

re we go from here ?

s. This chance appeal of William Brothers (New York) to President of Den this prestigious role, even though Energy who has publicly de Donald MacDonald has indicated he TAPS plan.

ect that the oil pi "the right Canadian choice". The Wil- either way but th others' choice is a natural one for mem- across Canada. Can the former Northwest Project Study istrial representative The company, a large and experienced wo years now that and its Calgary subsidiary, Williams n the MacKenzie s Canada Ltd., has been used exten- ally feasible once an many of the group's environmental cubic feet of gas ha

h Slope has yielded nment's choice for "maximum Can- mounts that the o adership and participation" in the ed to market it. The federal government wants most of gal and there will ated \$1 billion needed for the actual rection feasible. Th of the line to be raised in Canada, and ys it will be ready majority of the consulting and engin- pipeline by the end ork to be handled by Canadians. The nt is already in negotiations with the consortium on the financing and detailed of the entire project.

again largely Am department of Northern Affairs has will be no grave dan word on choice of a route through m a gas pipeline, an enzie Valley, and the National Energy it with from an oil gains the final authority on any ap- really built up such for pipeline construction. Whether ated body of knowle will be financing, building, operating d operate a pipeline ing the pipeline construction through can guarantee no irre territory remains to be seen. ne to the environment by the federal government through ic-Northwest Project his Ltd., is in the Arctic to protect d on June 15, 1972 vest. In fact, it is deeply involved in to apply to Cana it and gas exploration, and commit- tory authorities in ear oiting these resources as quickly and a multi-billion dollar as possible. It strongly supports rally acknowledged t to market because of its cash in- the largest undertakin and because of the general impact a ced by private indust pipeline could have on Canada's e largest oil compan development. A pipeline means the money required. Estim transport corridor" is much more r proposal at over \$5 is in turn means greater North inal route selection, ccess to Canada's northern natural e inclusion of a spur resources. Four American gas dis- ered MacKenzie delta g

as consortium, Gas An companies have even loaned Panarctic e been studying co dollars for further exploration with nt that the payback be shipments gas". adian government would like to pipeline buried in the ess role in the project, but the oil ere being projected as involved are cool toward govern- 6-inch) diameter lines essment. It is said that possible go- deliver 3.5 billion cubic ement. It is said that possible go- . and Canadian consum participation would strengthen re- gas production is at 2 some U.S. government circles to exports to the U.S. major oil and gas arteries, essential et a year. rity, to another foreign power".

west Project Study G Arctic oil and gas supplies, whether a route cutting diagon or Alaska, are ultimately destined atchewan and Mani rkets anyway. Identically, the ance of about 2,500 es shouldn't control the pipeline's oured a 1500 mile ro struction and operation, let alone e Valley linking Pruc gas and oil.

the Alberta Gas Tru nment claims that already "the Alberta. Any propos of ecological sensitivity have been a designated "transport ritics of the government program April 8, 1972 by Prim is is not good enough and that s corridor is to conta as to be known about the specific 0-mile highway to t elines on northern ecology and y under construction

possibly an oil-carrying these critics have a well-taken omes to choosing a pr ly when the government goes on ulties will definitely a useful information can be ob- companies involved in t the next year even though an- only 4 are Canadian ght be under consideration" and estments Ltd., Trans-Ca red in "the subsequent years will e, though the pipeline construc- bers of the consortium begun." In other words, there

will be an overlapping of the research and decisions processes; the government will be approving pipeline construction when the results of its own research are incomplete.

In late June the Federal government issued a series of tentative regulations on the construction of northern pipelines. But in its usual academic haze it failed to be specific in defining such terms as "good environment management", "adequate plans" to deal with oil leaks and spills, and "effective plans" for an environmental education program for companies. The closing guidelines insisted the companies become good corporate citizens of the North, and make "a conscious effort to contribute to the social and economic development of the territories."

In March of this year, the Environmental Protection Board issued a report which described Canada's level of ecological research in the MacKenzie Valley as "abysmally low". One scientist has written that "in the true Arctic there is not a species we know enough about and many that we have not studied at all." Furthermore, in 1970 the most extensive monitoring survey of its kind ever undertaken in the Arctic found subsidiary damage from northern oil exploration work to be 10 to 100 times greater than expected.

The root of the environmental problem is the very vulnerable natural environment - the slow growth rate of vegetation and short growing season mean that wounds from heavy equipment and construction will take a long time to heal and may not heal at all. Modern man can easily cause rapid and irreparable devastation.

The worst condition for construction is in "detrimental" permafrost, which exists where soil is suspended in water and becomes solid ground only because the water is frozen. Anything that raises the temperature - the breaking up or removal of the insulating mosses, the penetration of moving water or structures build on top of it - will revert it to mud. When the tundra thaws in the summer the Arctic mosses and plants act as an insulating layer and protect the permafrost below.

Any pipeline faces the problem of leakage. A natural gas line, transporting gas at cool temperatures, does not pose the same threat to permafrost that a hot oil line would. The relatively intense heat of oil as it comes out of the ground (160-180 degrees F), if put through a buried pipeline, could melt the permafrost causing disastrous changes in the tundra. If the proposed MacKenzie oil line is above ground it will interfere with migrating animals, particularly caribou and birds. Their continuous movement is an adaptation to the tundra vegetation and slow growth cycle. The oil companies should be forced to take all possible steps to minimize damage to environment and wildlife, and to ensure continuing research and checks are carried out. The possible loss through environmental changes, if it must be put in economic terms, can be evaluated in terms of tourism, hunting and fishing.

Research into engineering, geophysical and ecological aspects of such a venture have not reached the stage where this project can be encouraged.

Jean Chrétien, Indian Affairs and Northern Development minister, sees the north as "part of the wealth of Canada that has to be used to build up a better society." He also sees the development of oil and gas resources as the solution to many northern problems. He says

it will provide employment for the Yukon and NWT, touted to be the fastest-growing population group in Canada.

Development in the north has changed the lives of the native people in major ways - always for the worse. Most skilled jobs have always gone to white men from the south, and the natives have been left to scramble for the remaining menial tasks. When asked in early July why northern natives at the communities of Arctic Red River and Fort McPherson had not been hired for work on the delta end of the MacKenzie highway, Chrétien replied that "there is some discrepancy between what I have started as (hiring) policy and what is actually happening." Hiring priority has been promised to native peoples, but it is unlikely that the present hiring and training policy will change for their benefit once construction begins on the pipeline.

The permanent employment opportunities after the pipeline is completed is expected to be small. Bud Orange (Liberal MP-NWT), and a pipeline enthusiast, expects only about 400 jobs. There are 20,000 Indians and Eskimos in the NWT. Where does that leave the argument of the oil consortium that the pipeline is going to be a permanent bonanza for the native peoples?

Groups of Indians in the Arctic have already spoken out against Ottawa giving approval for pipeline construction before aboriginal land claims are settled. Successful court action by the Indians could tie up the pipeline for years, costing the government millions of dollars. One such group is the Old Crow band, consisting of about 200 Loucheux Indians, who have been living for centuries on the banks of the Porcupine River about 80 miles north of the Arctic Circle. Their area is one of several routes now under consideration for the Yukon portion of the pipeline system.

All over the Arctic the lives and livelihoods of the native peoples are being drastically changed by white man's economic development and profit motive, as well as Ottawa's colonial domination. The federal government has not been able to stop the destruction of native culture - not has it tried very hard. The 1970 annual report of Panarctic Oils stated: "The inherent survival skills of the Eskimos are no longer a major attribute...In order to become an effective worker, the northern resident must develop a skill required by the job rather than depend on his native expertise for employment." Crude logic rests in that statement: hunting skill will not be of much use in a land already despoiled.

Time and again the federal government has expressed the conviction "that the needs of the people of the north are more important than resource development, and the maintenance of ecological balance is essential." That's a fine conviction and those are reassuring words, but it's action, not words, which count. From its actions it is apparent the government has decided that the welfare of native northerners and the northern environment are to be sacrificed in favour of large-scale economic development for the benefit of southern Canadians and foreign corporations.

Curtail resource exploration and extraction

A group from University of Toronto's Pollution Probe, after examining the evidence and the situation, argues that "man is rushing headlong and thoughtlessly toward the exploitation of the Arctic. Damage inflicted in the name of

Continued on page 13