

23 January, 1950.

W.G. Jewitt, Esq.,
Manager of Mines,
The Consolidated Mining and
Smelting Company of Canada Limited,
Trail, B.C.

Dear Mr. Jewitt,

I have your letter of the 9th instant in reply to my letter of the 4th instant about the collection and disposal of arsenic from the roasting operations at the Con Mine, Yellowknife, N.W.T. You mentioned that a statement of the measures being taken by your company to meet this situation is being prepared and will be forwarded shortly.

Mr. A.K. Muir and Dr. Hubler of the Giant Yellowknife Gold Mines were in Ottawa recently and I arranged for a meeting to be held on the 18th instant at which these officers met Dr. Charron and Dr. Kay of the Department of National Health and Welfare, Dr. Atkinson of the Department of Agriculture, Dr. Katz of the Defence Research Board, and Messrs. Parson and Trail of our Bureau of Mines, for the purpose of discussing this important arsenic problem. I might say that officers of the Department of National Health and Welfare, after the visit of Dr. Kay to Yellowknife in December, recommended that the roasting process at the Con and Giant mines be stopped forthwith as they consider there is a serious hazard in the Yellowknife area caused by pollution by arsenic. At the meeting held in my office, the representatives of the Department of National Health and Welfare were asked whether they would modify the recommendation that the roasting operations at the Giant mine should be closed down because, as explained by Mr. Muir, this would mean a closing down of the mine. They were advised that Mr. Muir had agreed to the purchase and installation of the Cottrell equipment for collection of arsenic in a dry form at the Giant mine. However, regardless of the assurance which we received from Mr. Muir that steps will be taken to collect and dispose of arsenic from the roasting operations in a satisfactory manner, Dr. Charron did not care to change the recommendation.

This statement of policy made by the Department of National Health and Welfare was reported to members of the Northwest Territories Council and it was decided that inasmuch as Dr. Stanton, Medical Health officer for the area, is also Chairman of the Local Trustee Board, the Council would not order the Giant mine to cease its roasting operations provided Mr. Muir assures the administration immediately that the order for the Cottrell equipment has been placed and also that the advice which we have

able to obtain from the Deputy Minister of Health is placed in the hands of Dr. Stanton immediately with the request that these requirements be observed strictly. We are also requesting the Deputy Minister of Health for further advice which will be forwarded to Dr. Stanton and a continuing survey will be arranged by Dr. Charron and Dr. Stanton.

Mr. Muir has now advised me that his company has placed an order for the necessary equipment which will result in the collection of dry arsenic at the mine. Delivery of this equipment is expected in August, 1950, and installation will be made immediately after it has arrived.

The impinger method now used at the Con mine is not considered to be satisfactory as the arsenic is spread in liquid form to various lakes in the vicinity of the tailings dump.

Council, acting on the recommendations of the Department of National Health and Welfare, considers that your company should install the proper equipment for collecting the arsenic in a dry form so that it may be disposed of under supervision in a manner to be decided after our Chief Mining Inspector has explored the area adjacent to Yellowknife in search of a suitable sandy area for the disposal of this poisonous matter in a safe manner.

The action taken in the case of the Giant mine means that changes will be necessary at the Con mine so that the collection and disposal of arsenic will be made so as to meet the recommendations of the Department of National Health and Welfare which were approved by the Northwest Territories Council. This means that we should have an immediate discussion with officers of your company so that our plans may be made to assure that a satisfactory solution of the arsenic problem at the Con mine will be made within a reasonable time.

sgd. R.A. Gibson
Deputy Commissioner.