

# Chambers say it's their mandate to lobby governments

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Ottawa, Hamilton, Sudbury and Haldimand-Norfolk, resulting in 1,200 fewer politicians and taxpayer savings. Amalgamations are in place in Toronto, Emerson was also upset because

Whitchurch-Stouffville president Helene Johnson is proposing that York's rural municipalities, including Whitchurch-Stouffville, join forces and strike out on their own.

"I've said it over and over, a rural makeup would result in tax increases," said Emmerson.

A meeting with Clement is critical, Black stressed. "We need to know: can we go outside the GTA or outside York Region? I'd like to ask Clement that."

A Richmond Hill Chamber official has heard no response from local council. "There shouldn't be a problem," said chamber director Dorothy McCabe.

"This is part of our mandate. We look out for the business community. I'd like to strike a task force and create a model to present to Clement," said McCabe.

The mandate of chambers and

boards of trade is to lobby all levels of government, stressed Markham Board of Trade President Ruth Burkholder.

Emmerson is sending a letter to the chair of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce asking for a detailed account of its mandate. As well, Emmerson is asking Clement for a meeting. Ward 6 councillor Sue Sherban also took issue with the local chamber. She told council she'd received comments about the chamber stepping into the amalgamation debate.

"People pointed out that we've been trying to fight off amalgamation and yet the Chamber wants us to be amalgamated," said Sherban. "I'd like the chamber to know that residents are also questioning their authority."

Johnson had no comment regarding Emmerson and Sherban's statements.

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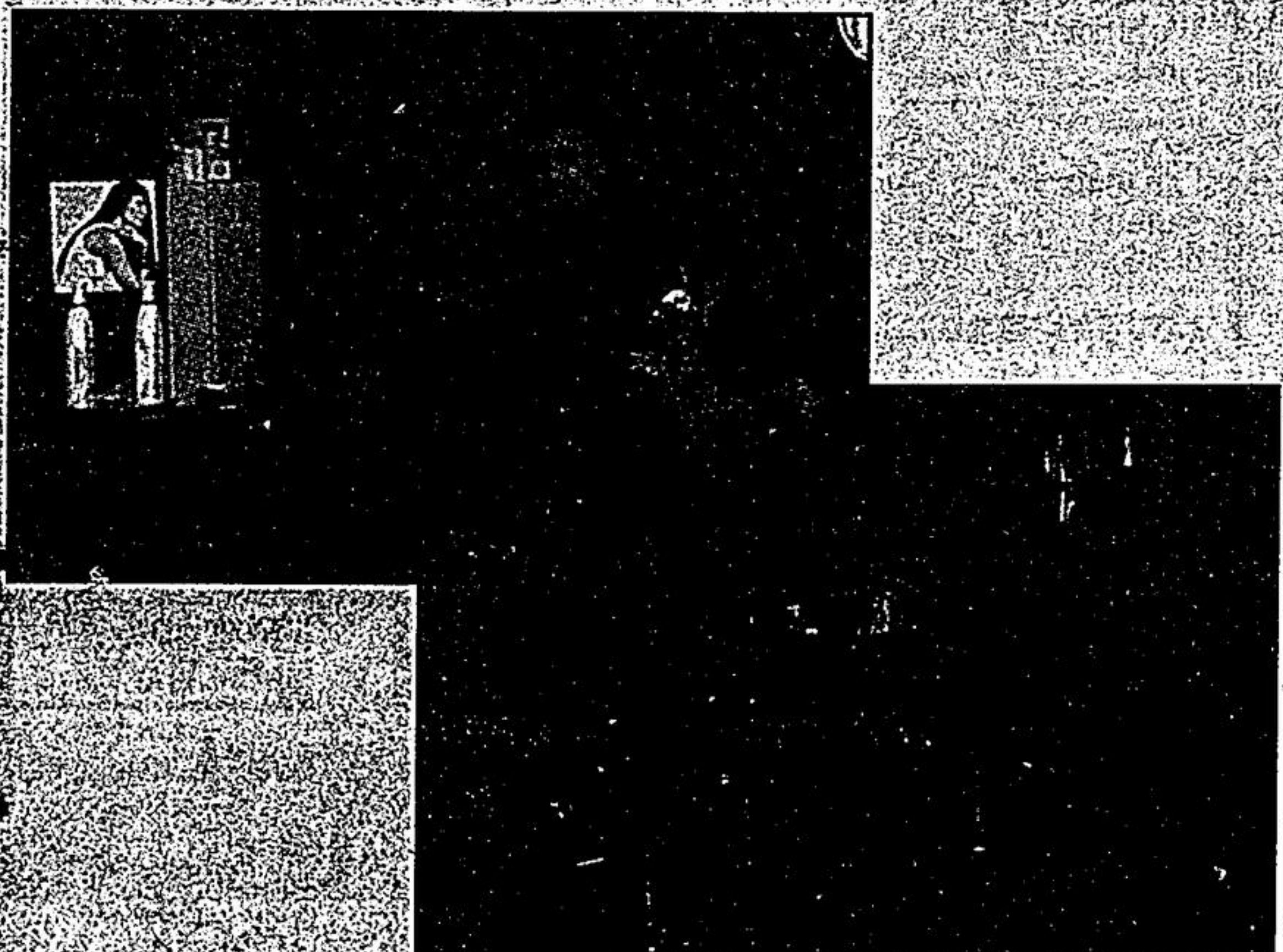
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