

SENATOR ERNEST HOLLINGS of North Carolina (center) shakes hands with Robert Aiken (left), a member of the Barrow dance group. Floyd Ahvakana, North Slope Borough clerk, smiles in the background.
—photo by LESLIE K. NAKASHIMA

SE NATORS VISIT BARROW

Senators Adlai Stevenson, Jr. of Illinois, John Durkin of Vermont, and Earnest Hollings of North Carolina visited Barrow on August 18. The visit, arranged by Charley Edwardson, Jr. through the office of Senator

Mike Gravel, lasted a couple of hours and included tours of the city of Barrow and the Naval Arctic Research Laboratory. A briefing was held at NARL, after which a reception was given at the North Slope Borough Build-

ing. Eskimo dancers performed in honor of the senators' visit. Also with the visiting group was Mrs. Mike Gravel and Mrs. Huddleston, wife of Kentucky's senator.

View from behind the governor's desk

The North Slope Haul Road
By Governor Jay S. Hammond
August 16, 1976

When the federal government became involved in construction of the haul road, it was with the understanding it would be incorporated into the State highway system. If closed completely, the \$24 million the federal government invested in the Yukon River Bridge, the \$1.5 million used in road construction surveillance; and the \$2.8 million worth of federal gravel might be charged against the state. Moreover, agreements by the past State administration with Alyeska asserted the State would, upon acquisition of the road, maintain it and permit Alyeska continued access to pipeline facilities.

Thus, unless we are willing to risk paying millions and face endless litigation, the haul road will be opened. That conclusion, however, is not the total picture; it merely frames the basic issue: conditions under which the road is opened—for opened it will be. Commitments made

(Continued on page 8)

News Briefs

health care, says a lawyer from Boise, Idaho.

The prospective plaintiffs contend the "skyrocketing" cost of health care is partly due to the AMA's near economic monopoly over health care without effective competition.

States named as defendants include Idaho, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Washington, Colorado, Oregon, Alaska, Nevada and California.

THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE Committee is looking over legislation that would once again open national forests to the clear-cutting of trees by private companies under government permits.

An 1897 law, which authorizes the removal from national forests of dead, physiological mature or large trees only, was upheld in August 1975 by a federal court in Richmond, Va. The court, in its interpretation of the law, banned clear-cutting operations then underway in West Virginia. Federal courts in Alaska have applied the same standards in cases brought in their jurisdictions.

HOUSE AND SENATE leaders agreed last week to compromise on a bill that drastically revises the nation's

policies for offshore gas and oil exploration. Most provisions on the bill will apply to Alaska, according to Rep. John Murphy, D-NY, even though the first lease sale off Alaska has already taken place. Among the new guidelines set out in the bill are revised leasing procedures, improved safety requirements, and the establishment of multi-million dollars funds to clean up oil spills and reimburse businesses and communities for damages relating to offshore drilling activities.

THE VILLAGE OF English Bay on the Kenai Peninsula sent a delegation to Anchorage to protest an oil and gas lease sale proposed that could destroy their long-protected culture.

A draft environmental impact statement prepared by the government states that an oil spill could have an impact on native villages within one day.

A SPECIAL EDITION of the "Village Voice" concerning subsistence hunting and fishing was released last month by RURAL CAP. The newsletter covers issues including aquaculture in Alaska, public interest lands, and the question of subsistence hunting and fishing.

Letters

industry to the trucking companies.

Refuting the claim that there are no facilities for recreational vehicles or tourists, the carriers claim that graveled river beds and cleared areas adjacent to present pipeline campsites provide more parking and camping facilities than any other stretch of road in Alaska.

In a recent public statement, Venable pointed out that the present 350-mile North Slope Haul Road is the only connecting road into 240,000 square miles of northern Alaska. He compares this in size with the state of Texas having a total road and street mileage of only 350 miles, or if the combined states of Oregon, Washington and Idaho had a total of just 350 miles to serve that area. Their study quotes Labor

Department statistics that 49.6 per cent of employed Alaskans work for the federal, state or local government compared to a national average of just over 20 per cent. This, the carriers claim, emphasizes the need for revising the present "no-growth" policy of many state and federal officials and legislators and assuring an open road to the north and to the future for the economic development needed in private industry as well as for the recreational values that can be made available to all.

L. V. Venable
Acting General Manager
Alaska Carriers Association, Inc.

(Editor's note: A copy of the study made for the Alaska Growth Policy Commission is available on request from the association office).

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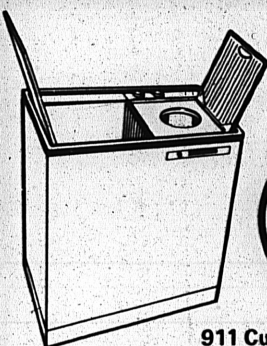
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