

# Approve final hydro corridor link

In a year and a half the most visible consequence of the Ontario government's go ahead on the Bradley-Georgetown hydro corridor will be a long line of steel towers carrying 500,000 volts down the centre of Halton Hills.

Students in the new Acton high school on Churchill Road North will be able to see the towers. Residents in the yet to be built estate subdivision between the fourth and fifth lines will also see them. Drivers on Highway 7 will pass under the high voltage transmission lines between Acton and Georgetown.

The 250-foot wide swath is to cross the Niagara Escarpment near Limehouse and veer west towards Milton where the power brought from the Bruce nuclear generating station will be piped to the energy-voracious Metropolitan Toronto.

Energy Minister Timbrell made the announcement at a press conference at Queen's Park Wednesday afternoon, twinning the approval with Ontario's proposal for an alternative method of pricing domestic crude oil, a subject which representatives of the daily media found more

newsworthy. Mr. Timbrell said in essence he inherited many of the difficulties encountered in making a decision on the controversial corridor and he had never been in a position to order an independent study of the corridor as requested by the Interested Citizens Group, (ICG) representing land owners along the full length of the corridor.

The Energy Minister said he had been told by the ICG that a study of the entire corridor could be done in three months and they would abide by the decision of an independent body. But Timbrell said he did not believe that length of time would be sufficient. He claimed it would take from 27 months to three years to make an independent study and this would cost taxpayers millions of dollars in delays in the availability of full power from the third generating unit at Bruce A station.

"It would put us back in Square One", the Minister said, claiming the existing route suggested by the Environmental Hearing Board was only a line of wooden poles on a 100 foot corridor.

The gist of his report says: "Ontario hydro began preliminary planning for a 500 kV transmission line from the Bruce generating station to transmit power to the Toronto area in 1971", Mr. Timbrell said. "The selected route received government approval in principle in January 1972. Dr. Solandt was appointed to study the proposed Nanticoke to Pickering corridor. The decision was made in 1972 to defer construction and to undertake an environmental study for the Bradley-Georgetown line."

"Dr. Solandt made a key decision when he recommended two separate crossings of the Escarpment for system security purposes—one for the Nanticoke to Pickering line along the Highway 401 corridor and a second crossing for the Bradley Junction to the Milton Substation line at Limehouse. Dr. Solandt agreed with the arguments that there should be a completely new corridor into the Toronto area."

In order to ensure that everything possible is done in this area, the Ministry of the Environment will monitor Hydro's environmental practice in the implementation of the Hearing Board's environmental recommendations. In this task they will be supported by the Ministries of Agriculture and Food, and Natural Resources, as required.

"Ontario Hydro is conscious of its obligations to the property owners along the transmission line corridor. It will establish local offices where property owners can obtain information regarding the line. These offices will be used as contact points for Hydro personnel who are engaged in property acquisition. Hydro's field offices will be opened to the public for discussions on all matters re-

lated to placement of the facilities. "The Environmental Hearing Board dealt in some depth with the problem of a residence which is in extreme proximity to the line. I am in substantial agreement with this section of the Board's report and Ontario Hydro will make provisions for either the relocation of the residence or compensation sufficient to purchase one of comparable quality. This option will be available to any property owner who finds that the right-of-way crosses his land and encroaches on the living area associated with his or her dwelling. The Hearing Board Report identifies four residences which may be in this category."

"Because of the concern expressed by farm organizations for the problems encountered in operating farm vehicles under transmission lines, Hydro will maintain a minimum 40-ft. conductor to ground clearance at all points over the length of the line and

"That report was completed last December. Since then, many of the letters commenting on the Report expressed concern for environmental impact and agricultural land loss, and requested that the transmission line be placed in some other corridor."

"A complaint with respect to the Bradley to Georgetown corridor was made to the Ombudsman by a group of citizens. The Ombudsman found that he did not have jurisdiction to investigate such a complaint. "We understand the concerns expressed by citizens, however, no matter what route is chosen, the reaction in any area will be to put the corridor somewhere else."

"In selecting the exact alignment, Hydro will cooperate with property owners to minimize the environmental impact and disruption of farmland. Hydro will use construction techniques designed to minimize

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## Timbrell tells Reed

# Study delay will cost millions

Energy Minister Dennis Timbrell is not happy with a press release issued by Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed in answer to a speech Mr. Timbrell made to the nominating convention of Halton Progressive Conservatives recently. Mr. Timbrell has issued another press release in rebuttal to the Halton-Burlington MPP's remarks.

The most recent release concerns the controversial Bradley Junction to Georgetown hydro corridor. "I believe the second paragraph of your press release is most misleading," Timbrell tells Reed. "You refer to remarks made by my predecessor in the Ministry of Energy, the Honorable Darcy McKeough and try to leave the impression Mr. McKeough was referring to the whole of the Georgetown-Bradley route" (when McKeough said in the house that no route could be adequately justified unless the whole area was studied and documented, taking into account all the environmental and other factors involving the public.)

Timbrell said Reed's remarks were out of context and claims this was substantiated when he read pages 5264 and 5265 of Hansard, that this is the case. "Mr. McKeough was answering a question from the former Member for York Centre, Mr. Deacon, with respect to the section of the Bradley-Georgetown transmission line which travels between points 33 and 95 (Colbeck to Limehouse)." "With regards to my comments on your relative silence, I think you would have to agree that in no time in the more than six months that you have been a Member of the Legislature, have you ever availed yourself of the opportunity, either in the Select Committee on hydro rates, or in the Legislature of Ontario to question me on the subject of the Bradley to Georgetown transmission corridor," Timbrell says. "It was to this silence I was re-

fering." "I am well aware, the release continues, "since I read the transcripts of the Select committee that you have from time to time, made comments and put questions on this subject but, I repeat

never once to me, not to officials of the Ministry of Energy."

"As I indicated in a speech in Milton on the 17th of March, 1976, the representations made to me by the interested citizens group led by

William Mann, have been and continue to be taken very seriously. I went on to indicate that faced with the realities of very expensive delays at the Bruce Generating Station, I had to attempt to strike a balance between the interests of people in that immediate area, and the interests of all Hydro consumers in the Province of Ontario. This I have tried to do, recognizing that it did not fully meet the demands and/or expectations of the group led by Mr. Mann."

"I asked in that address and I put it to you now, are you prepared to recommend that the people of Ontario incur the hundreds of millions of dollars involved in shutting in part of the Bruce Generating Station while several years are taken with the kind of study you are suggesting?"



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## Corridor no news?

Prior to recording Ontario Energy Minister Dennis Timbrell's policy announcements last week, cameramen and newshounds sat around the press theatre on the main floor of Queen's Park, discussing what was about to happen.

Advance copies of the minister's announcements on the province's alternative method of pricing domestic crude oil and the government's decision to build the Bradley-Georgetown corridor had been distributed.

Two newsmen talk on the hydro question.

First man: "I don't think anyone cares here except Reed, the fellow from Halton-Burlington." Second news-type: "And a few farmers. Number one again: 'I don't think they care.'"

Media Mr. Timbrell read out loud his announcements, some 12 pages in total, for the benefit of the electronic media, then he fielded questions. The oil policy came first.

The minister or one of his assistants expressed surprise by the questions on the hydro corridor. At first most of the media's questions concentrated on the crude oil policy. Every once in a while, however, a member of the non-Toronto press would stick in a hydro related question. After a while the Toronto media seemed to catch on that there was more to the hydro story than a new corridor.

Stories on the hydro corridor appeared on Global TV that night, and the next day in the Globe and Mail.

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will clearly identify vehicle height limitations in areas where vehicles may be crossing the right-of-way. "Preliminary engineering will begin immediately, to be followed by land acquisition and then construction. It is expected that the line will be in service by October 1978.

"In summary, let me say that the decision to go ahead with the transmission line has benefitted greatly from extensive public discussion and review. In the interests of all the power consumers of the Province, this project will now proceed", the release concluded.

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