



*As part of her Silver Jubilee visit to Canada, the Queen opened Parliament with the traditional Speech from the Throne. The speech promised the required legislation to turn the negotiated pipeline arrangement into a working reality. At press time, the legislation is before Parliament.*

square inch. The most the Foothills system was prepared to attempt was 1,260 pounds a square inch.

There were also complex differences in engineering approaches by the two groups to the major problem of coping with frost heave. But what finally tipped the scales for good in favour of the Foothills project were the environmental and socio-economic issues. These were gradually brought to bear on the projects by a demonstration of "participatory democracy" also unique in Canadian experience - and perhaps any other democratic country.

#### **Never before**

Never in Canadian political experience had there been a royal commission quite like the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry headed by Mr. Justice Thomas Berger of the British Columbia Supreme Court. The issues of the environmental impact of a pipeline, of the rights of native peoples in the regions through which it would be built, and of the

effect on the socio-economic climate were neither unknown nor new. The inquiry itself was what was new; no such pervasive examination of the issues had ever been made prior to a development project before.

The Berger Inquiry, as it came to be called, spent 302 days listening to evidence from 1,000 witnesses. It travelled by plane, boat, dogsled and canoe to hold hearings in 35 isolated northern communities and settlements throughout the Mackenzie region. Sometimes the hearings were convened in tiny meeting-halls - and occasionally in open beside a river. Total transcripts of testimony were finally estimated at 14 million words. The inquiry, which lasted for months, cost an estimated \$4.5 million, including \$1.5 million to fund native and other public-interest groups to ensure that they could stand up to the pipeline companies. Considering that it concerned the welfare of, in all, no more than 38,000 of Canada's population of 22 million, and adding to findings all the information gathered by competing applicants along similar lines