

International Quaker meeting — first in Canada

Quakers from 30 countries met at Hamilton, Ontario's McMaster University July 18 to 24 for the thirteenth Triennial of the Friends World Committee for Consultation. This is the first time that the Religious Society of Friends, as Quakers are formally known, has held the triennial event in Canada. Previous meetings have been in Australia, Kenya, Sweden, the United States and Britain.

Native employment opportunities

Alberta Treaty Indians will have opportunities for regular employment and contracts on the Syncrude tar sands project under the terms of two agreements concluded in Edmonton last month.

The agreements, which commit more than \$10 million for training and economic development for Alberta Indians, provide openings with Syncrude Canada Ltd, and business-development opportunities in the Fort McMurray area.

Regular employment and business contracts with Syncrude are under the terms of a ten-year agreement, signed by Syncrude Canada Ltd president Brent Scott, Indian Affairs and Northern Development Minister Judd Buchanan and Indian Association of Alberta president Harold Cardinal; the second agreement, signed by Messrs Cardinal and Buchanan, includes a minimum of \$3 million from the Federal Government to help Indian-owned firms to become established in the Fort McMurray area.

The first agreement, under negotiation for six months, commits Syncrude to offer employment to qualified In-

dians in all branches of the company. Those lacking educational qualifications will receive up to two years of pre-employment academic upgrading, paid for by the Federal Government. Both the Indian Affairs Department and the Indian Association will review the pre-employment training to ensure it meets "the special cultural and social identity of the Indian students".

Business incentive

The second agreement provides for the establishment of two companies to help Indian-owned businesses in the Fort McMurray area. Indians will make up the majority of both boards of directors, and will have the shares held in trust by the Indian Association of Alberta for Alberta Indians.

The first company, the Indian Oil Sands Economic Development Corporation, which will receive \$1.5 million over five years from the Federal Government, will explore business oppor-

tunities and help existing or newly-formed Indian-owned firms to take advantage of them. It will provide pre-feasibility assessment, proposal preparation, advice on economics, marketing, production, employee relations, and financing as well as legal and other professional services.

The other company, with federal funds of \$1.5 million over five years, will act as a foundation or trust to provide direct equity financing to Indian-owned firms operating in the Fort McMurray area. Businesses that receive contracts or develop business opportunities through the assistance of the Corporation, and which obtain debt financing through traditional lending agencies, will receive non-repayable grants from the trust company to help meet their equity capital funds.

Syncrude will make a donation to the trust company, which will approach other corporations to do likewise.

News briefs

- Canada and the Soviet Union have signed a long-term economic agreement which will last for ten years. It starts with a \$43-million contract that is almost completed between the Soviet Union and Unit Rig and Equipment Co. Canada Ltd for 30 large off-highway vehicles. The new agreement calls for meetings at least once a year of ministers on a new mixed commission.
- Canada's economic growth will be about 5 per cent or slightly more during the next 12 months, says a survey by the 24-nation Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. The organization also predicts a 3.5 per cent growth in the number of jobs by next July but says continued rapid expansion in the labour force will make any reduction in unemployment during that period unlikely.
- Dome Petroleum Ltd of Calgary is to start off-shore drilling in the Beaufort Sea this summer with a \$200-million fleet of drill ships and support vessels. The five-year project is part of the \$500-million gamble on the oil and gas potential under the Beaufort Sea. Its outcome could have a long-term impact on energy security in Canada.
- Retail beef prices are the lowest in three years at an average of \$1.29 a

pound, the president of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association said recently, but the lower prices will not last.

- The average urban household spent \$10,467 for current consumption in 1974, and an additional \$3,582 for personal taxes, security and gifts and contributions, for a total expenditure of \$14,049, reports Statistics Canada. Some 24.5 per cent of the expenditure of households in the \$20,000-and-over income category was for personal taxes, compared to 4.6 per cent for households in the under-\$7,000 group. Food and shelter accounted for over half the total expenditure of households at the lower end of the income scale.

- Canadian Labour Congress president Joe Morris says the Government will be given one more chance to withdraw the anti-inflation program or the 2-million member Congress will go ahead with its long-planned protest against controls. But he qualified the remarks, made following a meeting with the Prime Minister, by saying the program must be withdrawn "at a time that we may find acceptable".

- Total corporate assets in all industries increased to \$356 billion in 1973 from \$275 billion in 1971, Statistics Canada reported July 27. The increase resulted from strong economic growth and inflation.

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