

Arco Alaska sends largest-ever sealift to North Slope fields

The largest ever sealift of facilities to oil fields on Alaska's North Slope completed its 3,000-mile journey from the West Coast late last month when it arrived at Prudhoe Bay.

The historic sealift brought a new central gas facility for the Prudhoe Bay field, a production center for the new Lisburne field and a third central production facility for the Kuparuk River field.

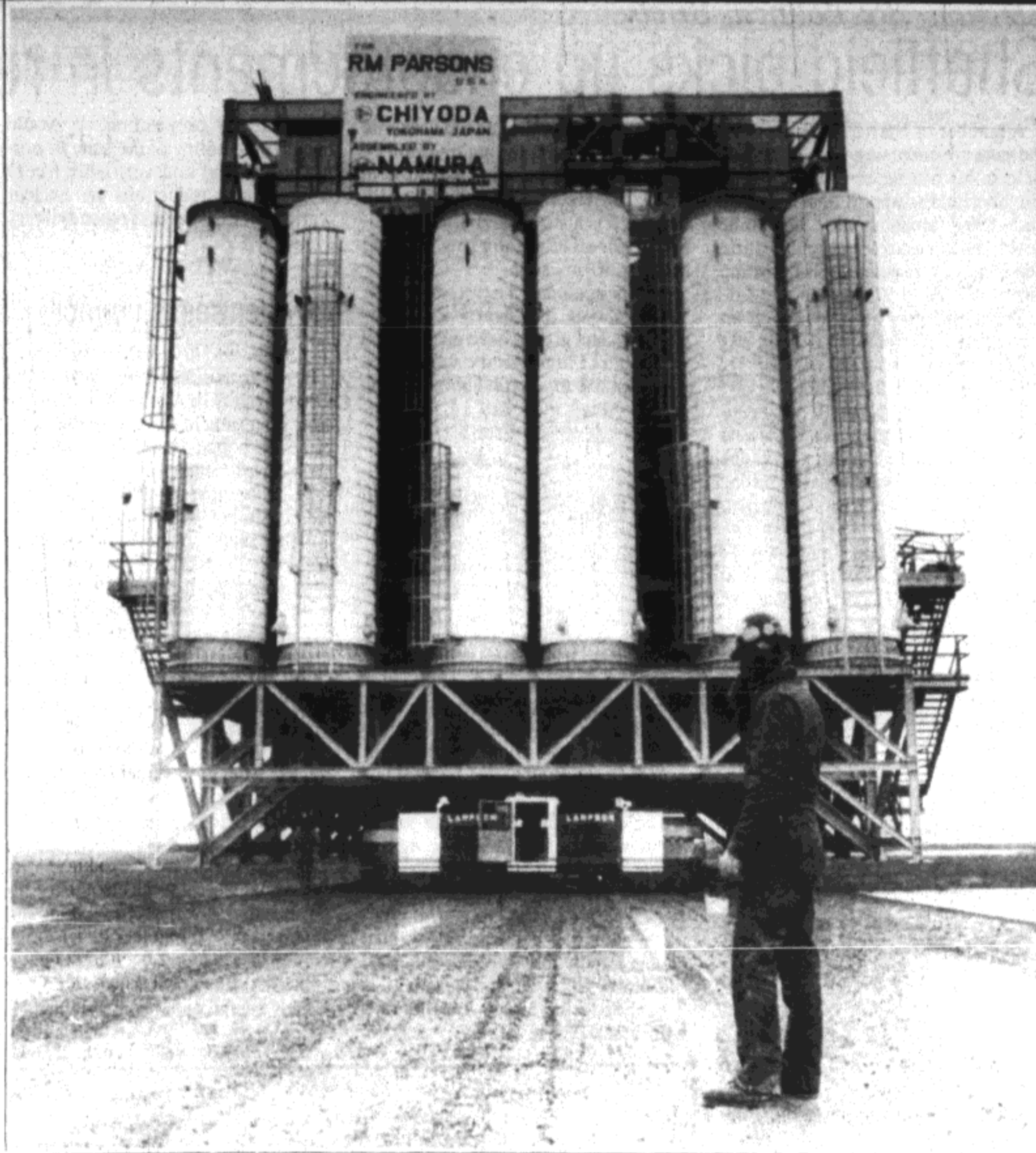
"With this shipment, we will have all the facilities necessary for the development of the two largest oil fields in North America — Prudhoe Bay and Kuparuk — and open the door for new production at a third field, Lisburne. Together these fields will account for over 20 percent of U.S. production," said Robert E. Wycoff, Arco president.

Each of the new facilities is built in cluster of modules fabricated for Arco Alaska Inc. at shipyards in Portland and Astoria, Ore., and Tacoma and Anacortes, Wash.

Some individual modules weigh 2,700 tons and stand more than 10 stories high.

The value of the cargo was about three-quarters of a billion dollars. When installed on the North Slope, the new facilities will represent more than a billion dollars in capital investment by the oil companies that own leases in the Prudhoe Bay, Kuparuk and Lisburne fields.

The sealift included 25 ocean-going barges, as well as an icebreaker barge. The total weight of this year's sealift was more than 87,000 tons.



A worker helps guide the 2300 ton dryer unit for the Central Gas Facility along the main dock road as it is carried approximately 4 miles from the docks.

photo by Norris Klesman