



In Memory of Mel Watkins, a Great Citizen
April 7, 2020

Mel Watkins has died. He played such an important role in constantly reminding us that we could not go on being so dependent on natural resources, and without a properly complex industrial structure of our own.

He was a brilliant and funny man, a great disciple of Harold Innis - reminding us that we have to move beyond our dependency on staples. We have to own more of our corporate structures, particularly in the most sophisticated and cutting edge areas. This was never about cutting ourselves off.

It was about having the same kind of influence at home that other Western countries do. And we have to become a corporate and industrial centre which represents the sophistication of our education system. Mel explained this so clearly again and again.

Such a terrible irony, which Mel would have fully appreciated, that he should die in the midst of a crisis which proves just how right he was on all of these issues.

And he was also devoted to supporting Indigenous rights. His role working for the Dené during the drama of the Mackenzie Pipeline in the 1970s is remembered by a lot of people in the North. A great citizen. And a lovely person.