

GIANT YELLOWKNIFE MINES LIMITED
YELLOWKNIFE, N.W.T.
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CANADA

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October 4, 1976.

The Honourable Marc Lalonde, Minister,
National Health and Welfare,
Parliament Buildings,
OTTAWA, Ontario. K1A 0K9

Dept. of National Health & Welfare
Minister's Office
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Ministère de la Santé Nationale et
du bien être social, Cabinet du Ministre
RECU

Dear Mr. Minister:

Last January 22, at a meeting at Giant with the Department of Health and Welfare officials, Dr. C.R. Forrest suggested that we set up an arsenic surveillance program of medically monitoring any of our personnel working in the concentrator who might have come in contact with arsenic in the course of their work. We concurred in this program because it would mean that two benefits would follow:

- 1) Our employees would be informed of any possible damage to their health resulting from the presence of traces of arsenic in their work environment, and
- 2) The Company would be informed of the correctness of their work procedures, and of the efficiency of their dust collecting system.

In the period from March 29th to April 14th, clinical examinations were conducted on some 35 employees who might have come in contact with arsenic. These men were told the reason for the examinations, and their cooperation was solicited. Quite naturally, they were all anxious to learn the truth about their condition, and awaited the results with some trepidation.

Mr. Pawson, the Mill Superintendent, from whose department the majority of those examined came, phoned Dr. C.R. Forrest, Programs Medical Officer, Health and Welfare, Medical Services, Mackenzie Zone, Yellowknife, repeatedly, every two weeks from April until September to ask when the results would be available, but was advised that he would be informed in due course.

In the meantime, those employees who had been examined were asking their supervisors for news about the test results. The Union, U.S.W.A., got into the act and tried to find out unsuccessfully. Finally, they collected some samples of hair from the

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same employees and sent them out to a private laboratory for analysis. But they also spread the word around that the Company had had the results for months and wouldn't release them because they were so bad.

Finally, in September, Mr. Pawson told me that he suspected that the results were in Yellowknife, but that someone was unwilling to release them to the Company. On September 15th, I wrote a letter to Dr. O'Donoghue, who had taken the samples, and sent a copy to Dr. Forrest. A copy of this letter is enclosed. I received copies of reports 76 AR-16/1 and 76 AR-16/2 on September 27th, covering results for 16 employees.

It is interesting to note that urine samples which were collected in the period March 29th to April 14th were not analysed until July 19th, and that the lab reports were issued on July 21st.

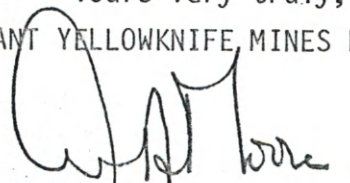
It would appear that a comparatively simple operation had been incredibly bungled, upsetting 35 employees who have been worrying unnecessarily if they might have excessive levels of arsenic in their bodies, (they haven't - the results were all below the acceptable norm), relations between the Company and the Union have been severely damaged, and the Company has been made to look like the proverbial villain in the scenario.

I hate to bother you about what may seem to you to be a simple problem, particularly when it is the second such instance this year of poor management and follow-up of what should be a routine matter, in your department, that I have brought to your attention.

I feel very strongly that the best way for your department to make amends is to send some responsible senior official to Giant to apologize directly to the employees concerned, and to the Company.

Yours very truly,

GIANT YELLOWKNIFE MINES LIMITED



W.A. Moore
Mine Manager

WAM: jc
Encl.

c.c. H.E. Pawson
D.J. Emery
C.R. Forrest

September 15, 1976.

Dr. P. O'Donoghue,
Medical Arts Building,
YELLOWKNIFE, Northwest Territories.

Dear Doctor O'Donoghue:

RE: Arsenic Surveillance Program
Giant Employees

In accordance with instructions from Dr. Forrest of the Department of Health and Welfare, we have been sending certain of our employees to your clinic for tests for arsenic. Naturally, these employees are concerned with their welfare and they are interested in these tests. They have asked us if they could have a copy of their own test results, and we have been unable to do this as we haven't seen the results ourselves.

Giant is interested in the health of these employees too, particularly as it reflects on the efficiency of our pollution control efforts. So we would like to have a copy of the results to see whether the improvements that we have made, and are making, are having any effect.

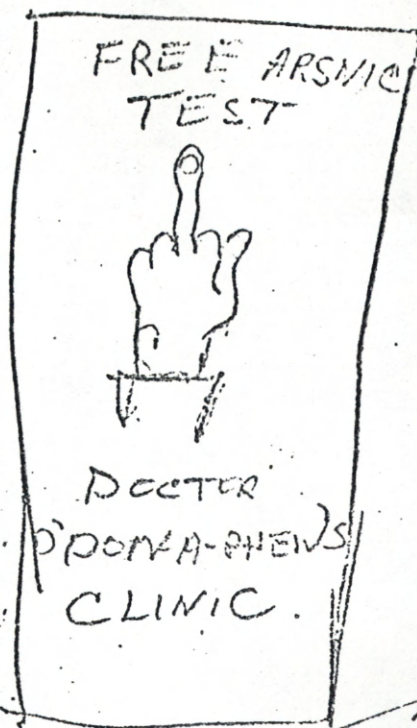
Could you please arrange that a copy of the test results be forwarded to our office, and we will make certain that each employee so tested gets a copy of his own results. It would help quell a lot of fears.

You may be interested in some evidence taken from one of our bulletin boards in the mill today of the interest that these tests have generated. You will note too, that you have been getting some free advertising. It would appear that the upright digit has some significance. I had no idea that that was how arsenic entered ones system.

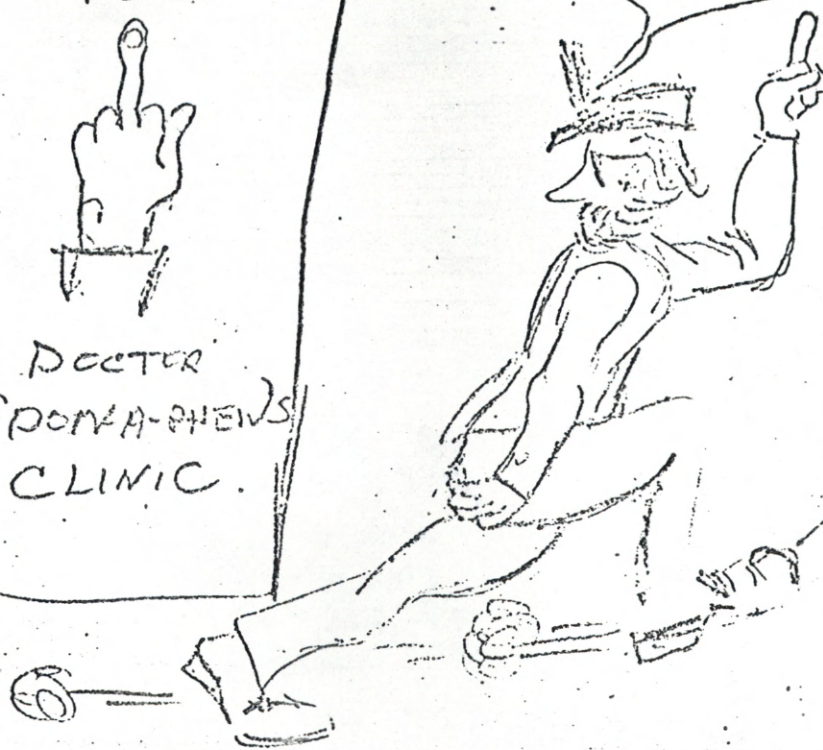
Yours very truly,
GIANT YELLOWKNIFE MINES LIMITED

W. A. Moore
Mine Manager

WAM:jc
Encl.



UP YOUR'S
TOO!



CENSORED

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