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Northern Medical Research Unit,
Medical Services,
N.W.T. Region,
c/o Charles Camsell Hospital,
12815 - 115 Avenue,
Edmonton, Alberta.
T5M 3A4

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PA 201/77

ACTION	PA	DATE	BF	DATE
	AC		AR	
INFORMATION				

January 5, 1976.

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Your file / Votre référence

Our file / Notre référence

Mr. Ken Nelson,
ASARCO Incorporated,
120 Broadway,
New York City, New York 10005
U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Nelson:

I checked immediately after our telephone conversation with my Regional Headquarters concerning your request to obtain a copy of the Intradepartmental Report on our screening and clinical follow-up examinations of presumably arsenic-exposed Mine and Mill workers employed by the Giant and Consolidated Gold Mines in Yellowknife, N.W.T. I was advised that Intradepartmental Reports can only be released by our Headquarters in Ottawa.

I presume that there is no objection to repeat here the gist of the summary as this was already released by the Minister to the Press in September, 1975 and may have been quoted to you in full or in parts

We concluded that:

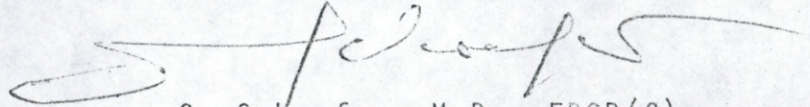
- ✓ (1) There was no evidence for excessive arsenic exposure to the citizens at large in Yellowknife.
- (2) Some long-term employees engaged in the Mill process, in particular those working as roasters, bag house cleaners and to a lesser degree chemical analysts
- ✓ demonstrated significantly elevated hair levels and marginally increased 24 hour urinary excretion of arsenic.
- (3) Clinical evidence of true systemic arsenic toxicity was not found, but local skin reactions related to contact with arsenic laden dust were frequently reported by this group of Mill employees.
- ✓ (4) The degree of systemic arsenic exposure as reflected in urinary excretion rates, even in this group of Mill employees, compares favourably with those reported in the literature. Indeed, the mean urinary excretion levels of arsenic in these 56 persons identified by previous hair analysis as the probably most exposed persons in Yellowknife, and consisting mainly of Mill employees was with 49.8 microgram per L. and 73.1 micrograms per 24 hr. less than 10% of the mean excretion reported for a large series of exposed Smelter workers (Pinto, et al.), and in the range of

his "unexposed" controls, reaching in no case even nearly to levels regarded by Elkins and other authorities in this field as "bio-significant".

This is all the useful information I am free to give you at this moment as this has been released to the public previously. I doubt that you really need more than this. Should you, however, desire to read the full report, I have to refer you to Dr. Lyall Black, Director General Program Management, Medical Services Branch, Health & Welfare Canada, 255 Argyle Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0L3, who has the full report and may decide about release of all or parts of it to you after naturally deleting all personal identification of examined persons.

I would appreciate to receive copies of reviews and other information you may have collected in this field.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'O. Schaefer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

O. Schaefer, M.D., FRCP(C)

OS/ms

cc: Regional Director.

✓ Dr. Lyall M. Black, Dir. Gen., Program Management.

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