

MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE INQUIRY

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATIONS BY EACH OF

(a) CANADIAN ARCTIC GAS PIPELINE LIMITED FOR A
RIGHT-OF-WAY THAT MIGHT BE GRANTED ACROSS
CROWN LANDS WITHIN THE YUKON TERRITORY AND
THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, and

(b) FOOTHILLS PIPE LINES LTD. FOR A RIGHT-OF-WAY
THAT MIGHT BE GRANTED ACROSS CROWN LANDS
WITHIN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
FOR THE PURPOSE OF A PROPOSED MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE

and

IN THE MATTER OF THE SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL
AND ECONOMIC IMPACT REGIONALLY OF THE CONSTRUCTION,
OPERATION AND SUBSEQUENT ABANDONMENT OF THE ABOVE
PROPOSED PIPELINE

(Before the Honourable Mr. Justice Berger, Commissioner)

**Kakisa Lake, N.W.T.
July 17, 1976**

PROCEEDINGS AT COMMUNITY HEARING

Volume 69

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1 Kakisa Lake, N.W.T.

2 July 17, 1976

3 (PROCEEDINGS RESUMED PURSUANT TO ADJOURNMENT)

4 (CHIEF A CANADIEN RESUMED AS INTERPRETER)

5 THE COMMISSIONER: Well, I'll
6 call our hearing to order ladies and gentlemen. The
7 job that I am doing is to find out as much as I can
8 about the people who live in the north, about the way
9 they live, about their hopes and their fears so that I
10 can tell the government what in the end is likely to
11 happen if they build a pipeline to bring gas from the
12 arctic to the middle of the continent.

13 There are two companies --
14 Arctic Gas and Foothills Pipe Lines. Each wants to
15 build a pipeline that would go along the Mackenzie
16 Valley and into the big cities and industries in the
17 south where people need natural gas.

18 Now the government has said
19 that if we build a natural gas pipeline through the
20 Mackenzie Valley, then we will be opening up a corridor
21 and that an oil pipeline will be built after that. So
22 what we have to consider is the development of a
23 corridor for gas and oil pipelines along the Mackenzie
24 Valley.

25 Now, the government has asked
26 me to come here to the north to find out from you about
27 your life and about your concerns for yourselves and
28 for the future. I have been travelling through the
29 north for two years now and I think I have learned a
30 lot. I have been listening to people all over the

1 north; Indian people, Metis people, Inuit people and
2 white people. This is one of the last places I'll be
3 visiting before I sit down to write my report and turn
4 it in to Ottawa.

5 I should say that if a pipeline
6 is built, there will be, we are told, thousands of
7 workers needed to build it. We are told that many of
8 those workers will be brought in from the south. We are
9 told that the cost of this pipeline will make it the most
10 expensive project that private enterprise has ever
11 undertaken in the history of the world.

12 You are the people that live
13 here. Some of you in the Mackenzie Valley live close to
14 the route of the pipeline, others farther away. But all
15 will feel the impact if the pipeline is built. To give
16 you an example of what I mean, we are told that they are
17 building a pipeline in Alaska. You've probably heard
18 about the pipeline they are building there. In the last
19 two years, 80,000 people have come to Alaska because
20 they wanted to get work on the pipeline.

21 We are told that there are more
22 people unemployed in Alaska now in the middle of pipeline
23 construction than there were before the pipeline got
24 started. Now, nobody feels that 80,000 people are likely
25 to come into the Northwest Territories if a pipeline is
26 built here. But if a pipeline does go ahead, many
27 thousands are likely to come or want to come. One of the
28 routes by which they would come would of course be the
29 Mackenzie highway which is just eight miles from your
30 village.

1 Agent told then that he's going to move them to
2 Providence nobody wanted to move. They wanted to stay
3 here. You see the houses here, that's the original group
4 of people who had been here before. We're still here.

5 Sometimes living here is
6 pretty hard. At the time that the old chief there
7 didn't want to move, I guess he had thought of the
8 future of these people. So, I guess he had foreseen
9 what was to happen. So they didn't move.

10 Here, they don't want for
11 anything. They don't have to wait for fuel to make
12 fire or anything like that. They didn't have to wail
13 for anything. They never had anything to do with
14 welfare. Their life is hard but they got by having
15 nets in the water, in the bay here and along the shore.
16 This is what they get by on. This is how they live.

17 He said that the time when
18 the Indian agents were trying to move them to
19 Providence they had come here a number of times trying
20 to persuade the old man to change his mind. But he
21 says he doesn't know what his father had thought or
22 why, hut. they never persuaded him to move. He said
23 that they wanted to live by their fishing lake. Before
24 they built these houses along the shore here, they had
25 lived in Tathlina lake, in that area. At that time,
26 they had a huge forest fire I guess and it killed most
27 of the fish in the water.

28 So they moved into this area.
29 They established their little community here and it's
30 what you see today. At the time when they were living

1 THE COMMISSIONER: They don't
2 need it here.

3 A Yes.

4 Q In the village.

5 A No, what they use is
6 just gas lamp and that's good enough for them.

7 Q A gas lamp?

8 A Yes.

9 Q The electricity probably
10 won't be for Kakisa. It probably won't be for
11 Providence. It'll probably be for other larger
12 communities like Hay River and Yellowknife and Smith
13 and around that area. It's going to damage our fishing
14 grounds and that, and we don't need it. It's not a
15 necessary part of our life.

16 He said, you visit all these
17 houses here and you won't find electric lights hanging
18 on the ceiling or anything like that. They use candles
19 and gas lamps. They buy their own gas for the gas
20 lamps and they don't need it. Nobody's going to come
21 around and dictate to them how they should live and
22 stuff like that.

23 He said that if we had been
24 living in town, had all the modern facilities like
25 everybody else has, we wouldn't be sitting in a dim
26 little room like this. You'll have a lot of light to
27 write your notes and that.

28 They built this place for the
29 Indian agent. He had his office in the back here. If
30 we had been some place else with all the modern

1 skins to the height of the gun, even before you
2 received it. There was all kinds of pelts: beaver,
3 fox, marten; everything, all piled up. He says he has
4 seen this happen. He's seen two people buy guns like
5 that, trapping all winter long. They just piled their,
6 all their cache for the whole winter and got the gun.

7 This is how they lived. This
8 is how the gun was introduced among the people here.
9 He said this is the kind of life that we live and it
10 has been a hard life. The way we lived a long time ago
11 there was nobody around to dictate to us how we should
12 live and what we should do. Among us, we had a leader.
13 The leader was usually the man who knew most
14 everything, hunting and all that.

15 Aside from him, there was the
16 medicine man. He was usually the one who knew how long
17 he was going to be among the people. Then somebody
18 else, after he was gone, someone else took his place.
19 These were the only two people who were sort of leaders
20 within the Indian group of people who lived. Then
21 little by little, the white man came without telling
22 the people why they were here and why they came.

23 Slowly the change came and then
24 all of a sudden there was an entirely new different,
25 everything was different. Not knowing about and not
26 being prepared for it, you know, everybody was sort of in
27 the air like, you know. This is the way that it still is
28 he says, not understanding what happened. This is sort
29 of a culture of shock I guess you might say.

30 He said at the time nobody

1 He said sometimes when he was young and nobody knew
2 anything about a dollar and sometimes someone would
3 find a dollar or someone from the Bay and not knowing
4 that, you know, what, you know, how much it was or what
5 it was worth, they used to give it to the local priest
6 who told them that one dollar was worth four skins.
7 They used that to buy, you know, because the priest had
8 a whole bunch of supplies and that, you know, they
9 bought a little stuff with that.

10 Four skins were worth maybe
11 four quarters or whatever. But he said that it may have
12 been funny for us young guys sitting here and laughing at
13 that but for them at the time not knowing what it was,
14 you know, used to go the priest because he used to give
15 them four skins. It was lots I guess you know, for one
16 thing you can get four. It's was lots to them.

17 THE WITNESS: You give the
18 priest a dollar and then he give you four skins worth.
19 So, when you find a dollar, you get a dollar from the
20 Hudson's Bay, well you give it to the priest. So he
21 give you four skins. He doesn't know what's four skins
22 means. But everybody even if they find a dollar, well
23 they go to the priest. This is four skins and you get
24 back -- I don't know. Maybe four quarters, maybe, I
25 don't know -- maybe four dollars.

26 THE INTERPRETER:

27 He remembers the time that it
28 must have been a little over forty years ago that when
29 they used to live at Tathlina that they first seen the
30 money or the cash that like we know of today. They

1 Q Yes.

2 A But they took samples
3 from, you know, along the shore but everything.

4 Q Yes.

5 A Finally it got to a
6 point where the fish were all in the nets and that,
7 rotten and all that. So they came over here and had a
8 talk with them and told them to leave. They left.

9 They told them to take their
10 nets out and that and so they did and then they left.

11 Another example of this was
12 that a few years ago they had all these guys here were
13 doing some commercial fishing down at the end of the
14 lake for pickerel and that. When they came back one
15 day they came back to bring their catch back in here.
16 When they came in there was a whole bunch of people
17 here young people and that. So he was over at this
18 house and he saw them so he came over here to ask them
19 what they were doing. He found out that these people
20 were from the correctional institute in Hay River.

21 These people said that they
22 were going to build some cabins down along the lake
23 there some place. So, he told them that they shouldn't
24 just come in here, barge into here without talking to
25 the people and telling them what they want and that
26 this area is none of their business and they shouldn't
27 bother it. It's for the people here. So these guys
28 left and they took all their supplies and canoes and
29 everything and went back and left. Since that time,
30 there is nobody that has been bothering them at all.

1 A -- the government --
2 Territorial Government employment. He's an economic
3 development officer?

4 Q Yes.

5 A He approached Fisheries
6 but Fisheries couldn't do anything because there's no
7 law or any set rules or regulations that prohibits
8 anybody from, you know, fishing.

9 So these guys came in with
10 their nets and they used three inch mesh while the
11 acceptable measurement for any mesh here in this lake
12 is four and a half. So these guys brought in about 30
13 nets and these guys just started. In no time at all,
14 their limit was -- they caught their limit.

15 Then these guys came and left
16 and they left all their nets down there at the end of
17 road there down by the bank. The fishing inspector
18 came and, you know, confiscated about 16 nets all three
19 inch mesh. Part of the blame went on them and left
20 them a bad name with the fisheries people. So here
21 they are with, you know, they could have done all their
22 fishing throughout the summer but their limit was gone
23 in no time at all. So they're just sitting here and
24 wonder at so much an hour they're sitting here for.

25 There's no work at all here
26 and they learned to pray when they were in school.
27 That's all they do there and I get paid for it all.

28 Q Praying comes in handy.

29 THE WITNESS: We expect the
30 pipeline any time. We get a free gas for it.

1 THE COMMISSIONER: Yes, please
2 do.

3 (WITNESS ASIDE)

4 JIM THOM, resumed:

5 THE WITNESS: What I was just
6 saying here was that there was two person that was on
7 that land use research in Kakisa here, One of them was
8 Betty Menicoche and Rufus Moses who did the interview
9 with the people here. There was twelve of them, twelve
10 able men that did all their trapping during the -- that
11 were between the ages of 30 to about 40 I guess, 45.
12 There are just only about ten of them now -- ten able
13 person that are doing all their trapping year round.

14 I was just explaining to
15 them that what you see on this map is just where they
16 did all their trapping during the winter and the
17 spring.

18 THE COMMISSIONER: Yes.

19 A Trapping seasons. I
20 said like most of them did all their trapping way up
21 towards Trout Lake but later years, I guess they've
22 just been up to this area. There main concern was just
23 right up to where the Kakisa River flows. They've been
24 going through all this. This area here is a real good
25 beaver country and that where they're, -- you notice
26 that they're --

27 Q To the west of Tathlina
28 Lake.

29 A Yes. That's where
30 they're doing all their -- that's where they do all

1 MR. ELLWOOD: The route comes
2 just past Fort Simpson here, running down through here
3 and out like that.

4 A But also Henry said all
5 along these two lakes this a real good beaver country
6 there.

7 MR. ELLWOOD: There is another
8 pipeline, the lateral pipeline to serve the communities
9 here, from about here the pipeline goes across to Fort
10 Providence and then along the lake and along the
11 highway.

12 THE COMMISSIONER: Maybe I
13 should explain that Mr. Ellwood's company wants to
14 build a pipeline that will go over to Providence, Pine
15 Point, Hay River, Yellowknife and Rae so they have to
16 take a pipeline from the main line across to Providence
17 and then along the river. That's one of the reasons
18 why we are here because that pipeline they want to
19 build according to the way Mr. Ellwood just described,
20 it seems to go through an area that you are concerned
21 about.

22 Excuse me, do you want to
23 trace the course of that lateral again just as best you
24 can.

25 MR. ELLWOOD: It would run
26 from a point about in here towards Providence and
27 then goes along highway there and goes here across
28 the highway but still on this side of Birch Lake so
29 it goes up here and about somewheres just to the
30 north of the west end of the lake here to up to

1 | about Trainor Lake.

2 | THE COMMISSIONER: You'd
3 | better tell me if a consensus has been reached here.

4 | (WITNESS ASIDE)

5 | I. THOM sworn;

6 | THE WITNESS: No I am saying
7 | what Foothills saying that it was just a proposed route
8 | that they were having and then showing them the map.

9 | THE COMMISSIONER: Yes.

10 | A Showing on the map where
11 | they are proposing to have the pipeline. They are said
12 | what they "concerned with is that if they were in the
13 | area surrounded by the pipeline then they would be
14 | concerned. But they said that's only just they don't
15 | want no pipeline till there's a land claims settlement.
16 | until it's finished after a settlement is settled.

17 | Like it seems just to show where
18 | the pipeline is it looks easy but he said -- what they
19 | are really want to say is that they don't want to, you
20 | know,
21 | no pipeline until this land settlement is settled.

22 | THE COMMISSIONER: I'm sorry
23 | Chief, I missed that.

24 | CHIEF CANADIEN: I said they
25 | re not talking about it until they've settled their
26 | land claim then they can do what they want.

27 | THE COMMISSIONER: O.K., I
28 | mean O.K., I understand.

29 | WITNESS SIMBA: You should
30 | talk Slavey to us.

1 | have anything to add, you can get in touch with me
2 | through Chief Canadien or through Mr. Jackson whom you
3 | know. You should feel that you have every right to let
4 | me know if there is anything you wish to say that you
5 | forgot to say today. So thank you again, maybe you
6 | could translate that.

7 | (INTERPRETER INTERPRETS ABOVE)

8 | (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED TO AUGUST 9TH, 1976)

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