

CRTC RULING

# B.C. Tel refused interim rate hike

OTTAWA (CP) — The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission has rejected the British Columbia Telephone Company's application for an interim rate increase.

B.C. Tel has not demonstrated its financial condition is sufficiently serious to justify approval of the proposed increases without a full public review, the CRTC said Friday.

And the commission is not persuaded that the company's ability to raise long-term capital during the first half of 1983 is seriously impaired, the agency said in its decision.

The company, which announced its intention to file an application last October, added the interim rate increase to a request for a general increase due to come into effect next June.

The interim increases were proposed to come into effect January 1, 1983.

Claiming the severe decline in the provincial economy has affected its revenue base and earnings, B.C. Tel

proposed a six-per-cent increase on both basic service rates and service charges and a 2.1-per-cent increase in long-distance revenues.

If implemented from the proposed date to June 27, 1983, the additional revenues would be about \$13 million.

The company said it had no alternative but to seek external financing in its obligation to ensure adequate future service levels.

B.C. Tel argued keeping basic service rates low is not an appropriate economic way to assist customers on low incomes in that it creates many economic inefficiencies and inequities.

The CRTC's decision will not affect B.C. Tel's Dec. 23 application requesting final rate revisions.

## Non-profit industries feel pinch

by BERNICE TRICK  
Staff reporter

The depressed economy is taking its toll on non-profit organizations as well as business and industry.

AIM HI, the Prince George Association for Individuals with Mental Handicaps, is concerned that tough times may jeopardize its programs before things get better.

The association's three non-profit industries, which employ more than 60 handicapped persons, are experiencing a marked decline in sales and in obtaining contracts for manufactured products.

"And to make matters worse, our accounts receivable now total \$28,000 because bills dating back to mid-summer have not been paid," said executive director Lorna Dittmar.

To ease the situation AIM HI is holding a lottery for two Mercury LNT Sport Coups. The draw will be April 2.

The 3,000 tickets, at \$10 each, will be sold locally by volunteers from the AIM HI office, 1268 Fifth Ave., Aurora Industries, 966 Fifth Ave. and in the Parkwood Mall.

Dittmar said the first winning ticket will be resubmitted for the second drawing to give ticket holders two chances.

AIM HI is hoping to make a profit of \$14,000 on the lottery.

Dittmar said AIM HI has requested \$44,000 from United Way but doesn't expect to get it.

"Last year we asked for the same amount, but received only \$26,000. The balance has to come from somewhere and that's the reason for the lottery," she said.

AIM HI began feeling the crunch when sales of decorations and souvenirs fell off and contracts for manufacture of survey stakes ceased for the winter at Aurora Industries.

At the same time markets for wood furniture — marketed across North America by IKEA of Sweden — and local sub-contract work decreased at Northern Lights Woodworking Ltd. while cancellations of light housekeeping contracts were received at AIM HI's A-Cleaning Service.

With the help of government grants, AIM HI also sponsors a Life Skills program including a residence for five handicapped adults, a Skill Building Library and Infant Development Program for children with special needs and a Children's Residence offering short-term support and relief services for families of mentally and physically handicapped children.



Protesters march outside Red Hot Video store in Prince George Saturday.

Citizen photo by Ric Ernst

## RED HOT OUTLET PICKETED HERE

# It's just a start, say video foes

by BEV CHRISTENSEN  
Staff reporter

A picket line outside the local Red Hot Video outlet Saturday is only the first move in a campaign to close all the outlets in the province, say the organizers of the one-hour demonstration.

They've already taken the next step by laying charges with the RCMP against the store for distributing a film which includes a several violent rape scenes, one of which ends when the woman is murdered.

"There are other movies available in which women are shown wearing leather muzzles while being gang-raped, a woman is shown being sodomized while being smothered by a pillow and a woman being strangled with a cord while being raped," said a member of the group who asked not to be identified.

She said these were some of the examples of explicit violent sex which are defined as obscene and subject to prosecution under the Criminal Code.

The local group intends to continue its program of viewing films and laying charges when any are found to contain material they believe contravenes the Criminal Code.

They claim B.C. is being viewed as the test case and if distributors of adult movies are successful here they will move into other provinces in Canada.

The local demonstration drew more than 50 protesters — about one-third were men — and was one of a group of protests planned outside the 11 Red Hot Video outlets which have opened in the province this year.

The group included representatives of groups such as Pro-Life and the Women's Equal Rights Association (WEA) usually found on opposite sides of the fence on issues such as abortion and proposed family life education courses in local schools.

The demonstrators handed out more than 190 pamphlets signed by Mayor Mercer, the Salvation Army, WERA, Pro-Life, Prince George Rape-Assault and the Phoenix Transition House. They indicated they also had support of some local ministers.

They claim 80 per cent of the people they spoke to agreed with what they were doing and many joined the demonstration after reading the pamphlet.

At one point a Santa Claus wearing a sandwich board joined the parade adding a bizarre Christmas note to the protest, chanting:

Down with violence against people."

"I don't want my grandchildren raised in a country that views rape and violence against women as erotic," said one woman taking part in the demonstration.

The group also plans action against stores displaying pornographic magazines in public areas.

They said they chose to demonstrate against Red Hot Video outlets because it gave them an opportunity to draw attention to the issue on a province-wide basis.

Dr. Gordon England, a psychologist associated with the local Mental Health Clinic, who took part in the demonstration, said he did so because there was plenty of well-documented evidence to prove that hard-core pornography is linked to rape, wife abuse and forced sex in dating situations.

The group also points out although the owners of Red Hot Video-outlets claim they control the age of the people obtaining their adult movies, they also distribute a catalogue which includes a form on which anyone of any age can order films and the local outlet has placed an advertisement in the national Globe and Mail inviting readers to write to their George Street address for a copy of the catalogue.

## Snowmobilers nabbed here

RCMP ticketed four Prince George men during the weekend for illegally driving snowmobiles on city streets and are warning residents to keep their machines off the streets.

Cpl. Charles Scheidegger of the traffic division says the act will cost each driver \$300 for driving without insurance, since Prince George does not insure snowmobiles for city driving.

"It can be very dangerous — I've seen more than one machine end up under a truck," he says.

RCMP are asking residents to report any infractions this winter.

## School district lawsuit heard

One of four wrongful dismissal suits against Prince George School District began here today in B.C. Supreme Court.

Stu Drinnan, former director of business services, took the stand on his own behalf this morning.

Lawyer John Steeves is representing the school district while Dave Jenkins is representing Drinnan.

The dismissals followed an October, 1980, organizational audit by the school board.

Mac Carpenter, former secretary-treasurer, Dimitri Pajdaeff, former employee relations manager and Gus Buysen, former director of physical plant services have also filed wrongful dismissal suits.

## NORTHWOOD PULP

# Mill project completed

by BOB ROWLANDS  
Staff reporter

The \$300 million pulp mill expansion project at Northwood Pulp and Timber Ltd. is now completed.

The project, which began in the fall of 1979, provided work for 1,500 construction workers and created 130 new jobs at the mill, the company said.

The mill's production capacity has more than doubled to 1,450 tonnes a day, making it the largest producer of

prime bleached softwood kraft pulp in the world.

The last major component to be completed was the bleach plant which was handed over to mill personnel by the contractors last week, said Bill Matson, vice-president of the company's pulp division.

If this system works out as well as the other segments of the expansion project, the mill should be running both lines in January, he said.

The expansion project was interrupted twice by labor disputes, Matson said.

"The resulting delays have meant that we produced 33 per cent less pulp than we had planned for 1982. Now the new mill is available and the personnel is trained, we want to get started.

"I know it is a poor time in the market. Demand is down and prices are low and unstable. However, given our pro-

duction losses and the high pre-startup costs we are carrying, we have to get more tonnage through the system."

The new machinery, along with an extensive maintenance overhaul on the existing line in 1982, gives Northwood the capability of being a low-cost producer, Matson said.

"We ... are certainly aware of the market, but it is our intention to achieve a presence in that market," he said.

## Fans welcome brew brothers

About 70 beer and back bacon fans were at Prince George airport Sunday to meet the McKenzie Brothers, who are in town making their first movie.

As soon as the comedy team walked into the terminal, the crowd gathered around for autographs and a man wearing tinsel around his head invited them for a drink.

The "brothers", Dave Thomas and Rick Mora-

nis, are the writers and stars of The Strange Brew, an adventure-comedy that centres on a brewery. Most of the film has been shot in Toronto.

Why did they choose Prince George?

Moranis says he's never been here before, but he added "Old Fort is the only brewery that would have us."

Bob and Doug should be in town for most of the week.

## OUR MEN IN OTTAWA

# The job is more than kissing babies

by BOB MILLER  
Staff reporter

So you want to enter federal politics?

There's more to being an MP than spending most of the year making or breaking the nation's business in Ottawa, lobbying this way or that for legislative change, or railing in the House against injustice, real or imagined.

It means more than strutting the halls of power on Parliament Hill in a three-piece suit. Terms like high profile and job security (three years out of four) come to mind, not to mention the chance to leave your thumbprint in the corridors of time.

Hmm...can't be bad.

But for Tory backbenchers Frank Oberle and Lorne McCuish there's as much work in their home constituencies of Prince George-Peace River and Prince George-Bulkley Valley as there is in the centre block. And there's more to it here at home than ribbon cutting, glad-handing on the hustings, or luncheon and after-dinner speeches.

Their constituency offices are the catch-all for a potpourri of people problems and for the most part this "ombudsman" role goes unsung. Only their executive assistants know the hours spent each week on "people problems" that might be small potatoes to you or I, but loom large

in the mind of anyone hung up in bureaucracy and red tape.

"We like to solve problems," says Oberle's executive assistant JoAnne Doerges, hanging up the phone for the fifth time in 15 minutes. "We can't solve them all and those that aren't in our jurisdiction are transferred to the appropriate area — provincial, municipal, regional — where they can be solved."

Many wind up as referrals. People want help and don't know where to turn, or who to phone. When all else fails they call on their MP.

"Mr. Oberle never figures a problem is too small if someone takes the time to bring it to his attention," Doerges said, adding that party politics are left outside when people bring problems to the office door.

"It's a constituency office and we try to look after everybody, regardless of their political leanings."

Government and bureaucracy go hand-in-hand, said McCuish's executive assistant Karen Ward, and often the individual gets left out in the process.

A lot of people think their MP is unapproachable because of the two little initials but most MPs go to bat for the little guy who does get pushed aside by the system.

"Mr. McCuish is in Ottawa a fair amount of time but we keep in touch on a day-to-day basis," Ward said.

And if a problem can't be handled here, Ottawa is only a phone call away.

Inquiries range from wrangles with Immigration or Revenue Canada to hang-ups with UIC payments. Or maybe they just want government employment programs and mortgage schemes explained in everyday language.

When governments put out directives it's never done in clear, concise language and if people can't understand it in the first few paragraphs they generally won't read on, Doerges explained.

Generally, they phone or drop into the constituency offices in the Scotiabank building at Fourth Avenue and Victoria to find out how this or that change in legislation affects them.

Inquiries that regularly come to their attention range from the very serious — a UIC claimant whose benefit period is about to run out — to the trivial — a foreign exchange student who wants pins or tiny Canadian flags to take with him out of country.

Recently most inquiries have come from small businesses struggling under high interest rates or people who are out of work because of the downturn in the economy. They don't know where they stand and they want information on a va-

riety of programs that might help them weather the crisis.

In areas of government where the executive assistant herself runs into a stone wall, doors which would otherwise remain closed are opened by the MPs themselves. On more than one occasion Doerges has done the footwork on a constituent's problem and Oberle has taken it up with whichever government minister is responsible.

"Of the problems we get we bat about 90 per cent in solving them," Doerges said. "The answer might not be what people expect or want to hear but they wind up knowing where they stand."

Doerges said she's surprised by the number of people who think MPs simply disappear to Ottawa after they're elected. They're genuinely surprised to find out the person they did or didn't vote for maintains an office here.

"I wish more people knew the services available through their MP's office. We can't solve all their problems but we can steer them onto the right path.

"People always find politics scary, but MPs are just people like you and me who cared enough to run for Parliament.

"Whether you like it or not, politics affects everyone and when the economy goes down our business goes up."

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