

ARCTIC AIRLIFT

Aircraft and crews from the Canadian Forces Air Transport Command were engaged, from April 3 to 10, in a major airlift in the Far North to resupply Canadian Forces Station Alert with essential fuel oil.

Originating in Thule, the airlift involved flying in about half a million gallons of oil for heat and electricity at the ice-bound northern outpost.

Hercules aircraft and crews from 436 Squadron of Trenton, Ontario and from 435 Squadron, Edmonton, Alberta, provided the "muscle" for the operation.

The airlift, which bore the code-name "Exercise Box-Top One", was necessary because Alert, just 500 miles from the North Pole, is not open for seaborne supply. The joint Danish-U.S. base at Thule, because of its fuel-storage capacity and short distance from Alert, provides an ideal jumping-off point for the big supply aircraft.

INDIAN YOUTH SUMMER PLANS

When Cindy Star finishes Grade 11 this June, she could, if she wished, just loaf around the Indian reserve where she lives. That's what she has done most years and that's just about the only thing for an Indian high-school student living on the northern shore of Lake Superior to do during the summer.

If she's lucky, however, she may be chosen to work on her own reserve on the federally-sponsored Indian High School Student Employment Project and earn a little money as she did last year, along with 307 other Indian students in Ontario.

National incentive programs boomed in 1971: first the winter works program, then, opportunities for youth. Employment for Indian high-school students developed easily enough from there.

BENEFITS OF INDIAN PROJECT

The Indian project, which was initiated by the Education Branch of the Indian Affairs Department, was not just an employment program.

First, it brought back to their reserves high-school students who might otherwise stay in the cities where they had been going to school. Second, the reserves were improved physically and socially by the work of the students. Economically, it meant a saving of funds allotted for other community improvement projects. It also gave the students work

experience and many of them drew their first pay cheque.

Most important of all it simply gave the students something to do during the summer other than joining the "welfare rolls".

For Cindy, it meant cleaning out a park and building a baseball field on the Pic Heron Reserve, with four other students.

Cindy also worked in the band office as secretary to the chief. "It was the first job I've ever had and it meant taking a lot of responsibility," she said.

Cindy's group was not the only one in Ontario involved in recreational projects, which seemed to be a favourite with the 93 bands that participated out of 113 in the province.

Ontario got the biggest grant in Canada - \$110,890, or 22 per cent of the total \$500,000 for the program.

The money was then split up by district on the basis of student population. In some cases bands paid students out of their own funds and were later reimbursed by the Department. In others the Department paid students themselves through the district offices.

The basic running of the program was left to regional co-ordinator George St. Germaine, an Indian university student from the Georgian Bay area.

The plan was to have nine district supervisors work under him but when the bands agreed to do their own supervision, most of these positions were eliminated, freeing money to hire more students.

TYPES OF JOB

Projects across the province varied from cleaning up pollution and setting up recreational programs for younger children, to renovating houses and building band council offices. Students cleared swimming areas, planted trees, built fences, did a manpower survey, rebuilt a skating rink, renovated cemeteries, did maintenance work on roads and became aids in nursing homes on reserves.

Now that the bands have gone through the program once, it will be much easier setting it up this summer.

The Federal Government has already allotted another \$110,000 to Ontario, and band managers are starting to work up proposals.

On the Pic Heron reserve, Cindy is also starting to turn her thoughts toward what she would like to do during the summer. One of her major recommendations for the program is to have student exchanges between reserves across the country.