

Highway People Roused By Fuel Dumping In Bush

Forestry, game and private persons have expressed concern about the dumping of jet fuel from the Haines to Fairbanks and Canol pipelines at many points along their course through the Yukon. Reports of amount allowed to drain off into creeks, sloughs, ponds and forest have ranged as high as one million gallons.

The jet fuel is chiefly kerosene with a small percentage of anti-corrosive in it.

Trouble started when the pipeline, which had been tested at about freeze-up time with sea water, froze at low points along its route. First attempt to clear up the trouble, it is reported, was made by crews lighting fires under spots affected. Falling this, Wil-

liams Brothers, pipeline contractors, were asked to bring in crews. They set to work with flame-throwers and cut the line in, it is said, 27 places in the territory. During this operation, which was carried on throughout the winter, the fuel was pumped out of the lines and onto the ground.

Further complication was added when some private citizens put the abandoned fuel to their own use. Customs problems and question of ownership cropped up on this score. At many points the fuel soaked into the ground and became as a giant wick, waiting ignition.

Sportsmen along the highway have been "more than irritated" to find some of their favourite spots contaminated by dumping of jet fuel from the Haines-to-Fairbanks Pipeline and the Canol Line.

At three places in particular: Mile 1042.9, Mile 1046.1 and Mile 1051 — thousands of gallons of fuel were left lying on the ice beside the road during the clearing of ice from the frozen line this spring, they report. When the run-off started, the fuel spread to nearby creeks and lakes.

At Mile 1042.9 the fuel spread over a slough containing many muskrat houses. Effect on them has yet to be determined. At Mile 1046.1 the oil runs into Lake Creek and thence into Edith Creek, one of the good grayling spots on the highway. At Mile 1051 it has drained into a small stream which in turn empties in the Koidern River.

Several dead and dying ducks that landed in the oily sloughs and streams have been found by game officials. At Swede Johnson Creek, another "best" fishing spot on the highway, fuel oil is still seeping into the creek. The effect on fishing there has not yet been determined either.

United States army authorities are doing all they can to clear up the mess now but the damage may have been done already, residents say. At one point workers pumped more than 20,000 gallons of fuel and water from a pool beside the road. Later this was burned. The highly explosive forest fire hazard in these areas is being closely watched by forestry officials.

Observers regret the natural resources and wildlife of the Yukon should have been endangered by what appeared to many to have been indiscriminate dumping of fuel oil near creeks and sloughs containing fish and animals. The United States government organization easily might be criticized for abusing the privilege of running pipeline through this country, highway people said. They will press for a closer watch on the pipeline operation in future, in order to protect fish, wildlife and forests.

When the pipeline froze last winter, crews worked for many weeks trying to thaw out the line. When this failed the line was cut and pumps put into operation to force out the ice. The crews moved from section to section carrying out this job. In doing so many gallons of fuel were pumped out of the line onto the surrounding ground.

Some of this was absorbed into the muskeg but many gallons were not and remained an extremely serious fire hazard. When more or

less on the spot burning was tried as a means of disposal, the fire burned for so many days the plan was abandoned. Last week a scheme of pumping out the areas concerned into tankers to be trucked away and burned in a gravel pit was completed.

Highway residents suggested this scheme should have been tried at the onset although winter conditions made any disposal method difficult.

Still Want Brief

Additional copies of the Board of Trade's brief presented by city lawyer Harold Hine to the royal commission examining Canada's economic future will be prepared because the brief's popularity with interested firms, educational institutions and private persons outside has exhausted the local supply. Decision to make more was okayed at last week's board of trade meeting.



Admiral Sergei Georgevich Gorshkov, who is the new commander-in-chief of the Soviet Navy, succeeding Admiral Nikolai G. Kuznetsov. Gorshkov formerly commanded Russia's Black Sea fleet.

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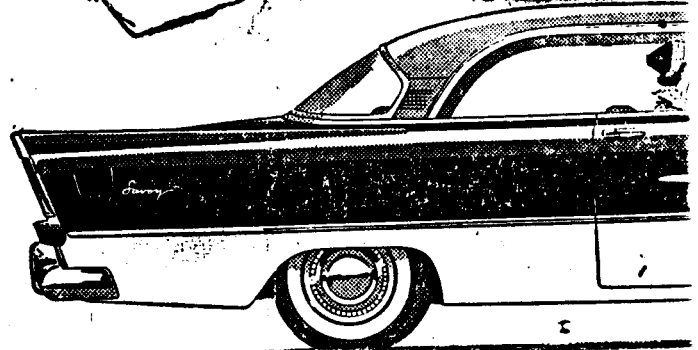
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