

HEADNOTES: government, energy policy, global economy, Blackstone, anti-shutdown protests

Bill Moore-Kilgannon

BK: Bill Moore Kilgannon. I'm the executive director of Public Interest Alberta.

Q: Bill, could you tell us your understanding of what led to the decision to close the Celanese plant?

BK: My understanding is that Celanese Canada was purchased by Blackstone back in 2004. Blackstone is one of the largest trust funds in the world. What they specialize in doing is taking companies, busting them up, selling them off, and flipping them and making a very fast profit, which is definitely what they did with Celanese. The reason that the company gave though, is that Celanese Canada now was producing Cigtow, which is the filter product for cigarettes. Most of their market is currently in China right now. So what they were doing, according to Blackstone, it was a business decision – they were moving the production to Mexico. They were shutting down the plant here in Edmonton as well as a plant in southern U.S., and they were going to do some additional production in their plant in Belgium. So they were rationalizing it. They were also in the process of building some new plants in China at the time, which are probably on stream right now. Given that most of their production coming out of Celanese Canada was going to China, they just said, well it's much cheaper to produce in China, that's the market where we're sending stuff to. But in reality, the Canadian plant was still turning a profit, the equipment was still in good shape, and they had trained workers. It really is much more focused on the fact that here in Canada there is no longer any economic advantage in terms of being close to petrochemical feedstocks. We're paying the same price here as we will in Chicago or in southern U.S. for the feedstock. So when the company did its analysis, it said there was no reason to keep the plant here, they were going to shut it down and ship it overseas, because they could produce it cheaper, they figured.

Q: The feedstock being as cheap to buy anywhere else as buying it here is the result of political policies. Would you like to discuss a bit about that?

BK: As Alberta's petrochemical industry developed, one of the key things that was put in place was that we required processing of our raw natural products here before being exported. Back in the mid 1990s, the Klein government made the decision to remove that requirement and allow the shipping of raw natural gas to the U.S. They were lobbied very heavily by the Alliance Pipeline and their consortium of companies that were pushing for the Alliance Pipeline to do that, because Alliance wanted to be shipping raw product so that it could feed into the American petrochemical industry, and have them do the job processing there. When the Celanese plant first announced that they were going to be shutting down, Public Interest Alberta was working with CEP to raise awareness around this. We orchestrated a media event just a few days prior to the provincial election in 2004 that put a lot of attention on this. The workers came in; they protested that they were losing their job. At that press conference, the premier said, when the media started

posing questions, that yes indeed they had in the mid 1990s made the decision that they were going to open up the shipping of raw natural gas to the U.S. to help feed the Alliance Pipeline. Pat Black at the time had come to cabinet and said that it was going to be beneficial for the producers of energy as well as the pipelines, but knowing full well that it was going to have a major impact on the petrochemical industry in this province. He admitted that at that press conference, so from there we continued to put pressure on the provincial government to actually do something about this.

Q: Would you say they've done anything at all?

BK: Well I went with the representatives from CEP to the meeting that we had later that afternoon after the premier had committed in front of the media that they were going to meet with us, that they were going to try and resolve this. He was trying to do damage control just before an election. But we went to the legislature and met with Murray Smith, who was then the Minister of Energy. Mr. Smith was just in the process of leaving politics to go to the United States where he was going to be Canada's ambassador, or sorry, Alberta's ambassador on the Canadian embassy, and in particular with a strong focus on outreaching to the American energy industry. So obviously Mr. Smith wasn't planning on doing anything himself. He was only 3 more days in the job, his office was in disarray; they were packing boxes. But it was an interesting meeting, because the more we explained what was going on—and shockingly here was the Minister of Energy, who was completely unaware that the Celanese plant was shutting down, that this was a petrochemical plant that had been in operation for 50 years—the more he listened to us, the more he got incensed. He turned to his deputy minister and his assistant deputy minister and said, “You know boys, we spend millions of dollars a year trying to convince companies to come here to Alberta. Why the hell aren't we doing anything about this company that's already here and are shutting down?” To me that was the classic admission that they weren't paying attention, they hadn't figured out that they were going to do anything about this. Yet it was completely contrary to what they were attempting to do in terms of attracting energy companies to Alberta. So since that time, the union has done an excellent job and others have done an excellent job in terms of awareness to say, we have to have a values added policy in this province that makes sure we are benefiting from our energy, and they we're able to develop a skilled industrial workforce that is doing the processing of our energy, instead of just shipping the raw product.

Q: My understanding was that Peter Lougheed placed a great deal of emphasis on the petrochemical industry. He seemed to think that that was his shining accomplishment, bringing petrochemical plants to the province, expanding on the early companies like Celanese. What caused the change in this emphasis?

BK: You're right. Peter Lougheed took a very different approach in the 1970s to the development of Alberta's energy. One of the first things he did was increase the royalty rates back in 1972, which a lot of people don't know much about. In fact, it never won him any friends in the energy industry. But he had a vision about developing Alberta's energy for Albertans and for the greater good of the economy. A part of that strategy was to make sure we were developing the industry instead of just shipping the raw product overseas to be developed. We can credit Nova Corporation's rapid growth in the 1970s

based on the policies that were put in place by the Lougheed government. What happened in the 1990s is you had a totally different dynamic at that point. We're now in a situation where we have free trade. The trade agreements were all about dismantling any policies that were going to limit the free flow of energy. We were in a situation where the premier was at the time trying to do everything possible to stimulate investment in energy extraction. Frankly, the people that were there no longer had that vision that came with the Lougheed Conservatives about developing the economy for all Albertans. They had completely lost their perception of what developing a strong economy needs. They had no plan back then. They were responding to their political and corporate masters that were saying, "We want to export this stuff." I imagine there may have been some potential threat of a NAFTA trade tribunal. This is just my conjecturing. But oftentimes the corporations use a NAFTA trade tribunal as a threat in order to force policies to change. They say, "We will take you to a NAFTA trade court in Washington in order to make this happen." And they were trying to please the corporate leaders anyway, so that's why they pushed for that.

Q: I wonder what role the development of the oil sands has played as well. Certainly in the Lougheed period there was a notion that Alberta's supplies of oil were finite, and even with the oil sands projects they were talking about at that time, you were only adding so many years to the number of years we would have oil. It had to be planning for the next economy and using the resources for that. Is there now a notion that we'll just tie ourselves to the American demand for oil, and we have the oil sands which can supply 100 or 200 years, therefore we don't have to do anything else, and that's our whole economy?

BK: Yeah, I would think that, for the Alberta government, their whole plan is just to open it up to what they call market forces, rather than looking at a much more comprehensive approach to economic development. ...

Q: You were saying that the notion of an integrated economy has been lost.

BK: Right. The difference nowadays is with the incredible focus on the oil sands and the desire to export as rapidly as possible to meet the growing demands in the U.S., means that everything is about exports. It's about. ...

So with the focus on the oil sands that we have now, everything is about export. Back in the 1970s the oil sands was just getting going. They were unaware of how huge the reserves were there. At that time as well, we had an energy policy in this country and this province that required a set amount of energy for our own energy needs. They had a 25 year rule, like they have in the U.S. The strategic supply rule was abandoned in the 1990s as part of the signing of NAFTA. The focus was on extracting it as fast as you can with minimal amounts of government interference. The petrochemical side of that is that we need a lot of natural gas in order to extract the oil sands. So a lot of the production up there is using natural gas, rather than having it go to the petrochemical industry. So the petrochemical industry was competing for the access to the feedstocks as well as they were competing with the strong focus on exports. So it reached the point where there wasn't a lot of advantage. In fact, there was no longer any advantage in having a petrochemical industry here in Alberta. All the major petrochemical industry that's here

has been here for a while and there are no major expansions currently going on, unlike what we had in the 1970s and early '80s.

Q: There's no expansion and there's new companies coming in. Are we going to lose what we've got?

BK: Well that remains to be seen, whether we'll lose what we have. It's very expensive to build new facilities. The existing facilities are still operating and still making huge profits. So my concern is that what we are losing is the value added jobs that are definitely being shipped down the pipelines. All those jobs could easily be established here and could be a real source of expanding the Alberta economy. I know the economy is doing very well right now, but in terms of the long term vision of where we're going—it's incredibly shortsighted: the policies that are being put in place right now. The Celanese plant is the tip of the iceberg of this, and it's showing exactly what the problem has been for far too long with this government and their lack of a real energy plan.

Q: What policies do you think need to be implemented to stop the companies leaving and bring expansion of the petrochemical industry?

BK: I think first and foremost the government needs to stand up and say that we're going to have an energy policy that's going to put Albertans' needs first before the needs of the companies and the U.S. energy market. That would include making sure that we're assigning a set percentage, if not all of the percentage, of what we produce energy-wise to do secondary processing. And it has to be developed at a pace that allows the economy to grow with that. Right now the pace of development is just out of control. Rather than limiting the pace of development for something that will see us for generations to come, we're just going out of control. Third and foremost, we need to be able to develop our energy with incredibly high environmental standards. We can be doing that, but not under the current standards that are out there. The development that takes place can be done in a much cleaner fashion than what's currently being allowed in this province.

Q: How much of that will the private sector allow to happen?

BK: Well the private sector will not want any of it to happen. The private sector wants to extract the energy, ship it off, sell it, and pay their corporate shareholders as much dividends as they can, themselves included, and then go. They're not necessarily here to develop the economy for Albertans; they're here to develop their bank accounts. That's where the government has an absolutely crucial role, to set policy that is for Albertans, and to make sure that we're developing our resources, that we're looking to the long term, and that we're doing it with the highest environmental standards.

Q: Would they be violating the free trade agreement to do the things that you're suggesting?

BK: That would remain to be seen. The major part of NAFTA that applies to this is Chapter 6, which talks about the whole role of energy within North America. The key that they say is that Canada cannot arbitrarily stop exports to the United States for their own needs separate from, or based on how much we're currently exporting over the last

36 months. So the proportionality clause of NAFTA on energy says that we have to keep exporting at the same ratio that we're currently at, based on the average for the last 36 months. If a policy was put in place that required us to do extraction of our own energy and that increased the environmental standards on that, it would be interesting to see how the industry would respond and whether or not a NAFTA trade tribunal would pass that. As we know from other examples though, the NAFTA trade process is incredibly slow, and governments can actually just stand up to it and say, no we don't agree with that. But it would take some political guts to be able to do that, and they would be under huge pressure from the industry to not do that. But according to the polls, Albertans strongly want our own energy policy, and we are deeply concerned about the future. I think, politically, if they were to follow in the steps of Peter Lougheed and actually develop those policies, they could withstand the political pressure from the oil industry.

Q: What are the potentials in job numbers for the petrochemical industry in this province, if we follow the policy of requiring a manufacturing condition?

BK: Well Hugh Mackenzie did an analysis for CEP as part of their project for fighting at the National Energy Board against the Keystone Pipeline that Trans Canada Pipelines is putting in. On that one pipeline alone, he estimated, I believe, it was 18,000 jobs were going to be lost because of not developing the petrochemical processing ourselves. That's not just direct jobs, that's direct jobs and indirect jobs that come from the support and supply of the petrochemical industry. And that's just the one pipeline. There are 3 other major pipeline proposals that are coming at us, and all with various potentials of shipping raw bitumen rather than processing the bitumen here. So what we see in the business press in the U.S. is there are many plants that are retrofitting themselves for accepting the bitumen. In Texas and in Illinois there's a number of projects that have already been approved as if these pipelines are automatically going to go ahead, as if the National Energy Board process has already been complete. They are already investing in the U.S. because there's just an assumption there that the tar sands is American oil, and they're going to process it in the U.S. rather than here in Alberta.

Q: The kinds of jobs that we're going to be losing are better jobs than the jobs the oil sands create. We're talking long term jobs; we're talking jobs that are in communities that will last. The workers will build the plants and ...

BK: Exactly. The petrochemical industry of course is must higher end technological jobs. They're permanently. Whereas the oil sands extraction is, they're well paying jobs as well, but it's nowhere near the level of industrial development that we could be getting if we had a real energy policy in this province.

So with the Celanese plant shutdown, you had close to 500 unionized jobs that were lost. But there were many other people working at the plant that were not part of the unions, as well as there was a whole support network and contracts that were taking place there. So the numbers that I saw were close to 2,000 people who were directly or indirectly going to be losing their jobs because of the plant shutdown.

Q: And that number of course is the number of people who are losing their jobs with the actual shutdown, but then 6 or 7 years of reducing numbers of jobs.

BK: The total number of people who had worked there at its height of production was just under 1,000 people. You're right, in the previous years the plant had been downsized to the point where the actual jobs lost directly from the plant was around 500. It's difficult to say, because they had a number of various companies that were working under contract for them as well. But unionized jobs we know were just under 500.

Q: I'd like you to tell us a bit about Blackstone and the way it operates. You mentioned how they'd buy a firm and then they'd strip its assets. I think that's something that a lot of people don't understand, the notion of that completely destructive capitalism, as opposed to destructive by indirection.

BK: Blackstone Incorporated is a big trust fund in the U.S. It has some of the most powerful people in the world on its board of directors. They have purchased equity in companies all over the world. When it came to the purchase of Celanese, they did what they've done in other instances. They'll take a hard look at the economics of it; they will sell off huge bits of it to other companies, shut down different sections of it. And they, interestingly enough, as part of that process, paid themselves \$70 million in consulting fees to come in and break up the company. So while all these workers in Edmonton are losing jobs, all these corporate exec types in New York City were paying themselves \$70 million to do the consulting work on the breaking up of the job. So Blackstone, in their own filings to the security commissions in New York, has to put all that in there. So when we were organizing with the CEP and trying to raise some political awareness around this, we were looking through all their filings that they did on the New York Stock Exchange and bringing this out, saying, why is it that they're laying off people at a perfectly profitable plant in Edmonton at the same time as they're paying themselves \$70 million in consulting fees to shut down these profitable companies. That's the nature of this type of trust fund and how they're able to flip companies and move them around like that.

Q: This is an interesting kind of change in terms of the way industry is operating. I imagine capital has always been extremely important. But it sounds like when it's happening in the era of globalization, you've got the financial capital firms that are taking little bits of this and that. They're not really trying to operate any particular company, they're just trying to strip wherever they can and put together whatever profits they can.

BK: Exactly. The people who built the original Celanese plant before it was Celanese, back in the 1950s, had a vision that they were building a company. They were here to stay for the long term; they were good corporate citizens in the 1950s and '60s. But the type of company that Blackstone Incorporated is is not about actually building a company and making things. It's about having capital assets that they can flip and sell off. That's how they make their money. They move incredibly fast. Within 2 years they had taken over the company, sold off a couple of the plants, flipped things around, paid themselves a huge amount of money, and then sold out. It's no different than say between someone who purchases houses and flips them very rapidly, as opposed to someone who actually goes out and builds houses, and has a vision of building a quality house. The people who flip houses are the type who are not really tied to the community. They don't really care what happens to the community, they're just in it for a fast buck. And that's what

Blackstone was doing with the lives of all these people who'd worked for years and years at the Celanese plant.

Q: Some people would argue that what you're talking about is a form of piracy. Is this becoming quite common throughout industry?

BK: I think there's always been a strong element of people who understand who finances work and who will use that. Certainly in the 1980s and '90s, this type of merger acquisition sell-off has accelerated—the scale of these mergers and acquisitions has increased. But it has always been a part of the capitalist history that people were going to do these sorts of things. Just nowadays with the technology that exists and the scale of these companies, they can do it so much faster, and they're doing it absolutely all over the world. So the people who lost their jobs with the Celanese plant are definitely a victim of globalization and rapacious capitalism.

Q: The operations of free trade and fewer government restrictions must make this kind of radical capitalism that much easier to operate.

BK: This is why the Celanese plant is such an important story. That people need to understand what's going on in our industry because all of these elements work together. But if there was actually a Canadian energy plan that supported our petrochemical industry, that made it much more worthwhile for these companies to stay here in Alberta, then you wouldn't necessarily see these companies coming in and just shutting them down. And yet, at the same time, globalization has allowed the capitalists in these trust companies to come in and just do what they're going to do. As we heard, the provincial government was even aware that it was going on at the time, and weren't going to do anything about it. They've still done absolutely nothing about it.

Q: Beyond the oil industry that's focused upon, this is going on in other industries in this province as well. We've seen the closure of pretty much all of the meatpacking industry in the Edmonton area. We lost GWG, other plants that are closed down. Do you see this as part of this phenomenon of having very little control of these corporations, and very little reason for them not to move?

BK: Certainly there's a real connection between what's happening with Celanese and what we have in terms of other examples, the GWG plant being shut down, other examples of value added production not being established here in Alberta. With the lack of real plan coming from the provincial government, it's not surprising that you have these plants that are going overseas. There is just no economic advantage that's given to them for them to stay here. Because of globalization, they can easily move to southern China and have workers working at \$2 a day, and be able to produce the same product that was being produced here in Alberta. So now the push is to make sure that we're still shipping our raw natural resources overseas to match the very low paid labor that's overseas. That's why the pipelines are absolutely crucial, that we have pipeline proposals going to support the U.S. energy industry. There's also pipeline proposals to ship to British Columbia so that we're exporting more of our raw natural energy to China. That's a very important big political push that's coming right now. It remains to be seen whether

that pipeline will be approved, because there is huge political pressure coming from the U.S. to make sure that it's not.

Q: What do you think the impact of this is on basic economic freedoms, freedom generally, the notion that people have some control of what goes on in their lives, and they can rely on their governments to provide them with some kind of security against the greedy exploiters?

BK: The Celanese plant shutdown is an example of how the provincial government is not taking on its role of governing in the public interest. It doesn't mean that they can't do that, it just means that this government has completely abandoned its responsibility to develop the economy for the benefit of all Albertans. I think people, when they see that, either can get active and start demanding that the provincial government and the federal governments act on our behalf in our democracy, or people can just become cynical and say, well that's the way it is, there's nothing we can do about it. Our hope at Public Interest Alberta is that people will see these examples and say, we've got to do something, that it comes down to the very root of what it means to live in a democracy. And that if our government is abandoning its responsibilities in terms of developing the economy for all Albertans, then we have to get involved and we have to engage them and we have to challenge them or throw them out. This is a critical democratic question for all of us to ponder.

Q: Now of course the government will argue that, democracy aside, in this globalized age governments can't really do very much about those things, that they had no option but to let Celanese close down. How do you respond to that?

BK: It goes back to the argument that was put forward by people like Linda McQuaig in her book *The Cult of Impotence*. They throw this up and say, well there's nothing we can do, these are business decisions, it has nothing to do with us. But we have clearly seen that other countries around the world have taken very proactive stands when it comes to developing an energy plan and a strategy that will mean the development of a much stronger industrial economy. The United States, for its part, has an energy strategy. They have a plan, and yet Canada doesn't have an energy plan. Canada is not looking at how we can 30, 50 years from now have the energy resources that we need for our very cold climate, as well as for the growth of our economy. So what's going to happen to the Canadian economy 30, 50 years from now? Unfortunately, the government is not thinking that far ahead. They're only thinking 2, 3 years down the road to the next election. This is where the people of Alberta and Canada need to stand up and say, these are incredibly important public interest questions that we all must decide on. It cannot just be left to the so-called market out there, to make these fundamental decisions. This is the fundamental public interest question about our future, and we have to be engaged in making that decision.

Q: Some countries have reasonably tough policies in terms of the company closing down or even downsizing. Certainly Norway and Sweden have reasonably tough policies. Is it made too easy to shut down a company here, in terms of what benefits they have to provide the workers, what provisions they have to make for workers' next jobs,

provisions they have to make in terms of the environment? How hard is it to shut down a company in Alberta?

BK: I think we've seen the example of Celanese: it's way too easy to shut down a company. On the environment side, for instance, there are huge environmental issues that need to be addressed at the Celanese plant site still. The bond that they have left is ridiculous compared to the site cleanup costs. The fact that the City of Edmonton had given them concessions a number of years before, and then they turned around and actually shut the plant down. If companies are going to come and look for concessions on access to resources, access to water, tax breaks, etc., then they also have a responsibility to not just turn around and shut down the next year. So absolutely the government needs to put in place much, much stricter standards around companies that are coming here and able to access the wealth that exists here. They shouldn't just be allowed to up and leave because some guy in New York decided that they can make more money shutting it down than keeping it running.

Q: Would it be fair to say that with the huge royalties that the government could potentially take from the oil sands, that some of that money should go into a public corporation in the petrochemicals area, so that we have a lasting legacy of the resource that we currently have but won't necessarily have in the future?

BK: Well that would be definitely one way of addressing the inequities that exist within the whole industry, is to make sure that the public sector has a clear window on the industry by being directly involved in it. We see just recently in Newfoundland Danny Williams forced the province to have an equity share in the development of their offshore resources. We certainly see other examples around the world. Norway is probably the most developed in terms of its Statoil and its own ability to develop their resources. They're in a very strong position, because while they work with the oil industry, they're also able to say, "Well, we know how much it would cost us to develop that oilfield. We're happy to partner with you, but if you don't want to do it, we'll do it all ourselves." And the oil industry and natural gas industry in Norway is very actively involved. They're not running away from investing Norway under those conditions. And yet here in Alberta, they've taken the Alberta Energy Corporation and privatized it, Petro-Canada has been privatized. We had those mechanisms in place, and we've abandoned those because of the ideological drive to just turn the whole thing over to the private corporations. The people who lose from that are the people like the Celanese workers, who lose their job at the end of the day.

Q: One of the ironies in a company like Petro-Canada being closed down, is when it was first established I recall Donald McDonald, finance at the time before he was chief –in-selling-off the whole country. He said at the time that the reason for establishing Petro-Can, apart from the obvious fact that they were a minority government and depended on the NDP to survive, was that they had no way of assessing any of the claims the oil industry was making. They wanted to have a company in the public sector so that they could see from its operations what really went on, and then be able to know what they should be getting from the oil industry, and what claims the oil industry was making, whether about environment or about prices that they were charging for their products—how much of that was true and how much of it was simply concocted in order to extract

enormous profits. That sort of thing. That, in a sense, with Petro-Can, was given to the private sector, so it just became one other oil corporation in the private sector. It means [we] essentially lost that right?

BK: Absolutely. The way in which public crown corporations work is that it gives them the window on the industry and allows them to be on a level playing field with the industry. Currently we're in a situation right now where we have to, or the government completely trusts the industry to tell them what's going on out there, what their reserves are, what's happening on the environment. They have no mechanisms in place to actually track what's going on. The other way to go is to just demand an equity share in every project that goes ahead, which would allow the government on behalf of the people of Alberta to actually share in the resource wealth. That's what Newfoundland's just done. They don't have their own company that's developing it, but they now own a portion of it and, in owning that, they have access to all that information and are partners at the table. What's happened is that Albertans have been basically cut out, and we are no longer partners at the table. Whether you're talking about extraction of oil and gas, or whether you're talking about the petrochemical industry, we are not seen to be the owners of the resources anymore. We are no longer the partners at the table that we could be. It's a completely different reality than what's going on throughout the whole world that's involved in oil and gas industry, whether you're talking about how Russia develops its production, whether you're talking about development in the Middle East. So we are not benefiting to the extent that we could be from our incredible resources.

Q: The Norwegian example is a good one. It's one this provincial government always tries to pooh-pooh. Do you understand their arguments against the Norwegian policies in terms of oil?

BK: I have heard the Alberta government's arguments against the Norwegian strategy. I don't understand them, because the Norwegian government is doing far better for the Norwegian people by far than the Alberta government is. Really it's about the Alberta government trying to cover up the fact that they haven't had a plan for a long time; that the real profits in the natural resources that are coming out of this province are not staying here in this province. The arguments the provincial government puts forward are really a cover-up for their own failed economic policies that they've had. Statoil has, through their direct involvement in extraction of oil and to some extent natural gas in Norway, meant that Norway has been able to develop a huge trust fund savings, well over \$200 billion now. They didn't start their trust funds until the late 1980s, when Alberta had had its started in the 1970s and had reached \$12 billion. Norway didn't start theirs until the late 1980s, and now they have well over \$200 billion. We're up to just over \$14 billion right now. Basically from 1986 until 2 years ago, the heritage trust fund had stayed static at \$12 billion. So Norway's example is not something that the provincial government can just easily push aside. The more Albertans understand and see how there is a different way to develop our oil resources, the more people are going to get angry and start demanding some very tough questions of the provincial governments.

Q: In a way, one could probably argue that the Norwegian policy is just a somewhat tougher version of what Lougheed was initially intending, and which successor conservative governments pooh-poohed as a kind of socialism almost.

BK: In many ways, yeah, Norway has carried on the tradition that Lougheed had of trying to make sure that the citizens were key partners and players at the table, and that everyone was benefiting from it, not just the oil companies. The oil industry has done a very effective job in terms of their lobbying, in terms of their campaign contributions to the parties. In so doing, they have managed to change energy policy and economic policy in this province to their benefit, to the great detriment of the people of this province. I'm aware I haven't answered Winston's question about the Celanese stuff yet. You wanted to know more about our role in the Celanese.

Well, Public Interest Alberta was approached by Donny McNeil the day after the announcement came down that Celanese had been shut down, to work with CEP on developing an advocacy strategy. Our role is not to do research; the Parkland Institute has done excellent research on the whole energy industry, all these questions we've been talking about. Having been the former executive director of the Parkland Institute, that's why I know a lot of the details of the energy issues. But our role was very much to try and create a public campaign and public outcry about what happened around Celanese. We didn't do it under the heading of Public Interest Alberta. It was the workers who were losing their job who needed to be heard first and foremost. What we did was organize this protest in Sherwood Park where Premier Klein was speaking at a Chamber of Commerce event 3 days before the election. The workers came there with signs, and they got great media. They had done the background work on what was going on, how many jobs were being lost, and they managed to give that out to all the media. I helped coordinate and support that role. Then as such, that's why I was involved in the meeting with the then energy minister Murray Smith, and carried on from there. We also had, on February 14th, 2005, a media event at the legislature, where we brought hearts with the names of all the people and their kids and wives, who were going to be losing their jobs to the legislature. It was Valentine's Day; it was a message for the provincial government to have a heart and to see the actual people who were losing their jobs. So I helped to coordinate the media event around that, and we got excellent media coverage, and helped to build awareness around that. CEP obviously has excellent staff and people who are involved. The local that was directly affected, CEP 777, they played an amazing role in supporting the workers and setting up the workers' center at their office, and did a really good job. Does that cover it?

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