

MR. CAMERON, EXAM. BY MR. MERRICK

1 story that seems to have politics very deeply buried in  
2 it.

3 A. Well, it's a swirl, you know. We had a strip -- we  
4 had two other strip mines open at the very same time.  
5 One -- two in Cape Breton. One at Evans and the other  
6 one down -- I think it was Brogan, and there was no  
7 problem. But whenever the decision was to try to open  
8 this up to start using that as coal, close the Southwest  
9 section off, go back to the original plan and drive your  
10 tunnels north as far as you're going to go and retreat  
11 mine back, blend the coal, it was like we were, you know,  
12 some kind of evil demons, and everyone yelled and  
13 screamed and hollered.

14 And I told Terry Donohoe, who was Minister of  
15 Environment at the time, I said, "Terry, we're not even  
16 going to discuss this in Cabinet," because I was Premier  
17 at that time. "We will not discuss this in Cabinet. We  
18 will -- I want you to go to your officials and do what is  
19 right."

20 And those officials were able to approve two other  
21 strip mines. In fact, one was larger than this one. And  
22 my understanding that officials said, and I'm sure you  
23 can get the records, there was really no reason a strip  
24 mine shouldn't go ahead. They took the bulk sample out.  
25 They took some caution. They had the rock-lined ditches.