

**Over pipe welds—**

## **Ketchbaw sues Alyeska**

With extreme reluctance, Ketchbaw Industries has instructed its attorneys to file suit against the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company and others involved in the construction of the Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline.

Also named in the suit is the United States Department of the Interior, and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources. The suit was filed in Superior Court in Anchorage by the law firm of Edgar Paul Boyko and Associates.

Ketchbaw is seeking almost \$40 million dollars and the document filed in court contains astonishing information.

Referring to that information, the company's president, Tom Ketchbaw said, "I don't enjoy pointing an accusing finger at anybody. But, there seems to be serious deficiencies in the pipeline building procedures, and those deficiencies do not lie with Ketchbaw Industries . . . even though Ketchbaw Industries has apparently been selected as a scapegoat, to divert attention from the real problems."

According to the complaint the deficiencies are indeed serious. For example, it was not Ketchbaw Industries which had authority for final disposition of the welds on the pipeline. Bechtel Incorporated, along with Alyeska, had the final word.

It was that firm, working with Alyeska's knowledge, which allowed pipeline welds which had not been inspected to be made inaccessible to the Ketchbaw inspection personnel.

It was that company, along with Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, which has allowed burial of defective welds. How many? More than 600!

And, while making it impossible for Ketchbaw employees to properly inspect portions of the line, Alyeska contractors placed into the Alaskan permafrost, pipe on which critical welds requiring inspection had never been checked at all.

So anxious was Alyeska to get the pipe into position, that knowing what was going on, it allowed the Ketchbaw inspectors to be given misleading information which led to the X-raying of welds which had already been X-rayed!

These inspection reports were labeled in such a manner as to cause records to show that they were the inspections of pipe which was totally inaccessible to Ketchbaw employees.

Ketchbaw Industries intends to prove through its law suit, that there is a plan to systematically destroy Ketchbaw's long-standing reputation, its business and its credit.

Ketchbaw says in its complaint that considerable damage has been done to the company's name, and done purposely, with charges that Ketchbaw knowingly falsified inspection reports. It did not.

While Ketchbaw had a contract preventing it from talking to the press, Alyeska was feeding damaging information about Ketchbaw to reporters, through carefully prepared press releases issued to radio, television and newspapers. Ketchbaw considers that a tactic designed to cover up Alyeska's own wrong-doing.

The complaint filed in court carries with it a number of documents to support Ketchbaw's allegations.