

*Yukon*  
*Area File 105*

*E.C.*

# Buchanan takes new look at our Northern policies

By Philip Koring

**WHITEHORSE** — A review of the federal government's objectives in the North has been announced by Minister of Indian & Northern Affairs Judd Buchanan at the fifth Northern Resources Conference.

In addition to reviewing present government policies in the North, Buchanan told delegates to the conference that increased efforts must be made by business and industry to provide employment opportunities for native people.

At a press conference following his speech, Buchanan said he was disappointed in the small number of Indian people working at the Cyprus-Anvil mine near Faro. This is in the central Yukon and is responsible for nearly two thirds of mining revenue in the Territory and has an agreement with the federal government in which a target figure of 25% has been set as the percentage of native people to be employed at the mine.

Buchanan had lunch with about 100 four year employees at the mine and some of them were natives. He said he would speak tomorrow to mine management at Faro with a view to increasing the percentage of native people working at the mine.

The 300 delegates representing business, industry, and government met for three days to hear a number of speakers give presentations about mineral developments, transportation, tourism, energy, agriculture, and Indian land claims.

R. H. Salter, executive vice-president of Comco, told the conference that a number of factors precluded the construction of a smelter in the Yukon. Salter's statements came a week after Cyprus-Anvil announced the results of a smelter feasibility study in co-operation with the federal government.

The study showed that the construction of a smelter was not economically viable in the Yukon at the moment and would not be, even if zinc and lead prices rose substantially. Salter told the conference that the lack of an existing infrastructure in the Yukon and the great distances to markets were the primary reasons.

Although the recently completed feasibility study of railways in the Yukon, prepared by the consulting arms of Canadian National and CP Rail was not made public in time for the conference, the various possible railway alternatives for the territory were outlined by H. M. Romoff, assistant vice-president of corporate development for CP Rail.

Romoff suggested that the most likely development would be an extension of the existing narrow-gauge Whitepass & Yukon Railway from Whitehorse to the major or producing regions in the central Yukon. Whitepass marketing manager John Gilles said the company was looking at the extension of the railway, but would probably require federal financing to cover the large capital outlay unless a substantial increase in the number of operating mines in the area took place.

Whitepass now carries about one million tons annually on its 110-mile link between Whitehorse and Tide Water at Skagway. Romoff also told the conference that the British Columbia railway, which is presently under construction to Dease Lake, just south of the Yukon-B.C. border, would probably be extended eventually to Watson Lake, the largest town in the southeastern Yukon.

The transportation of ore and other resource commodities by aircraft was presented to the conference by Roy Phillips, of Boeing Aircraft Corp. Mr. Phillips

told the conference that, in addition to the work Boeing was carrying out on advanced designs for freighter aircraft for the transportation of Arctic oil and

gas, the company had prepared a cost analysis for a fleet of two modified 747 freighters for the transportation of heavy ores.

The study assumed a 400-mile flight from a mine to the transfer point, either at Skagway or at Whitehorse. Using present capital-cost figures for both the aircraft and ground facilities, a per-ton cost of between \$35 and \$40 was reached, with a 50% backhaul assumption.



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