

Toll Road Giant Buys Newspapers to Silence Critics

Critics charge that the Macquarie purchase of American Consolidated Media is designed to silence critics of a Texas toll road project.

Australian toll road giant Macquarie agreed Wednesday to purchase forty local newspapers, primarily in Texas and Oklahoma, for \$80 million. Macquarie Bank is Australia's largest capital raising firm and has invested billions in purchasing roads in the US, Canada and UK. Most recently the company joined with Cintra Concesiones of Spain in a controversial 75-year lease of the 157-mile Indiana Toll Road.



Sal Costello, the leading opponent of toll road projects as head of the Texas Toll Party, says the move is directly related to a 4000-mile toll road project known as the Trans-Texas Corridor. It will cost between \$145 and \$183 billion to construct the road, expected to be up to 1200 feet wide, requiring the acquisition of 9000 square miles of land in the areas through which it will pass.

"The newspapers are the main communication tool for many of the rural Texan communities, with many citizens at risk of losing their homes and farms through eminent domain," Costello [wrote](#).

Many of the small papers purchased, most have a circulation of 5000 or less, have been critical of the Trans-Texas Corridor. An article in the [Bonham Journal](#) for example, states, "The toll roads will be under control of foreign investors, which more than frustrates Texans."