

RESIDENTS WORRIED

PINE POINT
MINE CLOSURE
LOOMING

PINE POINT, N.W.T. (CP) — Eight years after ending a long search for a steady job and about to start a family, Dab Dube is preparing to pack his belongings and move again.

Cominco Co., which built the remote town of Pine Point to serve employees of a zinc mine it opened 24 years ago, plans to shut down the operation by mid-1987.

The town, built on a bed of muskeg near the southern shores of Great Slave Lake 800 kilometres north of Edmonton, won't be far behind.

The town's 1,500 or so inhabitants, most accustomed to the boom and bust gamble of all one-industry towns, will be on the road again, their businesses lost and welfare threatened.

"I don't know what I'll do or where I'll go if the mine shuts down," Dube, a native of Spiritwood, Sask., said in a telephone interview.

"I've been trying to stay stationary," he said. "It's a good place for kids to grow up, a quiet, small town. The money's good."

Metal prices continue to flounder while production costs increase. Companies are having difficulty selling ore they've already mined and processed.

Dube, like many others in Pine Point, has moved from town to town in search of employment. He worked on oil rigs in Alberta and on other jobs in Saskatchewan before finding work in Pine Point.

"There's a strong likelihood the mine will close, I can't see it continuing," said Mike Mandry, the mine's general manager. He has told 400 union workers and 130 other employees they likely be out of work by the middle of next year.

There is full employment at the mine now, but if world market conditions have not improved considerably by then, Pine Point will be shut down, Mandry said.

"I'm not hopeful for prices in 1986, but things could change in 1987," he said, adding the decision to close down the mine could be changed.

"Eighteen months ago we planned to continue mining Pine Point into the 1990s," he said.

Prices for zinc 18 months ago hovered around 60 cents a pound. They now are running as low as 45 cents a pound.

George Foley, president of Local 804 of the United Steelworkers of America, said Cominco was taking exorbitant profits from the mine when times were good.

"Now they've had to tighten up," he said. "They could keep the mine going — there's one hell of a pile of ore reserves — but it doesn't look like they will."

The owner of a grocery store doesn't take the shutdown threat seriously.

"They've made these announcements before," said the 22-year-old man, who did not want to be identified. Still, he said, he worries about the persistent talk.

"If it shuts down, we pack up and move to another small town. What else can we do?" said the man, who lives with his expectant wife in their own home rather than renting from Cominco, which owns most buildings and property in the town.

The man, originally from Kamloops, B.C., said he would lose thousands of dollars if he had to give up his business and home to move.

But that, Mandry said, is part and parcel of working in one-industry towns.

"The town was built by the mine," he said. "Now no one should really be surprised that the mine is shutting down."

Turner favors
federal district
proposal

OTTAWA (CP) — Liberal Leader John Turner says a proposal to turn the Ottawa-Hull area of Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec into a district separate from the two provinces is "worth exploring."

"There are all sorts of precedents we can look at," Turner told reporters, mentioning a proposal from Liberal MP Gaston Isabella to separate the area into a distinct jurisdiction.

Andrew Haydon, chairman of the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Council, has proposed that the area — with the assent of Quebec and Ottawa — be turned into the country's 11th province.

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NEWCASTLE, England (Reuter) — A drug to save AIDS victims is still years away and would not be a cure but a life-long course of treatment, a U.S. expert says.

Dr. Paul Volberding, director of the AIDS clinic of San Francisco General Hospital, told Reuters news agency at Britain's first major AIDS conference Wednesday night it would take a long time to perfect an antiviral drug which

had no serious side-effects.

About 25,000 cases of acquired immune deficiency syndrome have been reported worldwide since it was first identified in the United States five years ago.

British experts told the government-sponsored conference the disease has mainly spread among young homosexual men, hemophiliacs and drug addicts.

But they said the threat remains

Cure
for AIDS
'years away'

of a general outbreak of the disease, which seriously damages the body's immune system and lays it open to cancer and other infections.

Last month, two U.S. doctors said they estimated between 100,000 and one million Americans might develop AIDS-related brain disorders in the next 15 years.

Volberding, said: "Our first success will come when we develop an antiviral drug. It will be several years at least before anything effective is found."

Beyond a certain stage of AIDS, he said, some of the body's de-

fences were probably damaged beyond repair. "No drug will cure the infection, so it will be a lifelong treatment," he said.

Sufferers would be given regular doses of a drug to prevent the AIDS virus from multiplying, he said, but the virus would remain in the body.

Volberding said science has not had a great success rate with antiviral drugs.

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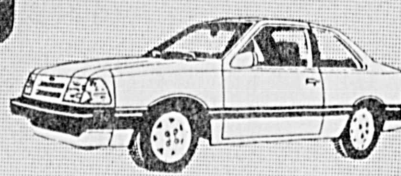
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