

Darcy would give councils more power

Government is too remote and not people-conscious enough, Conservative leadership candidate Darcy McKeough told a group of Halton East delegates Saturday.

McKeough said more responsibility and authority should be pushed down the ladder to municipal governments. He said local government is capable of doing two or three times what it is now and can do it more efficiently than the province.

He said grants should be made available to communities and not on a provisional basis. "If a community wants a new library they'll have to go through three or four departments at the province."

Locals know best

The local government knows better than the province what is needed in the community, McKeough said. He said there should be unconditional grants for this handed over and the decision left for the local government to make.

Noting the advantage would work both ways, McKeough said such a move would free members of parliament from the "nitty gritty" and allow them to deal with province-wide problems and leave local problems for local governments to deal with.

More autonomy
Municipalities should look at

low rental homes on smaller lots and the condominium and town house approach McKeough said. He said under regional government he would want the local government to have the power to approve subdivisions without going to the province.

He praised Kitchener for efforts in providing homes on 40 foot lots. He said it wasn't necessary for all homes to be of the cheaper variety, but said each subdivision should have an area allotted for homes on 40 foot lots or some of the condominium or town house nature.

"There is a real selling job needed to convince communities of this," he said.

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Second Section

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"I CAN'T VOTE yet Mr. Davis, but would you like a bite to eat?" Young Jennifer Snow, daughter of Halton East MPP Jim Snow helped serve guests at a party at the Snow home. Halton East delegates and alternates questioned leadership hopeful William Davis. Davis Minister of Education, is one of the five bidding for the Conservative leadership and premiership of Ontario. Snow is supporting him.—(Staff Photo)

Davis

Education key to prosperity

A superior education system is the key to prosperity, William Davis told Halton delegates to the Conservative leadership conference. Davis made the statement at a party in his honor Sunday at the home of Jim Snow, Halton East MP.

The minister of education told delegates education was a prerequisite to attracting industry and of greater importance than a country rich in natural resources. Education is the key to an affluent society and goes hand in hand with attracting industry.

Numbers not frills

He said the increase in cost of education was due to the increase in numbers, not frills. He said Ontario's education spending was favorable to that in the two neighboring provinces and five states.

"I have fewer questions about education spending in the north, east and west parts of the province than the south," he said, explaining that those in underdeveloped areas were concerned about attracting industries and providing jobs.

Tax reform is a concern of all candidates but not an issue. Federal help is needed before this can come about, he noted. He pointed out the provinces don't have the proper base to bring about tax reform and would need consideration from the federal government on the matter.

Province pays 60 per cent
Under questioning Davis said the province will assume 60 per

cent of the cost of education eventually and this will help alleviate the burden on the property owner. This wasn't possible before the county boards of education, he told delegates.

During the meeting Davis was careful not to make any promises. He claimed there were no easy solutions to be reached. He noted if you were to tackle pollution you have to check its effect on the economy and the major problems of government

are interwoven.

Davis backed the Roberts government and their efforts towards equalization among provinces. "When we no longer carry out this goal, confederation will cease to exist," he said.

Davis appeared confident in his ability to win the provincial election but said there were four other candidates in the race and no matter who leads the party "we'll emerge united and win the election."



HALTON EAST delegates to the Conservation leadership convention slated for next week met Allan Lawrence Tuesday morning (yesterday) at a breakfast in Oakville. Halton East delegates have met each of the five candidates at similar breakfast meetings or luncheons. The candidates have travelled province-wide since they tossed their hats into the ring.—(Staff Photo)

Lawrence

Dynamic "rebel" candidate stresses need for change

Allan Lawrence, Minister of Mines and Northern Affairs and perhaps the most dynamic of the five Conservative leadership candidates, spoke at a breakfast meeting of the Halton East delegates and alternates yesterday (Tuesday) in Oakville.

Lawrence spoke of the need for change and a need for a colorful and enthusiastic approach in government. "If you're happy with the status quo I'm not your man," he told delegates. He said he had no wish to deprecate John Roberts or his government, but noted Roberts was stepping down because he realized the need for change.

"We've had good stable government for 27 years because our leaders have recognized need for change — not because of a divine right to govern," he said.

Knock civil service

He said government based too many decisions on recommendations of the civil service and argued the party and people should be consulted more than they are. He said many businessmen and housewives considered government more of a hindrance than a help and this, to him, is a frightening idea.

He wouldn't point his finger at candidates who represent the status quo. "I'll need all these fellows on my cabinet. I don't want to make any enemies," he quipped.

Perhaps one of the most controversial moves of the campaign is Lawrence's suggestion to put a hold on education spending. "Last year it was 41 per cent of the provincial budget, this year it is 43 per cent and next year it will be 46 per cent," he said.

"This scares the pants off me," he told delegates. He claims the department of education and local trustees pass the buck back and forth as far as expenditures go, with one blaming the other.

Other priorities

"There is a need for northern development, better transit, better roads, expanded industrial and commercial programs and nursing home care but there is just not enough dough to go around," he explained.

Lawrence said a freeze should be put on the education dollar. He claimed individual boards could be left with a degree of flexibility. He proposed a three year freeze and by that time education spending would be 33 per cent of the provincial budget with the rising revenue. He said no one area should receive more than 33 per cent of the provincial budget.

Danger area

"I sense a growing backlash worse than anything we've seen if we continue to have costs increase. The educational tail is wagging the government dog and it shouldn't," he said.

Lawrence said his opinions on the education problem had been misconstrued and he had never advocated cutting or freezing teacher's salaries. He said cuts

should be made at the discretion of the board whether it be equipment, administration or teachers.

He said nobody — including administrators and teachers — is happy with the educational system. He said his child could explain what went wrong with the expedition to the moon, but can't multiply.

More consultations

He knocked the government for leaning on civil servants for recommendations. He said caucus meetings have been called at 1 p.m. and members asked to vote on an important matter at 2 p.m. when the house resumes. He said the same thing happens at the cabinet. "A high paid civil servant comes in with charts and maps and proposals and flashing signs on the wall and gives you 15 minutes to make a decision."

He claimed back benchers should be consulted more often on day to day matters. He called for greater participation in the party and greater consultation with party organizations.

He reviewed his record in

setting up advisory boards with people from the business and industrial world and noted there should be more of them.

Lawrence, sometimes referred to as a rebel in the party, provided Halton East delegates with direct answers and appeared ready to rock the boat if need be.

Darcy

Sweeten pot for Canadians

Canadian nationalism is a surging force in the country today, Conservative candidate for the leadership of the party and premiership of Ontario Darcy McKeough told Halton East delegates and alternates at a breakfast in his honor Saturday.

McKeough said this feeling wasn't concentrated just in Southern Ontario but in the far northern reaches of the province as well. McKeough, Minister of Municipal Affairs, claimed credit for being the first candidate to mention nationalism and favor it.

He took the opportunity to knock the federal government's move to form the Canadian Development Corporation. "We don't need more controls. The CDC is just another bureaucratic monster, not an answer," he said.

Canadian investment

He claimed nationalism of industry is the socialist answer to everything. He advocated pro-Canadian measures and said the tax system should be used to stimulate Canadian investment. If Canadians are to control their own economy by even 50 per cent in the coming years they'll have

to increase their investments greatly, he told the delegates.

McKeough said he wouldn't support moves to discourage foreign investment but rather moves to encourage Canadian investment.

McKeough supported the Roberts government's actions in funneling Ontario funds to Quebec and the Maritimes. He pointed out that under Roberts, Ontario has kicked in 43 per cent of Canada's money in the fight against regional economic disparity. He said he would continue this.

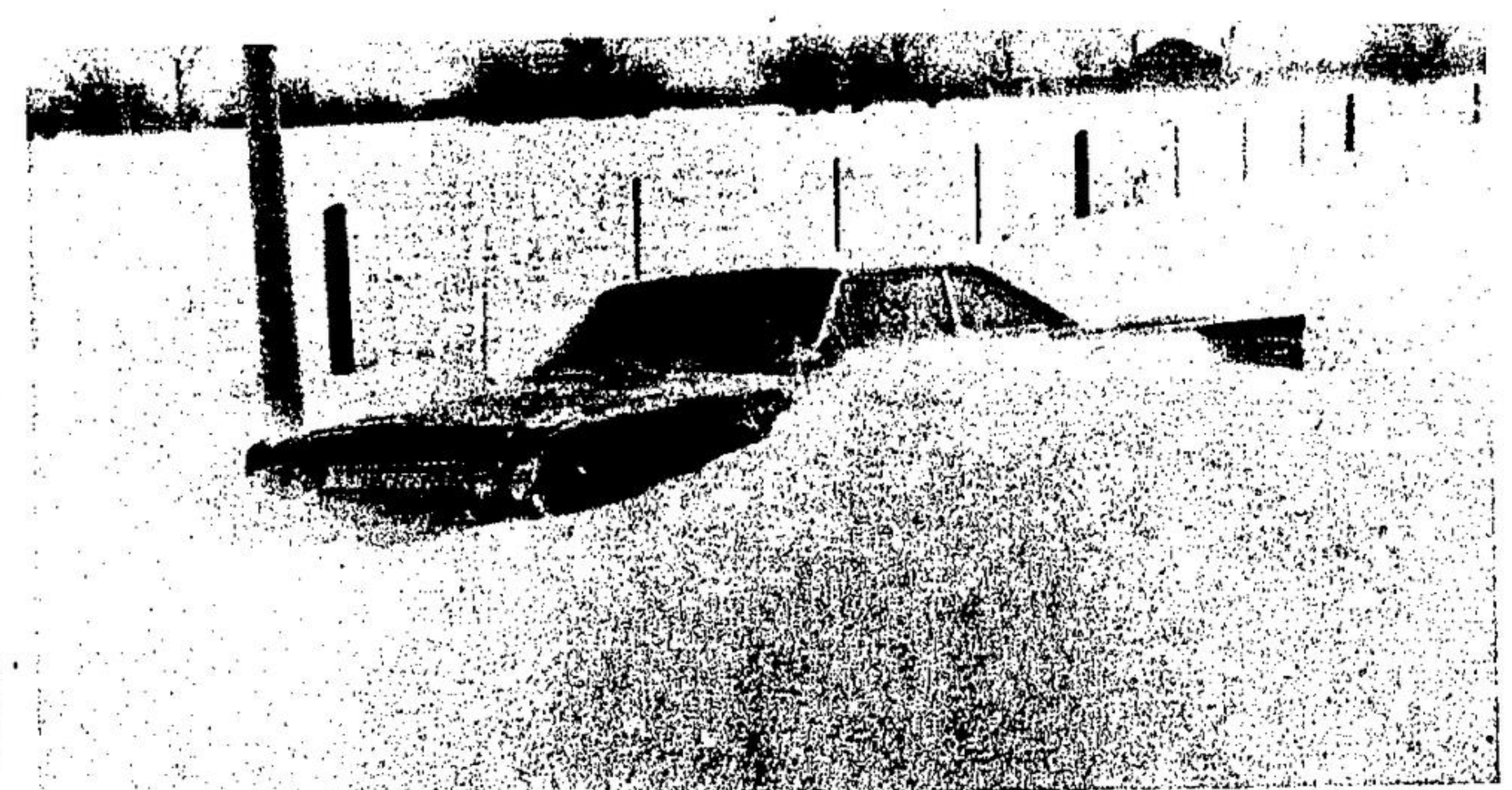
Roberts' greatest move

Both he and William Davis, a rival for the premiership, told Halton delegates Roberts' greatest contribution would be towards national unity. McKeough declared himself a citizen of Ontario but a citizen of Canada first.

In answer to a question McKeough said it is not realistic to expect a shift away from education spending priorities in the next 20 years. He pointed out the province would take a greater share of the spending and in this



Darcy McKeough way help take the burden off real property.



SOME UNFORTUNATE MOTORIST not only had to leave his car on the side of Highway 25, but will now have to battle mountains of snow that drifted around the car. A quick look might convince the motorist it is better to walk or depend on public transit until the spring. This car strayed from the road Saturday or early Sunday morning.—(Staff Photo)

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