

Native interests stall pipeline

by Michael Creery

Mr. Justice Thomas Berger, perhaps the most publicly visible legal figure in Canada today, presented a concise, informative and humanistic report on the MacKenzie Valley Pipeline Study to a packed house at the Weldon Building on Thursday (March 6). Mr. Justice Berger described the impact of the pipeline on the Valley and the surrounding area, concluding his remarks by summarizing the recommendations in the report. It seems, happily enough, that the federal government, on the strength of the report, has taken a stand against the construction of a pipeline in Canada's far north at least until native Indian claims and environmental concerns are properly safeguarded.

Mr. Justice Berger was originally sent to determine the environmental, social and economic impact to be wrought by the construction and maintenance of a pipeline built to transport vast supplies of American gas and oil from the frozen north to the heart of the continent. His task was one that blossomed into twenty-one months of hear-

ings entailing evidence from 300 expert witnesses, biologists, anthropologists, economists and historians, as well as from 1000 native Indian representatives. It was no small undertaking on either side.

Proposed by two huge oil consortiums, Artic Gas and the Foothills group, who spent over \$50 million in preparation for the hearings alone, the MacKenzie Valley Pipeline would have been the largest private undertaking every attempted. The emphasis is on the phrase "would have", however, for all the evidence presented detailed an impact too great to warrant the federal government's approval of the project.

Stressing the recommendations of the report, as well as the approval of the federal government, as decisions based on value judgments, Mr. Justice Berger painted a vivid picture of a north unknown by most. A Yukon area that is a unique ecosystem, having been spared the ravages of glaciation, shows a biological world as yet untouched by history. The warm and shallow waters of the

MacKenzie Bay, fed by the MacKenzie River flowing from B.C. and Alberta, incubate the calves of 5,000 white whales while the MacKenzie Delta harbours an enormous herd of Caribou while the birth and rearing of their young goes on. Having portrayed an environment enormously worthy of salvation, Mr. Justice Berger then described the plight of the native Indians of the area and, as has sadly become the norm, showed it as one not yet likely to be benefited by the white man or his industry.



setting aside part of the MacKenzie Delta as a wildlife park. The former, and now again, fisheries Minister, Romeo LeBlanc, commissioned a team of experts to assess the plight of the white whales in furtherance of Berger's recommendation towards turning MacKenzie Bay into a whale sanctuary. Berger himself has testified in front of the American Senate Committee on Energy, an understandably interested party, with regard to his findings and recommendations. The com-

mittee, driven by the pressures of a country consuming one-third of the world's daily-produced oil supplies, feels the need to explore the MacKenzie area for further oil. Berger counters this demand by stressing the sanctity of the Valley as crucial, by pointing out that the U.S.A. was the first country to

establish national parks and to pass a statute specifically dealing with the preservation of wilderness. To bring industrial exploration to the MacKenzie area, then, would be to breach a principle originally espoused by the U.S.A. Berger underlines this argument with his own philosophy: is the sacrifice of an earthly Elysium justified by the possible discovery of what is still a very finite resource? Shall we destroy forever an area as yet untouched so as to delay the inevitable search for alternate energy sources for a mere ten or fifteen years? Berger's answer, and it is supported by both the federal Parliament and the American House of Representatives, is a definite "No." The question remains, however, as to how long it will be until the American government, under increasing demand for a decreasing resource, is driven to pressure its counterpart to the north. From there the situation looks bleak—can a dubiously economically-independent Canada resist that kind of "neighbourly" pressure? The future of the MacKenzie area, though at present seemingly secure, remains to be seen.

University 'investing in organized crime'

MONTREAL (CUP)—Universities that invest in companies involved in South Africa should also consider investing in organized crime, says an anti-apartheid activist.

"The immorality would be the same," said Dennis Brutus. "If they want profitable investments maybe they should be selling drugs, setting up bordellos or getting into pornographic films."

Brutus, a South African exile professor at Northwestern University in Illinois and a prominent figure in the fight for the deracialization of sports in South Africa, made the statement in response to the argument, cited by many university

trustees, that the sole obligation of a board of governors is to guarantee the best return rate on investments without considering political issues.

Brutus was speaking at McGill University during the student-organized South Africa Solidarity Week.

Brutus said he could not comprehend how universities which pride themselves on being "bastions of morality whose goal is the search for truth and knowledge" could have financial holdings in corporations and lending institutions linked to the racist regime.

"It's a society where blacks are voiceless and voteless,

with no right to strike or to even talk of a strike," he said.

Brutus warned McGill students involved in the divestment campaign that administrations will often procrastinate: "At Northwestern we would meet the administration which would respond by saying they might form a committee on social responsibility and maybe even a joint committee with student and faculty representation. We soon found ourselves trapped in a vicious circle, running from one meeting to another."

"You must expect these difficulties, especially if you see who runs universities," said Brutus.

"What I ask of you is to help us remove this enormous octopus that strangles us and of which at least one tentacle comes from your country.

"You can help us make the struggle come sooner and be perhaps less messy in the long term. But there is no doubt we will win.

"And there is no doubt we will have to suffer as 1,000 students suffered in the ghettos in June 1976."

Brutus called upon students to educate others as to the realities of apartheid.

"People watching the evening news seem so baffled, they cannot understand why people in Iran are so mad at the United States. But on the 31st of December 1978 there was Jimmy Carter in Tehran, toasting the Shah as the best friend of the Americans in the area," said Brutus.

"People don't want to be reminded of this complicity in oppression. Very soon they'll be watching South Africans

rising up against apartheid and tossing it into the dustbin of history. Will they misunderstand that too? There's another area to work in."

During the question period Brutus was quizzed on the boycott of the Moscow Summer Olympics. He saw no analogy with the African nation's boycott at Montreal in protest of New Zealand's participation in sporting contests with racially-segregated South African teams. Brutus had helped organize the protest.

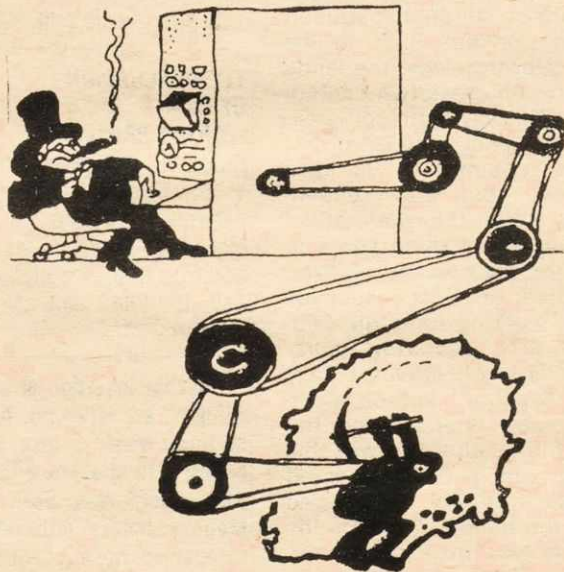
"We didn't go into the Olympic arena asking for South Africa to end its policies in schools, in factories or in ghettos. We opposed them introducing their politics into the sports field.

The International Olympic Committee has no power over internal matters; it can only enforce its charter, which South Africa was violating by bringing its racist structures into the Games."

"In 1976, the United States accused us of mixing sports and politics. They're standing that axiom on its head. Now they are taking action not because of sports but because of Afghanistan," said Brutus.

"I say you should not seek redress for political grievances in the Olympic Games. Any violations of the charter can be handled by the commission. I don't think you should be bringing in issues over which the Olympic community has no control."

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