

more accessible. A railroad is needed to carry the Pine Point ores to Cominco's smelter at Trail, B.C.; and at present, the nearest railheads are at Waterways and Grimshaw, Alta., almost 400 miles south of Pine Point.

Here, then, is a clear case where the Federal Government might become a catalyst, and in so doing, facilitate a new mining development which assuredly would benefit the whole national economy. Moreover a railroad would bring a number of other advantages to the people of our country. It would supplement existing road and water routes to the mineral-rich areas on Great Slave Lake, thereby reducing freight costs from southern Canada to destinations on and north of this lake. It would permit a substantial speedup in the time of travel from railhead to the mouth of the Mackenzie River. It would contribute to the reliability of freight deliveries at all northern points served by the Mackenzie route - and this would include our outposts of defence on the DEW line. Within the broad area which would come within reach of its services it would facilitate further exploration and enhance the prospect of development.

In effect, it would contribute significantly towards the kind of economic climate that permits development to take place, and in so doing would profoundly affect the economic prospects of the entire Mackenzie District. A railway to Great Slave Lake will not be just another line opening up some particular lake or mine or serving some individual community. It will be one of the major development railroads of our country.

Before we allow our fancies to soar, however, let us remember that we have known for 60 years of these lead and zinc occurrences at Pine Point, but have made no attempt to develop them. Actual mining demands some clear relationship between costs and benefits, and at Pine Point this relationship is not yet adequately favourable. Transportation costs are the major factor in the present unfavourable cost structure, and it is apparent that this situation will be altered only if a railway is built. But railways cost money, and thus far the final decisions have not been taken to unlock these very large occurrences for development.

Native Peoples

The responsibilities of the Government will not end, however, with its stimulation of the use of the physical resources latent in our undeveloped North. There are also the human resources. The Government has a clear and inescapable obligation to foster a better way of life among the native peoples whom the white man found in occupation of the land, and whom he has often tended - sometimes ruthlessly, but more often thoughtlessly - to push to one side.