AM Advocate Mines

Internal Correspondence

To: R. E. Sampson

Date: June 18, 1975

From: J. G. Cole

Copies: File

Subject: "HERE & NOW" NEWS - JUNE 17, 1975:
REMARKS MADE BY ED ROBERTS-LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION
& THOSE OF RAY STEVENSON-PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
WITH THE CANADIAN NATIONAL OFFICE OF THE U.S.W.A.

..... Mr. Silikoff of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York.. Mr. Silikoff referred to examinations of 65 asbestos workers in an open pit asbestos mine in California like the one in Baie Verte. He said most of those examined had only five years or so of exposure, yet a significant number showed symptoms of asbestosis. Mr. Silikoff also referred to other studies which indicate that lung cancer does not occur until 20 or 30 years after the initial exposure. Mr. Roberts said he is especially concerned that nobody really knows what's happening at Baie Verte.

"And I suggested to the Minister of Mines & Energy, who is the man involved in this case, that perhaps he should hire Dr. Silikoff and get him to come down, and go down and meet with the people at Baie Verte and look at the scene, and then tell us, tell the government, whether he thinks there, you know, how big a problem there is, whether there is a problem and above all what should be done. But I think, from what I know now, there is a problem, there is a possible problem and the bothersome thing is we're not doing anything at all about it. Well, I think we should do something, and I think we should do something quickly. I think the people of Baie Verte have a right to expect that."

Vigorous action by Newfoundland's Unions is required in order to get government to take action in the problem of health and safety standards in the province's mining industry. This is the opinion of Ray Stevenson, Public Relations Officer with the Canadian National Office of the United Steel Workers of America.

"The, ah, trouble at Advocate has existed of course has been part of the problem because trying to get the facts in relation to the contraction of silicosis has been very difficult. But more than that, the question of the monitoring of the actual work conditions in the mines has been generally a matter of guidelines, ah, laid down under mining acts and so on, and the problem of getting change into the situation, improvements into the situation, has always been for us either one of two things. Either we go to the bargaining table and bargain health conditions against wage increases and so on which I think is totally wrong, or we go to the governments who are generally unresponsive and ah, try to lobby to have legislation established."

Mr. Stevenson is in St. John's on a Union sponsored Labour School.

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