

DOYON LTD. OPPOSES LINE

Guarantees Needed To Save Way Of Life

By MARGIE BAUMAN
KTVE/KFRB

The board of directors of Doyon Ltd., vowed Monday to oppose construction of the trans-Alaska pipeline and all roads west and north of Fairbanks.

The action came on the heels of a board of directors meeting in Anchorage of the powerful regional corporation of the interior. Doyon represents 10,000 stockholders within the region, under terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Two hundred miles of the proposed pipeline route travels through their region.

"The administration and the board of directors of Doyon Ltd. have never taken a position on the pipeline," said Doyon President John Sackett. "We had previously no strong objection to the pipeline, provided that we would receive certain areas of need through amendments in the legislation," he said.

Sackett was referring to the legislation by U.S. Sen. Henry Jackson, D-Wash., which passed the U.S. Senate this week and went to the House. Jackson's bill primarily would ease right-of-way requirements for the proposed pipeline route. The amendment by U.S. Sen. Mike Gravel and supported by U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens included indemnification rights.

Among the lobbyists in Washington were State Sen. Willie Hensley, D-Kotzebue, president of the Alaska Federation of Na-

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tives Inc., John Borbridge, president and chairman of the Board of Sealaska Corp., and Sam Kito, executive director of Doyon Ltd. Kito notes that they were there primarily to lobby for amendments to protect the Alaska Natives.

"The needs are for protection of subsistence, indemnification (in case of oil spills) and employment," Sackett said, "however, as time has developed, in the implementation of the pipeline, we found that to a great extent, particularly the administrations of the Department of the Interior and the state of Alaska are not taking the recommendations of the Native corporations.

"This has been a fight that Senator Hensley has tried to lead and tried to make the different administrations accept certain stipulations that would protect Native people," Sackett said.

Doyon's board of directors said that "the majority of our people in the villages do not want the pipeline, or any highway that would connect our villages with major urban areas."

"We have tried desperately to assure that our subsistence way of life will be protected; however, the Department of Interior and the state administration has refused to act," the board said.

"The possible monies that we, as a corporation, will receive from the royalty of the oil from the North Slope will in no way compensate for the existing lifestyle of our people.

"Our people must continue to live off the land for years to come and this will become impossible as more roads are created, more people move into the area constructing and killing off the game, and regulations continue to be implemented that deny our villages the right to try and make a living," the board said.

The board noted that a large chunk of money had been spent fighting the Department of Interior, "as they have attempted to take more of our rights away.

"The fight for the rules and regulations regarding land selection, that would be applicable to our villages, took a major part of our time and monies," the board said.

The board was also highly critical of the Interior Department's new stand on Native Allotments.

Under the Native Allotment Act of 1906, any Native could file for up to 160 acres of land

that was lived on and used prior to the Rampart Powersite Classification in the Interior (1963) or the date of state selection (1960-1968) — so long as the application was on file prior to Dec. 18, 1971.

But Undersecretary of the Interior Jack Horton (formerly federal co-chairman of the Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission for Alaska) changed all that.

Horton issued a revised policy recently, stating that Native allotments could be obtained only if filed for, with the Bureau of Indian Affairs or Bureau of Land Management before the date of classification of Rampart Powersite (1963) or state selections (1960-1968).

Since most of the allotments were filed for during 1970 and 1971, virtually all of them will be rejected when the BLM gets to that phase.

Even those allotments which have been "approved" and referred for scheduling of survey are being recalled to the Land Office for rejection if they fail in the Rampart Power Site Classification, on State Selected lands or any other similar category," noted Robert Jenks, vice president for lands at Doyon Ltd.

Sackett advised Horton in a letter of June 29 that he was "shocked, flabbergasted and extremely disappointed" at the adverse regulations.

Under the revised allotment regulations, over 60 per cent of all Native allotments would be rejected. Jenks also advised Sackett that he felt the Interior Department actions were "improper, uncalled for and probably illegal. At least, it seems to me to be arbitrary and capricious use of his discretionary powers," Jenks said.

So while thanking the Native lobbyists for their efforts in Washington, Sackett said Doyon's board was strongly opposed to the pipeline.

"It matters little to us that other people may need jobs and fuel for their cars at the expense of overrunning our villages with cars, trucks and pipes," the board said.

"Our people, too, have some rights to be protected and assisted in their way of life, and they, too, need strong guarantees that their lands will not be taken from them. We intend to get these guarantees of not only protection, but total employment participation and the best guarantee now is not to have the pipeline construction."