

# Canada leaves 'big' impression on European writers

15 The Canadian Champion, Wed., November 9, 1988

By JANE MULLER  
If the European journalists who visited Milton Monday have one thing to say about Canada it would be "big."

The 33 trucking industry writers were hand-picked by their respective countries to tour the facilities of Volvo GM in the United States and Canada. The Canadian leg of their nine-day tour, sponsored by Volvo GM brought them to Milton.

Dr. Joerg Naumann, a writer with Switzerland's *Garage and Transport*, a monthly industry magazine, was told during his visit that his country was the size of Lake Ontario. One of Europe's smallest countries, Switzerland has a population of 6.6 million.

British journalist Brian Weatherley and his counterparts noted "there is so much more space compared with the United Kingdom." Our wide open spaces translate into much larger trucks than those used in Europe.

"The sleepers on some trucks are bigger than my bedroom," Mr. Weatherley said, almost seriously.

"What they want in a truck over here is so different."

Our bigger trucks and trailers are even made differently. Frames are bolted together in Canada, a technique Mr. Weatherley called "traditional and a little old fashioned." He admitted, however, bolts make for

easier repairs as opposed to the rivets and welds used on British-made equipment.

Canadians in the trucking

business must deal with bigger rolls of red tape. Mr. Weatherley said he "was amazed by our 'mish-mash of regulations.'" And despite being big

on rules, he says we're small on safety.

In Britain, all truck drivers have spies in their cabs. That's the term given to the "tachographs" which record the length of time a truck is driven and at what speed the driver is travelling at all times.

Drivers can only spend 4½ hours on the road before they must take a 45-minute break. The government has set rules outlining the number of hours a driver can be on the road over a one- or two-week period.

"Driver fatigue is a major factor in safety," the journalist said.

For some journalists, Volvo GM provided their first trip to North America. Dante Gavioli, a public relations officer for Volvo GM in Italy, had never been to Canada before

this tour. He credits Canadians with being "warmer" than their American neighbours.

During his travels to Virginia and Washington and then to Milton, he concluded there is a "big difference between the United States and Canada." He says life is better here.

After touring the Volvo GM warehouse and head offices on Steeles Avenue, the European visitors toured town hall and had lunch at Hugh Foster Hall next door. Many of the journalists commented on the restoration of the two historic buildings. The combination of the modern with the old impressed them most.

Mayor Gord Krantz gave visitors a Town of Milton pen and lapel pin as mementos of their visit.



Photo by JOHN WARREN

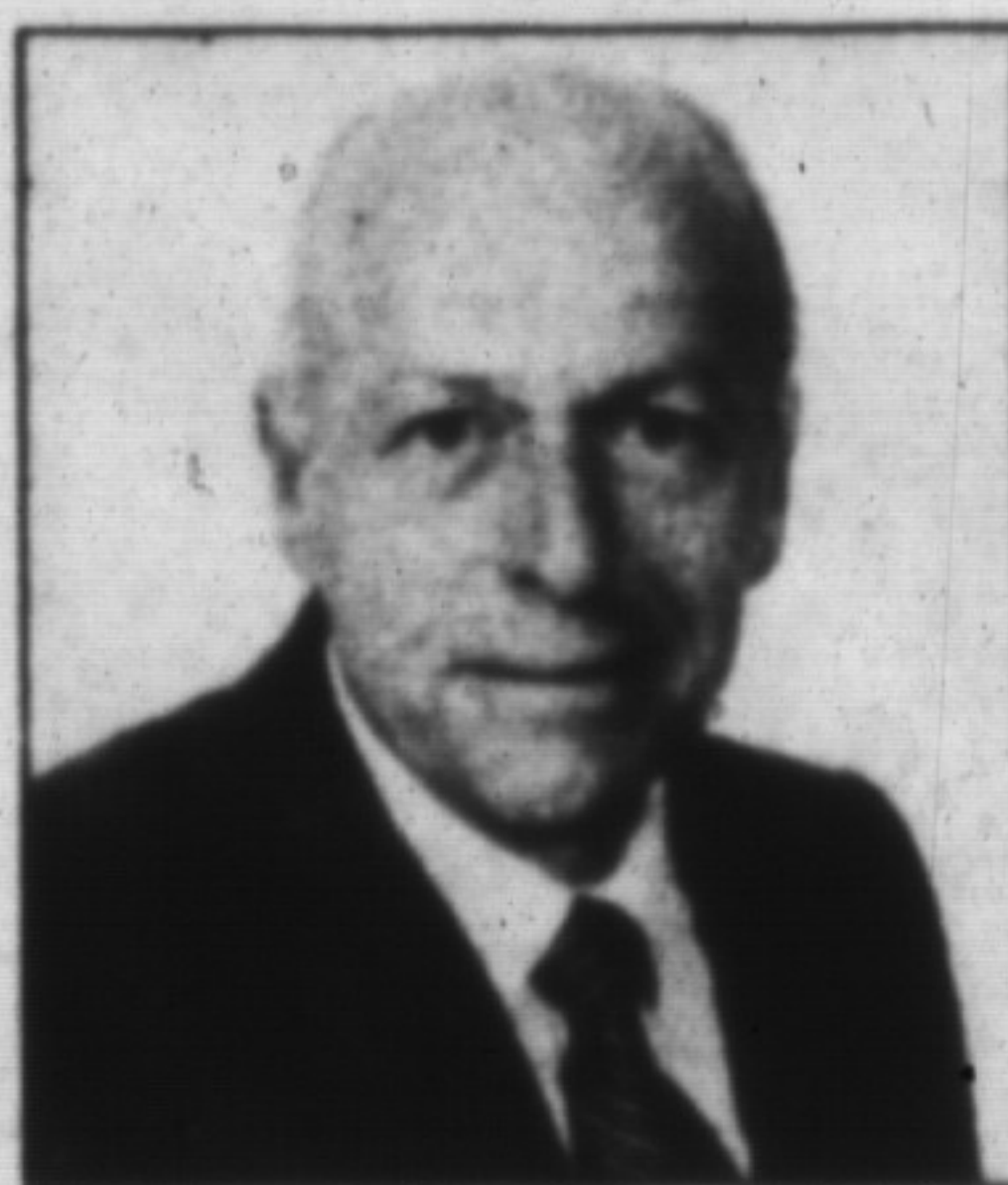
Who says no one is challenging Mayor Gord Krantz for his seat in the council chambers? Hendrick DeSpiegelaere found the mayor's chair at the head of the council chambers to his liking when he and 32 other European trucking industry journalists toured town hall Monday. The Belgium journalist was part of a North American tour organized by Volvo GM.

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