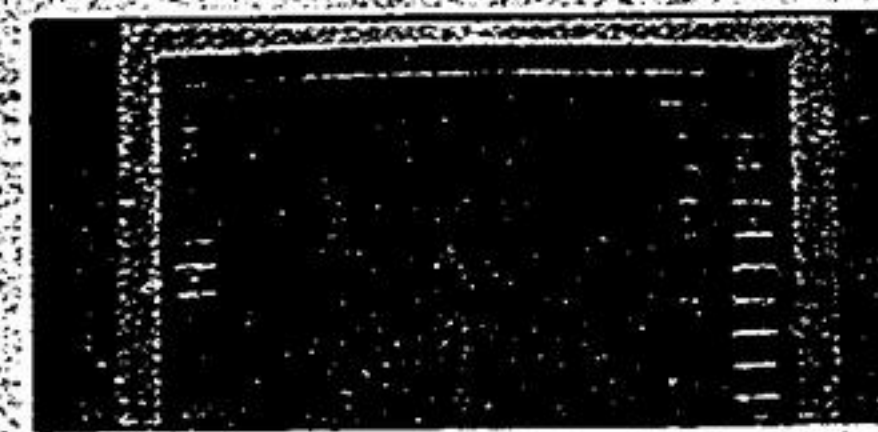


INSIDE: Letters 6
 Events 9
 Opinion 10
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10 Joan Ransberry on
 mould in our
 schools and E. coli in
 some of our water.

ARTS & CULTURE CALENDAR

EVENT: Cabaret Night
WHEN: Saturday, Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m.
WHERE: Stouffville United Church (640-1163)



14 Urban myths,
 legends and
 beliefs and where to find
 them on the Internet.

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A welcome to Canada

FARMERS' PROTEST HEADED FOR MPs

Crisis on the farm behind trek to Ottawa

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
 Staff Writer

York Region farmers climbed aboard their tractors, combines and pickups on Wednesday and headed for Yorkdale Shopping Centre in west Toronto. Today they were to make their way back to Markham.

It was all part of the On-to-Ottawa Trek.

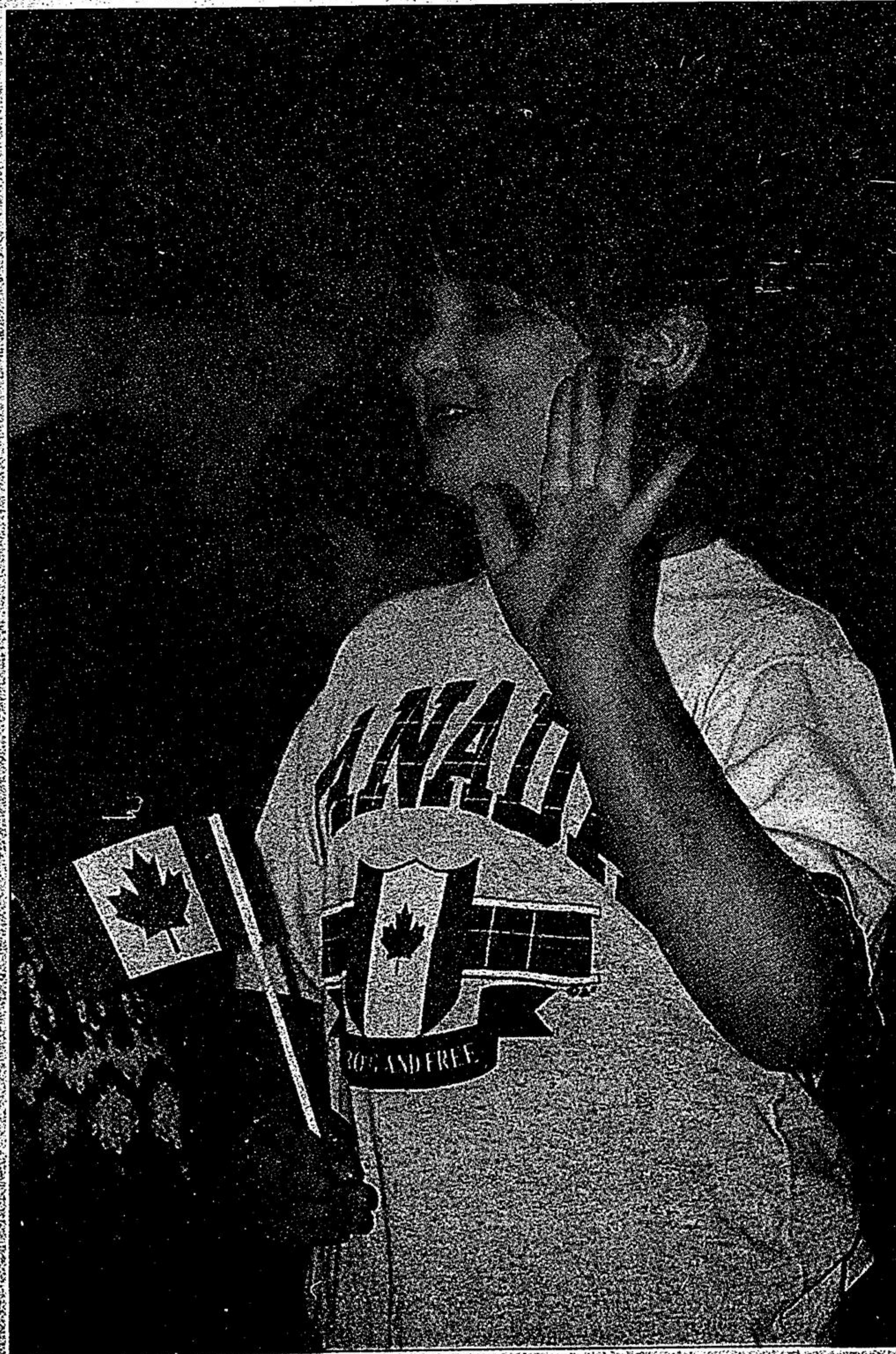
In an attempt to draw attention to their agricultural troubles, York Region farmers met up with tractor and truck-driving colleagues from Halton, Peel and Durham regions and made their way to the busy shopping destination.

Today, the York contingent of 20 farmers was scheduled to turn around and come back to the region. Following along Highway 7, the procession planned to stop at Oak Ridges MP Bryon Wilfert's office in Richmond Hill and at MP John McCallum's office in Markham before going on to Durham.

The trek is part of British Columbia farmer Nick Parsons' quest to raise awareness of the danger posed by the current crisis in the Canadian farm economy.

According to Georgina farmer John Holtrop and Stouffville grower John Doner, farmers are united behind three conditions necessary to ensure sustainable

See FARMERS, page 5.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEN

Orchard Park Public School student Lauren Elliott waves to new Canadian citizens as she sings Bonjour Hiver at a citizenship ceremony at her school in Stouffville on Tuesday. Forty new Canadians took the oath of citizenship. For more photos, see page 11.

Mayor 'livid' with chamber

Meeting with minister 'overstepped group's bounds'

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
 Staff Writer

Charging them with overstepping their bounds, the mayor of Whitchurch-Stouffville leveled harsh criticism against York Region's nine chambers of commerce and boards of trade.

When Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Tony Clement met two weeks ago with representatives of the region's business community, it triggered an outburst of anger from Mayor Wayne Emmerson.

While the chambers let the mayors know, by letter, that a meeting was planned, Clement was the only politician invited.

"I got the letter and I was livid," said Emmerson.

"I don't believe it's the mandate of the chambers to do this. If they want to get political, they should get elected and then sit here," he stated, pointing to the mayor's chair.

Emmerson raised the issue at Wednesday's York regional council meeting. "The region supports me," he stated.

That said, King mayor Margaret Black was not concerned. "I have no problem at all," said Black. "The business community views this as very important. The only problem I have is Clement should meet with the municipal politicians. We need to sit down and discuss this too."

When meeting with the business community, Clement pointed out that the Harris government has already reduced Ontario's

See CHAMBERS, page 12.

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