

News from Inuvik

by Lois Keating

Nov. 28, 1976—It's been a long time since I've sent news from this area.

The Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Hearings are finally over. The hearings have been going on for over twenty months, and over sixteen hundred people have been heard.

Judge Berger is now working on his report to the government, which he hopes to have completed early in the new year. His report will be in two volumes. In the first, he will deal with the broad social, environmental and economic impact of the pipeline, and what measures which can be taken to lessen that impact. In the second volume he will set out in detail the specific terms and conditions that ought to be imposed on the right-of-way if the pipeline is to be built.

Judge Berger himself is not the one who makes the decision about the pipeline. It is his job to tell the government what he has learned from listening to all the speakers. He says that what he has learned from the people who live here in the Mackenzie Valley will carry more weight

than what was said by people from the south.

The National Energy Board, together with the Federal Cabinet are the ones who make the decision whether or not a pipeline will be built. If the Board approves a pipeline, it will recommend approval of a particular proposal by a particular company, thereby rejecting all the other proposals. And the Board will say what conditions will have to be adhered to when the pipeline is built and operated.

At the end of October, George Erasmus, president of the Indian Brotherhood of the N.W.T. presented a land claims proposal to Warren Allmand, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. The proposal contains a set of principles which the Brotherhood says must form the basis of any land claims. It also states that the Dene (Indian people) absolutely refuse to give up their aboriginal rights. They also want complete control over their own affairs. They also feel it is the

right of the Dene to say who would or would not be a part of the Dene Nation.

As the Dene proposal was being presented to the government, the split between the Indian Brotherhood and the Metis Association was widening. Rick Hardy, president of the Metis Association, says the Brotherhood proposal does not have the approval of the Metis Association. He says the Metis Association will start developing another proposal which is more in line with the thinking of the people of the Mackenzie Valley.

However, there has also been serious conflict within the Metis Association, and many people do not agree with Rick Hardy and the "official" Metis position.

There have also been changes in thinking regarding the Inuit Land Claims proposal (Nunavut). The Inuit have recently taken back the Nunavut proposal for major revisions, much of this regarding the extinguishment of aboriginal rights. The proposal has been taken back to the people to discuss the changes.

After a mild fall and one of the latest freeze-ups in history, winter had finally set in. Trapping is well underway, but has been hampered by deeper-than-usual snow, and lots of overflow on creeks and rivers.

So far the fur signs seem to be good in most areas. And on Banks Island, reports indicate that it could be an especially good season for white fox.

There have been a lot of caribou around Tuktoyaktuk, and permission has recently been giving to allow caribou hunting in parts of the reindeer reserve. And in the Mackenzie Valley, there seem to be an unusual number of moose this year, so most of the settlements have a good supply of meat.

People are now beginning to prepare for Christmas—so I'll finish this time by wishing you all a very happy holiday season. See you again next year!



ONE OF THE MOST difficult construction segments on the trans Alaska pipeline project is at Atigun Pass in the Brooks Mountain Range. In the foreground a trio of sideboom tractors lowers in a section of 48-inch diameter pipe at the north end of the pass.

—Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. Photo

Lestenkof —

AFN explains telecommunications

From Rural Communications

The main objective of the Alaska Federation of Natives Telecommunications Committee is to ensure that rural villages are provided with basic communications, according to Jake Lestenkof, executive vice president of the AFN.

During a recent interview Lestenkof discussed the role of the AFN Committee and the state-funded live television project. Lestenkof said he does not want to see the television project become a dominant issue that will "overshadow" other committee responsibilities.

The AFN Committee has played a major role in the selection of villages that received or will receive small earth stations under RCA Alascom's bush program. The committee also chose the 23 villages to receive television for the first time. Lestenkof believes the involvement of the AFN committee in the telephone and TV projects "has given RCA Alascom and the State of Alaska the opportunity to get together in one room."

Technical difficulties have put the television project "a little behind schedule" but he believes any "holes" or problems are part of the project itself. Lestenkof explained that the purpose of the project is to determine the feasibility of providing TV to the bush and expose any difficulties.

The AFN Committee is seeking more local TV programming for the project. However, the Committee lacks the time and the expertise to review all available programs and is sending many programs to the Governor's Office of Telecommunications for critique. Final program selection will be made by the committee.

Lestenkof admits that the polling of villagers on programming was "unorganized" but feels once the program is under-

way, the committee will take steps to collect more definitive feedback. He predicts that the regional corporations will become more directly involved and will take "a realistic look" at the available programming.

Several community groups have approached the AFN expressing concern about bringing television to rural Alaska. "They were a little worried about the violence that is found in TV shows, but that is a concern of people in urban as well as rural areas," Lestenkof said.

He said the installation of telephones and television in the bush will result in changes of attitude. The telephone will also bring an economic change. "The people can now call Anchorage to order things from the store. Before, they probably wouldn't have bothered to write for the item," Lestenkof said.

The continuation of the television project and the AFN Committee itself depends on future funding. The AFN Committee itself depends on future funding. The AFN Com-

mittee was established during the 1975 AFN Convention and is funded by the Governor's Office of Telecommunications as part of the television project.

In additional funding is obtained the AFN Telecommunications Committee would consider hiring a staff person "to keep the committee abreast of the latest advance in satellite technology."

TT marks fifth

Next week's issue of the Tundra Times will commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971.

Wainwright and Barrow receive land selections

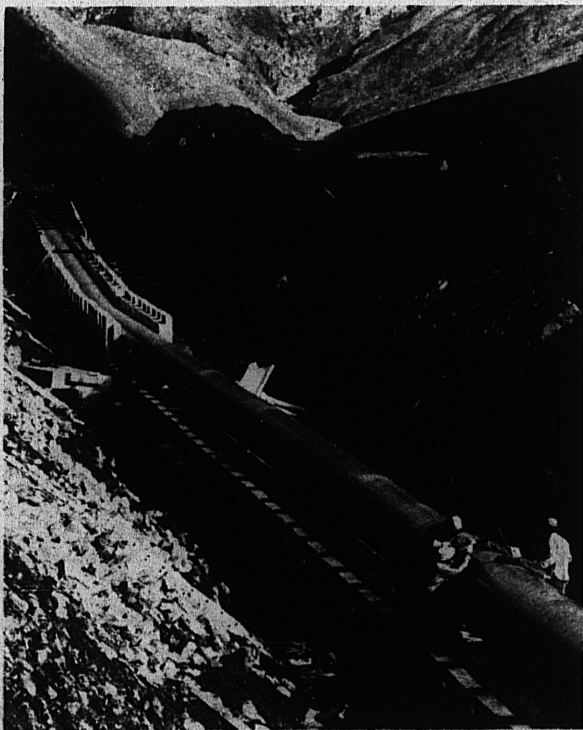
The Bureau of Land Management has just transferred from Federal ownership nearly a quarter of a million acres to two Native villages on the North Slope, BLM Alaska State Director Curt McVee announced today.

McVee said the BLM was conveying a total of 201,232 acres to the village of Barrow and 44,626 acres to the village of Wainwright. It was the second transfer of title to Wainwright since passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), bringing the total to that northern outpost to 105,312 acres.

Today's announcement of the land transfer to Barrow and Wainwright brought the amount

of Federal land conveyed to the Natives in Alaska under ANCSA to 664,132 acres since the first conveyance to Kenai Native Association Inc. in the spring of 1974. Alaska Natives will receive 40 million acres under ANCSA.

McVee said the conveyance to the two Arctic Slope villages was a result of an agreement signed this summer between Arctic Slope Regional Corporation officials and Secretary of the Interior Thomas S. Kleppe. That agreement permitted the transfer of Federal Lands to the Arctic Slope villages and to the regional corporation despite a delay on conveyances stemming from a suit against the Interior Department by some of the Native corporations.



A UNIQUE METHOD OF construction is employed at Atigun Pass for the trans Alaska pipeline project. Because of soil conditions in two short sections at the north and south ends of the pass, mainline pipe is being encased in an insulated box atop a concrete slab.

—Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. Photo