

BS # 1

Nov. 27, 2003

## Presentation to Public Utilities Board

In response to Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro  
request for rate increase.

Nov. 28<sup>th</sup>, 2003

Held at: Labrador Friendship Centre  
Happy Valley, Goose Bay  
Labrador

Submitted by: behalf of Port Hope Simpson  
residents.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Public Utility Board  
government officials, other towns representatives and MHA's

We thank you for this opportunity to address your Board and speak for a moment on the request by Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro for rate increase. I am Betty Sampson and I represent the community of Port Hope Simpson, Labrador.

As you are aware communities such as ourselves depend on diesel generated power for electricity. We are not connected to a grid or any other power line simply the diesel.

We are not an example where you get more for less or buy in bulk at discount price but rather the more we use the more we pay. Is that a fair approach or is this the reality of a monopoly or the absence of other options??

Do the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro have to get 100% + return immediately and not look at long term return for investment?? This fall my husband and I renovated a building and the important items apart from the actual structure were that of hooking into the Town Water and Sewer lines and electricity, two very, very important services. The cost to us of installing electricity to that building far outweighed the cost of the town water and sewer installation. Also over the left of that building Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro will get a greater return from us for their electricity than the Town Council of Port Hope Simpson with their water and sewer.

But both are essential modern commodities.

The need for electricity will remain as long as there is a population. The fear of losing a customer is nil and the fear of one going with another provider is nil.

It is a monopoly and we residents of Port Hope Simpson through our petition to you Board members request your support to see that the necessity commodity as electricity in the year 2003 is not beyond afford ability.

The Port Hope Simpson Town Council has taken out municipal loans to provide safe drinking water, which cost to the customer is 0.50 per day. Aliant provides telephone service in Port Hope Simpson at \$21.95 per month which is less than 1.00 per day with Special long distance rates based on usage ex. .15 per minutes all day every day or 1200 base line minutes for \$24.00 per month. I am sure if any company cries about the cost of investment..... it is Aliant as they struggle to provide their customers with e-mail,, high speed internet, etc. They have invested and they continue to invest in the future and in their customers.

The majority of our population in Port Hope Simpson is living on a fixed income. There is little industry or economic base in Port Hope Simpson with the majority of the working adults work seasonally. There are employment opportunities at the shrimp plant at Charlottetown and the crab plant in Mary's Harbour which draw some to travel to those seasonal employment facilities. We all realize that the fishery sector is in jeopardy with over utilization and the future of those species are constantly being scrutinized.

Our seniors are living on social security income a very firm and fixed income.

And sad to say, we have individuals on social assistance which is a condition that for many, beyond their control.

The majority of our families can be referred to as the working poor living on and yes below the poverty line. These families would ask that their financial reality would be a dominating factor in your discussion and deliberations.

The people of Labrador have always been givers in resources allowing for opportunities to others to earn a living. The fishery brought many Newfoundland families to fish off the Labrador coast line. The construction to the Translabrador Highway provided more jobs to non residents of Labrador than Labradorians. The Labrador water harnessed into hydro power is bypassing our communities and are going at basement bargain prices to the States areas. The political dynamics of those decisions are out of your and my hands but the reality of the Labrador resources can be evaluated by us all.

This past year we have been challenged by the quote **"Our Place in Canada"** but today many Labradorians would ask what is our place in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador when we are left with the highest electric power bills in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador

We urge you members of this Public Utility Board Hearing to be very sensitive to the economic and realities of living in Port Hope Simpson and other rural coastal communities, an increase of any amount will be a hurt felt not only by Moms' and Dads' pocket book but it will be felt by the school kids because there is lesser money for the family and a juggling of essentials will cause something to go. And we are game to say that children's activities and items will be the first on the family chopping block.

The factor of the rate of diesel generation power is not only expensive to the family unit but think of the industry development. If an individual or company wanted to construct a state of the art hotel or garage or supermarket or whatever along the Translabrador Highway or within a town one of the factors to be thought about and to be given a lot of thought is that of the method of heating such an establishment. In researching the realities and cost that business venture would soon have many second thoughts and face the reality that a large chunk of would be profit is taken in Hydro and stove oil remains the heating option. The cost to a local a sawmill to

upgrade and have electricity motors to run that sawmill operations is as attached copies show. Giving a high percentage of would be profit not to the entrepreneur but to Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro.

Are we to be forever slotted as gathers of wood because the option of electric heat is beyond our means along this stretch of the Labrador coastline.

Families, business development and social development in communities connected to diesel generated electric are held back because the simple fact the more you use means the more you will pay.

Think on this, members and we are confided that you will return with a decision of not supporting the request by Newfound and Labrador Hydro rate increase.

I stop to think also what would be the reaction of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro if municipalities across the province petitioned that the Utility Tax be increase from 2.5 %, but perish the thought because that extra cost to Hydro would in turn be passed on to the customer.

In closing, I say to Dennis, who is our provincial watch dog, thank you and we commend you in your battles... some won, some lost.

To Public Utilities Bard we are glad this process is in place and this is good.

To Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, your service is a necessary commodity but please never become one out of reach or become the monthly curse when Air Labrador brings in the "light bills", in these financially difficult times, I trust that the Board will agree with me and have your request denied.