

To Barrow Officials, Many Others— BP Offers Gala Welcome

By BETZI WOODMAN

A group of local government officials and their wives from the North Slope Borough and the City of Barrow was flown by charter aircraft to Prudhoe Bay last Thursday for the gala dedication of BP Alaska's new \$21 million Operations Center. They were joined by another charter planeload of dignitaries from Anchorage and Fairbanks.

Invitations to these northern Alaskans was in recognition that Prudhoe Bay and its activities are within the state's largest local government region, the North Slope Borough.

This was stated at the champagne party by Laurie Gay, BP's district manager and master of ceremonies when he said, "We are well aware that we are in the North Slope Borough."

In later remarks this group was also included when both Frank Rickwood, president of BP Alaska and Governor William A. Egan said that keeping the north a suitable habitat "will need the help of all Alaskans."

Lloyd Ahvakana, administrative and finance director for the borough, substituted for Mayor Eben Hopson in making remarks during the program.

Others invited to the affair from the Barrow area included: Barrow Mayor and Mrs. Jacob Adams, Borough Assembly President and Mrs. Johnny Nusun-

ginya, Sr., Borough Assemblyman and Mrs. Edward Hopson, Sr., Assemblyman and Mrs. Oliver Leavitt, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation President and Mrs. Oliver Leavitt, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation President and Mrs. Joseph Upicksoun, corporate secretary for the corporation and Mrs. Nelson Ahvakana, and Borough planning commission member and Mrs. Tom Brower, Larry Dinneen, executive vice president of the corporation was also present with Mrs. Dinneen who joined him from the Anchorage flight.

Roger Lang, president of the Alaska Federation of Natives attended also. Howard Rock, editor of the Tundra Times was invited but could not attend.

Although most of the men in the borough group had seen Prudhoe Bay before, it was a first for most of their wives. Wearing corsages of yellow roses with green tulle and ribbon for the BP colors, the women took great interest in facilities visited on a pre-party tour from the docks at Prudhoe Bay itself to the pipeline yard.

Getting special attention in the BP center was the two-story garden area with a 16-foot Alaskan black spruce, some birch trees and native ground cover. This and other parts of the unique building was designed to combat the greyness of winter and bleak face of the Arctic tundra.

Brilliant colors mark off sections of hallways with the effect of a rainbow as one looks down the corridors. Huge floor to ceiling numbers indicate floor levels and individual two-bedroom suites have bright foyers and mixed textures on the walls.

Lounges and reading areas are comfortably furnished and lighted. One recreation area next to the dining room boasts pool and pingpong tables along with other games. A 40-foot swimming pool has a Riviera-blue bottom and sides to make the swimmer forget that the water is also for use to fight fires if needed.

Most striking is the third floor recreation area where the party was held. Under foot is bright green and spongy astro-turf. Vaulted roofs are translucent and walls of the 200 by 50-foot room is glass.

Huge windows, which can be opened in summer, give additional light. In winter, artificial

lighting will offset the twilight of the non-sun days. In fact, lighting throughout the public areas of the building is brighter than in conventional buildings in order to keep a cheerful atmosphere.

The handsome hors d'oeuvres served at the champagne party were prepared by chef Peter Dienki who also directs food preparation for the dining room. The facility will house about 140 members of BP's staff.

At the close of brief speeches, Dorothy McGonigle, the first woman to go to the Slope to work for BP, in behalf of her employers gave Governor and Mrs. Egan a soapstone carving of an Eskimo family by Mary Regat.

Governor Egan commended BP for its facility, built "with as little desecration of the environment as humanly possible" and spoke of its "brightness, as though it were summer." He said that petroleum people "such as these" who with their families have become entwined in the life of Alaska have earned the right to be called "true Alaskans."

Frank Rickwood, president of BP Alaska, made the most thought-provoking statements at the dedication. He commended Alaskans for their efforts to save wildlife and scenery which "is given to you — you only need take care of it." But he also chided the people for paying so little attention to where people are living.

"What you do today affects the future," he said. "Leaving things to work out for themselves 'doesn't make great cities.'"

"It's your tremendous responsibility for the towns that become cities," he said. "They can be the most beautiful in the world."