



Northern Anti-Uranium Coalition

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Joan Scottie, representative, Baker Lake Concerned Citizens Committee

Coordinator: Jack Hicks, Executive Officer, Keewatin Regional Council

Tuesday, April 18, 1989

-SENT BY FAX-

Hon. Lucien Bouchard
Minister of the Environment
Government of Canada

Dear Mr. Bouchard,

On January 25 our coalition wrote the attached letter to you expressing our serious reservations about the Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (FEARO) review of the proposed open-pit Kiggavik uranium mine near Baker Lake, Northwest Territories.

Since January all the members of our coalition have been formally appointed by the organizations they represent, and we were delighted to welcome a representative from the newly-formed Baker Lake Concerned Citizens Committee. We have also changed the name of our coalition, the acronym 'nauc' being the word for 'no!' in the Keewatin dialect of the Inuktitut language.

Almost three months have passed since we faxed that letter to your office, and we have yet to receive a reply.

We are writing you today to support the attached letter from the Baker Lake Concerned Citizens Committee, and to demand that you postpone the 'scoping workshops' until such time as the people of the Keewatin feel sufficiently informed about the fundamental questions regarding uranium mining to effectively participate in them.

The FEARO review is proceeding under Terms of Reference which were imposed upon us with no public consultation, and the first phase of the intervenor funding program has severely limited our ability to carry out an effective public education program. The attitude of your department risks turning what should be an truly public process into a 'quick and dirty' review in which the convenience of the proponent is given far more consideration than the needs of the people being put at risk.

Attached you will find a list of questions compiled by the Baker Lake Concerned Citizens Committee after a community radio phone-in show. These questions should indicate the amount of public information which must take place in Inuktitut if Keewatin Inuit are to play more than a token role in the review.

Our coalition organized public information meetings in Rankin Inlet and Baker Lake last weekend, and we are currently preparing bilingual pamphlets which will answer the questions raised by the people of Baker Lake in a clear and concise manner. We are doing this despite the fact that our request for funding for this kind of work was denied on the grounds that we could feed into a publication of the FEARO panel- a publication which no one has yet seen.

With less than two weeks to go before the start of the 'scoping workshops' the public has yet to be provided with a bilingual terminology list, an Inuktitut translation of the draft guidelines for the Environmental Impact Statement, or even basic information on the FEARO process itself.

We were amazed to talk to a resident of Baker Lake with a prominent job in a "helping profession"- the kind of person whom other residents would turn to for information- who had not even heard of the existance of draft guidelines for the EIS, did not know what an EIS was, and had no idea of the projected schedule of the review.

Mr. Minister, if you do not delay the 'scoping workshops' for the FEARO review of the proposed Kiggavik uranium mine you will be sanctioning a serious injustice to the people of the Keewatin, to their descendants, and to their culture.

Please do not make us wait three months for a reply to this letter.

Yours sincerely,



Tagak Gurley, Spokesperson

cc member and supporting organizations
Hon. Pierre Cadieux, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs
Genevieve St. Marie, DM Environment
Lorette Goulet, ADM Conservation, Environment
Richard Van Loon, ADM DIAND
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