

Personality Profile Of The Week

A 56-year-old Port Credit resident, George E. Gathercole, has taken over the helm at one of the world's largest electric utilities.

As chairman of Ontario Hydro Mr. Gathercole will apply the same basic principles of leadership which have served him so well in football, hockey and at the conference table.

Confident in his team and armed with a wide knowledge of Hydro and the economic requirements of Ontario, he will keep fully informed himself and "will not hesitate to pass the ball to the specialists."

A one-time well-known athlete who rose from the position of Assistant Provincial Statistician at Queen's Park to become Ontario's first Provincial Economist and the first Deputy Minister of the Department of Economics, the new Hydro chairman has been closely identified with Ontario's economic planning throughout the phenomenal growth period since the Second World War.

He has directed activities ranging from studies of hospital insurance and portable pensions to the economic analysis of population growth, school and university enrolment, capital formation, industrial production, employment and taxation.

Since 1961, until he was named chairman April 1, he was Hydro's first vice-chairman.

Fittingly, Mr. Gathercole was one of six who received honorary doctorate degrees "for having attained distinction in a variety of fields" at the first convocation of York University June 1.

Mr. Gathercole was granted honorary degree of Doctor of Laws (LL.D.)



George E. Gathercole

THE CHALLENGE

Widely acclaimed for his ability to translate economic theory into constructive action, Mr. Gathercole defines Hydro's greatest challenge in clear-cut terms.

"Hydro's current expansion program, which will see more than \$1 billion spent on capital construction between now and 1970, is without precedent. In bringing this program to completion, one of the paramount objectives of us all will be to continue to ensure that new generating units come on the line, when their capacity is needed. To do this in the face of many pressures at the most economic cost will not be easy."

Mr. Gathercole predicts that the sustained growth of Ontario during the past five years will continue in the future. And the resulting pressures on manufacturers and suppliers—also faced with a shortage of many skills—he sees as acute.

"Inevitably, capital expansion in these circumstances means rising salaries, wages and costs of materials and equipment. But in matching generating capacity to growth in power demands Hydro has a well-earned reputation for proficiency—a reputation built up by men and women who have devoted their talents to making Hydro a success. As one of the key factors in Ontario's growth and development, Hydro has not only facilitated expansion, but broadened the market. It will continue to provide reliable service at reasonable cost in the future.

"With encouraging forecast by nuclear engineers I am confident that in coming years any increase in power rates will be relatively moderate and quite within the budgets of both industry and the people of Ontario."

With some reluctance Mr. Gathercole intends to "ease out" from much of the committee work in which he is active, in order to devote his full attention to Hydro. As well as being president of the Canadian Club of Toronto he is a member of Ontario's Advisory Committee on University Affairs, the Ontario Economic Council, the Ontario Advisory Committee on Confederation, vice-chairman of Sheridan Park Research Corporation and a member of the board of directors of the Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton.

"These activities have enabled me to feel the pulse of many areas of the province," he says. "But to fulfill the full-time demands of the chairmanship will obviously leave me little time for other interests."

FOOTBALL PLAYER

Born in Hamilton in 1909,

Mr. Gathercole entered the automotive parts business on leaving school. Frequent contact with university-trained engineers convinced him of the value of higher education and he attended night school to gain credits for university entrance. He played football for the Hamilton Tigers in the Ontario Rugby Football Union and for the "Big Four" Tiger team in 1930. On the latter, he says, he was the "lowliest substitute."

The following year he enrolled in the political science course at McMaster University where he captained both the football and hockey teams. Lack of jobs and lack of money for further schooling confronted him upon graduation. Proficiency at hockey provided the answer.

With hockey becoming a popular spectator sport in Britain and promoters hunting for Canadian talent, Mr. Gathercole scraped together the trans-Atlantic fare, enrolled at the London School of Economics and financed his tuition and other expenses playing hockey and baseball. He also edited a hockey publication.

On his return to Canada in 1937, he joined the research staff which compiled Ontario's submissions to a Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations. Thus began his long experience in federal-provincial relations. Mr. Gathercole has been a regular member of Ontario delegations to Ottawa and has attended every Federal-Provincial Prime Ministers' Conference since 1945.

Late in 1939 Mr. Gathercole joined Ontario Hydro as econ-

omic executive assistant. Completing war service as a navy sub-lieutenant in Operations and Intelligence, he became the first practising economist as such to be employed by the Province.

Of Mr. Gathercole's career in government service, former Premier Leslie Frost once commented: "He was able to see a problem in its entirety, provide all the facts concerning the problem and come up with the right answers. He's an outgoing man of tact and charm, but he's nobody's patsy. When he is convinced that a certain line of action is right, he sticks to his guns."

Mr. Gathercole was for many years a member of Ontario's Budget Committee. He also served as chairman of the Finance Committee of the Supreme Court of Ontario on the Management, Control and Investment of Funds, and as chairman of the Financial Supervisory Committee to the Public Trustee of Ontario.

Mr. Gathercole, who lives on the Indian Valley Trail, finds relaxation on the golf course and curling rink. He has two daughters, the eldest in her second year in Honor Economics at the University of Western Ontario.

Perhaps these comments by a Toronto paper were typical of press reaction at the time of Mr. Gathercole's appointment: "The great organization that is Ontario Hydro has been developed by wise, far-sighted leadership. It will continue to have it under the knowledgeable guidance of Mr. Gathercole."