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IBNWT YK

P.A
034-45556
850-5-12
Telex sent out
Jan. 27 '77

JANUARY 27, 1977

MR GEORGES ERASMUS
PRESIDENT OF THE INDIAN BROTHERHOOD
YUKON, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

SUBJECT: ARSENIC IN YELLOWKNIFE

THIS IS FURTHER TO YOUR TELEX OF JANUARY 26, 1977 REQUESTING THAT THE INDIAN BROTHERHOOD OF THE NWT APPOINT AT LEAST ONE MEMBER TO THE INDEPENDENT TASK FORCE WHICH IS TO BE SET UP TO LOOK INTO THE DATA RELEVANT TO ARSENIC IN YELLOWKNIFE.

I DANNXXXX T COMPLY WITH YOUR REQUEST BECAUSE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS NOT APPOINTING THE TASK FORCE. YOU WILL RECALL THAT IN THE SAME PRESS RELEASE TO WHICH YOU ALLUDED IN THE OPENING PARAGRAPH OF YOUR TELEX, I STATED THAT : THE TASK FORCE MEMBERS WILL BE CHOSEN FOR THEIR IMPARTIALITY AND EXPERTISE, WILL NOT BE MEMBERS OF THE FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE, AND WILL BE GIVEN A COMPLETELY FREE HAND IN THEIR ENDEAVOURS.

I WISH TO EMPHASIZE TO YOU THAT IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT A TRULY IMPARTIAL REVIEW IS PERFORMED, I HAVE ASKED THE CANADIAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION, AN INDEPENDENT NON-GOVERNMENTAL PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION, TO CHOOSE THREE INDEPENDENT EXPERTS AND TO OVERSEE THE CONDUCT OF A REVIEW OF ALL THE AVAILABLE DATA AND MATERIAL. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE NO HAND WHATSOEVER IN THE SELECTION OF THE THREE EXPERTS FOR IN SUPERVISION OF THE STUDY.

I AM SURE THAT THE TOTAL INDEPENDENCE OF THIS GROUP OF EXPERTS WILL BE EVIDENT TO ALL REASONABLE PEOPLE AND THAT THEY WILL THEREFORE BE ACCEPTABLE TO CONCERNED GROUPS SUCH AS YOUR ASSOCIATION, THE NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD AND THE UNION REPRESENTING THE WORKERS OF THE GIANT YELLOWKNIFE MINES, AS WELL AS TO THE PEOPLE OF YELLOWKNIFE THEMSELVES WHO ARE, I AM SURE, AS DETERMINED AS I AM TO HAVE ALL OF THESE SCIENTIFIC DATA AS CLEARLY INTERPRETED AS CAN BE BY THE INDEPENDENT EXPERTS SELECTED BY THE CPHA. I URGE YOU TO PRESENT ALL YOUR VIEWS AND INFORMATION DIRECTLY TO THIS GROUP. I AM SURE THE TASK FORCE WILL BE PLEASED TO COOPERATE WITH YOU IN EVERY RESPECT. I REITERATE THAT ALL FINDINGS WILL BE MADE PUBLIC.

I TRUST THE ABOVE INFORMATION SERVES TO OUTLINE MY POSITION ON THIS MATTER AND THAT YOUR ASSOCIATION WILL APPRECIATE AND RESPECT THE SPIRIT OF IMPARTIALITY REQUIRED IF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS ARE TO BE GIVEN A COMPLETELY FREE HAND IN THEIR ENDEAVOURS.

MARC LALONDE
MINISTER
NATIONAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

MEDSERVHWC OTT

CORRECTION:

SECOND PARAGRAPH, FIRST LINE READS AS FOLLOW:

I CANNOT

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MEDSERVHWC OTT

JAN 27 1977

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DEPT. OF HEALTH
AND WELFARE
D.M. - S.M. 57

JANUARY 26, 1977

RECEIVED
TELECOMMUNICATIONS

DEPT. OF NATIONAL HEALTH & WELFARE
Minister's Office
RECEIVED

TO: MARC LALONDE
MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELFARE
OTTAWA, ONTARIO

JAN 26 12 53 PM '77

JAN 26 1977

FROM: INDIAN BROTHERHOOD OF THE N.W.

TELEPHONED

Ministère de la Santé Nationale et
du bien-être social, Cabinet du Ministre
RECU

SUBJECT: ARSENIC IN YELLOWKNIFE

A.M.
P.M.

IN A RECENT PRESS RELEASE ON THE ARSENIC PROBLEM IN YELLOWKNIFE
YOU ANNOUNCED THAT YOU WOULD APPOINT A THREE MAN TASK FORCE TO
LOOK INTO THE SITUATION.

WE WOULD LIKE TO BE A PART OF THIS NEW EFFORT - AS WE ARE VERY
CONCERNED WITH THE EFFORT OF ARSENIC ON THE PUBLIC, ESPECIALLY
THE DENE THAT LIVE OFF THE LAND.

WE WOULD LIKE TO APPOINT AT LEAST ONE MEMBER TO THE TASK FORCE,
BE IT ONE OF THE THREE OR A FOURTH.

THE DENE AND THE PUBLIC OF YELLOWKNIFE HAVE BEEN THE PAWNS OF
MANY PREVIOUS STUDIES - AT NO OCCASION IN THE PAST HAVE WE BEEN
SATISFIED WITH THE ACTIONS OF THOSE IN CHARGE.

WE WOULD LIKE TO STRESS THAT WE WILL NOT RECOGNIZE THE ACTIONS
OF THIS TASK FORCE IF WE DO NOT APPOINT A MEMBER TO IT.

WE AWAIT AN EARLY AND POSITIVE REPLY.

GEORGES ERASMUS

PRESIDENT OF THE INDIAN BROTHERHOODX/NWT

HWC OTT

IBNWT YK
M

*cc. to the Min for info
Original to DMO 26/1/77 1435*