

March 24, 1976

Mr. David Paterson, MPP
London
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario

Dear David:

Thank you for your recent letter. If we cannot get an open public inquiry, at least we might try to get the information which is given to the closed inquiry.

However, I am writing on another matter and that is our affiliate in Alberta, Save Tomorrow Oppose Pollution. Their concern is that the SO2 emissions from the Syncrude plant are more than double the provincial standard.

As you can see from the enclosed photocopy, STOP has written to the Alberta government nine times without getting an answer and I am wondering if since Ontario is a partner in this venture, it would be appropriate for Ontario as a partner to request in strongest possible terms that Alberta take account of these problems. Strictly speaking, Ontario as a partner should be equally responsible for extreme pollution caused by the operation of the Syncrude plant.

Perhaps the Liberal Party in Ontario has a position on this project, but if it does not, I wonder if you could consider the representations of STOP and consider asking why Ontario is doing nothing, when as a partner, it clearly should have some rights and responsibilities in this matter.

As you will see from the list to whom carbon copies were sent, Robert Nixon has been receiving copies of all the correspondence so I assume that there is a file which might be of help to you somewhere at Queen's Park. If not, we of course have copies of all the information and I would be delighted to provide it to you.

Yours very truly,

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW ASSOCIATION

Heather Mitchell
Counsel

:by

S.T.O.P.
Alberta's Environmental Lobby
Box 1633
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2N9
March 9, 1976

Mr. David Russell
Minister - Alberta Environment
222 Legislative Building
Edmonton, Alberta

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Dear Mr. Russell:

Re: Syncrude SO₂ Limits

For the ninth time, we are officially requesting you to respond to our October 23, 1975 letter asking you to force Syncrude to reduce their SO₂ limits to between 40 and 60 long tons per day (from 287).

Let us summarize our correspondence about this matter since October 23, 1975.

October 23, 1975	Delivered our written request to you with supporting material.
October 27, 1975	You wrote telling us you would respond "in detail" after we met with your staff.
November 25, 1975	You wrote after our meeting with your staff telling us that the meeting had been "constructive" and that no further response was necessary.
November 27, 1975	We wrote telling you that the meeting was <u>not</u> constructive at all and that we expected a written reply.
December 8, 1975	We wrote you a reminding letter telling you that we expected you to respond if you were to observe the principles of "open dialogue".
December 10, 1975	You wrote to tell us to quit bothering you. You said, "I have nothing further to add to our correspondence so there is no need to write me anymore on this matter".
December 16, 1975	We responded and said that we found "...it strange that at a stroke of the pen you think you can eradicate a public concern altogether". And that democracy does not give your office this power. We reiterated our request for a response.
December 28, 1975	We sent you a reminding letter.
January 5, 1976	We received a letter from Premier Lougheed's office telling us that "...Mr. Russell will, undoubtedly, be giving his attention to your further remarks" as contained in our December 16 letter.
January 12, 1976	We wrote you telling you what the Premier's office had told us.
January 13, 1976	We received a letter from your assistant telling us that you would respond "at the earliest possible opportunity".
January 19, 1976	We received no word from you so we wrote you a kindly reminder.
February 2, 1976	Another reminder is mailed to your office.
March 9, 1976	And now this letter.

In your October 27 letter to us you said that S.T.O.P. and your "...Department have similar objectives insofar as pollution matters are concerned". I am now convinced that this is not the case. One would have to stretch the imagination to come up with such a conclusion. We feel that the Department has grossly neglected its responsibilities by authorizing Syncrude to emit such dangerous amounts of SO₂. We have lost confidence in your department's ability to account for its actions on this matter.

We are not only referring here to this series of letters with you, but also to our correspondence with your civil servants as well. Since October 23, 1975, we have written to your department, letters requesting over 160 different pieces of information about Syncrude and G.C.O.S. To date less than 5% of these requests have been filled--and those after at least one or two reminding letters. If this is what your department calls "full, public access to information", I would hate to deal with a more restrictive government. Our feeling here is further supported when you consider that so far, your Department has refused to give us over 10 reports that you have classified as "privileged", "proprietary", or "confidential". These actions do not agree with the former Environment Minister's statement that, "...Confidentiality must be regulated out of existence".

Webster's dictionary defines the word "stall" in the following manner: "To act or speak evasively, or hesitantly, so as to deceive or delay". I am not accusing you of doing this. But I do think that your department's behaviour certainly points in that direction. I will leave it up to you to tell us if in fact you are "stalling".