
GUY CARLETON BOUTILIER

PETROLEUM HISTORY SOCIETY

OIL SANDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

TRANSCRIPT

GUY CARLETON BOUTILIER WAS BORN FEBRUARY 28, 1959 IN GLACE BAY, NOVA SCOTIA. HE OBTAINED A B COMM DEGREE FROM ST. FRANCIS XAVIER UNIVERSITY, A B ED DEGREE FROM ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY, AND MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION FROM HARVARD UNIVERSITY. HE WORKED FOR SYNCRUDE IN FORT MCMURRAY AND ALSO AS A BUSINESS MANAGEMENT INSTRUCTOR AT KEYANO COLLEGE. HE RAN FOR CITY COUNCIL AND WAS ELECTED ON OCTOBER 20, 1986 AND BECAME THE YOUNGEST MAYOR IN 1992, AND THE LAST MAYOR IN 1995 WHEN FORT MCMURRAY AMALGAMATED WITH SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES TO FORM THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO. HE WAS THE FIRST MAYOR OF THE MUNICIPALITY. IN 1997, HE BECAME A CONSERVATIVE MLA AND, IN 2001, PREMIER RALPH KLEIN APPOINTED HIM MINISTER OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS. IN 2004, HE WAS APPOINTED MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND, IN 2006, MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL, INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS. IN JULY 2009, PREMIER ED STELMACH EXPELLED HIM FROM CAUCUS FOR CRITICIZING DELAYS IN CONSTRUCTION OF A LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY IN HIS RIDING. HE BRIEFLY SAT AS AN INDEPENDENT AND NOW LECTURES IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA'S SCHOOL OF BUSINESS.

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 1 PM, February 28th, 1959 in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia

Date and Place of Interview: December 12th, 2012, University of Faculty of Business

Contact Information of Interviewee:

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Name of Videographer: Jimmy Bustos

Consent form signed: Yes **Initials of Interviewer:** AD

Last name of subject: BOUTILIER

AD: It is December the 4th 2012 at 1:20 p.m., and we are in the Faculty of Business at the University of Alberta and I'm interviewing Guy Carleton Boutilier for the Petroleum History Society Oil Sands Oral History Project. Guy, thanks so much for agreeing to be interviewed. It's an important project that documents the history of the industry from the perspective of those who lived it and were involved. And I think your story is an important part.

GB: Oh, thank you.

AD: So can you tell me where you were ... the date of your birth, where you were born and where you were educated.

GB: Well, I was born in a small rural community, actually a coal-mining community, in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, at the Glace Bay General Hospital. And I was born just short of leap year—or I shouldn't say leap year of that year was 1959. So, I was born on February 28th, 1959, and of course moved to Alberta just for one year and here we are 35 years later back in 1977. I went to school in Donkin-Morien High School and moved on to an undergraduate degree, a BBA, Bachelor's of Business Administration, at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish. And then I was educated with a Bachelor of Education degree at St. Mary's University in Halifax, where my family's background is in teaching. And then from there a few years later, I went down to Boston—both my wife and I—and I took my Master's in Public Administration at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

AD: So how ...

[Interruption by other voice.]

Well that was a good pause ...

GB: Since after 15 years of question period I cannot be too distracted. I mean I'm not distracted by a phone.

AD: You can continue [laughter]. So Guy, how did you end up in Fort McMurray and when did you come?



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GB: Well, I came in 1977, and the attraction was my cousin had heard about the advertisement by Esso Imperial Oil, who were advertising on “Hockey Night in Canada.” Esso was a huge sponsor of “Hockey Night in Canada.” I love sports. And they were saying, “Come to Alberta. Come to Fort McMurray, Alberta.” And it was at a time when Syncrude Canada was just opening ... unemployment back home in Nova Scotia was extremely high, and he came. And, in my first year of university, he asked me if I would come out and consider spending the summer months in Fort McMurray, which I did working as a university student with Syncrude Canada. And it was a co-op program, and it was certainly most enjoyable.

AD: So what did you do?

GB: Well, I reported ... It was in a department called F and AS, which is Financial and Administrative Services. I was taking a business degree, and I was there for the summertime as a student, more like an intern, helping in an area that was really dealing with the finances of the company. Now, I was a student at the time. However, it was most enjoyable and actually paid quite well.

AD: So what prompted you to go out there for work purposes?

GB: I had an incredible interest in this small community called Banff, so as you can see my geography is not that good. But I was always attracted, coming from the east coast, to Western Canada, the Prairies, especially Banff and Jasper because they were right nestled into the Canadian Rockies, and so I knew if I was in Fort McMurray that I would be proximate to be able to visit on the weekends areas like Banff and Jasper, which I did. And that was an attraction to me. I wanted to experience all of Canada and chose to come to Alberta.

AD: So what was your first job and when did you arrive?

GB: The university finished in April and I arrived in '77, and it was really quite something because during that time we had major breakups in the Athabasca River, so spring breakup. And I recall meeting Chuck Knight, the mayor of Fort McMurray, and at that time, in April of that year, they were using dynamite to blow up the ice so it wouldn't freeze up and overflow the lower town site, which was the river called—the Heritage River now, which is called the Clearwater. And, of course, that year there was a major, major flood, in 1977 where the lower town site was actually flooded ... What happened was the Athabasca River had broken first and all of the water went onto the ice of the Clearwater River, which then elevated the flood-rising potential, and I recall canoeing on Riddell Street in Fort McMurray from Franklin Avenue.

AD: So then, what was your first job?

GB: My first job was working at Syncrude Canada as a student, a co-op student. And I had been recruited and that was my first job coming to Fort McMurray.



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AD: Now when you came back permanently, tell me when that happened and what was the job that brought you there?

GB: Right, well I had the honor of serving as a student for the three years, from '77 right up 'til when I graduated in '81. And Syncrude offered me the permanent job to move from Nova Scotia to Alberta. And it was an exciting place. I always enjoyed coming to Fort McMurray for the four months. I kinda missed out on the winters, and I can only say the most beautiful summers and springs that the north always had, and that was a real attraction to me. Somewhat of a surprise then when I became a permanent employee and I never knew what everyone meant when they talked about tires going square, and quickly learned that it could get quite chilly in the winter. Of course, minus 40, which was something unheard of in other parts of Canada, but I always found minus 40 still warmer than minus 20 in Nova Scotia, with the humidity.

AD: So what was your job title and what were your duties at Syncrude then?

GB: At Syncrude, I continued the F and AS, Financial and Administrative Services. I was a cost analyst, and that was of course in '81. And we were in the mining section. The building was 41B and 41A, and it was essentially maintaining all the costs in the engineering departments. And, of course, costs were always important and that was at a time, mind you, when the price of oil was only 14, 15 dollars a barrel.

AD: So, it was not necessarily a fortuitous career choice, because of course the industry was in deep trouble at that point.

GB: Yes, the business case made no sense whatsoever. And it was going to create some serious public policy changes in terms of ... for the oil sands, what I often refer to as this treasure that's been locked in the ground, and, you know, how do we materialize for the best interest of Albertans and Canadians that treasure?

AD: So, in terms of your first years then at Syncrude, you were dealing with a company that was uneconomic.

GB: It made no business sense at all.

AD: And the higher ups were actually looking for buyers.

GB: Absolutely so. And, in fact, during that time the Ontario government was a big investor in GCOS, now Suncor, but the Government of Alberta, of course, was a big investor in Syncrude Canada, quite simply because the marketplace did not attract that capital from private investors. So, they recognized—the governments—that the people of Alberta owned that resource but the question was, how do we unlock that treasure?



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AD: Now, you've really had multiple careers, and, you know, we'll talk about you being mayor and MLA, but I want to follow this track of a Syncrude employee. How did the turnaround come about and what was it like working in a company that as an economist you would have seen was failing?

GB: It was. Serious dollars were required to start up. It's not anyone who can start up an oil sand company. Huge capital investment—I call it patient investment capital—but at the end of the day Fort McMurray had something that the rest of the world wanted. So, it really tests the theory of supply and demand. We have something. There was clearly a demand. And as we know many years later that demand continues. And so, when I look at what was taking place, I think one of the key points, which I would like to talk about, is technology. What I have seen is the advancement of technology. I recall addressing the United Nations many years later as the Minister of the Environment, talking about what has grown the oil sands over 30 years, and the technology and the role that technology has played. And when I say technology, what I really am talking about are people. You know, incredible scientists and the companies' commitments of both GCOS/Suncor and Syncrude to want to do better. And, clearly, they have proven that, many times over.

AD: Did you ever consider leaving?

GB: Yes, not only consider leaving, I did leave. And I left during 1984. This was after the National Energy Policy and the impacts of that. Syncrude were then offering people, in terms of reducing costs, opportunities to further their education. That fit nicely for me, having graduated with one degree. And so, in 1984, I went back to Nova Scotia, to get another degree in teaching, in education, which was always in my family. And so, my dad was very pleased, as a high school principal, and my sisters, and I went back to university. But it was a wonderful opportunity, because Syncrude were offering to pay your tuition to be able to go back. I took advantage of what the company was offering and went back to get some more education.

AD: So two years later, then—I guess it would have been '86—you returned to Syncrude. Is that correct?

GB: Actually, in the summer of '85 I returned and came back, working for Syncrude again, and continued, but this time with some more formal education. And things were beginning to pick up. The discussion about Alsands, discussion about the other lease, the other six lease holders. OSLO was, of course, on the horizon, so there was a real sense of optimism and hope about the future. And certainly I wanted to be part of that.

AD: And what was your title at that point and your area of responsibility?

GB: A financial analyst. I had gone from a cost analyst to a financial analyst, and I recall reporting to the vice president of Technico, which is the technical engineering component in 41A. And that was in mining, and certainly some just wonderful people, most of them engineers.



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AD: And who was the person you reported to?

GB: There was Laird Wilson, was the gentleman's name, and also Mr. Ryant [?], and he was an engineer in charge of the entire engineering area. Just wonderful people, and I used to make fun of engineers, because they are clearly linear thinkers. One plus one must equal two. And, of course, they always would say that a financial analyst must make one plus one equal two, as well. So it was a fun time, and very collegial.

AD: So, very shortly we've got some major change and we've got some significant leaders emerging at that point, of course, Eric Newell being one of them. Now, do you want to talk about your understanding at that point of the change that brought about the prosperity and massive development that has happened since?

GB: Well, in that era, 1986 ... I recall that year because it was my ... I was hosting a sports show on cable, with Shaw Television. And there was a municipal election, so I was at the time in my young twenties, and someone said, "Well, you should run for Council." The average age of Fort McMurray was 24 years old. And so, in October of that year, 1986, I ran for City Council. But when I reflect back, Syncrude was of course running for now almost 10 years. GCOS, the oldest company, Suncor, had been doing well. But there was incredible, still, cost pressures, and it was viewed then that we need to come up with a policy that can attract investment into the oil sands, because we still had this treasure—a treasure of supply and demand that people wanted. And the question was, with our technology which was advancing, how do we move forward? Because moving forward is really what this was all about. It was once said that, "You want to run." Well, if you can't run, then just simply walk. And if you can't walk, simply crawl. And if you can't crawl, just keep moving forward. And that was the attitude of the leaders back then. Eric Newell, Jim Carter, the Chairman of the Board and the President of Syncrude, they had an attitude of wanting to move forward. Also I might add Rick George from Suncor. They had an attitude of how do we move forward? And a key component of that was clearly technology and they were investing serious millions of dollars in technology, which I think is what has turned the corner in the development of the oil sands.

AD: So you know ... so we're really talking about a shift to truck and shovel. Do you have any observations, comments on that?

GB: Well, it was something that both Suncor and Syncrude were studying, but it harkens me back to October, 1992. After two years of being away studying over in Harvard, I came back and I decided to run for mayor. And I recall the meeting that I had with the Executive Committee of Suncor, and that was one day after I'd just been elected the youngest mayor in Canada. And that was on October the 19th, 1992, and I met with the Executive Committee of Suncor, where they were moving from bucketwheel to truck and shovel. And the initial stages of that, in 1992, and Rick George in his most recent book talks about the rise of the oil sands. He came in and as a new Mayor and you know fairly young, he indicated that they were going to have to be laying off about 600 workers. And that was at the Sawridge Hotel. Then it was called the Sheraton Hotel, and I met with 15 of them. And it was really interesting. When I showed up for supper that evening, when you go to have supper there



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was only 15 chairs, and I was the 16th person. And my manners told me well if there's not a chair, then I'll meet you another time. So Rick George and Dee Parkinson came out and said, "No, sir, Mr. Mayor, we have a chair for you." And then they proceeded At the time, you know, Suncor potentially was trying to survive, and through mainly that new technology of truck and shovel..., something that Syncrude and Suncor both of course embarked on was in my view the beginning of a new era of oil sands.

AD: But as mayor, I mean, being told that these jobs in your community were disappearing. What did you feel about that?

GB: It really is how a public official reacts ... I see a leader like a mayor communicating to the public. And so, who would really be happy at seeing 600 of his workers losing their job? The bigger view... at 30,000 feet though was about the treasure that would never be uncovered because GCOS was at the brink of potentially not continuing on. And so, we are losing the battle with hopefully winning a war. And that war was that of a new technology becoming more efficient. Because the price of oil back in the early '90s was still hovering in the 12, 13, 14 dollars a barrel and, when it was costing over 20 dollars a barrel to produce, the business case was not strong.

AD: Do you think it had helped that you had been a Syncrude employee and understood the industry when you then wore the mayor's hat? Do you think that was an advantage?

GB: I would hope so. We were a team of councillors and city aldermen, and I view it as you're city leaders; you're all in a kayak or a canoe, and the question is how you get the team to row together? And it was really in part of educating, because some of what was going on behind the scenes with Suncor was not really known to the public and, understandably so, because it could also have a detrimental effect on investment and confidence in the future. And, obviously, I was privy to something so always I had an understanding of the business but, at the same time, for those who were losing their jobs for the survival of the company, it certainly was not received as good news. That's for sure. But I will say that I understood, what was really the incredible hurdle that the oil sand companies were facing.

AD: Now you've talked about the technology area, but you've also talked about the need for new investment. So could you tell me that story and how that came about? Who were the key players, you know, all of that?

GB: Yes. There was a requirement for a new public policy. I remind you, at that point, in the early '90s, we had a bridge to nowhere, which was the Lougheed Bridge. We had streets in Timberlea that were paved and with fire hydrants and street lamps, but with no homes on it. We had a water treatment plant with the capacity for a hundred thousand people, yet we only had just over/under 50,000 people. We had overbuilt in preparation, and so the question was—the infrastructure was in place but we still needed to attract that capital. And, clearly, it was a time as a mayor [to act], both locally and provincially, with the provincial leaders, and then nationally with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. I will say, Anne McLellan, who was the Minister of Natural Resources, who I had



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known—we both coming from Nova Scotia—we talked about how do we come together? And it was really about coming together and public policy. I recall writing a letter to then Prime Minister [Finance Minister] Paul Martin, and the generic fiscal regime was ultimately the answer, where companies could invest and they could recoup their capital. And, obviously, that was an incentive to attract [investors]. It was predicted that we would attract 20 billion dollars over 20 years. The policy worked so well. And I recall being the master of ceremonies for all of the CEOs when the Prime Minister came with of course key persons—people like Eric Newell, Jim Carter, Robert Rosen, who often talked about the treasure. How do we uncover it? But it was truly a policy, a policy of how do we come together? I recall meeting with the Prime Minister, but also with the Deputy Prime Minister, who was someone who was not always a fan of the oil sands. And her name was Sheila Copps. Sheila Copps was the Deputy Prime Minister. So, I had learned that some of her relatives were on City Council in Hamilton. I recall as a mayor flying to Hamilton to meet with the Deputy Prime Minister and also meeting with her relatives who were on City Council. And I remember saying that all of the steel manufacturing that could benefit from the development of the oil sands, and I remember quite simply saying to the Deputy Prime Minister, who was the MP in the Hamilton/Wentworth area, “You do want your steel workers to be working, don’t you? So why would you be against such a policy?”

And so I say that Anne McLellan, the Minister of Natural Resources, was a huge champion. You need champions to be able to move public policy, because there’s always someone [who opposes] ... Any new idea, any new public policy is like a newborn child. You have to feed it. You have to nurture it. You have to give it a chance to grow. And we projected 20 billion dollars with this new policy to attract over 20 years. And, ultimately, what happened was that policy generated over a hundred billion dollars, and not in 20 years but in actual fact just over five years. So, it was quite a successful policy and you had a Liberal government in Ottawa. You had a Conservative government under Premier Klein in Alberta. I was a local mayor that liked the Liberals and liked the Conservatives at the time and so I felt comfortable in meeting with Premier Klein and also meeting with the federal people such as Anne McLellan. And so the sense was that policy was more important than politics. And that was refreshing. To be a mayor you didn’t have to belong to any political party but recognizing that at that time the government in Alberta had been in power for over 30 years.

AD: Do you want to talk about the Oil Sands Task Force and the Chamber of Resources and so on?

GB: Yes. The Alberta Chamber of Resources, the Oil Sands Task Force, truly was just a wonderful example of public policy in helping politicians for advocating a policy that could work for all Canadians. I recall Syncrude Canada where we had reclaimed land that now had over a hundred bison roaming on it. That was reclaimed land that was fully restored back to its original nature, but even better. Now I don’t say “better,” because I will say that the Creator creates the best. But I can say that it allowed an opportunity for bison to be able to roam on reclaimed land.

But the Oil Sands Task Force connected Canadians. I recall speaking at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, where we would speak and where people were to hear the story, because some



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Canadians were not even aware that the oil sands were producing oil. And the media played an important role, but I think the champion leadership of people from the oil sand industry, from the Alberta Chamber of Resources, from the chambers of commerce, that was so important; from Aboriginal leaders, who saw for their people opportunity for employment while maintaining what the Creator had created. It was a delicate balance, but it was something that brought Canadians together. Labour unions ... I recall meeting with labor unions and, one company was unionized, the other wasn't, but there was a real sense that Canadians can benefit from a policy that could attract investment, that could then unlock this treasure with the technologies that were being explored. And that's exactly, what happened.

AD: Now, in terms of being the mayor in Fort McMurray. Basically, it is a one- industry town, in essence. And that if the industry is doing well, the town is doing well.

GB: Yes.

AD: And so the two appear to be almost inseparable. But Fort McMurray was the little town that grew and grew and grew and that there were special challenges. Do you want to talk about that?

GB: Ya, there was no question there were special challenges. There was a long history of corporate social responsibility. And what is corporate social responsibility? It really is where we marry public policy to the community. I'm always an advocate that all politics are local and no matter where investment decisions are made it still is our backyard. And I say that today as our son, who breathes the air in Fort McMurray. You know, I went on to be a Minister of Environment but, first, I want my son to breathe clean air. And I'm not speaking as a politician then. I'm speaking as a father. So those values ... this is our backyard. It's not a movie called *Avatar*. It's our backyard. We care deeply about it. Something that is grossly misunderstood. The people that call Fort McMurray their home, and I have done that now for over 35 years.

It's our backyard; it's our home. We have an investment in our community from an environmental and sustainability perspective more than anyone else. And, as much as critics from other parts of the world may comment about our community, you find me one mother or father or someone who calls Fort McMurray their home, and if you think for a moment they are willing to sacrifice the environment, they're not a part of our community, because we care deeply about our community and that's why Alberta was the first Ministry of Environment under Premier Lougheed. The first government in any province and the federal government was the Province of Alberta. And I think it speaks of Alberta's values, going back to 1971, that the environment is important ... and if you can imagine a premier inventing a ministry of environment that no other government had had. I call that true, you know, visioning for the future on the values that Albertans have. So our community was goal congruent, but not to the point of compromising important values that we have. And I think that is something that is grossly misunderstood and I will continue to advocate that no one has a greater vested interest in our backyard than the people that call Fort McMurray their home.



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AD: You have the distinction of being the youngest mayor, but you were also the last mayor. So do you want to tell that story?

GB: Oh, ya. Well, in 1995, we decided to move from the City of Fort McMurray to the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, and that was truly a team effort of forming what was referred to as the stakeholders group. People like Eric Newell, Jim Carter; people from the school; people from the college; people from the Aboriginal community; people from city council. It was really community members coming together saying, “How can we do better?”

At the time, I’d done a thesis at Harvard on why would we have a snowplow stop at its border, lift its blade, and go through the city and then put its blade down and continue on plowing the streets to Syncrude and Suncor? That just did not make good economic sense to any of us. And we thought, if we were creating, if we were creating Fort McMurray all over again, what would we do? And we said, “We do not need three or four local governments. We could do it with one.” And there was agreement. And the story was, be it an ambulance or a fire truck, we did not need this inter-jurisdictional fighting. And, so, we came together. And it brought together—I commend the Aboriginal communities, such as Chief Boucher, Chief Cyprien, Chief Wawakwin [?], true leaders that were coming together, saying, “This makes good sense.”

And, on April the 1st 1994, we eliminated the City of Fort McMurray and formed the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, and it was on April 1st and we said, “No fooling around.” And it brought ... we go as far north as the Northwest Territory border and Fort Chipewyan, which is of course Alberta’s oldest settlement. And two of the Councilors there we had on Council. And it was truly a hybrid model of how we worked together. But when I think of the people involved back then from Suncor, Syncrude, the Stakeholders Group, which I had the honor of chairing as mayor. I was working on working myself out of a job.

So, we went from 30-some politicians and three or four mayors and chairman of the improvement district to one, which we called Wood Buffalo. Now, to this day, 16 years later, 17 years later, the name, the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, is only a temporary name. And, by resolution of council, I don’t think anyone is aware that it’s still only a temporary name. And what we’ve done is on the new logo, which included the buffalo, which we decided to call it, after Wood Buffalo Park. We also had the bright red of the Aurora Borealis, and then we had the Aboriginal compass on the logo. And we took an approach that this covered everyone. But every community, such as Fort Chipewyan, had on its city trucks, Fort Chipewyan. The pride of Anzac and the other communities was very important, including Fort McMurray. And we ensured that we had the umbrella of the entire community, but we knocked down all of those borders and we were one people. And the Government of Alberta—Dr. Stephen West was the minister of Municipal Affairs—and he said, “My goodness, you came to me, you presented the stakeholders group as a community saying, ‘We want less politicians. We want a region as a whole. It’s more economical.’” And I can say that our taxes actually came down. So there were no losers, and it really gives new meaning to win, win, win. And I think to this day, seventeen years later, it still holds true.



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It really is a compliment to every single person. Jim Carberry was the Deputy Mayor. He had lived in Fort Chipewyan. He was a councilor. He had an incredible strong relationship with the Aboriginal community. And so, we all came together, and at the end of the day I think it helped our community. I think it helped our industry, because we were working together as one. And that is beautiful to see, working together as one as I made that comment earlier, as rowing in that same canoe. I recall having Council meetings up in Fort Chipewyan where we would go North on the Athabasca River. And I always remember the radio station, CJOK, playing a song as we went to our first council meeting after forming Wood Buffalo. We hopped on a canoe, a jet boat by forestry, and we hopped on the Clearwater River, which became the Heritage River, and we went North to a Council meeting, showing that we were together. What was interesting was they played the song “To Gilligan’s Island” [laughter].

AD: Now, in terms of the contemporary scene where you see critics making allegations about the companies and I guess by extension the civic level of government, the provincial level of government riding roughshod over Aboriginal interests. I mean, your take on this would be very different. Do you want to talk about Aboriginal interests and how the companies, the municipality, how they have dealt with these?

GB: Well, I think over the past 25 years, it’s been a rollercoaster ride, but when I was making reference to the formation of Wood Buffalo, at that time I believe was the truest sense of working together. The Aboriginal communities, we had two members on Council that were a first nation chief from the Chipewyan band, Archie Cyprien, sat on the Council. He was a chief, and he sat on the Council. It really spoke of the incredible relationship we had built, and so I do believe that the corporate social responsibility was at a peak at that time. You had leaders that I mentioned earlier that truly understood the importance of us working together.

I recall going to parades in Fort McKay, you know, where we were one community, and there was this sense of pride about how we were Wood Buffalo. There was no longer just Fort McMurray, which was associated with the oil sands. It was Fort McKay. It was Fort Chipewyan. It was Fort Fitzgerald. It was all of our communities coming together: Janvier, Conklin, Anzac, Sucker Creek, we were all coming together. But I think your question about leadership and roughshod, I think as the years progressed I think that some leaders have changed. I think that ultimately there is some truth to that. And I think it is a strong message to both governments as well as to industry that strengthening relationships with our neighbors, which was the intent of 1995 in forming Wood Buffalo [is important].

How did we work altogether? And here we are now, many years later, and certainly there’s many players involved, more corporate owners, but I remind every one of them that if you examine the corporate social responsibility that was displayed by Syncrude and Suncor and the city government and the provincial government and national government under the leadership then, I believe it truly captured the spirit of who we are, what we do and how we do it. Our slogan and our logo of the entire municipality was, “We have the energy.” And that captured the spirit of who we are, what we do and how we do it. But that is with no less of a commitment to our environment because of our



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children. This is our home. This is our backyard. This is not *Avatar*; this is not a movie. This is the real thing and we all believed in it. Our ego, it was as if we were coming into a room and what could we best do to grow this community in the most efficient and sustainable way? And I would argue that in 1995 to 2005, 2006, I would suggest to you the relationship with the oil sands with industry and the community could not have been stronger. Is it less today? Yes, I believe it is.

AD: We can go back to that. You also experienced the various efforts on the part of the companies to create Aboriginal job creation - the various projects that were really looking at finding jobs in the operations for Aboriginal People. Now, those did not succeed very well, and I'd like you to comment on that. But then I want you to address the whole cultivation of Aboriginal entrepreneurship.

GB: Well, later on in my political career, having had the honor of serving as the Minister of Aboriginal Relations later on, I will say this that, first of all, I do believe that the issue [is important. Syncrude Canada was the largest Aboriginal employer in all of Canada. That speaks of something. It speaks of the commitment, of the leadership and corporate social responsibility. And, so during that time there was an extra effort. I often use the three words "and then some." Not only were we working hard towards that end, we were working hard to employ Aboriginals and then some. I then went on to teach at the college and, of course, training at the college in terms of developing skill sets for Aboriginals and for others. It was there. It was a natural, you know, environment to be able to get a skill set to be able to do your job. And I think of people like one of Canada's 40 under 40, Dave Tuccaro, an Aboriginal who went on and who is truly a role model today, recently from Fort Chipewyan, with his company, Neegan Development, and he's a perfect example of the tremendous opportunity that was there that I do believe did work during that time. Today, in 2012, I think it's a different environment and I do believe that we've lost ground in that area. But I'm very proud, having served as a mayor and an MLA and a Minister of the Crown, to say that that commitment under corporate social responsibility was there. And those three words "and then some." I think the facts truly speak for themselves.

AD: Now, when did you decide to run provincially?

GB: Well, I first got elected in 1986. So I sat on City Council for 11 years and two terms as Mayor, both of the City of Fort McMurray and the first Mayor of Regional Wood Buffalo. And, then, one of my commitments was I wanted to ensure that we eliminated our deficit. I was wanting to reduce taxes, had achieved that objective. And, then, back in 1997, the Liberal candidate—he was the Liberal MLA and he now is a justice, Justice Adam Germaine, was the Liberal MLA. And I will say that we were friends. He belonged to Campbell and Germaine law firm. We had done much work with them. In fact, they were our lawyers. And they were lawyers in the city because the lawyers that were the lawyers for the city actually did not work in the city of Fort McMurray. I took an approach that, if you're a law firm from Calgary or Edmonton and you don't pay taxes in Fort McMurray, you're not going to work in Fort McMurray unless you had an office here. So, we ultimately let the lawyers go from both cities of Edmonton and Calgary, and we chose to hire the firm locally in Fort McMurray of Campbell and Germaine.



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Then, Adam Germaine became a Liberal MLA and went on to become a justice. But he called me. And to give you a sense of—forget about politics—just the sense of ... he said, “Guy, you’re the Mayor, you’ve had a successful run, you’ve been on Council for 11 years, why don’t you run provincially? But you make sure you run as a Conservative.” And, I guess, judging by my actions, I was a conservative. I like balancing a budget. But I’ll caution you, a good friend of mine, David Suzuki, said “Let’s save labels for planets. Not for people.” So, what I was really looking for were the best ideas. And that’s something that I truly admired about Premier Ralph Klein. No matter what political party you represented, you represent people, and let the ideas speak for themselves. And so I looked at every new idea as a newborn child. How do we protect it, nurture it and make it grow. And so that’s the approach I took. So, I did run for Premier Klein’s government then, which is a very different government than today. And I had the honor of getting elected and serving in his Cabinet for many years in a variety of ministries. And certainly I enjoyed it. But, at the same time, [I was] very good friends with Honorable Anne McLellan, who was the federal Minister of Natural Resources. And it just shows that government could work together. And that, you know, a Liberal government in Ottawa, with a Conservative government in Alberta. I don’t think the relationship had ever been stronger than what it was during that time of the Prime Minister coming, with the Premier and Ministers signing a generic fiscal regime, which is something that to this day truly serves all Canadians.

AD: Now what was your first ministry?

GB: My first ministry was Ministry of Municipal Affairs. And ... you know, Premier Klein had been the Mayor of Calgary and back then he said, “Guy, I want you to be the Minister of Municipal Affairs.” And that was an honor certainly for me, because not everyone gets into Cabinet and it was an honor to ... We had formed Regional Wood Buffalo. We were full of energy. The oil sands was continuing to be an even more important place. I always say I really was elected, but I think it was a signal by the Premier to the people of northeastern Alberta that it’s a very important place. It’s an important place for the future, so I thank the people of Fort McMurray for the honor of serving them and serving in Cabinet for all of Alberta was certainly an equal honor as well.

AD: So, following up on what you said, in terms of your tenure in that portfolio, what would you consider the achievements?

GB: Well, in Municipal Affairs I thought it was very important that we achieved some provincial legislation on some important points. One of them was that when you’re developing a community the municipality should have the authority to be able to do something such as offsite levies that, in fact, was being done but was not allowed. I was very proud of implementing under the Municipal Government Act that piece of legislation. But also equally important was the Mines and Minerals [legislation], which ultimately allowed the generic fiscal regime to go through. It was an honor for me to be able to sponsor that Bill. And that was being carried by Stephen, Dr. West, who was a Minister, and he asked me to sponsor that Bill, which unleashed the generic fiscal regime in partnership with the federal government. I might add, the trilateral relationship was so important:



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local government of the regional municipality, with the provincial government as well as with the federal government. All governments coming together, being harmonized to say, “This is good for Canada.” And even Sheila Copps in Hamilton ... her steelworkers were going to be getting jobs. People in eastern Canada, where I’d harkened from, were provided with employment opportunities, as well as the west and actually, for that matter, all across the world. So, it was quite a time with a welcome sign for Wood Buffalo/Fort McMurray to say, you know, “We have the energy.” But it was really not as much about oil sand energy as it was about people energy. You know, we were one of few. We were governments that were not fighting with each other. And we thought that was very energy efficient, in the environmental sense, rather than being disenfranchised, where you go off in this corner and come out and fight. We seemed to think we should harness that energy and put it towards good public policy, which we did.

AD: Can you give me a layperson’s description of about what that fiscal regime meant?

GB: It was intended to attract investment. So, quite simply, companies such as Syncrude/Suncor who were expanding, if they expanded with new technology such as the truck and shovel and hydro transport, they were first able to recoup their capital cost, so that was a very important incentive for them to attract capital to invest. And, then, later on governments began to say, “We don’t need to be in this business.” The fiscal regime was attracting investment from all quarters of Canada and for the matter the world. And so it was attracting [investment] both the Ontario government, which was invested in Suncor, and the Syncrude government of course, or I should say the Syncrude company that was invested in by the Alberta government under Premier Lougheed, that they could divest of that interest. Many people very seldom have said that, when the Alberta government invested in Syncrude it was one of the most profitable investments that the people of Alberta have ever, ever received because it was a tremendous success. And, of course, then it was sold, because there was room now for the market, for others, under the generic fiscal regime to be able to get involved. And that’s exactly [what happened] ... like I said, 20 billion over 20 years. It ended up being over 100 billion in less than five years.

AD: Now, what about royalty regimes? Do you want to talk about that?

GB: Royalty regime. Well, first of all, you don’t have any royalty regime if first you are not able to unlock the resource. And, so, I recall as my next ministry was Minister of Environment in 2004 and five, I recall two important points. One was intervening at the Steepbank Mine - that was for Suncor. I saw a lot of international community coming to our community to intervene. And the word intervene, you wonder. Is it a positive intervention or is it a negative? And I chose to say that I intervened because I thought I was knowledgeable and speaking on behalf of my community. So, we had these international people coming from all over the world. From Greenpeace, from the Sierra Club, all over world, and yet I thought as an elected official I should have a mandate. So I offered Premier Klein my resignation as Minister of Environment. I indicated that I think it was important to do my job first as an MLA and, also, as a minister, but I was there as an MLA to speak on behalf of my community, and that was my job. You don’t get to be a minister until you are first an MLA. And I wanted to speak. And I spoke from a trilateral perspective. I spoke about the good things that



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Suncor were doing. I spoke of where they had to do better. I spoke of where governments, both federally, provincially and locally—I thought we were working well together, but I was indicating that we truly need to come together no different than the oil sands task force. And that wasn't happening. And so I chose to intervene. And rather than listen to people from Sweden talk about the oil sands, I thought it was important for me [to do so].

So I went into Premier Klein's office and offered my resignation, indicating I need to do my job as MLA first. And he looked at me and he smiled and he took it and he ripped it up, and he said, "Guy, you just go and do your job and I trust what you will do so because you have never forgotten who your bosses are, and that's Albertans and the people in your community." So, I took it that I didn't have to resign, so I spoke. And I remember many of the lawyers interviewing me, "Well, are you here now as a Minister or an MLA." And I said, "I'm here as an MLA." They said, "Well, you're a minister all the time." They said, "What do you do? Do you turn off your half of your brain?" And I said, "Yes, that's exactly what I do." Because it was truly rhetorical what they were asking. But my ultimate job was to represent the good people of Alberta and the good people in my community. And so I spoke in a manner that said the oil sands with technology, with innovation, you know, the 20 years that have advanced with truck hydraulic, you know, truck and shovel. Then we went into new technologies. I thought that was so important.

And, then, when I moved on to the United Nations down in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to speak, I was honored to speak representing Canada. And that was at the time, by a federal minister, Stéphane Dion, and he said, "Guy, we would like Alberta to speak." And I think the reason was it was based on ideas, and it was not politics. It was ideas, in what the oil sands were doing in innovation and technology. And I think, truly to this day, Stéphane Dion was someone that was grossly misunderstood, because I think he truly did have a vision of the role that technology plays in our future. If you can imagine, a Conservative Minister of Environment coming together with a federal minister. Anne McLellan saw this as an important goal. Industry leaders saw it as an important step forward. And that was just after some work that had been done in Kyoto, and so we thought the answer was in the technology component as opposed to transferring wealth to other nations around the world. That was the position of the province of Alberta and to this day I still think that it holds true.

AD: Now what other issues did you have to deal with as the Minister of the Environment?

GB: Well, in environment it was such a ... I will say this story. I remember when the Premier called me the day after the election. As an MLA, I had the honor of a very good four years as Minister of Municipal Affairs and we had just won the next election and Premier Klein called me, and he said, "Guy, I want you to move to another ministry. This is one of the most senior and it's the Ministry of Environment."

And I said, "Are you sure? You know, I come from the oil sands companies." And what I was really impressed with was the Premier's vision.



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He said, “Guy, you’ve demonstrated working with industry, working with environmental groups; your ability of keeping those labels away and just simply working on just good policy.” And I was honored.

And I said, “Are you sure you want me to be Minister of Environment. Are you sure? Not the Minister of Energy?”

And he said, “No, I want you to be Minister of Environment because I know your family. They breathe the air in the backyard every day. So I know your commitment.” But he also indicated, and I certainly was complimented, that he felt environmental groups were pleased by the fact of my understanding because of my family. I first spoke as a father, spoke as a person who has a family in Fort McMurray as opposed to as a minister. And so I was honored to serve as minister of environment for over two years and the pressures that came with that. And I have some wonderful stories of excellent corporate social responsibility, unlike years afterwards. But I recall we had some emissions coming into Fort McKay and I remember calling Jim Carter, the then CEO of Syncrude, indicating that I was going to be issuing some environmental directives. And Jim saying, “Guy, you know, minister, you know.” Guy-Jim, that’s what we were. But it was our backyard. Jim had raised his family there with Eric Newell. And we stood on the steps of, in City Hall, and as minister of environment issued environmental directives relative to shutting down a coker at the time because of the emission. But I didn’t really have to do it, because the company under corporate social responsibility, working with Chief Boucher, the Aboriginal chief, it was the right thing to do. They didn’t need a government “nail and jail them” approach, you know. It was more fair and square. So here we were, the Chief, the President of Syncrude, and the Minister there executing the laws of Alberta, but executing them by working together. And, in my view, that type of corporate responsibility, of working together ... that’s a tall order, of shutting down a coker, because of the emission that was going on. But really it was like Jim Carter was there, and Eric Newell, and it was like, it was the right thing to do. And so, when you have that with you—the right thing to do—it will always serve Albertans well.

AD: So, you know, the regulatory regime was in place and as Minister you basically said “Comply or shut down.”

GB: Right.

AD: And of course ...

GB: It was the invisible hand. It was like not only do I want to read about it, I will be with you, saying, “Our company is committed to those values.” Our company ... this is my home for 30 years as well. And so there was a real sense of corporate social responsibility that’s more than just profit maximization. It was about doing what is right because we were neighbors. And Chief Boucher—the chief at the time—this is ... we had people, seniors, that the air was beginning to affect them with asthma. It was very easy, the decision, to make, and very acceptable to Syncrude and by those ... all of those people involved because we were on the right side of right.



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AD: You also had a spill to deal with but, of course, not up in Fort McMurray. This was, was it ...

GB: Wabamum. Wabamum. Yes.

AD: Do you want to talk a bit about that?

GB: Yes, I was Minister of Environment. It was the first day of my vacation and a helicopter picked me up, and I was at our cottage at Lac La Biche. And the value of being out at a cottage with your young family—that is very important. Canadian National, their train went off the track and ultimately spilled into the Wabamum Lake. And I wanted to be there quickly, understanding that, you know, that you have to be very proactive with that as well, and there's a responsibility by CN as well. And what happened was, and I will say this, that CN at the time were, unfortunately, more interested in getting their train on the track than being able to corral the flotation devices that are required to contain the oil spill that was seeping into the Wabamum. And, ultimately, of course, directives were issued, and in fact a Hercules plane went out, went down to A&M, Texas, to get the proper flotation devices to be able to corral the oil because the wind was coming up. I always remember meeting with some residents there, and on the national news that night, I believe, Peter Mansbridge ... I remember my Father not being happy with me because he was watching it from television in Nova Scotia and I had said on the television that I was quite pissed off with Canadian National and the CEO of Canadian National was Hunter Harrison and the head office was based in the United States—I don't think most people realize that Canadian National is, of course, owned by our neighbors to the south, majority owned. And, so, we had some very select words. But the next day when I met with the owners, of the people who own property at Wabamum and the MLA Fred Lindsay, they greeted us with a standing ovation, because I think we were reflecting the values that they placed in the environment. And so they blocked the train. They put their lawn chairs in front of the train on the track, and they were not allowing the train to move any further until such a time that the proper mitigation was put in place.

And I hired two people—one a gentleman from the University of Alberta, where I sit today, Dr. David Schindler, who is certainly a water expert that I value tremendously, and also a gentleman, a PhD, who had handled the *Exxon Valdez* from Alaska—and hired both of them to be with me during those seven days. I'm proud to say today Wabamum is back to what I consider typical, based on that time. But it was a very interesting time and perhaps that's one of the enjoyable things ... I made some very good friends to this day. And in fact one of my neighbor's, today, young daughter was only 10 years old at the time, and she was I think in grade 5 or grade 6, and I met them and now I met her many years later and she still to this day remembers doing a school project on the importance of protecting the environment and our water resources.

GB: Now, you know, Alberta has been getting a black eye in the media with respect to oil sands and conservation and environmental protection. But the story you tell is quite different. And I know you can only speak in the period where you had that portfolio, but it shows that the Alberta government



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having I believe the first ministry in the Commonwealth of the environment that there has been attention paid to the environment.

GB: No question in my mind, and it stands the test of time each and every day, because people whose back yards are in Fort McMurray, that call Fort McMurray their home. Now you can live in Calgary and Edmonton, and you're not as proximate to what's going on there. But the reality of it is the corporate leadership of those companies, they could not, in any way shape or form, mislead the people there. So, we had a bison ranch. We were launching more wetlands ... both Syncrude and Suncor. And then Shell came on, the CNRL came on. This was a commitment to the environment, and so very important. But I believe the true test, all politics are local. And regardless of what takes place internationally, no matter what anyone says internationally ... the media? The media don't always get it right. Sometimes they do. And I will be the first to applaud if they get something right. I use the example of the situation with the ducks that took place later. I was no longer at that time, with, you know, in the government, but I thought the negative coverage of the way that situation was managed was correct. Even though, Mother Nature, a change in the season, going from winter to spring. I'm very familiar with it, but back then I recall that if something like that had taken place under my watch I would have received a call from the executives of the oil sands companies in a heartbeat. Because we're neighbors. I would have received a call from the ... had it been an Eric Newell or Jim Poole, but they had moved on. Okay, you know, corporate social responsibility was also taking a beating in my judgment. And that's only my opinion, but I will say that I think, you know, we're neighbors. You know, we live here, we call it our home. As an MLA I shouldn't be learning about this from the media.

AD: Ya. Now, I think that—just as an aside—I mean, it's an issue of the leadership in the companies for a significantly lengthy period, 15 to 20 years, was mostly local or who lived there. And that resulted in a kind of understanding and commitment.

GB: Yes, it's their back yard too.

AD: That's right. Now, of course, we know that these are multinational corporations.

GB: They are.

AD: And when you parachute leadership from outside the country that doesn't have a stake in the community, you get different decisions. Would you say that was at play with respect to the duck incident?

GB: It was at play. You had a different style of leadership, and I will not comment on that leadership other than to say that the community was not pleased about it, the Government of Alberta I am certain were not pleased about it, nor was anyone nationally. All of the good work of corporate social responsibility, of the things that we had been doing for the 20 years prior to that seemed to go out the window very quickly. Okay? Because it's like you build up a goodwill account of capital, of goodwill. You know, the bison. You know, the wetlands and all of those things, but



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how quickly it was lost by someone who did not even call Fort McMurray or Canada their home. And I don't know how else to call it, but I will call a spade a shovel, but the leadership it was troubled. I actually think that at that time that the corporate leadership, it was a mistake that was made. Now, from my observation, and I can only judge by what we've seen, and I'll allow Albertans to make that judgment themselves, but it clearly hurt not just the industry of one company. It hurt the entire oil sand industry. Something that we'd worked very closely, you know, diligently with during the Oil Sands Task Force [period].

AD: I want to go back to this later, but now I want to go back to your service as an MLA. So tell me what happened to you next. So after the environment ministry ...

GB: Well, after the environment ministry there was a change in leadership as we went from Premier Klein to a new premier. And at that time we had, of course, within the political party any time there's a leadership change it sometimes creates factions within the party, the family, and, so, fair that what happened, but that's the nature of the business. And so you have a new premier, Premier Stelmach, and I then was appointed as Minister of International, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Relations. Aboriginal Relations was merged as the Cabinet became smaller, and I had the honor of serving at that ministry for about a year and a half. And enjoyed it, you know, tremendously, especially the Aboriginal portfolio. And of course the international portfolio ... we were opening offices all around the world, putting Alberta's best foot forward. You know, in Canadian embassies. We opened an office in Hong Kong. We had an office in Beijing. We had an office in Shanghai. And so that was part of Alberta projecting into the future. And, of course, it was just after that the ... we had the duck incident. That was about two years later, and that was very unfortunate. But I enjoyed, of course, connecting other provinces, because my background was connecting like people in Hamilton, steelworkers, with people in the Maritimes, who saw the tremendous opportunity of the oil sands. So, it was a connector, bringing people together, so that was really quite exciting. But at the same time, my family—we were just starting our family—and so I think that year I spent 150 days travelling the world, so I apologized to my wife that I didn't quite get to see my son in those early years to grow. But it still remained an honor to serve, and I served as best I could in those portfolios. And the Aboriginal community was a natural because of the strong relationships that I had, and I always tell the story. Chief Boucher would call me, "Hey, white man, what are you doing?" And I'd say, "Hey, can I say Indian? Well, I'm going to say Indian." And we had, we had ... well, we still to this day have a valuable partnership, and it was the respect of over 35 years of working in the community that we called our home.

AD: Now, your career as an MLA ended when, and this has been a recurring theme in your emphasis on service to the community and representing Fort McMurray, and so that really, as I see it, was the impetus that resulted in your leaving government. Do you want to talk a bit about that?

GB: Well sure ... first and foremost, just like when I went to offer my resignation to Premier Klein, saying my first responsibility, any MLA's responsibility, is to serve his or her constituents. That is the strength of our democracy. And when Premier Klein said, "No Guy, you go do that. You can still do that." And so what had happened was in the election in 2008, Premier Stelmach made a



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commitment for senior citizens to build a long-term care facility. And, ultimately, the Minister of Health, then, Ron Liepert said, “No, they’re going to have to wait five more years.” Now at that point we’re a city of over a hundred thousand, and I literally learned about this in the newspaper. And, so, my comments were that this is not acceptable. And, ultimately, because I refused to toe the party line, the Premier on a phone call—my wife, who was changing our son, who was just one-year-old at the time (no, he was two years old)—called to say, “I’m kicking you out of the Caucus because you’re not toeing the party line.” And I said, “Well, you do what you have to do, but my responsibility first is to the citizens that elected me, because Premier, with all due respect to the office of premier, my job was given to me by the people of Fort McMurray/Wood Buffalo.” And so I never forgot that important principle: you are there to serve your people, which is the strength, I believe, of the government. And so, I got kicked out of Cabinet and the Caucus and then I began as an Independent. And to this day I can look myself in the mirror, simply because I can go and tell a lady now ... Mrs. ... she’s a hundred and two years old, Mrs. Olive Woodward, who in fact hosted people like Robert F. Kennedy, when he was going to climb in the early ’60s after his brother was assassinated, he came to the oil sands with Howard J. Pew, which of course was a major contributor to GCOS and Sun Oil, but she met people like Robert F. Kennedy. He was going to climb a mountain that was named after him by the Canadian government, and he stopped in to see the oil sands with Mr. Pew. And Olive tells me that story, so here she is, a hundred and two, and I refuse to go back to her and tell her she’s going to have to wait another five years for a long-term care facility. So, I had to do what was the internal compass—I listened to my inner voice and, finally, I did that and I got kicked out.

I can only say that I can look myself in the mirror and say that I did the right thing, because I think that is one of the hallmarks of any successful democracy. I understand the important balance of being the team player but also, at the same time, representing your constituents.

AD: Now, in that period, you really identified the infrastructure gap in Fort McMurray that all of this growth—and please tell the story yourself and fill in the figures—that, you know, that the city of Fort McMurray had a population of such and such but how many of those people were actually living in camps? And that when you then take that population base and you look at what their needs are vis-à-vis health care, social services, whatever, there was a huge issue. So, do you want to talk about that? And also your learnings through experience of living in a boom town and how that could be better managed.

GB: Well, my observation was that, of course, the majority of elected officials come from Edmonton, Calgary and rural Alberta. So I was the elected official for Fort McMurray, so you have one voice and it still remained an honor to be at the Cabinet table where there is only 18, 18 or 19 members, and at the Caucus table. It was really important for me to bring the voice of Fort McMurray to the caucus table and to the Cabinet table. Because how else would you know? Fort McMurray, to this day, still is not on the way to anywhere, so for someone in southern Alberta or in Calgary or Edmonton or anywhere, unless you went and visited, you know. I remember one of the highlights was having the entire Cabinet and Caucus come to Fort McMurray. So they got to see first-hand what was really going on. Something that you couldn’t see ... And I remember at the time



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some of my colleagues in Cabinet, in Caucus, saying, “Have you created these traffic jams deliberately just to let us know that you need more infrastructure?”

And I said, “No, this is just what we experience.” And of course at the time, you know, we obviously did have some disagreements. I obviously traveled Highway 63, a major highway and, of course, was successful in getting funding for the beginning of the twinning and, then, it stopped. And of course that’s where we did have a departure with the existing Premier. But my job was to be a champion and an advocate for the people that I represent, and not only that, my wife and son were traveling with me on that highway. And it was a very dangerous highway. So, I was first motivated as a husband and as a father and then as an MLA inherently to say, “Hey, you’re pulling hundreds of millions of dollars out of our community. Reinvest.”

AD: So that issue is still ...

GB: That is still to this day, and I think it played a role in why I was no longer in Cabinet and why I was no longer in Caucus, because I was truly shaking my head in terms of, you know, we’re a democracy. You sit around a Cabinet table and if three or four see the vision of the future and the others do not, then logic says there’s not enough votes and, obviously. I’m doing my best and trying to get those votes to the table. And I think over time, and credit to many of those Cabinet ministers, they began to see the light of the important role that the oil sands played and that they continue to play today. And, of course, today, if you think of a city of about 120,000 people and then you have, you know, workers in camps of another 20,000, we’re somewhere in the 140,000 where Fort McMurray is Alberta’s third largest city. I believe Red Deer might be a bit smaller, but ...

AD: It’s at 96, 97,000, I believe.

GB: Ya, and so ...

AD: It is smaller.

GB: So it is. So, the reality of it is we are facing tremendous pressures on our health care system, on our roadways. You know, there are some times when I fly back to Edmonton and see two hours of steady streams of headlights on our highway and, by the way, with zero passing lanes. I credit Dr. Lyle Oberg, who I supported for premier in the leadership—he didn’t win it—but he was a medical doctor who in fact drove Highway 63 and helped a couple who had a major accident there when he was driving up rather than flying. And, as a medical doctor, helped save an amputation by the work that he did. He traveled the highway, and I encourage others to travel the highway as opposed to hopping on a plane. But everyone knows that it’s not a safe highway.

AD: I want to move into, and I’m not even sure how to phrase this, because the ending of your political career as an MLA was around Fort McMurray getting its just desserts. Why should it have taken so long to get ... and you still do not have appropriate transport or ...



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GB: No, and I do think to this day our community suffers.

AD: everything else, and yet of course it is the cash cow of the province.

GB: It ... I would only say, and I would encourage the new members who represent Fort McMurray that you truly have to be steely eyed. You have to be bold, persistent and determined. I'm very proud with the first twinning that started, but not so proud of all of a sudden, "Oh no, you're not going to get a long-term care center. Oh, by the way, we'll twin that eventually over a period of time." You know, you really have to be an antagonist to a degree. And I'm just proud. "Oh no, here comes Guy again. Oh my god, here comes the story." But the best way to be an advocate and champion of Fort McMurray is to go and see it. Okay? And envision it as your back yard.

AD: Now, going back to the era of corporate social responsibility, the community centredness. We have seen major shifts when CEOs reside in the community, there is a power base. They actually see what's happening in the community and can then make the case for community investment. Now, if you have the leadership absentee in Calgary or as a part of a global conglomerate, that's a very different situation.

GB: Well, it is. And it is much similar to—and I've obviously spoken to CEOs about this—the leadership of an Eric Newell, of a Jim Carter, to use examples. It was an example they lived. They called it home. Their children graduated from high school in Fort McMurray, so it was their back yard too. At the same time, those industries had to then go to their board of directors and say, "We want to go and invest some corporate responsibility dollars into that community." That went far for a while, but you began to get a different sense when a different style of leadership came from the corporate offices outside of Canada. There is no doubt in my mind.

Now, what I am encouraged by ... because in public office you have to remain, you have to be optimistic. But I give you an example. Steve Williams replaced Rick George as the new CEO with Suncor. Steve Williams, his children went to Dickensfield School in Fort McMurray. We barbecued together. He is the CEO of Suncor. I'm encouraged, because he lived in Fort McMurray. He knows Fort McMurray. We can talk about many things that many others cannot, so I have confidence in that style of corporate social responsibility. He has called it his home, and he speaks very fondly of our community, because he understands it. And that's the challenge of any corporation, how do you connect the head office with the office of where the resource is coming from. It's difficult. I felt it was difficult for me as a minister where I guess it got to the point where I lost my job for advocating for my community. And, so, for other corporate leaders, I think it's very important for them to continue bold, persistent and determined, and in doing so building that corporate social responsibility with Aboriginal communities and building it with the community as a whole, because the community are actually the greatest watchdog. And they're actually the toughest to be able to convince, because they can sift through what is true and what is not true.

AD: Now I'm going to get you to put on your professorial hat and be a bit of a futurist. Looking at the industry ... I mean, we have two major pipeline projects that are going to take the resource out



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and that all of those secondary sources of revenue that happen when you build an upgrader locally or you build it in another part of Alberta or now in another part of Canada that those jobs are going to go offshore. Do you want to look at, you know, 15 to 20 years out and look at the implications of that and give me some pros and cons?

GB: Sure. Well, I think perhaps one of the best examples of that was the public policy of the government of Alberta when Premier Lougheed was there when essentially it was structured towards upgrading and refining in the province of Alberta. And not only that, though, but the companies were rewarded because it created employment. But rather than a raw resource going to other parts or neighbors to our south, it was the policy that you could upgrade and you were rewarded for upgrading and refining in our province. And, so, that's very important. Now, based on the marketplace today, refining in Alberta, the business case for refining in Alberta is very, it's not a good business case. They can refine a lot more efficiently down in Texas. Simple. So, the question is, how does the business case be how can we not be as competitive? And, so, we should be working on models where we can upgrade and refine with the resource that we have right here in Alberta. And, I think, a reflection of government policy ... it may be a requirement for a transitional period to get to that point. But, I believe, for the future that has to be the way we go. And, as much as we talk about pipelines, which are important in terms of, you know, transporting the resource, because remember even to this day people of the world still have an insatiable appetite for the resource that comes out of Fort McMurray, so we have it from a marketplace perspective. We have it. The question is, how do we become more efficient? And, I believe, that what I'm excited about is through technology. If you look at the technology of the last 30 years, I am very excited of the technology over the next 10 years. And, in fact, the technology 10 years from now has not even been created yet.

AD: When you look at the in situ ...

GB: Wonderful example.

AD: Ya, you know, SAGD technology, all of those things. I mean, that's ... innovation is continuing to happen. Looking at the market forces. I mean, the proponents of the pipeline projects are basically saying that so long as everything remains in Alberta, we really, we're a single market. I mean, the United States basically is the beneficiary. By creating, say, the pipeline to the west coast and to China, and so on, we're opening up our options as to who we sell the product to, so that there can be a competition between parties that desire to purchase this.

GB: Which is always healthy. I mean, this is a healthy competition. This is Adam Smith and his *Wealth of Nations*. It is the invisible hand of laissez-faire, of going forward. And so as an economics professor, the question is ... I am confident that the pipelines will be built, but the question is, what will be in the pipeline? I would prefer to see upgraded and refined product going to Vancouver and going perhaps up to Alaska that could be shipped over to other parts of the world. That to me is the long-term vision.



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AD: Rather than the unprocessed.

GB: Ya, it's ... and so we need to continue, and I know there is work being done on how we can be more efficient in a refining and upgrading process. And, of course, the announcement of a new upgrader that's going to be taking place in the Redwater area, that's encouraging. But with the new technology I believe there's no reason why—be it the TransCanada, the Keystone with Enbridge. I believe that, you know, I think there's a message to pipeliners, though. I believe that, to the CEOs of both TransCanada and to Enbridge, I think that corporate social responsibility says that oil sand products or whatever you move it seems to me that the public are being starved for information. I mean there was a real sense of unsettlement about the first pipeline after the Leduc back in the '50s. You know, there was a sense. But, of course, we moved and advanced, but I think today the pipeline people perhaps need to demonstrate some greater corporate social responsibility in educating the public of the wonderful, you know, of the wonderful road map we have with pipe laying. And actually, a pretty good record. But today there is doubt, and that doubt is created by any time you have public policy ... the example that President Obama demonstrated. He said, "Okay, hold it. We're not going to approve that." I'm expecting that to be approved now, but there was a lingering sense of doubt. How safe is this? I believe it is safe.

AD: Well, the Enbridge spill ...

GB: Not good.

AD: The media revealed the huge staff turnover, inadequate training, of the people who actually monitor these things.

GB: Right. So then that is from a regulatory perspective the regulation of government, as well as what corporate social responsibility carries. And I do believe that the oil sands when we were forming Wood Buffalo, when we were forming the Oil Sands Task Force for the generic fiscal regime, that was the greatest engagement of labor unions, of industry, of Aboriginals and governments, locally, provincially and federally. We were all working together. But somehow over this past while, it appears to me that we've slipped. And my encouragement to all of those leaders would be to re-engage. And by re-engaging through all of those components we re-engage the public. Otherwise, someone else is going to fill the void.

AD: You know that that slip that you've talked about, is it that things fell between the cracks in the succession in the leadership? What happened?

GB: I think only Albertans and Canadians will be able to judge that, but I think there's some very interesting data to be able to say that, you know, when there comes a change in leadership then does that impact your community? I think it could. And so, all politics are local. And there are ways there are perhaps to be in a corporate office but still have the avenues of communication with where the raw resource comes from or where the pipeline will go. And I think that the time to be doing things is not in a crisis. The time to be doing things under public policy development is during times when



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things are good. And, so then, in my judgment, rather than counting money perhaps that's the time when we should have been engaging public policy and perhaps that's exactly what oil sand companies did back then. And, you know, they were building farms for roaming buffalo and wetland development by Suncor and Syncrude. And that was at a time when everyone was doing well. They were building up this bank account on this corporate social responsibility, and their account was getting very high and respected. And, then, situations happen, changes in leadership, and ... the account is withdrawn, so it's time to build it back up.

AD: Yes. Now, what about the environment? I mean we've seen international environmental groups targeting the oil sands, and I'd like you to talk a bit about that and how we can do better. And the role of people like David Schindler and others on how we make the process. And I mean it isn't just the miners. Strip mining is ugly. But also I mean in terms of SAGD technology of course there's water usage, so there are related issues. How does an industry, since it produces a commodity that the world needs, how does it improve?

GB: I think keeping the end in mind. Okay. So what is the end in mind? For me, the end in mind is whatever they are extracting from this blessed natural resource that we have, what is the end in mind, keeping the end in mind? Well, the best example for me is to see a strip mine at Syncrude or Suncor that have been reverted and reclaimed after 25, 30 years, with its reclamation certificate now, where they have a hundred, 200 bison roaming on it. That's reclaimed land. That's land that looked ugly and is reclaimed and the oil resource that was in it has been sent somewhere in the world, and here it is we have bison roaming on it today. That is the end product of how we want to be able to reclaim the land back to the way it was before. It may even look prettier the way it is today, but it is very difficult to argue with the Creator's formation geographically of how it looked before. So that's keeping the end in mind.

And, basically, what I'm talking about, that's our back yard, and so we have a due diligence to ensure that takes place. We have a due diligence to government—locally, provincially and federally. We have a due diligence to the corporate people that are making these decisions that can affect our back yard. And, so, I think that with the true spirit of corporate social responsibility, there is no reason why with the new technologies, and technologies that still might not be invented today. But I will only say that the technologies of the future will truly surpass the technologies of the past, quickly and more efficiently in a manner that most people are not even aware. That over 90% of the water that is used in oil sand development is totally recycled. Most people don't know that. So, when we read of the international community talking about our community, I would suggest to everyone to harken back to, first and foremost, what is true. Because as someone said, "The truth will set you free." We will continue to keep the industry's toes to the fire. That is a responsibility. But it's their home as well, and it's important what is true. I am not afraid, not at all afraid, of living in Fort McMurray. I'm more afraid of riding that highway.

[Interruption for new memory card.]

We must be almost through.



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AD: We're getting there, but I'm into that futurist mode, and I think that that's ...

GB: So do you want to re-ask? I didn't finish what the question was.

AD: Well, we were talking about the future and we were talking about the environment, and what kind of regulatory regimes do you envision on the part of the provincial and federal governments.

GB: Well, I think regulation is important, just like regulation is important in the banking industry. And I use as an example the meltdown back in 2008. Essentially, it really has proven that Alan Greenspan was wrong when he sided with a totally deregulated market. I believe that no banker should be left alone with no regulation. No different than no oil sand company should be left alone. We have a corporate social ... If you can inject corporate social responsibility with a proper regulation. But it's a regulation that is fair and square. It is known and it is transparent for the public, rather than "nail 'em and jail 'em." Okay, I've seen government that took the "nail 'em and jail 'em" approach in other provinces, as opposed to fair and square. When I had Jim Carter and Eric Newell and the Aboriginal chief with me as Minister of Environment saying we want to do the right thing, that is fair and square. And I don't think we see enough of that. But, at the same time, don't take a government for granted. There is a responsibility to the public, and I believe that that delicate balance is one that can hold true for the future and that there will always be a requirement for regulation. But it's a regulation that doesn't see the flight of capital. It's a regulation that says, "We care about our back yard."

By the way, I always recall I used to go and speak to grade 6 students, where we'd go and deal with state, local and provincial governments, and the reason I would do that is they'd go home and tell their father or mother who was the CEO. So, I think, you should work with your young people, because they have a different view of the world and the future. And I always recall where a CEO said to me, "Guy, my son came home telling me you were talking as the Minister of Environment about what I should be doing." And I think that should really, because you're hitting them personally. And I'm optimistic that there's good people out there in industry. I'm not at all scared off that because you're a CEO you're not a good person. Because I believe the value that Premier Lougheed had, during the days of forming the first Ministry of Environment, I believe that that is a value that still holds true today for Alberta, and for that matter for all of Canada.

AD: The media is very negative, both on the Harper government's pushing back in terms of environmental legislation, providing inadequate resources for monitoring, muzzling scientists—this is another area, not necessarily the oil sands. I'm thinking of fisheries and stuff, and in terms of the province, I mean, we're expecting some new monitoring regimes but those have not been announced as yet. Is there back-peddling, do you think? Is that something to be concerned about?

GB: I really, I'm not sure. But what I am certain of is that a regulation coming from Ottawa and, of course, as you know, with navigable waterways such as the Athabasca, and that is, water is a federal responsibility. And provincially, of course, regulation to ensure proper reclamation. As Minister of



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Environment, I was very proud to issue the first reclamation certificate. But that being the case, again I harken back to all politics are local. And I believe that people who call the back yard of where the resource comes from. And, by the way, people who come from Scandinavia and other parts of the world who represent their own agendas, environmental groups. Good for them; that's great. But, at the same time, I believe that regulation should be first of all started at the local community and, at the local community, no one is going to help put together a regulation that's not going to protect their family and sustain it into the future. So, I believe a real sense of regulation. I don't believe in this idea of top down.

You know, the first order of government, you know, not level of government but order of government was municipal government. And I know you're aware of that. It was not provincial or federal. It was local. And, so, I have confidence in going back to our Aboriginal leaders and community leaders and saying, "What is the best regulation for us?" And, then, building that in partnership with provincial counterparts as a Minister of Environment, which I have always done. And, also, building it federally, as it travels from one province to another. I understand the Constitution and the law, but at the end of the day it should be always from the roots up as opposed to from the sky down. And, I believe, that the roots up will truly survive the test of time when it comes to proper environmental regulation.

AD: Now I want to revisit the whole issue of Aboriginal needs, entitlements. I mean the whole ... You know, yes, we're dealing with Crown lands but of course they're adjacent to reserve lands. Do you have any summative remarks with respect to Aboriginal issues?

GB: I think that the more that we celebrate the champions in the Aboriginal community ... As you are aware, it's been said that the unemployment rate within the Aboriginal community is high. So, I think that I applaud the mode of companies like Syncrude or like Suncor or CNRL or Shell. Their role is, how do we ...? You know, first of all we have a labor shortage. How do we get properly trained, skilled people? Well, a large portion of them are Aboriginal people. That seems to me to be a win-win. I always harken to a story—I don't remember the chief's name—but the chief's brother was supposed to get, got a job at one of the companies and was supposed to show up every day. And actually he didn't show up. And the chief hired him. And he said, "Listen, the opportunity's there, but you've got to work to be there." And that, by the way, is not just for Aboriginal. You know, if you're a white person, wherever you come from in the world, you have to ... There's an important responsibility and accountability. You know, an honest day's pay for an honest day's work. I'm excited by Aboriginal leaders who are excited by the opportunity in terms of what lies ahead. And, so, I see the future for helping solve the unemployment rate within the Aboriginal communities. And statistically, rather than, you know, it is stated that the number of Aboriginals that are now incarcerated. I mean, there is nothing better than the feeling of having a new job, providing that feeling to your family. You know, that I'm out working providing. You know, that feeling is priceless. And that is the sense of the opportunity that lies there for oil sands and for Aboriginal communities all across Canada. And I see it as a win-win opportunity, and I remain optimistic it can happen. But it's going to require more bridges back to the Aboriginal communities under corporate social responsibility and in partnership also with governments.



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AD: Is there anything else that you'd like to get on the record and I mean is there anything that I haven't ...?

GB: I will say that first and foremost we've been blessed with an incredible natural resource. And it's a natural resource that in our Constitution of Canada is owned by the people of Alberta. The oil sands is a treasure that Robert Rosen often talked about. The question is how well do we manage it? And, so, that treasure is something to be cherished, no matter what anyone internationally says. I believe that intrinsically that we are motivated to develop that treasure the best way we know how. To save it into the future with our technologies that I believe some day we can share with countries such as China and India. I believe that our emissions ... When I attended Kyoto many, many years ago, I believe we can take something that is unwanted, such as CO₂, and I believe that that can actually be a wonderful fertilizer in terms of the agriculture community of our future. So, why don't we turn a lemon into lemonade? And, I think, technology will play that role. And I'm confident that it will. But the key resource of all of it is it goes back to our slogan, "We have the energy." It is the people energy, the energy of innovation, the energy of taking a risk, the energy of wanting to move 5,000 kilometers from one province to another to call it their home. And, I hope, that people that call it their home, that they call it their home and they roll up their sleeves and they coach hockey or, you know, they coach figure skating or they coach little league baseball and soccer. I hope our community where the resource is will be one that will serve our community well. Where it's not just go in, make your money and leave. I hope it's going to be where they invest, and that's why we came up with "We have the energy." And it is the energy of investing in the community.

Life is short and with life being so short, you never want to be anywhere that you don't like. So, 35 years ago I came to Fort McMurray. I could have complained or I could have rolled up my sleeves and said, "Hey, I'm going to make it my home." I chose to make it my home, and my wife and I and our five-year-old son, we love Fort McMurray and we've invested many years in Fort McMurray, and I would only challenge and ask others to do the same like my family but like so many other families. Like Eric Newell and Jim Carter and Robert Rosen and so many others that are investing in our community. It's a long history, and history is a teacher. And we have a very rich history, and I'm very proud of that history. And, as I said earlier, and I'll conclude by saying, it was an honor and a privilege to serve as a mayor and as a city councilor and as a minister and as an MLA. And to this day, I will be humbled with the rest of my life and I am every so confident in our future. And I hope that someday my son will pick up that torch and continue on in the next generation. And, of course, the next generation is digital natives, the digital native generation. And I learned that today at my class here at the University of Alberta. The next generation is the digital native generation.

AD: And how did your class define that?

GB: Digital ... really it's about my son. It's about where my son is when he was two years old had a Steve Jobs iPod. He does not know anything else but the technology, and that's a perfect example. That we have, you know, our children are more computer savvy than we'll ever be. And, so, here he is five years old now, and he's teaching me what he is doing on his Steve Jobs iPad, that today is just



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phenomenal. I think the sky is the limit in what we will be doing in the future. And, hopefully, it will be making more positive impact on our future for the next generation, whatever that will be called. But, I think, the digital native future looks very good.

AD: Well, thank you so much Guy.

GB: It's a pleasure.



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