



COLLEGIUM RAMAZZINI

INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Castello dei Pio
41012 Carpi / Modena / Italy

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Castello di Bentivoglio
Via Saliceto, 3
40010 Bentivoglio / Bologna / Italy
Telephone 39 051 6640460 - Fax 39 051 6640223
E-mail: collegium@ramazzini.it

DA VENIAM SCRIPTIS QUORUM NON GLORIA NOBIS
CAUSA, SED UTILITAS OFFICIUMQUE FUIT

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FOUNDING SECRETARY GENERAL
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MORANDO SOFFRITTI

General Secretariat
Collegium Ramazzini
Castello di Bentivoglio
Via Saliceto, 3
40010 Bentivoglio, Bologna, Italy
Tel. 39 051 6640460
Fax 39 051 6640223
E-mail: credir@ramazzini.it

The Honorable
Dr. JEAN CHAREST
Premier
National Assembly
Quebec

Sent by fax : 001-418-643-3924

Dear Premier Charest,

I am writing you today in my capacity of Secretary General of the Collegium Ramazzini, an independent, international scientific society dedicated to the prevention of occupational and environmental diseases around the world. Our membership is comprised of 180 members from 34 countries, including leading scientists distinguished by their focus in environmental health. For over 25 years Fellows of the Collegium Ramazzini have convened annually in Carpi, Italy, birthplace of Bernardino Ramazzini, to discuss and make recommendations on the most pressing issues in environmental and occupational health.

We have been informed that in the next few weeks the Quebec government intends to allocate \$58 million in financing to an anonymous consortium of foreign investors to open the Jeffrey mine to export 5 million tons of asbestos to Asia over the next quarter century.

On behalf of our membership and of our President, Dr. Philip Landrigan, Chairman of the Department of Preventive Medicine at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York, USA, I urgently implore you to take action to halt this project and prevent the unnecessary increase of asbestos diseases in future generations in Asia.

Asbestos is a public health disaster in every country in the world. It is a proven cause of asbestosis, a fibrotic form of lung disease. Asbestos is also a proven human carcinogen. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the cancer



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mesothelioma and cancer of the ovaries. The WHO has stated that all forms of asbestos are probable causes of gastrointestinal cancer.

The forces that advocate for the continuing use of asbestos are formidable and well-organized. Lies are their weapon. Manufacture of doubt is their strategy. They are deterred by neither scientific fact nor the rulings of the World Health Organization.

The Collegium Ramazzini has called repeatedly, in 1993, 1999 and 2004, for all countries to ban asbestos. Virtually all of the independent organizations of the world concerned with the health and welfare of workers and the general public, such as the International Social Security Association (ISSA) have likewise called for a ban on asbestos use. A copy of our most recent call for a ban of asbestos is attached.

To date, 50 countries have banned all forms of asbestos, most recently Japan, South Africa and South Korea. Malaysia is expected to announce a ban within months.

We are confident that you will listen to our call and take action to prevent Quebec from contributing to such a grave public health danger.

Dr. Morando Soffritti
Secretary General
Collegium Ramazzini

Copy to: Dr. Philip J. Landrigan