

# Pipeline over impact

BY VANESSA DE JONG, EDMONTON JOURNAL DECEMBER 20, 2010

Re: "Mackenzie pipeline gets green light; \$16.2B project touts prosperity for Canada's North," The Journal, Dec. 17.

As wonderful as the Mackenzie pipeline was made out to be, the article failed to mention the reason the pipeline idea was shelved in the first place.

The Berger inquiry was a report released in 1977 by the Hon. Justice Thomas Berger. The Berger inquiry found that the Northern Yukon was too susceptible to environmental harm and no pipeline should be built in the area. He also reported that the pipeline would have little benefit to those living in Canada's North.

Projects based on non-renewable resources often offer little long-term employment to locals and the employment that is available is often low and unskilled work that conflicts with traditional hunting and trapping subsistence.

After this scathing report was released, the project was halted for over 30 years, pending environmental approval.

Now, under the Harper government, it has essentially been given the go-ahead.

The Berger inquiry was perhaps the high point in an environmental impact assessment process which has since become little more than a bad joke.

It is an absolute shame these findings have finally been cast aside in favour of big development.

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