

The ICG's going for broke

While we question the use of the much-quoted term "blockbuster" to describe the shiny, new strategy unveiled by the Interested Citizens Group (ICG) last week at Queen's Park, the very scope of the group's new assault does indeed pack a punch.

The setting was fitting enough for announcing a greatly-expanded attack on the powerful (no pun intended) crown corporation: the media studio usually reserved for Premier Bill Davis and his vocal opponents instead became a launching pad for an assault on one of Davis' favorite charities, and the media was suitably impressed.

The story made page one of the Toronto Star, for example, and though the Great Hydro Corridor Battle was barely mentioned, the implications of the ICG's accusations have no doubt raised many fears among Hydro's top brass, who would otherwise shrug off public criticism of the Bruce to Milton hydro line.

As Toronto media fully acknowledged, the ICG together with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and Energy Probe have come up with an astounding array of charges which go far beyond anything the ICG has even implied publicly during its seven years' war against the 500,000-volt super-corridor.

Brought into question by information released at the press conference it is Hydro's very right

to export power to the U.S., a basic but usually limited part of its mandate from the people of Ontario.

What really raised eyebrows among the big-city reporters was the charge that American consumers are paying less for power produced right here in Ontario. The ICG has been saying as much for years, but apparently lacked sufficient evidence to give the charge any credibility.

What is perhaps of more interest here in Halton Hills, particularly among our unfortunate Fifth Concession neighbors, is that the controversial transmission line cutting across their properties is actually needed more to aid and abet this disgusting example of corporate game-playing.

We feel the ICG's charges and the evidence offered in support of them speak for themselves; we believe a National Energy Board inquiry into the charges will bear them out; and we believe it's long past due time to take Hydro to task for its empire-building and deal-making.

Clearly, the travesty inherent in faulty planning and suspicious negotiations over the Bruce to Milton corridor is only one small facet of the Ontario Hydro's "crime". Before we all go broke keeping the Americans warm or fending off the hydro towers, let's ensure that justice is done in the taxpayer's name.

...so is Julian

Further to our comments on the ICG press conference, we'd like to extend our congratulations and thanks to Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed, absent from the conference physically, but certainly present in spirit.

Reportedly forced to abstain due to illness, Mr. Reed nevertheless forwarded a statement of support for the ICG's cause which was read to reporters and generally indicated the sentiments of the Ontario Liberal party.

Halton Hills should be proud to be represented by an MPP who started out defending his neighbors' rights over a proposed school closure and has ended up at least once a week in province-wide headlines as Liberal energy critic.

To hold such an Opposition party post during a time when the energy crisis is rising daily to new flood level heights must be an awesome task, but Mr. Reed has demonstrated his competence at the job time and time again. He

does his homework and takes full advantage of the many opportunities afforded by Premier Davis to attack the government's energy policies and practices.

With his theatrical experience no doubt still lending itself well to his legislative career, Mr. Reed has risen himself to new heights of effectiveness. It was the initial shock-wave he and several of his Norval neighbors created among local school board officials over the closure of the village's small school which singled Mr. Reed out in the eyes of Liberal supporters, then searching for a new champion in Halton riding.

Julian Reed is still creating those shock-waves, nearly a decade later, but now they're much more sizeable and infinitely more important.

We wish him much luck in his political ventures and causes; and may he remain a thorn in Bill Davis' side until the day Bill Davis returns to private citizenship.



FOND RECOLLECTIONS FROM THE YEAR OF THE CHILD

Halton's History From our files

THIRTY YEARS AGO—1949 will long be remembered by Halton farmers as one of the driest years in their experience. It may be a surprise to many therefore to learn that we have had three and one-half more inches of precipitation this year than we had in the entire 12 months of 1948. However, when the figures for the two years are scrutinized by months, we find that for the three months (April, May and June) of 1948, the precipitation was six inches more than in the same months this year.

When a defective oil heater at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Shepherd, Chapel Street, threatened to cause a fire on Christmas Eve, a call was put in to the fire brigade. The blaze was extinguished before the brigade arrived and no damage was reported.

All members of Esqueping Council, Reeve George Currie, Deputy Reeve George Leslie, and Councillors Wilfrid Bird, Walter Lindsay and H. Craig Reid, were returned to their positions by acclamation at a meeting held Monday at Stewarttown Hall.

TWENTY YEARS AGO—Holding their final meeting of 1959 December 15, in the township hall at Stewarttown, members of Esqueping council expressed their appreciation to retiring reeve George Currie when he was asked to vacate the chair at the close of the meeting. With Deputy Reeve Campbell, who will be 1960 reeve in the chair, a motion was passed thanking Mr. Currie for the courteous and impartial manner in which he had presided over council meetings during his term of office.

SALARIES UP Increases in county council salaries for members and employees were approved Wednesday afternoon at the last regular meeting of the year. Retrospective to January 1 of this year, the Warden will receive \$800 plus mileage and expenses, plus the council rate for committee and council meetings. Councillors will receive an increased allowance of \$12 for attendance, with a maximum of \$20 for more than one meeting in a day.

Damage estimated at \$50, plus the necessary time to clean up the mess, was caused by an unknown intruder at Norval United Church early last Tuesday morning. Apparently he was searching for money or valuables, but only two cans of soup appeared to be missing from the church kitchen. But in his ramblings, the culprit broke eight panes of glass in the basement apparently by hurling chairs against the windows. Three chairs were casualties too.

Local Main Street merchant Graham Farnell was chosen as Worshipful Master of the Credit Lodge, No. 219, AF and AM, Gr. GRC, at their annual election of officers.

Georgetown Raiders scored eight times in the third period as they turned on the power to beat Orillia handily Friday night, 15-4. The win was the fifth for the Raiders and lifted their percentage back to an even .500.

TEN YEARS AGO—Halton County council last week did an about-face and came out strongly in support of a super-metro-type Halton-Peel region. Until last week's vote, council had been supporting a separate Halton region. The motion, which will be sent to Municipal Affairs Minister Darcy McKeough, includes the condition that Burlington be included in the two-county region.

Judge Kenneth Langdon of Georgetown, the county's senior provincial court jurist, has been appointed full-time Family and Juvenile Court Judge. He has served as a part-time Family and Juvenile court judge for the past 25 years in Halton, and during that time, has also sat on the criminal and traffic courts in the county.

SKIPPER'S HOME "Skipper"—a tiny four-pound Papillon dog standing ten inches high, has just returned from Mexico with two more championships to add to his impressive record. He is owned by Mr. W. Ineson of Wynfield Kennels, R. R. 3, Georgetown. Skipper is perhaps the only dog on the whole continent to hold five championships simultaneously; he is American champion, Canadian champion, Bermuda champion, Mexican champion, and International champion.

Fred Armitage, chairman of the Halton board of education, said at a board meeting Thursday that he won't be seeking re-election to the chairmanship for another term. He said his reasons were strictly personal, "to find time for my family and my personal affairs."

Roland Sparling, the Georgetown man who for six months served as part of a Canairiel crew flying food into Biafra, is home for Christmas, wrestling with a decision he will have to make in January. That's when he will return to the relief flights as Sao Tome if he decides to do so.

ONE YEAR AGO—The Ontario Municipal Board has denied a request from the Town of Halton Hills to adjourn hearings on the proposed Bruce to Milton hydro transmission corridor. A hearing on whether to allow Ontario Hydro to build the 500,000 volt power line south of Orangeville to Milton will proceed January 2, as planned, hearing chairman William Dyer, Q.C., ruled yesterday.

Negotiators for the Halton board of education and its 1,370 elementary teachers have reached tentative agreement in their year-long contract dispute.

Mayor Pete Pomeroy and members of town council have been pulling out all the stops in an effort to win a series of eleventh-hour approvals for the construction of the long-awaited McNally apartment complex in Georgetown, which will open some 200 rental units to a community badly lacking in rental accommodations. Halton region's public works committee has rejected a suggestion by Halton Hills council that hamlets throughout the region should be identified by name on roadside signs, but permission may be granted for the area municipalities to erect signs at their own expense.

Telling differences between Clark's, Diefenbaker's defeats



Ottawa Report By Stewart MacLeod

The final few hours preceding the defeat of Joe Clark's government were unlike any previous build-up to a confidence crisis in Parliament. It was certainly a far cry from the 1963 vote that brought down the Diefenbaker government.

That 1963 vote is difficult to forget: It was so inevitable, so deliberate, so intense. The Diefenbaker government was in a state of disintegration, the Liberal opposition was, to the last individual, absolutely dedicated to the prospect of an election. The Tory MPs desperately wanted to avoid the defeat, and said so. There were not phoney smiles. The behind-the-scenes negotiations with the inter-balancing Social Credit MPs were intense.

It was so easy to follow, so predictable. A teetering government, disunited, tired and brittle, was making a last-gasp effort to hold on to power, dislodge it. You knew where everyone stood as you watched the drama unfold toward its climax.

But the defeat of the Clark government had none of this stark simplicity. It was a sort of fluffly television production, with the huge parliamentary cast in apparent confusion, gushing out contradictory statements, while always blaming the enemy for an election they claimed, unconvincedly, they welcomed. You couldn't get a grip on anything.

TV SHOW It seemed that the MP's had become studio prisoners of an event that had simply got out-of-hand. Privately, they all appeared to have the view that somehow the non-confidence motion wouldn't carry; that an election would be averted. "But," as veteran Tory Ted Baldwin put it, "I don't have any idea how this can happen."

"God, I hope we can get out of this mess," said another Tory MP, who, a few minutes later was telling listeners he could hardly wait for the campaign.

"The Grits can accept the full responsibility for this election," said Finance Minister John Crosbie.

"They played politics and we called their bluff," said Marcel Prud'homme, a Liberal MP. He thought the Canadian people would take out their wrath on the Tories.

Howard Graffey, a Quebec Tory, was shouting that the Liberals were contributing to the separatist cause by forcing this election.

HAPPY FACES Television cameras were everywhere around the Commons entrance, and one

by one, MPs paraded in front of them to offer their conflicting views. There were cautious efforts to appear happy. But deep down, most weren't happy.

"What do you mean by lame-duck leader?" asked John Monroe, when someone asked him about Pierre Trudeau's leadership. "Some lame duck," he replied, trying to convey the impression he could hardly wait to campaign beside his leader.

"Has anyone talked to the Creditiste in the last hour?" asked one Tory. "Don't think so," another Tory replied.

"Damn!" That aside, he smiled for the benefit of cameras and cheerfully predicted that his party, if forced into an election, would win a comfortable majority.

"I've never been so confused," said a veteran reporter. "I haven't the faintest idea how the public will react to this — not the faintest idea." A handful of MPs, staring in confusion, agreed.

"That's what it was like that night in Parliament; no one seemed to know what was happening. But the television show, in blazing color, had to go on. The cast had to be "up" for this one.

Then came the vote. The government was defeated. The TV lights flicked off, and MPs were left alone to ponder a mid-winter campaign.

An MP who shall remain nameless, but who had been bouncing in front of the TV cameras like a fight promoter, now was sipping coffee in a corner. "I don't think I can run again," he said.

NDP'er's Timber Act changes chop away at Tory foundation



Queen's Park By Derek Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau of The Herald

MPP Elic Martel (NDP-Sudbury East) has dreamed up the neatest ploy so far this session to embarrass the Conservatives by introducing a sub-amendment to the Crown Timber Amendment Act.

What he used was a phrase indicating that forestry companies will have to plant two trees for every one cut and regenerate every acre harvested.

It just so happens that those are exactly the words Premier Bill Davis uttered in his 1977 election campaign promise about reforestation in what is known as the Brampton Charter.

Promising two trees for one seemed silly (to me at any rate) at the time, but environmentalists and the political opposition were up in arms then about the government's reforestation failures.

Presumably the promise was meant to blurt that attack. Now it has come back to haunt the Tories.

JUST OVERSIGHT Martel cunningly noted that he had "no choice" but to "enshrine the Premier's words in a piece of legislation."

forgotten," MPP Albert Roy (L-Ottawa East) said innocently.

Martel agreed. "Yes, just an oversight. That's what I felt. You can call this the Martel-Davis amendment."

Natural Resources Minister James Auld, one of the best verbal stickhandlers on the Tory defence, found himself trapped away down ice with nowhere to go.

He offered the lame explanation that Davis' words in the Brampton Charter were "really a symbolic statement that indicated a major effort was going to be made regenerating the Crown forest."

ONE FOR ONE And on the surface at least the Crown Timber Amendment Act offers hope that future timber policy will be a decided improvement over the slipshod approach of the past.

An old rule of thumb in logging is that one-third of the area cut regenerates naturally, another third is planted, and the last third abandoned.

That's why most critics of government policy would be happy just to see one tree planted for each cut, never mind two. Still, the new Act does cover land where regeneration was not satisfactory in the past.

ON BUSINESS Its basic thrust is to put responsibility for regeneration back where it belongs, on the pulp and paper companies, while leaving to government a support and policing role.

In theory it sounds good. But... and here's the rub. Almost two decades ago the province took responsibility for regeneration away from the companies because they weren't doing the job.

As might be expected, government didn't do any better job than the companies in the years since then. Now it is the corporate turn again.

Martel had fun with his sub-amendment, but underneath all the joking he and other critics have a very legitimate fear that things won't improve this time around either.

Advertisement for the Herald newspaper, including contact information for William Evdokimoff, Paul Dorsey, and phone number 877-2201. It also lists several awards won by the newspaper.

Looking back A decade of Davis

BY DON O'HEARN Queen's Park Bureau Of The Herald

Good Lord, it's not only the end of the year but of a decade. It has gone very quickly.

Ten years ago at this time we were riding the advent of an economic era. There was obvious trouble ahead. Automation and the flood of women into the work force had the employment market severely disoriented, the Third World was obviously coming on strong as a global competitor and production costs led by big wage bites by labor were getting frightening.

We started an economic era all right and then when OPEC came along in 1973 with the oil price increase we were mired in it. And the balance of the 10 years has been a period perhaps more pleasant to forget than remember.

BITTER PUBLIC It was a period in which the history books will find new heroes. By any fair-minded measure Pierre Trudeau was our outstanding public figure, but if future generations hear about Trudeau at all it will most probably be of his failure as a politician.

Certainly there are no figures in Ontario who will rate any place of importance in the future. In fact at the end of this decade we are in the very remarkable position that on looking back there isn't one single achievement that stands out, even anything that comes to quick memory as an identity of the period. This probably has never happened before in Ontario history.

And strangely, very strangely, this is not any particular indictment of the leadership we have had but rather a reflection of the times.

The leadership was probably not signifi-

cantly worse or better than over the years in the past. But the public acquired a demanding dimension that was new.

In a time of major problems it wanted answers and quick answers. The fact was there weren't answers. We were at one of those times in history of great change when society can't be much steered but goes ahead on its own in the flux of evolution. The public in its frustration became irate or disillusioned and the politicians tended to cower.

The most significant incident, in this light, to me probably was an occasion when I happened to get Premier Davis and Treasurer Darcy McKeough together and I asked them "When are you guys going to do something about productivity?"

The reaction was startling. Darcy actually looked over his shoulder to see if anyone was listening and both men quickly slushed me up with the treasurer saying almost fiercely "It isn't the time."

Of course it was time to do something about productivity. But it wasn't the time when public would accept doing something about it. Any effort to improve performance would have meant some disturbance of the status quo and the public wasn't ready to accept disturbance. At least not in the politicians' sensing of it.

So the real figure-head of the seventies—whether hero or villain—became "Joe Public" if you like.

DAVIS ROLE The big mark to Bill Davis' credit could be that he survived. Davis now is getting close to his tenth year as premier. It may well be testimony to his skill that of the men who headed the governments of Canada when he took over in 1971 only one is now in office—Richard Hatfield of New Brunswick.