

Jim Snow

Felt "right at home"

By JOHN CHALLINOR
Champion Editor

It was somewhat of understatement when Transportation and Communications Minister Jim Snow said he "felt right at home" speaking to members of the Milton-Burlington Progressive Conservative Riding Association in Milton Thursday night.

Aside from the fact Mr. Snow is a Milton native who makes his home in nearby Hornby, he is one of the most influential Cabinet ministers in Ontario Premier Bill Davis' majority PC government.

His presence at the riding association's annual meeting, which might have drawn cackles of ridicule from any other audience in light of colleague Frank Miller's new sales tax scheme, didn't ruffle a feather.

Mr. Snow, whose stature is equalled only by his physical size, was permitted by the 30 residents in attendance to talk off the cuff about his ministry—past, present and future.

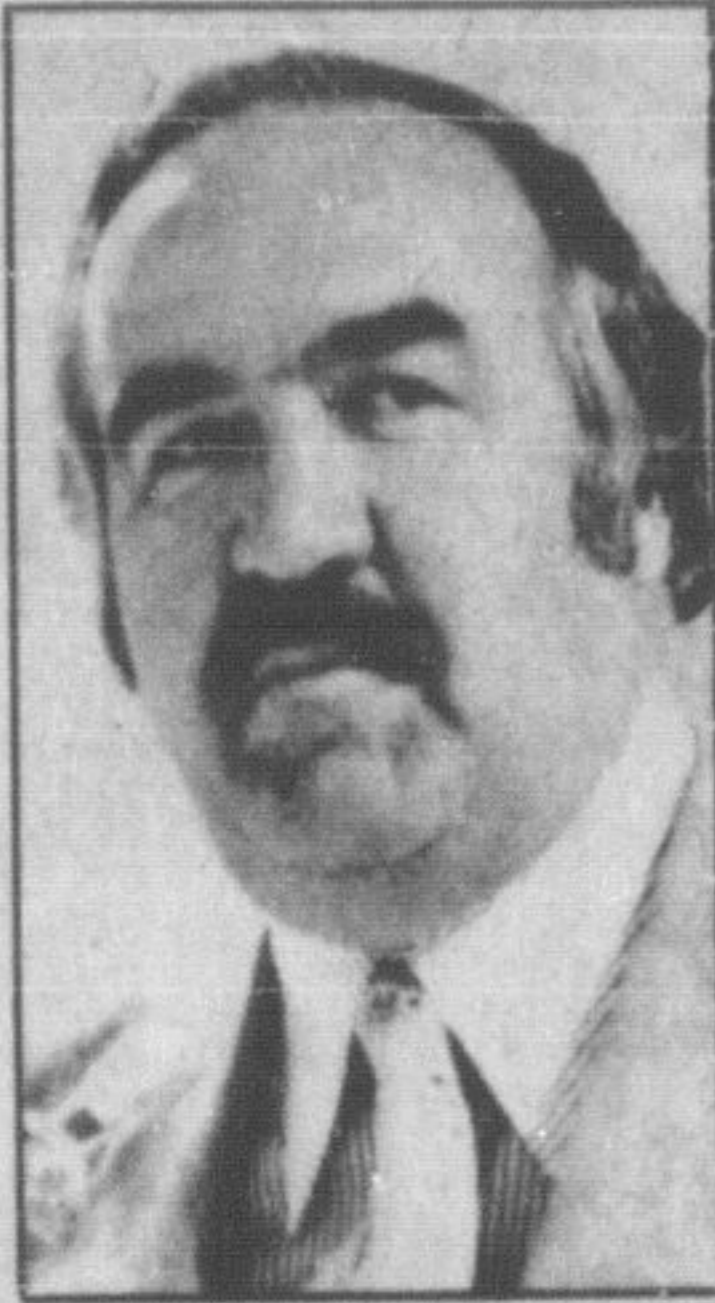
Since taking over the ministry seven-and-a-half years ago, Mr. Snow said the number of employees has decreased to 10,750 from 12,000; his budget has increased from \$984 million to \$1.1 billion and the Ministry of Transportation and Communications has become the third largest ministry in the government.

There are 13,000 miles of highways, 83,000 miles of municipal roads and streets, 50 airports and 62 municipal transportation systems under his jurisdiction—and the figures are increasing daily.

GO Transit, one of the ministry's great success stories during the 70s, carried 22 million commuters last year.

Mr. Snow said 80,000 passengers are carried along the Lakeshore line each day—a figure which has doubled in the last five years. Milton's route carries about 3,700 per day.

Mr. Snow added his ministry is responsible for the management of the St. Lawrence Seaway as well as the port at Thunder Bay—the largest grain port in the world. Mr. Snow said in excess of 60 per cent of



JIM SNOW

Canada's grain goes through Thunder Bay.

While pointing to a series of maps, Mr. Snow outlined the future plans of his ministry in the area of road construction.

Plans for Highway 403, 407, the James Snow Parkway, the twinning of the Burlington Skyway and additional work on Highway 401 were highlighted in Mr. Snow's thumbnail sketch of the next 20 years.

"Some problems are impossible to solve, but there is never a problem if I can find enough money," he smiled.

Ken McDonald of Burlington was elected president of the riding association for the coming year. J.R. Belleghem of Burlington assumes the role of immediate past-president.

Sylvia Milinkovich of Burlington was elected first vice-president, Ron Flannagan of Milton was elected second vice-president, Irene Saunders of Hornby was elected secretary and Bill Mercer, a Milton businessman living in Burlington, was elected treasurer.

Area directors include Doris Gould of Burlington, Roy Wood of Nassagaweya, Marie Shadbolt of Acton and Ab Tennant of Georgetown.

Directors at large include Ross Ballantine of Acton, Robert Serena of Burlington, Ric Morrow of Georgetown, Barb Pentland of Milton, Roy Galloway of Moffatt and Fran Baines of Georgetown—the riding's candidate in the last provincial election.



A free ride

Lovely Liane Middleton rode in the back of Milton Coun. Brad Clements' convertible during the Chamber of Commerce parade on Saturday.

Interest rate concern no surprise to Snow

Oakville MPP James Snow isn't surprised that a recent NDP riding poll showed local residents are concerned most about high interest rates and unemployment.

"The answers don't surprise me one little bit," Snow, a Progressive Conservative, said. "But it all depends on the wording of a particular question. A question can be worded in two different ways and get two different results."

The Oakville riding of the NDP polled 600 residents and found 40.5 per cent were most concerned about "intolerably" high interest rates. Unemployment, jobs and layoffs were tops in the minds of 34.3 per cent of those polled.

The controversial provincial budget

widening the use of sales tax placed a distant third with 6.2 per cent.

In a press release, the NDP blamed the current economic picture on government inaction, claiming canvassers sensed despondency that things were only getting worse.

Mr. Snow said layoffs were "a major concern to our people" and that they were connected to high interest rates.

The increase in the use of sales tax is mostly going to be felt to those dealing in businesses whose merchandise was not previously taxable. Mr. Snow said, adding rates are tied to the economic strategy of the federal government, which in turn, work in conjunction with the world situation.

Tower approved

Milton's bylaw allowing the construction of a micro wave relay tower in Speyside has received the final stamp of approval from the Ontario Municipal Board.

Councillors were advised recently that the Board had accepted amendments to the bylaw which will allow MacLean Hunter Cable Television Ltd. of Guelph to construct the tower which will improve reception in Guelph of four television stations from Buffalo.

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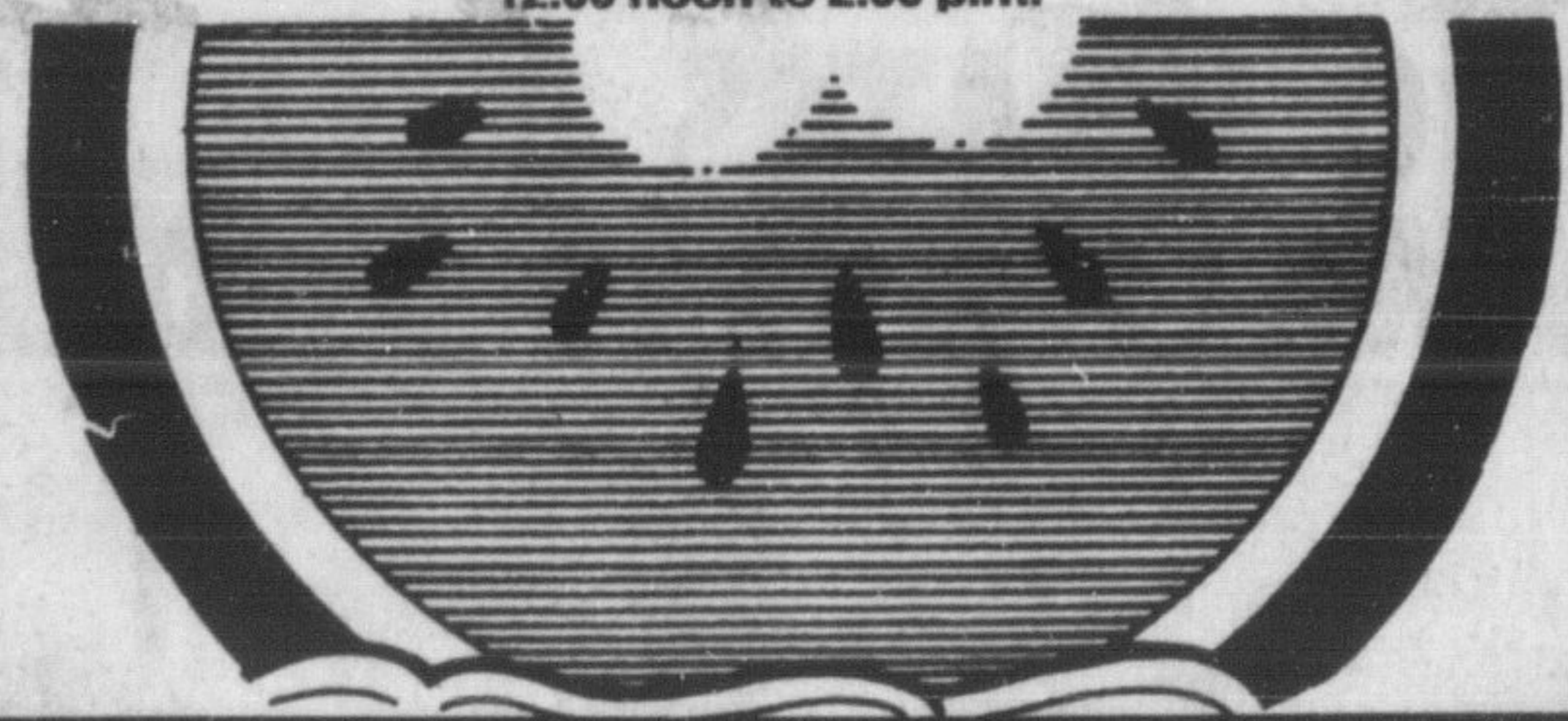
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