

STATEWIDE IN ALASKA

Highlights: Under an agreement between the State and the oil industry some 300 Alaska Residents will be hired and trained for semi-skilled oil industry and pipeline construction jobs. Although all Alaska residents will be eligible for the jobs, it is anticipated that natives from rural areas will fill a large portion of the positions. The agreement calls for the oil industry to provide instructors and equipment at its own expense. The State will provide transportation, subsistence and housing during the three month training period, which will begin next June. Oil and Construction industries will identify the skills required for pipeline construction and other oil development work. In addition, the two industries will estimate the number of jobs to be available and determine when the workers will be needed. Initially the program will train men for such jobs as machinist's helpers and mechanic's helpers.

Thirty Alaska native youths will be given preparatory instruction for apprenticeship examination in the building and construction trades. The training is part of the U.S. Department of Labor's Apprenticeship Outreach Program. Funding will be provided by the U.S. Department of Labor, contracting with the Anchorage Building and Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO. Transportation to Anchorage, meals, and quarters for the youths will be furnished by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The State of Alaska is about to enter into negotiations to acquire the Dead Horse air strip on the North Slope. The acquisition comes as a result of a review of the requirements of the aviation industry. This review demonstrated the need for a public airfield connected to the major road system serving the oil fields. State ownership of the air strip will enable the Federal Aviation Administration to install public navigation and approach aids at the strip. The FAA is not permitted to install navigation aids at private airports. Improvements planned include paving the strip and lengthening it to 7,500 feet. The airport could be extended to 10,500 feet. This would make it capable of handling even the huge Boeing 747's which may eventually be carrying cargo to the North Slope.

In response to a shortage of overnight accommodations in Alaska's capitol city, Alaska Hotel Properties Inc. is building a major hotel in Juneau. The eight story 108 room structure is scheduled for completion in January of 1971. The hotel will include a coffee shop, lounge and dining room. There are also tentative plans for banquet and convention facilities.

The State of Alaska is about to enter into an agreement with the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System for the construction of a permanent road to the North Slope. The road will be built by TAPS to accommodate construction of the northern portion of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. Once the pipeline is completed, the State will take over the road and perform those alterations necessary to make it usable to the public. As part of the agreement with TAPS, the State is reopening a large portion of the winter road to the North Slope this year. With this road open, TAPS can begin installing pipe for the pipeline along the northern portion of the

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route as soon as the go-ahead for construction is received from the Interior Department. A permanent road to the North Slope will open vast areas of Interior Alaska for industrial development and tourism.

Application has been made by the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System to construct at Valdez what would be the largest tanker terminal on the west coast. The application, to the Corps of Engineers, calls for a three-berth terminal that would handle tankers up to 250,000 tons. Some indication of the size of the proposed facility can be gained from the fact that at least 100 feet of water will lie beneath the keel of any tanker docking there.

Canadian Industries Limited (CIL), a Canada based explosive company, recently announced plans for establishment of facilities in Alaska. The company will provide commercial high explosives and blasting accessories as well as technical assistance to contractors involved in the building of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. Continental Explosives Alaska Limited, a subsidiary of CIL will handle sales and distribution of the explosives. Presently the subsidiary company has magazine and storage facilities in Valdez with its main office in Anchorage. As pipeline construction progresses, facilities will be expanded to include various locations along the pipeline route. This will insure prompt delivery and service to customers.

Employment:

Total estimated employment continued to drop seasonally, falling from 104,600 in November to 102,200 during December. Decreases were noted in construction manufacturing, and mining. Over the year employment was up by 6.7 percent with only manufacturing, communications and federal government showing declines.

Mining employment, which has declined steadily since last summer, fell by 100 over the month. Most sources predict a surge in employment sometime during late January or February when oil companies receive their 1970 operating budgets. In addition to lack of funds, disputes over unitization of the Prudhoe Bay oil field and over conservation considerations appear to have been factors in the declining levels of oil industry employment.

Employment in construction continued its seasonal decline, as winter forced many layoffs in the industry. However, relatively high winter levels of construction activity, both in the Anchorage area and on the North Slope, have resulted in the highest December employment in the construction industry since 1952. These unusually high levels of employment are due to relatively mild winter weather and increased demands for virtually all types of construction in Alaska's rapidly expanding economy.

Manufacturing employment rose over the month, but declined over the year. The over the month rise was due to the settlement of the dispute between processors and fishermen over the price of king and Tanner crab. However, because a number of canneries remained closed rather than sign the agreement with the fishermen, employment in seafood processing was below December of 1968.