



MINISTER OF NATIONAL HEALTH AND WELFARE
AND
MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STATUS OF WOMEN

MINISTRE DE LA
SANTÉ NATIONALE ET DU BIEN-ÊTRE SOCIAL
ET
MINISTRE CHARGÉ DE LA SITUATION DE LA FEMME

OTTAWA, K1A 0K9

Mr. F. Stewart Cooke,
Assistant to the Director,
United Steel Workers of America,
100 Lombard Street,
Fourth Floor,
TORONTO, Ontario.
M5C 1M3

Dear Mr. Cooke:

Thank you for your letter of January 19, 1977 concerning arsenic in Yellowknife and for your offer of cooperation with the Task Force which will be investigating the situation. However, I understand that since November 18, 1976 the mill workers at Yellowknife have been represented by the Canadian Association of Smelter and Allied Workers which is an affiliate of the Confederation of Canadian Unions.

As you no doubt know, many other groups and agencies including the Canadian Association of Smelter and Allied Workers, the Federal and Territorial Governments and of course the people of Yellowknife have valid interests in the analysis and publication of the facts of the situation. It is for this reason, and in order to ensure that a truly impartial review is performed, that 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 material and any other data which may be requested.

As you probably now know, the Canadian Public Health Association has already selected the three members of the Task Force, whose names were made public on January 28, 1977. The Federal Government had no hand in the selection of the three experts, nor does it with regard to supervision of the study. By this means, I wish to ensure that the total independence of this group of experts will be evident to all who are concerned, as I am, to have the facts of the matter clarified and made public.

Yours truly,

Marc Lalonde

P.A.
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BW/es
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