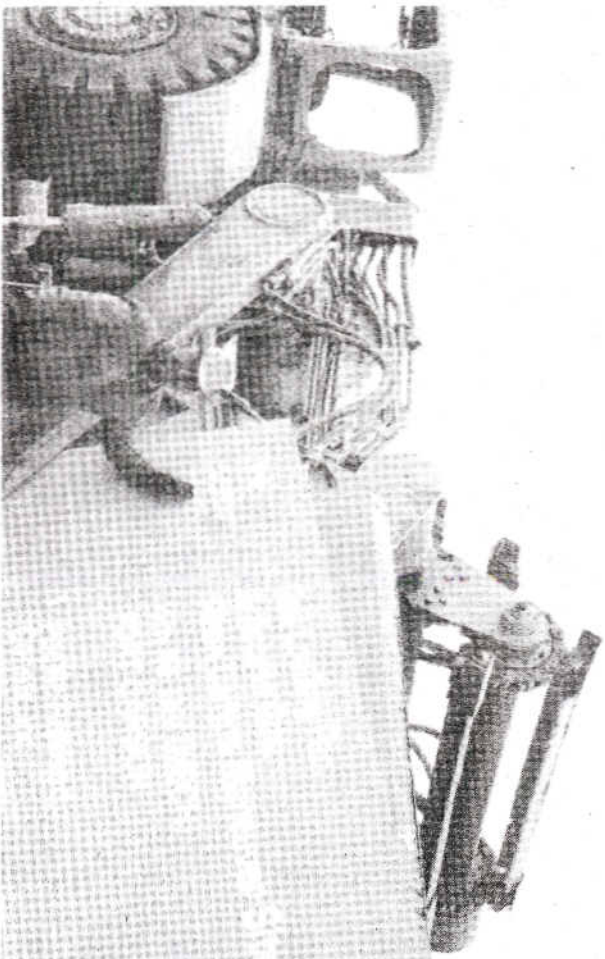




IT WAS the last day of summer, Sept. 20, 1983, but the temperature was in the middle-forties and there was a wind that cut like a knife. These things didn't detract from the symbolic ground-breaking ceremony at the U.S. Army's Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site. Pictured at the September ceremony are (left to right): Gene Lujan, chairman of the Las Animas County board of county commissioners; Major General T. G. Jones, commanding general of Fort Carson and the 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized); and Col. William Andrews, commander of the Omaha Division, Army Corps of Engineers.



CITY MANAGER Carmie Sarlio was described as resembling a "dehydrated Matt Dillon" when he posed beside a giant piece of earth moving equipment during ground-breaking ceremonies at the Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site last September. Since then, the equipment, owned by Pacific Railroad Construction, Inc., has been busy on phase one of the development, a \$3.5 million project to provide a rail loading facility and access roads in the cantonment area at the site.

Army Starts Pinon Canyon Construction

The Army's Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site (PCMS) isn't like the weather. It isn't something everyone talks about but nobody does anything about, mosireebob.

The Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, completed the acquisition process on the 245,000 acre site just last September...at a cost of approximately \$26 million...and already is well into the first major construction project at the site.

Currently under construction is a rail loading facility and access roads, a \$3.2 million dollar project. The rail loading facility will provide rail spurs into the cantonment area, will be the point where military supplies, including vehicles, from Ft. Carson will be received. The access roads are simply streets within the cantonment area.

The timetable for projects in 1984 calls for range road improvements (\$7.3 million) and construction of boundary fence completely enclosing the parcel (\$900,000). Contracts on the fencing project are expected to be let as early as March. Contracts to provide utility services as well as contracts to provide maintenance of existing structures and facilities will also be let in 1984.

Even with an apparent all-systems-go situation at the site, Ft. Carson officials are expressing concern shortly after the start of the new year because of rumors that the Department of Defense is considering postponing or even deleting certain parts of Pinon Canyon development.

They have urged La Junta and Trinidad residents to ask for support from Colorado's senators and congressmen to see that the project is completed in its entirety and on schedule.

Unofficially, high-ranking Army officers are predicting the Pinon Canyon Maneuver site will, in the next 15 to 20 years, become a "major military installation" with as many as 10,000 troops stationed there permanently.