

Alberta Labour History Institute (ALHI)

Oral History Interview

Interviewees: Bernie Fleirl

Interviewer:

Date:

Location:

Index: Role of the Secretary-Treasurer in the union; merger of the Oil, Chemical & Atomic Workers of America (OCAW) with the Energy & Chemical Workers Union (ECWU); union conventions; 1974 Celanese strike; changes at Celanese – loss of local control, quality programs, unit shutdowns, changes in ownership; layoffs and plant shutdown; voluntary retirement packages;

BF: My name is Bernie Fleirl. I started work at Celanese Canada when it was known as Chemcell 1963 Ltd. I started as a lab technician, industrial lab technician. I worked in a department that was called gas chromatography, analyzing petrochemicals in the petrochemical section of the plant. After 5 years I transferred to the wet chemical lab and integrated in the whole system of lab work, also on the petrochemical side. I joined the union in February '66. If I didn't mention it, I started with the company October 12th, 1965, a long time ago. I was approach by a fellow brother, Louis Yakimishyn, who had tried to convince me that Ed Ewasiuk was the one behind this, to try and become a union steward. It wasn't more than a matter of months before they talked me into looking into running for secretary treasurer. I have to really clarify the dates in my own mind first before I give any, but it lasted a long period of time until about 1974. Celanese unit was a company, the unit was called part of Triple 6, and then later changed to Triple 7. It was 1974, I believe March. We went through a 5 week strike. Then I had applied before the strike, maybe a year before that, to sign up for the electrical apprenticeship in maintenance. I wanted to do something different rather than do lab work all my life. So after 10 years of doing lab work I decided to go that route. A lot happened during that time where I was involved with the union. We had many different locations for our headquarters, offices and stuff like that. There was a lot involved with doing secretary treasurer work, a lot in the background. It wasn't like chief steward or like president, but we had to keep going financially. I wasn't really a specialist in it, but I kept what I call a pretty good set of books, if I could admit that myself.

Q: Give us a couple of ideas of what a secretary treasurer does.

BF: First of all, it isn't a position for a male or female, it can be either. I think I had a little bit of background from my dad. I used to call him a bookie, but he was a bookkeeper in the old days, from the old country, although he didn't stay in it. But that was one of my stronger subjects in school, is math. You've got to remember, this is in the

days before computer. If I was out one cent, I worked at it, even at home, until I found it, to balance the books. Most of the time, the first responsibility is the financial accounting of it, of the dues receipts that we got through the system. It was all done by local 666 secretary. Our portion of it was calculated every 2 years or whatever it was. We were responsible for looking after that money. The other basic function was recording of minutes. I would say I probably wrote more than you did in the last little while, but I can't even think of how many thousands of meetings I wrote minutes for. Also I recorded most of the negotiation minutes from 1966, '67 till right through the strike. From there on I took a little bit of a leave; not an official leave, but I just decided to take an apprenticeship. Not only that, I had to go first year to school in Calgary, and I couldn't do the job justice of helping the union out with whatever I could. But anyway, the minutes were very important because many times someone would ask what was said. Not how did we say it, but just give us an idea what was recorded. Well sometimes what was recorded wasn't other people's impression of what happened, but I did try to take word for word. Motions, exact wording if I didn't get it down right, I would ask them to repeat it until I got every word in there that they wanted to get in, in the right order. So I really was determined that it really wasn't my words, it was somebody else's. Then I would try and explain my version of what that meant, when I was asked. I was delegated to many conventions across the country, not only as secretary treasurer but as a union member, to every major city convention that we had. You have to remember we started out as OCAW, Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers of America. We were part of an international union. Whether it was 1970, '72, we merged with the chemical union in Canada and became ECWU, Energy and Chemical Workers Union.

Q: Were you around for the final merger?

BF: I was, but I was a member only; I wasn't back on the executive. And I also attended many schools, some of which Winston was one of the instructors. I'm not sure if I learned anything from Winston, but I'm sure I used some of the organizing, whether it was health, all those, in some of our deliberations back home.

Q: Tell me about a couple of the conventions that you remember.

BF: I remember one, I think it was still OCAW convention. In fact it took place in this hotel. This is the first time that I was at a convention where we were the host. Alberta area council at that time was involved in the organizing and the extra activities that took place. They did try to also look after spouses that came on these trips; there's children involved. Between the national and the host union, I think they did a really good job. I'm not sure what my wife thought about it anymore, I'm sure she enjoyed herself. We stayed in a hotel here and the activities were fairly good. But the actual convention itself was something that, I don't know if it was OCAW or even ECW conventions, there's something about that that really gave me some adrenalin to use when I went back to our units. I made a lot of reports also. I was one of the few people that insisted that anybody comes back from a convention makes a written report. In case they forgot something, we still have it in writing. Then we get the final, I'm not sure about the minutes, but the gist of the decisions at the convention, later on. But there was always a time delay of a month or whatever.

Q: Where do those reports sit today?

BF: I have no idea. But anything that we got, when I left the union executive position, I know our office was crammed with file boxes full of reports, financial statements, everything. Each unit had their own system. But somehow those must have been archived. I think Bill Kolba might have an idea from his days if there was anything done, or each unit might've been responsible for doing it. But it was my understanding I filed reports and they stayed in the filing cabinets. Anything that went into file boxes stayed in the local union office. I'm not aware if they got transported anywhere else, but I'm sure they had to be moved someplace.

Q: You left the stream by going into the apprenticeship program and going to Calgary. Did you return to become a union officer after that?

BF: Yes I did. I started my apprenticeship in 1975. I received 3 months credit by recommendation of the company with the apprenticeship board, because I was involved in a lot of things around the plant. Not so much doing work in the plant, but going there, sampling some of the samples, and having the knowledge of the plant and the operations. Anything I heard about the place, I tried to learn a little something. I couldn't tell you any company secrets or anything.

Q: You're coming back to the union after being on leave for a while.

BF: Yes. I don't know what really made me go back, because I thought I had enough. In fact, I tried vice president once and there wasn't enough that the president would allow me to do, so I never went back to that. But a position was up for election, it was the secretary treasurer position, and I ran for it again. I won that election and got right back into it again. Until 1992 I decided to run for chief steward, which was a full time position negotiated by the company union to be paid by the company as a negotiated benefit to the union. Directly to the union, there was no extra union dues used to pay that position. Those days were very long. But during that time things were a little iffy with the company, our relationship wasn't that great. The company challenged everything that we ever tried to do or negotiate.

Q: Did you notice that was a change from the way the company used to be?

BF: Yes. It may have something to do with some of the personalities, but I noticed it in other things. I'm not sure, but I think a lot of other companies and unions got into these quality programs. Some of them were safety based, in fact most of them ended up as being portrayed for the safety of the workforce. But they almost tried to surpass us in our safety, our endeavors to improve safety in any unit or in a plant that we had a contract with. You also have to remember that Celanese at the time was one of 10 or 11 plants in the country, us being the 2nd largest after Kingston. Actually it was a CIL plant that eventually Celanese bought. That was the biggest labour force there of any of the companies Celanese had. This is what the beauty of conventions was, when we had a OCAW or ECW convention, that that's when we saw our brothers and sisters from the other plants. They all operated under different contracts with the same company. They had different negotiating teams...

Q: Most people are frightened to death of strikes; they think there's violence. Was there any of that?

BF: The police that talked to me would say there's some violence, but it was more threats. In our strike in 1974 there was one incident where there was a women only picket, I believe it was on a Monday morning or it might've been Sunday. But anyway, a police officer came to the union strike location across from the Beverly Crest where we rented a 2nd storey apartment. We had a policeman visit us upstairs. There's always some people around working, updating lists of strike schedules for members to work the strikes. And there's some people just having coffee, people trying to get information on what's happening. But this one policeman asked for the person in charge. I said, well I don't really consider myself in charge; everybody else left, but I'm a union executive officer, secretary treasurer. He says he didn't appreciate it when people were throwing staples on the road, fence staples. I said I wasn't aware of that, because most of my work was in the office and then I would make the odd stop at the picket line before I went home; I'd put in an hour or two with the people and talk with them and walk carrying a picket sign. Then he says, and I really didn't appreciate when the spray paint came out and people had their headlights painted, truckers and staff people and stuff like that. I said, well I didn't know about that either; you're telling me this. He says, just make sure you don't do it again. I said, well I'll discuss it with the executive and see what happened. We never heard anything since. The only other thing that happened was the company had problems with us parking on a public road on the shoulder, and the police threatened to move us out of there if we didn't at least keep back from the entrance. No vehicle as far as I know ever blocked the entrance, of our members. We parked on the shoulder and far enough back so people could make the right and left turns. But we did have a picket trailer; because of the cold, we had to have a way to warm up and have coffee and hot chocolate. That was done also in the ditch on public property, crown land; it wasn't on company property. So most of it was fairly peaceful. But we did have one thing that the executive eventually agreed to was that someone on the executive that was in control of picketers gave the company passes, management that were working in the plant. Whether they were doing their management jobs or some of the other jobs, we don't know who did what. So they got stopped, they stopped and they flashed their passes. That was kind of a contentious issue for a while, but once it's started you can't do much about it. But we were assured by the company that there are no strike breakers that were brought in from other plants from the same company. There was only a report, and as far as I'm concerned it was a rumor, that they saw somebody come through that they didn't recognize, and they think they worked there. That was, as far as I know, never found out to be true, at least not to my recollection.

Q: You talked about things changing, things became iffy. I wonder if you can cast your mind back a little bit. From the time you started working, some of the other people talked about the phases that they noticed the company going through, changes occurring in the company, where things were building up. Units were added and units were taken away. Maybe talk a bit about the phases that the company went through in your experience.

BF: I think as far as the plant management of Chemsel 1963 Ltd. or Celanese Canada Ltd. and later Inc., and later on it was called... actually there was a name change in

between too, Celanese Canada Resources Ltd. I don't know if that changed their image at all over the years, but someone in the company higher up – and you have to remember that Celanese was 53% owned by Celanese of America at that time, they had controlling interest – they had the agenda down in New York at one time, the company had their headquarters in New York, but the plants were on the eastern coast down to Tampa and North Carolina. They made similar products than we did, so there was some competition. But there was enough sales that we benefited from that also. But the changes that I noticed more was how the company changed from local management having, not free rein, because in any company there has to be some goals that they set, just like we have in unions. But I noticed that the company was using this excuse more and more in negotiations, I would say before the strike even, where they would tell us that it's out of their hands. A lot of it, they had control of what they could do at negotiations. I say limitations were put on them. We didn't know for sure. But a lot of it was done from Montreal, then it shifted to The States, where they were starting to get involved more and more. I think you could see it in the quality program; they called it quality management program at one time. They wanted the workers to buy in. I said, with the name management in there I don't think it's ever going to work. But somehow we did give it a try. During that time we had what we called, things that couldn't be resolved at negotiations, we agreed with the company. We got it into the contract that we would discuss these things and we would call it continued dialogue. I'm not sure if that was a mistake or not. Nothing ever was really accomplished, but there was a lot of talking went on. I think we did get an understanding of the position the company was in so we could formulate our proposals later on in negotiations. But there came a time in '74 where the company said, that's a strike issue with the company, before we even started bargaining. They just saw a list of our proposals, and they flipped. So I think the pressure was on from external, from up above I call it. These people played that part very well. In fact, during a certain period of time, there was no one safe in management and even in the union. When they had the goods on people, they would fire people. It almost seemed like they were trying to reduce the number of people working there without laying off. I would like to say that I think Celanese actually over the years did a very good job of not having any layoffs. There were some, maybe late '70s early '80s there was some layoffs, but a handful of people at a time, and eventually those same people got recalled back. I don't think the experiment they were trying worked. It may have been based on sales. At that time we were competing with the American plants that were run by the same company. The differences also was in their stance at bargaining. I mentioned it in a few different words, but they became harder to deal with. I don't know if they felt the same from us. We were at loggerheads. I was never in the wood business, but that meant things stood still. We were criticized as an executive on a number of occasions that we couldn't get anything finished or achieved with the company. That was true on some occasions, but we kept plugging at it. Although there was different people on the executive over the years, it was still pretty much the same. It was a tough go for quite a while.

Q: Did you notice units of production coming in and out?

BF: The ones that were shut down I believe were old processes. I think the company wanted to get into higher volume businesses and they wanted to limit the number of products from each plant and try and do the special jobs. I'm not sure if that was getting ready for the global market. I don't know if you know it or not, but the other side of the

petrochemical equation was the fibers production. We didn't make polyester at our plant but we made similar man made fibers. It started with wood pulp supplied by a plant in Prince Rupert for years, and the company finally bought it. Then later on they got it supplied from Weyerhaeuser in Washington, then later the other one, I forget the name of it. But Weyerhaeuser eventually came into Canada also, so we got some of the pulp from northern Alberta and BC again. But the time that we got really cheap pulp from Washington, it was really bad wood pulp. Our company, the engineers and chemists, they had to get together to try and change the process to the point where we could use it. If we didn't make good quality... actually this is when they changed process over to cigarette filters, the filter part of it. If we didn't make good quality filters, we didn't make cigarettes, we just made the filter, then we would be not shut down, but we wouldn't get as many sales. So there's that competition between Canada and the US in Celanese. Things got pretty tough. Our lists were reduced quite a bit for negotiations. We always had to deal with the ones that were brought up by the membership. Before we went into bargaining we would concentrate on the ones that were achievable and the ones that were principle type of proposals.

Q: When did the rumors start happening that things were coming to an end?

BF: Maybe we didn't recognize the signs as early as we could have. But my own personal opinion is that the company was getting into more outside third party type of efficiency type programs, where they were trying to get more competitive with the rest of the world. Most of it probably was to do with China. Everybody was trying to supply China – the American competitors of our company, and European. Every company was starting to jump on these bandwagons. The one I can recall is just in time for the Japanese. We didn't have the same program, but the company did have someone look into these programs. Inventory levels could go down, they squeezed more money out of the system because they didn't have to have warehouses full of stuff. But it meant the shipping had to be on time, the orders had to come on time. I can't give you many details, but it was a whole process of getting things from there to here and there to here when it was needed. All you had to do is have one thing go wrong and it would set them back, maybe even cause layoffs. I believe in the automotive industry that was a problem when they couldn't get supplies. Maybe sometimes it was because of a strike in a certain location or in a region. I'm not sure who figured out what they would call these programs, but I think they had people in the educational field figure some of this out. They call them experts; everybody else has experts in other fields. I think the company tried to do some of their own within, but eventually they were starting to bring in people from outside and even try to, some people would say educate, some people would say brainwash their people. But a lot of the programs depended on whether the companies could convince the workers, some being non-union, like staff clerical people, who were very hard to organize in our company. We never did, we made several attempts. But most everybody else was part of the union. If you didn't get them on board the company got frustrated. So over the years they'd try something for 2 or 3 years, didn't work, they'd try something else. But if you listen to what's happening in other companies, they're trying similar things, at least the ones that think they can get something out of it. But a lot of times all it addressed was company things. When we were kind of forced by the company to go into some of these programs, we tried to negotiate what do we get out of it. I'm not saying the union, the union members working at these jobs. I think there was a certain amount of success. Our

wages didn't go down during that time. Things slowed down a little bit because in the '70s there were some years there was 12 and 13% agreements, and you don't hear about them anymore. In fact I wanted to say, I started at Celanese at \$2.05 an hour, and this is after 3 months, after my probationary period. It was \$1.95 for 3 months, then it went up from there. I think there's people in the company that weren't always convinced these programs would work. That was the other thing that we could see when people, they had these quality meetings and they'd invite so many people from the hourly workers and from staff, and they'd try to mesh them and come up with these ideas. They did keep track of the ideas, they made a list of them. They didn't always let us know what it was, but in the end it worked out that the list they came out with that they're going to put in the program were ones that only the company would benefit from, at first. We said, we can't go along with anything like that. We had a few, some of them, they extracted some of these ideas not through the union, except for the fact that we probably would've been in real bad trouble if we didn't send any people. But the company even chose the people to go. The union told the company we wanted the right to send union people there, especially if it meant any kind of representation. The company finally agreed to it, but they hedged on it for a while. We didn't know what was being said until somebody, maybe just a union steward, would come back and say, did you hear this happened there? We said, no. Then we'd confront the company and talk about it, and yah they're trying to do this and trying to do that. During negotiations that is interference with union members during negotiating time. I think the company limited their programs to production type things and not to weeding out the bad guys in the unit. One of the worst things that can happen is if a fellow worker complains about you or you complain about another fellow worker. The company will flag that person and first chance they get they'll ease him out. Everybody makes mistakes at some point. They may be little ones, but our company had a habit of building up a few little ones and then saying, I think it's time to go. Some people actually did go. Some fought it, I don't know too many that got back in. There were some. So there was a reorganization going on.

Q: Was that leading to a shutdown? When did you start notice a shutdown was occurring?

BF: I don't know if I was the only one that picked up on it or if I was talking to someone else who picked up on it and we talked about it, but the company had 3 categories for their plants in North America. I can't give you the initials except for one. When they say it's an M that means it's a maintenance type category and they will only spend money on that location, that plant that they own, to just maintain it, keep it safe as best they can, and not invest any more into expansion. That was the mid grade. The bottom category was they wouldn't spend any money except just to make basic things that they could; if they could sell it fine, if they couldn't it would get the thumbs down. Then there was the top one, where we fit in for a period of time, where if we could improve our products a lot more we could beat out Eastman Kodak and some of the other companies. We did a little bit of that, but those 3 categories eventually everybody was in the same boat. They made decisions in headquarters. Oh, the other thing was that we got bought out by a German company. Hoechst bought out Celanese of America. They didn't buy out Celanese of Canada, because Celanese of America already owned 56% of shares in Canada. But the Hoechst influence could be felt. I don't know if you know this or not, but Hoechst was concentrating on pharmaceuticals more than anything else. In fact one of the stories we

heard was that they didn't really like to own a plant that made cigarette filters, because it was not part of their philosophy to make things that hurt people. They wanted to help people, especially if it made big profits. So there was a change every time it changed ownership like that. I think it was subtle, but the units that shut down in the early '70s or late '60s were actually small units. The methanol plant was a world scale plant at that time. In 1980 the company shipped 200 tank cars of methanol to Japan on one ship that they bought, and it went back and forth every 10 days or something. They used all our production up, but the Japanese eventually got another supplier in Australia and other places, off shore production at that time. Our plant, the methanol part of the plant still made a profit, in fact it was one of the last units to go down. When they couldn't get another big contract the company finally decided this is a good time to pull the pin. It had to be done secretly, this plan, because nobody really figured out, except the subtle things that were coming up. I don't think I was every privy to any management. What they didn't say in public, I did not know about. Maybe some of the other people did. Some of our people actually had relatives on management side. But that's neither here nor there for me, because I didn't hear anything from them.

Q: So when did you hear things were going to be shut down?

BF: There was talk of it then. But I was faced with retiring by 65 in another 6 years, and these offers came up that that the company called voluntary early retirement. That's for anybody that's past the age of 55. Originally the first few times the company would announce, we're reducing numbers; we still want to produce, we still want to keep the plant going, but with less people. In maintenance they kind of compensated for a while by contracting out. They tried to contract out maintenance trades people's jobs, but every chance where we saw that happening we would file a grievance. We would then get into discussions with the company and there would be a minor change. Their attitude would change for a while, but it's a constant struggle. You had to either see it yourself or somebody had to come and tell you and then you had to investigate. Construction in the plant was the only thing in the end that they were able to carry on with. Every once in a while there were suggestions by company people, even our foremen, why don't we get people from this construction, borrow some of their people to come in with our people so we can do the maintenance on this plant? We said, you know what? That's exactly what we don't want to have happen, because then you can keep reducing our numbers and just bring in more the other way. So we never agreed to any of that. But construction, in fact we had it challenged by the electrical union when the company tried to run their own electrical crew in a modification. There was no expansion as such, but essentially it made the process more efficient, and the fact it took less workers when they automated, to do the job. Instead of them going out pushing buttons, the computers did it in a process that can be programmed, and most can be. There were signs, but I think they were pretty subtle. But definitely there was one sign that was there for a number of years before any announcement by the company. There were plants shutting down in Canada. In fact, our plant manager used to pride himself that he came from here and there. He even mentioned that some of the plants he came from in Canada shut down. But one thing he made a commitment at the plant in Edmonton. He said there will be no layoffs while I'm plant manager here. Well the company changed the name of the plant manager, the function, made him vice president of operations plus he was a site director. All of a

sudden he retired. It took a little while, but he was the longest reigning plant manager at the Edmonton plant. That's when the layoffs started.

Q: Was that just before you retired?

BF: It might've been 4 or 5, maybe even 6. Late '90s. In fact I asked in one of our continuing dialogue discussions, I said when there's a captain of a ship ... this was during coffee break, it wasn't being recorded in any minutes. I says, is it true that the captain is always the last one to go down with the ship. He points his finger and me and he has a strong Scottish accent and says, I hear you, I hear you. That was at a time when something set an idea off in my head that there's a change coming. I think there have been a subtle, when I say threat I mean reality, that the company would drop a hint every once in a while, maybe inadvertently, that this is a possibility. AT Plastics or CIL, I actually worked for them my first summer in the chemical business. They opened up the plant in 1952; ours opened up in 1953. We all exceeded our life expectancy for a chemical or a chemical based plant, oil production included. The ones in the US, on average 25 to 30 years and they were done, because of the corrosion involved. It was cheaper to build a new plant than to fix up an old one, if you let it go. But that's the other thing the company did. As long as we saw them spending money, I think this is reality really set in. When the budgets weren't there to go into retooling. I don't know if you remember when the gasoline manufacturers, the oil companies had to quit putting lead into gasoline. Well there as a product called MTBE, tertiary butyl ether. There's still a company producing something replaces the lead in fuel, except it's a changed process from when we were. They use methanol and they use oxygen and they make this MTBE, and now it's called something else. So when they built the methanol plant we saw little sign of expansion into a brand new product. But there was limitations on the other parts. Cigarette filters, people were smoking less. There was less sales in cigarette filters to other companies that used it in their products, and we weren't getting any new ones. The other important product the company made was cellulose acetate. It used to make the old film. It's still making video tape, the plastic. This is a man made fiber. Wood pulp, treat it with some chemicals and a process, you've got the acetate. It's a solid; it looks like snow when you throw it up in the air. But that was plastics. And the methanol went into producing plastics in cars. But the old man-made plastics, that was coming to a halt. People were using digital cameras, but that was even before then there was a slowdown. Great competitions from the Americans. Either an American worker out of work or a Canadian worker, and I think it was going downhill in Canada. The signs were there. Early '90s probably there were signs there and things were getting tough at the plant to negotiate. More influence by outside third party company people coming in at the beginning of negotiations, not only at the end. They used to let us do a little bit together. The local issues we could try and resolve; later on even those were controlled a lot more by third party company people. So I knew I was within 6 years of being 65. There was a small layoff in maintenance and it happened to affect our most junior electrician. I says, well I had 2 other chances and I never went for it but that's because I joined the pension plan quite late. It wasn't a mandatory one until we negotiated it to be mandatory. I says, well now might be the time. I applied and got it. I was the most senior electrician.

Q: In 2003?

BF: 2003, just prior to that. We had maybe not quite 6 months. The decision to be made had been made in a matter of a week or two. But it wasn't until 6 months later, and it took me to my 59th birthday, so it's 6 years early. I says, well it gives me a chance to do something else. I went for it. The other thing was that if the company was still going in 6 years, which might've been a remote possibility, I says I don't know if I wanna stay that long. I have my health, I thought I still had most of my sanity, and I made the decision after talking with my wife. But it wasn't really that it was that affordable.

Q: What did you think of what happened to the plant finally?

BF: I'll tell you one thing that helped. All things being equal, after I talked to my wife and the buyout package, there's one thing that I wasn't sure I could face. Working at Celanese was my life, it was my first permanent job, and I wasn't sure I wanted to be there to face it. I saw some units go down in the '70s and the company was starting to level while we were still there. In the late '90s even then they were leveling. There was a contract issue with one of the companies that bought a unit, and there was lawsuits involved. That was kind of a rumble. It looked like Iraq when Iraq was first attacked, even now. It looked just like Iraq. Eventually that got cleaned up and that was after I had retired. Our credit union had a contract with the union to operate out of the plant outside the gates on their property. I would see little by little units getting cleaned up, section by section. I didn't know if I could face that; I didn't know if I wanted to face it. So I didn't. I went early, but I kept in contact with a lot of people. Sometimes go have a cold beer, or we met more when they had these parties when the major layoffs took place. I think there was one more voluntary retirement package offered after I left, and I believe that was it. Or if there was one more after that it was a very small one. Then it went strictly...

Q: What were the prospects for the people who remained when the final shutdown took place?

BF: There was no prospects, you got laid off in accordance with the agreement. Some people said it should've been done that way to begin with. But if a company and union agree to do it this way, if the membership voted in favor of it, I can't remember if it had to be two thirds or 50% plus one. There may have been some jealousy involved, but I think in the end it delayed the official layoffs. It ended up that people who were left remaining, and in maintenance I know that would happen because if you still had the same amount of problems with maintenance and you only had 10 people in your crew and you needed 16, you're not going to get it done in the time that they think it's going to get done. Everything took longer. So there's reductions that forced people to either work harder, but there's probably more illnesses reported, more sick leave and stuff like that. So it had all the signs of going down, both morale wise and otherwise. But I think the spirit, I can't tell you about people really young raising families had big mortgages, I think there was a lot of, there may have been some animosity. But then those people didn't have that many years invested in the plant. But even 5 or 10 years at a job, people would say they have an investment. So they had to start looking for other jobs. I didn't have to, although I did work for 10 weeks and haven't worked since. But I may try to do something else yet. I think I still have something left in me.

[END]

