

7 Ken Midkiff? We haven't missed anybody.  
8 We're just rolling right along, rolling right along.  
9 From the Missouri Sierra Club, Ken Midkiff.

10 MR. MIDKIFF: Yes, and for the record I  
11 live in Colombia, Missouri.

12 MR. CARLIN: Columbia.

13 MR. MIDKIFF: And we have occasionally  
14 played the Arkansas Razorbacks and occasionally  
15 they have won.

16 MR. CARLIN: That is okay, it's when you  
17 play Kansas State University that I get concerned.

18 MR. MIDKIFF: Well, Kansas State came  
19 to Missouri and we don't want to talk about that.

20 MR. CARLIN: I wouldn't have raised it if  
21 I hadn't known the score. And start his time now.

22 MR. MIDKIFF: Fresh country air? No,  
23 not since concentrated animal feeding operations,  
24 CAFO's I'll call them now, have been popping up  
25 like fetid mushrooms all over my state, the state of

1 Missouri. And instead of mowed fields, freshly  
2 turned earth and the pleasant smell of cows in a  
3 pasture resulting in sighs of contentment, all too  
4 often the odiferous country air stimulates gagging  
5 and retching.

6 Now, eventually the water quality and  
7 rural economics will be impacted as you have  
8 heard and as you will hear. But the first and  
9 loudest and most enduring complaint about CAFOs  
10 is stink. Now, I assume that others, as I said, will  
11 talk about the effects of the water quality and the  
12 family farmer in rural economics. I want to focus  
13 on air quality, odor, stink.

14 Stink and odor, of course, are caused by  
15 many compounds, many of which are unhealthy,  
16 such as high levels of hydrogen sulfide and  
17 ammonia released by CAFO's and many other  
18 compounds. The hog industry says there are over  
19 260 compounds.

20 Those who support the factory life of mega  
21 operations in which hogs, chickens and cows are  
22 kept in confinement buildings with hundreds or  
23 even thousands of other critters all point to urban  
24 and suburban movements as those who complain.  
25 While that is seemingly a sound assertion and one

1 that is embraced by the likes of Premium Standard  
2 "Farms", let the record show that I put a quotation  
3 mark on "Farms", Tyson's, the American

4 Dairymen's Associations, Smithfield and the Farm  
5 Bureau, which is nothing but a shell for  
6 agribusiness, that assertion, the assertion about  
7 urban move-ins doesn't hold water.

8 Looking at the facts of actual  
9 demographics in Missouri, my state, there is no  
10 migration from urban to rural areas. The opposite  
11 is true. Urban counties in my state such as  
12 Boone, Columbia, Jasper, Joplin, St. Charles -- St.  
13 Charles, Green, Springfield, Jackson and Kansas  
14 City, the north suburbs of Kansas City in Platte  
15 County and Buchanan, St. Joseph, these urban or  
16 suburban areas are experiencing population  
17 increases ranging up to six percent since 2000  
18 while rural counties are losing folks due to birth  
19 rates, birth to death rates are breaking even. It is  
20 no coincidence that up in northern Missouri where  
21 Premium Standard Farm CAFO's are all over the  
22 place, Putnam, Sullivan and Mercer counties,  
23 population decreases are the norm.

24 Even in such places as McDonald County  
25 in Missouri where big chicken reigns supreme, the

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1 county essentially broke even. And according to  
2 the Census Bureau, the U.S. Census Bureau, there  
3 was no in migration. In all these counties the rate  
4 of crime has increased dramatically. Drive-by  
5 shootings, drug abuse and sales, child abuse,  
6 spouse abuse, teenage pregnancies, all of these  
7 are all too common in the counties where  
8 agribusiness corporations have moved in.

9 But never to be diverted by truth or facts,  
10 big ag advocates keep claiming that lawsuits are  
11 filed move-ins, as if reputation -- repetition of a  
12 lie somehow makes it a reality. It is not urban  
13 folks that are complaining and filing all the  
14 lawsuits. It is longtime rural residents.

15 In the current cases about odor and  
16 quality of human health and quality of life, there  
17 are over 200 areas, one company, Premium  
18 Standard Farms. It is farmers who have inherited  
19 the land from their father who in turn inherited it  
20 from their fathers who have done the filings. It is  
21 not unusual at all for the loudest complaints  
22 about the stink from giant hog, chicken and cattle  
23 operations come from people who raise those  
24 animals in more traditional and more sustainable  
25 ways. It is not animal agriculture that is the

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1 cause of the big stink. No one complained about

2 the neighbor's hog lot or chicken house or dairy  
3 barn. Rather, it is the industrial methods of  
4 raising these animals, concentrated feeding  
5 operations causing the problems.

6 As my FFA project, I grew up on a farm  
7 while I was in high school, I raised hogs. Not  
8 many by today's standards, I had about 12. That's  
9 4.2 animal units for those of you who are quick at  
10 math, but my mother insisted that hogs be kept  
11 downwind of our house and our backyard. In  
12 addition to stinking up the house, any clothes --  
13 our clothes that hung out on the line to dry ended  
14 up smelling like hog manure. Now, even my 12  
15 hogs didn't smell like roses. Thousands and  
16 thousands create gut-wrenching stink.

17 Hog manure is particularly odiferous and  
18 those living downwind from a few thousand swine  
19 are overwhelmed by the stench. But to listen to  
20 the representatives of livestock organizations, you  
21 would get the impression that any attempt by the  
22 state or federal government to control litter is  
23 going to put all farmers out of business. This is,  
24 of course, patent nonsense.

25 While Premium Standard, owned by

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1 ContiGroup with Henry Kissinger a board member,  
2 or Tyson or Moark, which is owned by Land O  
3 Lakes by the way, or the Hilton Dairy now the  
4 Missouri Dairy near Carthage and owned by the  
5 Missouri Soybean Association, go figure, many of  
6 those entities may encounter some difficulties.  
7 But it is likely they have the wherewithal to install  
8 devices or to switch to methods that will keep  
9 their stink down to a level that does not offend  
10 their longtime rural neighbors. Since that is  
11 unlikely -- or, I'm sorry, since that is likely to cut  
12 into the bottom line profit, they won't do it  
13 willingly. However, no matter how loud or how  
14 long the pork producers or the American Dairy  
15 Association squeals, it is highly unlikely that  
16 independent and diversified family farmers will  
17 suffer. State and federal laws and regulations are  
18 applicable to CAFO's of more than 1,000 animal  
19 units. A hog is 2.5 animal units. A dairy cow is  
20 .7. 1,000 broilers equals one animal unit, 30  
21 laying hens to make one animal unit.

22 Now, not many real farmers have 2,500  
23 hogs or 750 cows or 100,000 broilers or 30,000  
24 laying hens. Agribusinesses do. They own the  
25 animals on contract growers operations.

1 Agribusinesses own that many animals. And that  
2 is where federal and state laws and regulations are  
3 and should be targeted to agribusiness  
4 corporations headed in Bentonville, Arkansas or  
5 Omaha, Nebraska or Chicago, Illinois, not to  
6 farmers in Missouri and certainly not to folks who  
7 have been on the farm for years and years and  
8 years.

9 Now, I end where I started. Manure and  
10 urine from thousands of hogs or millions of  
11 chickens stink. It is longtime rural residents who  
12 object to the stink, not urban move-ins.  
13 Repetition does not equal reality. No matter how  
14 many times an untruth is told, it is still a lie.

15 MR. CARLIN: Michael?

16 MR. BLACKWELL: Thank you for the  
17 presentation.

18 MR. MIDKIFF: Thank you.

19 MR. BLACKWELL: I would appreciate if  
20 you would help me to understand -- I have no  
21 doubt or I don't disagree at all about the odiferous  
22 nature of swine feces.

23 MR. MIDKIFF: Particularly odiferous.

24 MR. BLACKWELL: Particularly, yes. My  
25 question, though, is actually I asked you to touch

1 on two things which I believe were relevant here.  
2 So the trend that has been underway for some  
3 years is a decrease in the number of farming  
4 operations.

5 MR. MIDKIFF: Correct.

6 MR. BLACKWELL: And my understanding  
7 is many youngsters growing up in farming families  
8 have expressed little to no interest in continuing  
9 that lifestyle and so we have an aging population  
10 of farmers and there does not appear to be a  
11 sufficient number in the pipeline behind them to  
12 maintain those operations. That coupled with a  
13 global population, we just passed the 300 million  
14 mark, I think where I'm going with this question  
15 is, although we have the problems that you have  
16 identified with respect to odor, are you suggesting  
17 that the solution is to be found in the 1950s sort  
18 of --

19 MR. MIDKIFF: More -- more and more  
20 people are going to farmers markets, are buying  
21 organic sustainable food. That's the fastest  
22 growing sector of agriculture, so there are  
23 different ways of doing it, better ways of doing it  
24 than the industrial methods, so that's part of the

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1           The rest of the answer is it's very difficult  
2 for farmers to compete when the U.S. Government  
3 subsidizes Premium Standard Farms, Tyson, Moark  
4 and so forth, so I'm a farm boy who left the farm.  
5 I did it because I didn't like getting up at four in  
6 the morning to milk the damn cows, so I did leave  
7 the farm but for a totally different reason.

8           MR. CARLIN: If I'm understanding you  
9 correctly, although I suppose if you could wave a  
10 magic wand you would like everything organic, all  
11 small farms, but if I'm hearing you correctly, you  
12 accept the fact that realistically there's going to  
13 be some large ones?

14           MR. MIDKIFF: That's correct.

15           MR. CARLIN: Okay. So the focus is from  
16 your point of view the concern we should deal with  
17 is the smell.

18           MR. MIDKIFF: The smell. If you take  
19 care of the smell, sooner or later, I didn't mention  
20 this, but every stream in McDonald County is on  
21 the water list because it's been subjected to 30  
22 years of poultry litter, so there are many, many  
23 problems.

24           The first, as I said, loudest and longest  
25 complaint is about odor and I think if that's taken

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1           care of I would suspect that longtime rural  
2 residents would overlook some of the other  
3 problems.

4           There will be a continuing demand for  
5 cheap food produced in quantity. At the same  
6 time, there is more and more people who are  
7 wanting quality foods produced in smaller  
8 quantities, but I think that inevitably corporate  
9 agri-business will continue.

10           MR. CARLIN: Thank you very much.

11           MR. MIDKIFF: Thank you.