

UNCLASSIFIED
Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 03330 241944Z
ACTION EPAE-04

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INFO LOG-00 COPY-01 AOS-00 EUR-00 EB-00 DINT-05 10-17
COME-00 L-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 QES-09 /052 W
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R 241420Z APR 86
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8463
INFO AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMCONSUL QUEBEC

UNCLAS OTTAWA 03330

DEPT PLS PASS EPA

E.O. 12365: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EMIN, SENV, CA

SUBJECT: CANADIAN RESPONSE TO PROPOSED EPA BAN ON ASBESTOS
PRODUCTS

CASE FOR CONTROLLED USE OF ASBESTOS TO THE INTERNATIONAL
LABOR ORGANIZATION, HOPING THAT A FAVORABLE I.L.O.
RESPONSE WILL INFLUENCE THE FINAL EPA DECISION.

5. ACCORDING TO GOC STATISTICS, CANADIAN EXPORTS OF
ASBESTOS AND ASBESTOS PRODUCTS IN 1985 EXCEEDED CDOLS 450
MILLION. IN THAT SAME YEAR, CANADIAN EXPORTS OF ASBESTOS
AND ASBESTOS PRODUCTS TO THE U.S. EQUALED APPROXIMATELY
CDOLS 72 MILLION.

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1. THE GOC AND THE CANADIAN ASBESTOS INDUSTRY ARE
MARSHALING FORCES AND FACTS FOR A CHALLENGE TO THE
PROPOSED EPA BAN ON CERTAIN ASBESTOS PRODUCTS AND
PHASING-OUT OF ALL ASBESTOS USE OVER A TEN-YEAR PERIOD.
CANADIAN MINISTER OF MINES ROBERT LAYTON ANNOUNCED ON
APRIL 22 THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, TOGETHER WITH THE
PROVINCE OF QUEBEC AND THE ASBESTOS INDUSTRY, WILL LEND
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TOTALLING CDOLS 2.5 MILLION TO THE
MONTREAL-BASED ASBESTOS INSTITUTE TO PROMOTE CANADA'S
POSITION ON THE CONTROLLED USE OF ASBESTOS. THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT AND THE QUEBEC PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT FURTHER
AGREED TO CONSIDER RENEWING THIS FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR AN
ADDITIONAL THREE YEARS.

2. IN ANNOUNCING THE FUNDING, MINISTER LAYTON
ACKNOWLEDGED THAT A "PRIMARY PURPOSE" WAS TO "HAVE THE EPA
RECONSIDER ITS POSITION, GIVEN THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE
THAT IS OVERWHELMINGLY IN FAVOR OF CONTINUED ASBESTOS USE
UNDER CONTROLLED CONDITIONS." IN ESSENCE, THE CANADIANS
ARGUE THAT THE EPA HAS NOT STUDIED SUFFICIENTLY THE
HAZARDS ASSOCIATED WITH ASBESTOS SUBSTITUTES AND CHALLENGE
THE WISDOM OF REPLACING THE CONTROLLED USE OF ASBESTOS
WITH "UNTESTED AND UNREGULATED SUBSTITUTES."

3. THE ASBESTOS INSTITUTE SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY TO
LAUNCH THE OPENING ROUND IN ITS FIGHT WITH THE EPA. IN A
COMMUNIQUE RELEASED APRIL 22, THE INSTITUTE CHARGED THAT
THE "SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY" WAS "SHOCKED" BY THE EPA'S
METHODOLOGY IN RECOMMENDING A BAN ON ASBESTOS IN THE U.S.,
AND INSISTED THAT THE EPA'S DECISION WAS AT ODDS WITH THE
MOST RECENT SCIENTIFIC FINDINGS ON THE SUBJECT. THE
INSTITUTE BASED ITS ACCUSATIONS ON ANALYSES OF THE EPA
DECISION BY TWELVE "RESEARCHERS" FROM CANADA, THE U.S.,
FRANCE, AND GREAT BRITAIN. ACCORDING TO THE ASBESTOS
INSTITUTE, THE RESEARCHERS, WHO REPORTEDLY ARE EXPERTS IN
SUCH FIELDS AS EPIDEMIOLOGY, TOXICOLOGY, BIOSTATISTICS,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES, QUESTION NOT ONLY THE
SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE BEHIND THE EPA DECISION, BUT ALSO THE
EPA'S ALLEGED FAILURE TO EXPLORE THE DANGERS OF ASBESTOS
SUBSTITUTES. THE INSTITUTE ALSO CLAIMS THAT SEVERAL OF
THE EXPERTS HAVE CALLED INTO QUESTION THE EPA'S
COST/BENEFIT ANALYSIS. (A COPY OF THE INSTITUTE'S PRESS
RELEASE IS BEING SENT TO EUR/CAN.)

4. THE GOC IS PREPARING WRITTEN COMMENTS WHICH IT WILL
SUBMIT TO THE EPA THIS SUMMER. CANADIAN OFFICIALS FEAR
THAT THE EPA RULING WILL AFFECT NOT ONLY ASBESTOS SALES TO
THE U.S., BUT THE WORLD-WIDE ASBESTOS MARKET, SINCE THIRD
WORLD NATIONS FREQUENTLY FOLLOW THE U.S. LEAD IN ADOPTING THE
REGULATORY STANDARDS. THE CANADIANS WILL ALSO PRESENT THE

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