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Anchor/Reporters: YANNICK BOURDON, YANNICK BOURDON, RACHEL DESAULNIER

SOIL STUDY

YANNICK BOURDON: We now talk to you about this meeting that was held yesterday, the meeting of the Sudbury Soil Study committee, which was held last night at Cambrian College. This meeting was dominated by the transparency theme of the process. The public was invited to take part in this joint meeting. The citizens' committee and the technical committee were both present. The technical committee that started the process, is made up different partners. For example, Greater City of Sudbury, the Health Bureau, and representatives of both mining companies, INCO and Falconbridge are all partners in this technical committee. However, we must mention that the presence of the two mining companies is being contested by a union coalition. One of the representatives of the labour movement, Mr. Omer Seguin, handed a letter addressed to the Premier of Ontario, Ernie Eves, asking that INCO and Falconbridge to withdraw from the technical committee. Mr. Seguin says the companies are in a conflict of interest situation, because evidently, in this study, one of the issues are soil contamination, and the two mining companies will be looked at during this study. My colleague, Rachel Desaulnier was present at the meeting of the Soil Study, last night. She discussed about this issue with the President of the Citizens' Committee, Mr. Yvan Fillion. She first asked him to describe the roll of each member and the way they communicate.

YVAN FILION (PRESIDENT OF CITIZENS' COMMITTEE): There must be a liaison between science, the public and the community. There must be ways to ensure the communication is clear and precise, so that it can be done in an efficient way. In reality, our role is not really to survey the science, but there are other ways to do it. What we do, is we ensure the communication that will come out of the scientific studies, will then be presented to the public in a clear and precise manner, so that the public can form its own opinion, in regards to the information and then react, according to their own needs.

RACHEL DESAULNIER: Tell me who is the technical committee, who are some of the members?

FILION: I think we must understand that the members who are part of the technical committee have been working together for a long time to study Sudbury soils. There is the Ministry of Environment, the two big mining companies, INCO and Falconbridge, the Ministry of Health, the Health Centre of Sudbury, and also the City of Sudbury are all members. These people have been studying the soils for a long time, and also in conjunction with Laurentian University, and often times, the university uses students in training to do these soil studies. So, it's not really a group that was formed all of a sudden, at this time. It dates back to a long time. So, at this moment, now that we have looked at, and studied the results of the samples, we then go to the next question, which is, now that

we know a bit what the toxic levels are, we go to the next question. What does this represent, when it comes to health risks levels, or risks to the environment? So, I believe it's a process evolution that dates back to 10 to 20 years, and it should be approached by the same partners, the ones that have been working together for 20 years.

DESAULNIER: On the technical committee's side, even though it is city members of companies, it seemed that there was some issues, on their side, on questions like the legal responsibilities, the transparency, and also the selection process. Why is that all of a sudden, that it would be the technical committee that is worried?

FILION: The technical committee was always worried about transparency, because the technical committee knew right from the beginning, myself included, as it is two years that I am involved in this process, the technical committee is very serious in wanting to ensure that the public gets the information in a transparent manner. This was a worry right from the beginning, and in my opinion, it is still a worry, but it's not one that just comes out all of a sudden. I mean, we always asked ourselves, will the results worry the public? The public may doubt our intentions and the intentions of the partners, so we must ensure first of all, that the process be transparent. So, we always come back to re-evaluate our objectives. Are the objectives we put in place at the beginning, that of transparency, are we doing this? So, my opinion is that it's simply to look at the goals of the project, once in a while.

DESJARDIN: Mr. Filion, tonight there was more questions of policies, than environment. When will we arrive at talking about environment?

FILION: Myself, I hope we reach this real soon. I came here to take part in the process, because the scientific sector, we had to ensure the community could get precise information, when it comes to scientific results. More and more, the facts are coming in from the study. We are doing garden analysis, we will be doing analysis of the food that we buy in stores. We also did other samples that will come in, as analysis is being done at this time. So, once we get the samples, the companies and their consultants must do some analysis, that can tell us what the risk factors are, risks towards the environment and health risks. At this time, I think, we will have contents that will come, that will be of scientific value, and have some environmental and health content. I think we will address these issues. I think we are still trying to get the information, so people are asking themselves question about the process, but I think it's simply a question of sequence at this time. There will be discussions on the environmental substance and on the risk substance it poses on our health, soon.

BOURDON: That was Yvan Filion, President of the Citizens' Soil Study Committee in Sudbury. Other public meetings will be done during the consultations.

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