

autumn of 1977. Actual construction should end by September 1977. The number of people required to operate the line on completion will be between 600 and 700 but only 50 of these will be stationed in Fairbanks. The population of Fairbanks city in 1973 was estimated at near 18,000; the mid 1976 estimate is 36,000 people.

The Establishment of the Impact Information Center

Even before construction began, a few people in Fairbanks were concerned about possible social impacts of such an enormous project. In particular, the Social Concerns Committee of the Fairbanks Council of Churches, while discussing impact on churches realised that the implications were much wider and called in other people in the community. At this stage, discussion of impact had been concerned almost solely with "environmental impact" (i.e. physical and ecological) and "economic impact" (i.e. increased income to the region).

This small group of concerned citizens organised a one-day Community Forum described by one of the organisers as being "like an old-time town meeting" which met on 23 February 1974. For most of the participants, this meeting was an information exercise, for few people had much idea what was in store for them. There were strong feelings of apprehension about "the massive army moving in on us". Others have likened the arrival of Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. and the whole construction organisation to "a military invasion of a colonial province". (It did not help perhaps that the Alyeska headquarters and a construction camp were set up at Fort Wainwright, just outside Fairbanks city in military quarters no longer required by the Defence Department). Various issues were discussed at this first Forum such as crime, the provision of social services, the role of the churches etc. as well as economic impacts. The chief outcome of the meeting was a strong feeling that the people of Fairbanks needed to know what was going on. Some sort of information center was needed to look at the effects of pipeline construction on the lives of people in the community.

The Social Concerns Committee along with other interested individuals organised support for an Impact Information Center as part of the local government services at Fairbanks North Star Borough. The presiding officer of the Borough Assembly envisioned a centre whose purpose was