

# McNamara waves flag for Blanchard in S'fld

BY PAT MURPHY  
STAFF WRITER

Former Gov. James Blanchard has received a strong endorsement as Secretary of Transportation in the cabinet of President-elect Bill Clinton.

That endorsement came Thursday from Wayne County Executive Ed McNamara when he was addressing the City Centre Optimist Club at the Radisson Hotel in Southfield.

The Wayne County executive's talk was informal consisting mainly of McNamara giving his views on a wide range of topics.

"Blanchard is a very capable and qualified person," said McNamara, who first became acquainted with Blanchard in 1970, when McNamara was running for lieutenant governor as Sander Levin's running mate.

Blanchard was his driver, McNamara said. And their association grew as Blanchard became a U.S. representative from Pleasant Ridge and later a two-term governor of Michigan.

Clinton is expected to name his pick for Secretary of Transportation this week and Blanchard is reportedly on the short, short list. Blanchard has some stiff competition, however. The other commonly mentioned name is Wil-



Ed McNamara

liam Daley, a Chicago banker who is the brother of politically powerful Richard M. Daley, mayor of the Windy City.

Transportation secretary is an important post, said McNamara.

"That secretary is able to control everything that moves... as well as the dollars that make things move."

## Backing Blanchard

McNamara said he is backing Blanchard for numerous reasons, including discussions in the Chicago area about a third airport. "I'm concerned if Daley is selected over Blanchard because (federal) dollars that should go to Metro (airport) will be diverted to Illinois."

Wayne County has plans for upgrading Metro Airport, McNamara said, and turning it into a world-class airport. Those plans would need all the federal dollars available.

McNamara said he and other Michigan Democrats have informed Clinton of their support for Blanchard. They also believe Blanchard has a good chance of winning the position because of

their early — and steadfast — support for Clinton during the campaign.

"We were with him through Jennifer Flowers and discussion about his draft status," said McNamara, referring to two issues to haunt the Arkansas governor throughout the campaign.

Clinton carried Michigan in the Democratic primary and the Nov. 3 general election — something McNamara thought would weigh in Blanchard's favor.

Other Democrats, however, note that William Daley also has some heavy political ammunition, namely ties to the Democratic machine of Chicago which helped Clinton carry Illinois.

## On other issues

McNamara's talk dealt with a wide range of issues, such as:

■ Clinton's economic summit in Little Rock. "I'm impressed," he said. "That's a good approach and just what we needed."

■ U.S. Rep. Bob Carr, who has helped metro get millions of federal dollars for its expansion. "He's more important to us than Bill Clinton," said McNamara.

■ On Bo Schembechler when he and Wayne County were negotiating about a new baseball stadium. He talked to us "like he was talking to (college) kids worried about their scholarships. That's the only way he knows."

■ On Tom Monaghan, former

owner of the Detroit Tigers. "Monaghan wanted (for a stadium) an island, an oasis, surrounded with a 12-foot fence with barbed wire on the top. He wanted fans who would drive off the freeway, watch Monaghan's team and buy peanuts from Monaghan."

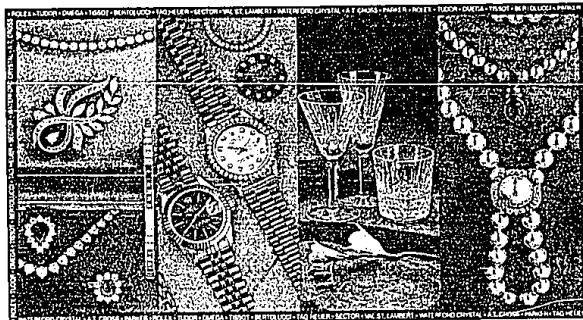
■ On casino gambling in Detroit. "Casino gambling isn't a moral issue. If it were, we'd have to get rid of the lottery, raffles and bingo in Catholic churches," said McNamara, who is Catholic. "Casino gambling in Detroit makes sense. What doesn't make sense is businesses in Detroit or Southfield putting guests on buses to go over to Windsor to gamble."

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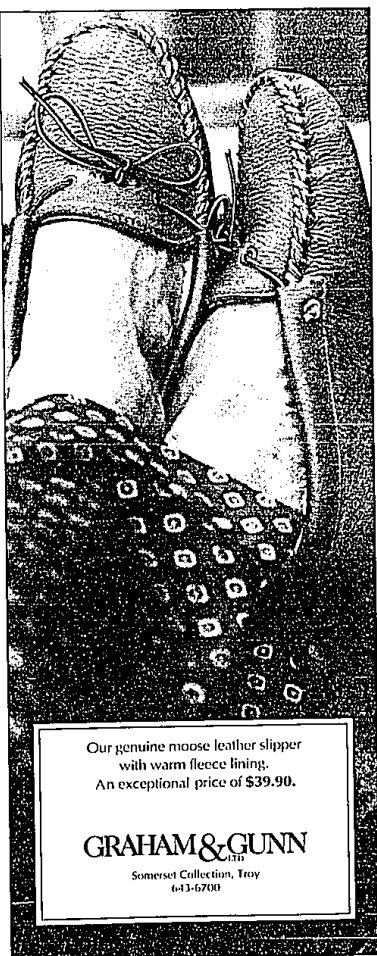
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