



MEMORANDUM

NOTE DE SERVICE

850-5-X751
800-5-6

TO: Director General
Program Management
Medical Services Branch

FROM: Regional Director
Northwest Territories Region

ACTION	PA AC	DATE
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INFORMATION		

SECURITY-CLASSIFICATION - DE SÉCURITÉ
OUR FILE - N/RÉFÉRENCE 151-1-5-N (N1)
YOUR FILE - V/RÉFÉRENCE
DATE April 26 1976

SUBJECT
OBJET

RELATIONS WITH MEDIA

I am advised that the CBC Yellowknife contacted Mr. Grainge on April 21st to ask a number of questions about arsenic in the environment which fall under the following headings:

1. People are worried about planting their gardens. Is there any danger in eating vegetables grown in or around Yellowknife.

Reply: Vegetables should be washed before being eaten and there is no danger in eating them.

2. Is the water supply safe?

Reply: The water supply has been made safe by the the construction of the pipeline several years ago.

3. There seems to be an idea that arsenic concentrates in the snow. In former years before care was taken to reduce the amount of arsenic admitted in the air, there was a practice of melting snow for drinking water and more and more snow was piled into the same pot so that there was a tendency for the arsenic to be concentrated. Now there is a considerable reduction of the arsenic admitted into the air and therefore falling on the snow.

4. Could water supplies become toxic?

Reply: There has never been any suggestion at any time that the water supplies were toxic. The question that had been raised was small concentrations of arsenic might lead to carcinogenesis and that the literature on this subject appeared to be contradictory.

F. J. Covill, M.B., B. S., M.F.C.M., D.P.H.
Regional Director

29 Apr 76
Noted / is.
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