

Reformers await vote on United Alternative

BY MIKE ADLER
Staff Writer

For York Region stalwarts of the Reform Party, the next few months will be anxious.

A membership vote following a convention this month will decide whether or not the United Alternative emerges as a new political party to unite Canada's right Reform's leader and founder, Preston Manning, has said he will resign if it does not.

"A lot of Reformers, we're sort of sitting, holding our breath," said Lindsay Mason, a member of the Reform riding executive in York North.

Mason hopes the merger with the Progressive Conservatives, opposed by some Reformers, becomes reality. But if it doesn't, the former Tory voter knows she won't support Conservative leader Joe Clark.

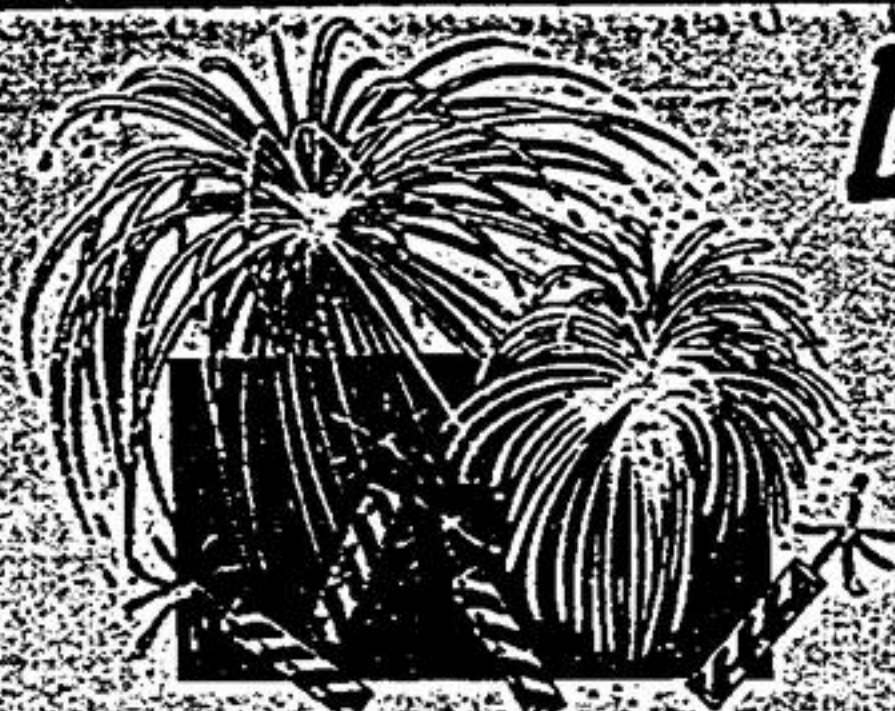
Clark, whose party last year ruled out a merger with Reform or running joint candidates, slammed the door (on the UA) before he even heard the argument. That's the same arrangement, the problems that we had with (Brian) Mulroney.

Markham Reformer Ed Brown believes the UA will be attractive to people "looking for a home" in a right-wing party.

There is a belief in Ontario and the East that it would probably be looked at more favourably (than Reform) by conservative-minded voters," he said.

Alberta treasurer Stockwell Day will be in Markham Jan. 26 as guest speaker for a luncheon on tax reform organized by Jim Jones, Ontario's only Conservative MP.

Day is "a very charismatic, dynamic speaker," said the Markham MP, who approached Day for the Jan. 26 event because he is "top-of-mind on this tax issue."



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