

# Queen's Park

By ALF STONG  
MLA — York Centre  
On Monday, December 17, the Minister of Energy made a statement in the Legislature concerning the Ontario Hydro transmission lines in the Parkway-Belt between Claireville Transformer Station and Cherrywood Transformer Station, which transmission line passes through the towns of Vaughan and Markham on the edge of the town of Richmond Hill.

He indicated that the line would proceed and that no part of it would be buried.

He also indicated "the location of the Parkway Belt has not been determined east of Highway 48 and there have been no hearings under the Parkway Belt Planning and Development Act."

However, following a review co-ordinated by the Parkway Belt Steering Committee, the general route of the transmission line recommended by Dr. Solandt was adopted by the Government.

"I should also advise members that at the request of the Box Grove Ratepayers Association the Parkway Belt Steering Committee has examined three alternate routes near Box Grove."

"The Steering Committee's report, which I am tabling today, supports the route on the north side of the railway tracks. The route south of the railway tracks was not recommended, largely because of the number of homes that would be affected."

"The third alternate route would add considerably to the length and cost of the transmission line and was considered inferior for this reason. The Box Grove Ratepayers Association has asked for clarification of certain matters in the report and this will be undertaken shortly."

Previously the Minister of the Environment denied an environmental impact study with respect to the construction of the transmission lines east of Highway 48 and now the Minister of Energy has supported that position.

The Minister of Energy rather than following the precedence already established under the enabling legislation which would permit a public inquiry has opted for an expropriation inquiry which would be limited to hearing from all affected land owners.

This persistent approach by these two Ministers although committed to a program continues to deny everyone affected a right to be heard.

The National Energy Board has been asked by a group of land owners who have been fighting a long drawn out battle against the Ontario Hydro transmission line to halt construction of the line and suspend hydro's exports to the United States.

At a press conference, a spokesman for the Interested Citizens Group said hydro is exporting power at rates below those charged to Ontario residents. Ontario Liberal Leader Stuart Smith raised this matter in the Legislature, asking the Minister of Energy whether it was true that hydro was selling surplus electricity to U.S. utilities "for as much as 1 cent per kilowatt-hour less than what Ontario consumers are paying". The Minister replied that the complaints were comparing "the wholesale price of exports to the Ontario retail price". Asked by the Liberals why U.S. utilities could buy power more cheaply "than our own consumers" the Minister said hydro's prices are at least 10 per cent above costs.

**VANDALISM**  
The Provincial Government, Metro and North York have combined to find methods to curb vandalism. The Attorney General announced a study that will cost more than \$50,000. This study will focus mainly on Metro vandalism which cost taxpayers and property owners at least \$15 million a year.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy holiday season. We shall soon be entering not only a new year but a new decade. My best wishes to you all in the future.

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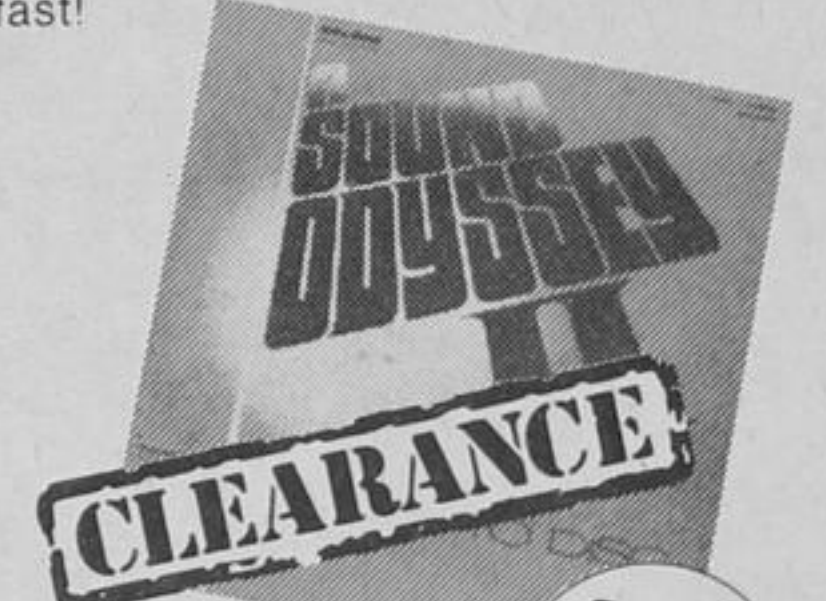
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