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AIR POLLUTION ARSENIC - YELLOWKNIFE

The committee appointed to maintain surveillance on pollutants of importance in the northern territories has recommended that continuous air sampling be carried out at Yellowknife as close as possible to the centre of the populated area. Trial sampling was carried out at Yellowknife Airport twice over 24 hour periods in February and April 1970 by Samuels and Quinn of the Radiation Protection Division, who employed the neutron activation technique for analyses of the filter samples. The committee recommends that the same procedure as used in the trial tests be repeated but on a continuous basis for a period of at least a year.

Continuous monitoring would demonstrate whether there are variations in the level of pollution in the city due to variations in wind direction and velocity and to variations in smoke washing efficiency. Lack of such information about the extent of atmospheric pollution constitutes a serious gap in our present knowledge of the Yellowknife situation. In the United States and many other countries, air arsenic concentration figures are available for centres where arsenic pollution is known to exist.

Do you anticipate that the transfer of the Radiation Protection Division to the new Department of the Environment will affect our ability to have such work carried out?

Original Signed by
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