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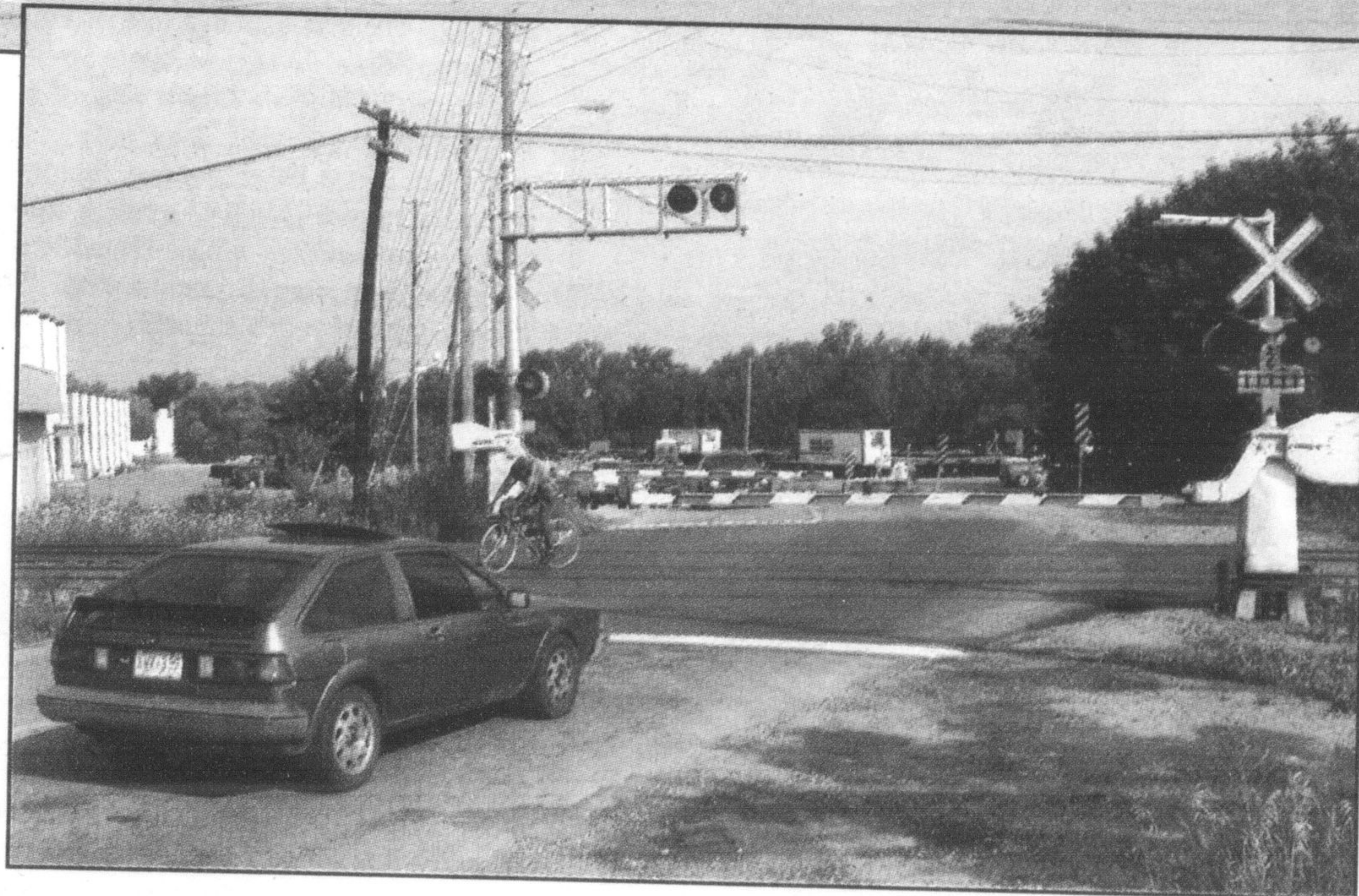
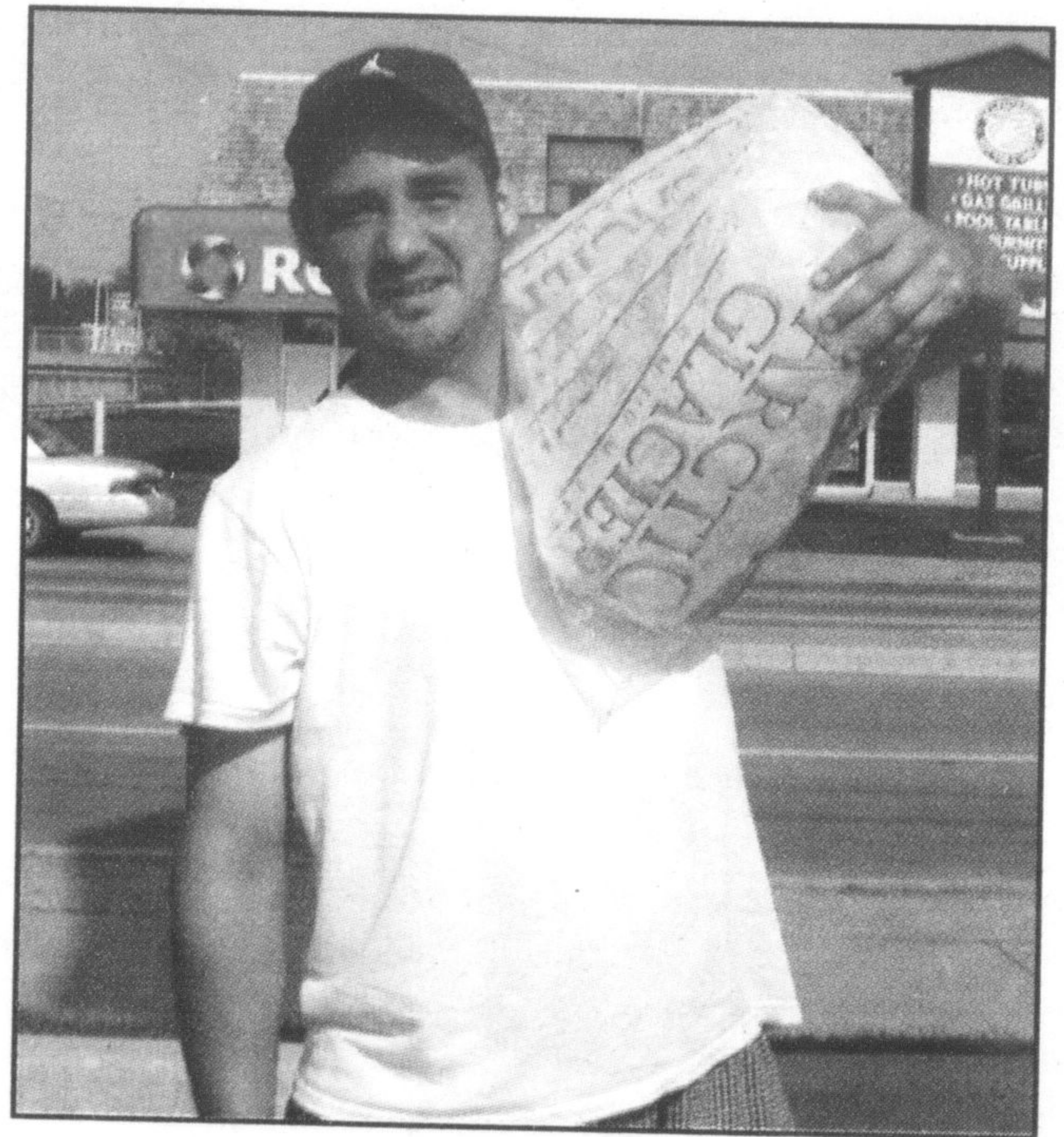
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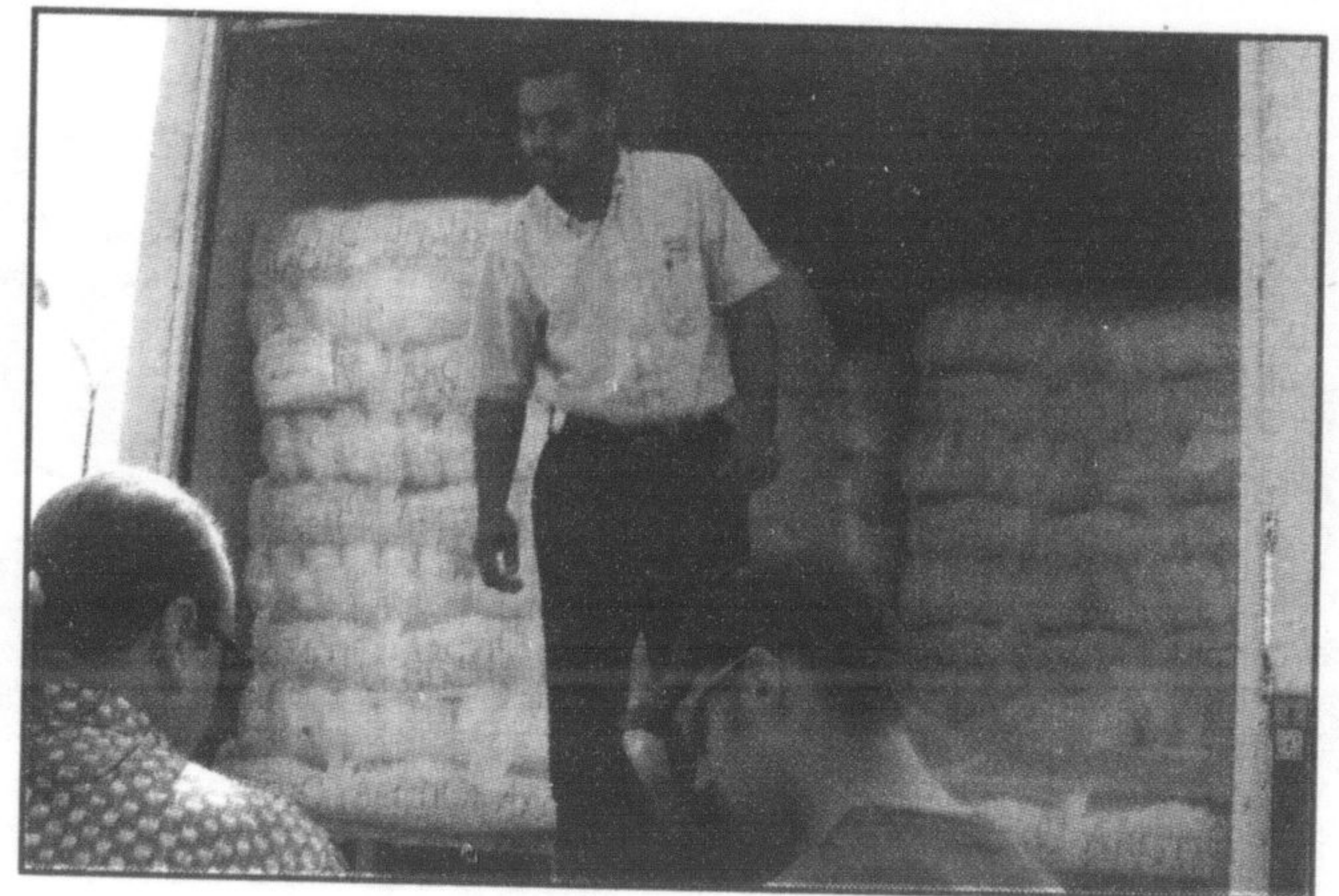
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Malfunctioning railway crossings (left) and empty retail parking lots (above) were the order of the day as Milton continued to deal with the power outage that hit Ontario and part of the U.S. yesterday afternoon. At top right, Sam Way was among the many local residents who stocked up from an ice truck parked at Milton Mall.

Photos by SEAN MILLER



Town stays calm as blackout hits

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**
The Champion

Milton was a scene of calm confusion yesterday when the power went out at 4:10 p.m. in a blackout that stretched from Ontario to parts of the U.S.

Just after 5 p.m., Milton transformed into a true small town as downtown store owners waited outside their store fronts and chatted with neighbours and fellow proprietors.

Moods varied, but puzzlement was the order of the day everywhere as people waited — although nobody knew exactly what for.

Kathleen Smith, of Kalena Flowers, sat on the step in front of the Main Street florist and expressed what seemed to be at the back of everybody's minds — was it terrorism?

"We're campers, so first I thought, 'no biggy.' But

in the back of my mind, I thought, we've been warned — how many times has the U.S. been on high alert?," she said, adding that her customers said they were thinking along the same lines.

She said she was slightly worried about her husband, who was taking GO Transit as well as a subway from downtown Toronto.

"I'm supposed to pick him up from the GO station at 5:30 p.m., but he might not be there. But he's a big boy. He can take care of himself."

At about 5:10 p.m., Leigh Silva pulled up to the downtown post office and asked employee John Shields if she could pick up her mail, which she did.

Ms Silva said she had been talking on the phone with a friend when the line went dead. She first thought it was a minor power outage, but got a flash of reality when she turned on her car radio.

"I heard them say people should pull over and

park at the side of the road. I was thinking, 'I wonder what happened in downtown Toronto?' But then I realized there were no traffic lights on here."

She said all the drivers in Milton were extremely polite, treating intersections as four-way stops.

Within a few hours of the initial blackout yesterday, there were pockets of power in the area, including parts of Main Street.

Today, the scene wasn't much different, although the calm seemed to prevail over the confusion. As of this morning, most traffic lights were out in Milton, with the known exception of Main and Martin streets.

Initial plans to set up a cooling station at Allendale to provide relief from the heat were squelched by the facility's lack of power.

Milton police said the scene last night wasn't much different from a usual Thursday, although

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