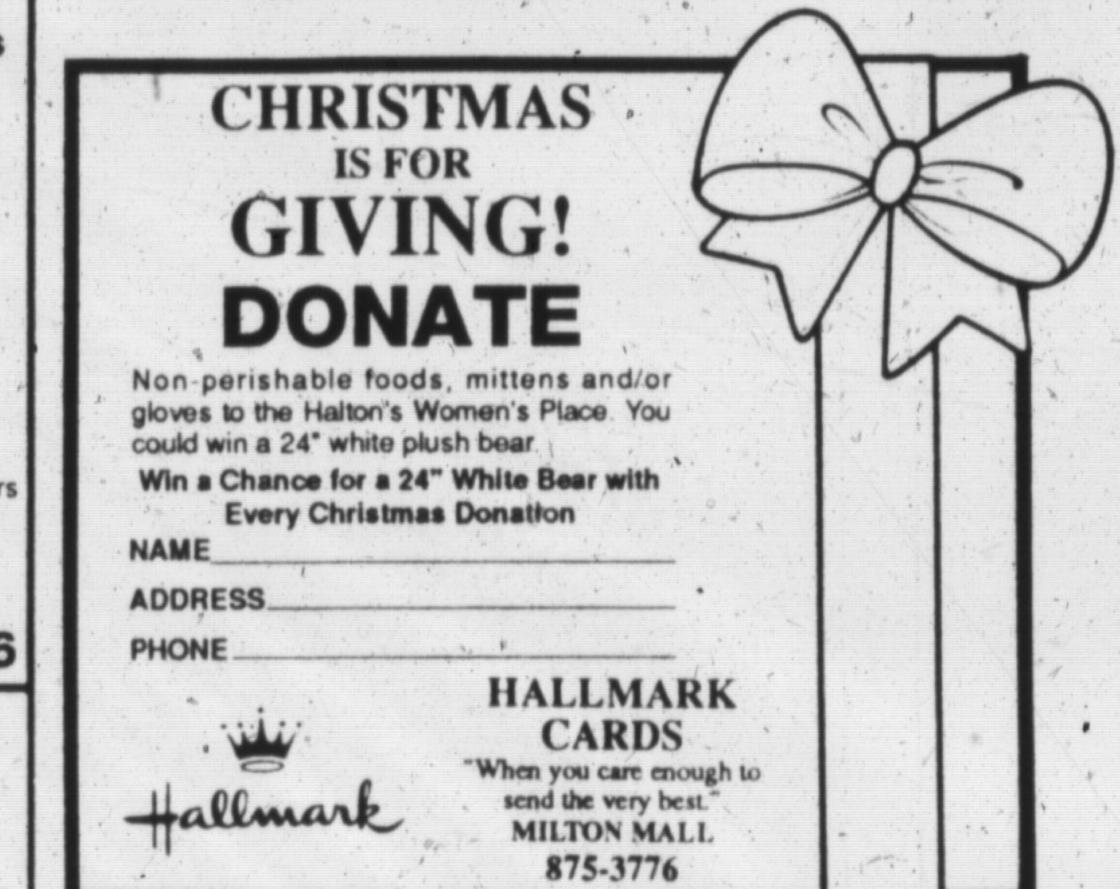
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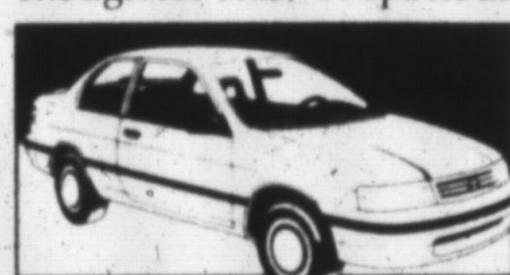
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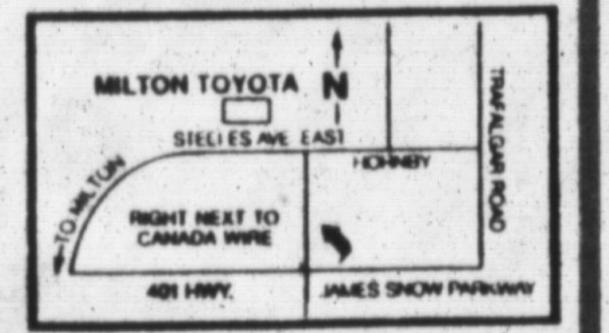
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