

Interview: Dave Smith (DS)

Interviewer: Rod Mickleburgh (RM) and Donna Sacuta (DS#2)

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Transcription: Pam Moodie

RM [00:00:04] Brother Smith. Welcome.

DS [00:00:05] Thank you.

RM [00:00:06] So what brought you to Prince Rupert?

DS [00:00:09] I was getting sick and tired of Ontario.

RM [00:00:11] Whereabouts?

DS [00:00:13] Guelph.

RM [00:00:13] Oh, Guelph, Ontario. Oh yeah! know it well. Aggie School.

DS [00:00:14] Pardon me?

RM [00:00:14] The Aggie School.

DS [00:00:18] That's right. Exactly. Yeah. Yeah, although agriculture these days is, you know, becomes smaller and smaller, and part of that is.

RM [00:00:27] The Guelph Biltmores.

DS [00:00:28] The Biltmores? Yeah. And it's, it's.

RM [00:00:30] The old hockey team.

DS [00:00:31] I can't remember what they're called now.

RM [00:00:33] Yeah. Anyway, sorry, I interrupted. Okay. You were tired of Ontario.

DS [00:00:35] Yeah, yeah. I'd been working in factories back there. I was. I studied photography and design at Sheridan College.

RM [00:00:43] Oh yeah.

DS [00:00:43] I started freelancing and took a look at my books after a few months and realized that I'd better find a real job to make some money. So I went back to the factory. At any rate, that lasted whatever it lasted, and a friend of mine who had moved here right from school, a schoolmate, phoned me up and said "Come on out. We are putting together a gallery cum slash studio."

RM [00:01:10] In Prince Rupert?

DS [00:01:11] Yeah, yeah. Called Hugh's. So I, so I moved out here. I thought, well, I'd move out for a year just to get it out of my system. I was what, 23 or 24. I can't remember now offhand. 1979.

RM [00:01:23] Wow.

DS [00:01:25] And I never left. Yeah. Well found work here.

RM [00:01:29] What kind of work did you find?

DS [00:01:31] Worked for the Post Office.

RM [00:01:32] Right off the bat?

DS [00:01:34] That was, well, I had a couple of part time jobs prior to. But the, I was, first, first stint that I had with the Post Office I was backfilling, you know, a fellow who had undergone some fairly extensive knee surgery so he was off work for six, eight months.

RM [00:01:53] Was this the Letter Carriers or CUPW?

DS [00:01:55] No, Letter Carriers union. Yeah.

RM [00:01:57] I always used to think you guys had the best job in Canada.

DS [00:02:01] The work was, it was good, you know, the Employer sucked, but the, the work was.

RM [00:02:07] The exercise.

DS [00:02:07] Yeah. Well, my feet are.

RM [00:02:10] Yes. Apart from that. So what was it like delivering mail in Prince Rupert?

DS [00:02:16] Actually, I don't, to be honest with you I don't think I would be able to do the job other than here or Victoria. Vancouver. If I had to go to Vancouver it would be a bit of a stretch. But the moderate temperatures here.

RM [00:02:32] A lot of hills though.

DS [00:02:32] Yeah, well, stairs and stuff like that, so that takes it out of you. But there's no so far as, you know, like freezing your ass off in Regina or, you know, Moose Jaw or wherever kind of thing in or, conversely, you know, like, you know, a hundred degrees in Kamloops, you know, in the summertime and I don't think I'd be able to do it, quite frankly. So this is a nice, this is a nice spot, too. It's a nice little town. I enjoy living here. I've enjoyed living here most of my life now, obviously.

RM [00:03:07] Yeah, and because it's more of a community, you would know the people you're delivering the mail to.

DS [00:03:13] I still do. It's, you know, they're constantly saying, you know. Mind you, it's a town of twelve, twelve, six, I guess, or whatever kind of thing. You know, you know an

awful lot of people anyways. But yeah, yeah. Old customers, have a chat every once in a while.

RM [00:03:30] Yeah, of course. Of course. I mean, talk about the way the mail system is changed. I mean, what, you mostly deliver flyers now and stuff that?

DS [00:03:41] It's parcels that's what there is.

RM [00:03:42] Oh yeah.

DS [00:03:43] There's not really there. There's really not. And again, I'm getting this all second-hand. I've been retired for what, eight years now? Nine years. Eight, nine years. Okay. So, so at any rate what they're dealing with now is, is certainly out of my experience.

RM [00:03:59] Is there still house to house delivery here?

DS [00:04:00] Oh, yeah.

RM [00:04:01] They didn't get replaced by the horrible boxes.

DS [00:04:03] They tried, they tried. Union managed to, you know, forestall that. And, you know, obviously they lost out in, you know, new, new subdivisions in Vancouver and things of that nature kind of thing that. No. You know, we've always managed to keep the door to door here.

RM [00:04:23] When you retired, had the unions merged by then?

DS [00:04:25] Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah, sure.

RM [00:04:27] Oh, so was that a good move?

DS [00:04:29] The, the merge? Well, the Letter Carriers were essentially forced into it. It was, it wasn't, it wasn't our idea to begin with. CUPW had always had a policy or, yeah, I guess it was a policy or a mindset that the, that all postal workers should be, should be under one umbrella-kind of thing. So they managed to force the vote with the Labour Relations Board and the Canadian Labour Relations Board and force the vote to either go with the Letter Carriers Union or the Postal Workers. And they won the vote.

RM [00:05:10] And they had more members, didn't they?

DS [00:05:12] They had more members but it was, it was, you know, though not all their members were all that happy with their union, you know, with their, with their philosophy.

RM [00:05:19] Right.

DS [00:05:20] So, and quite frankly, the two unions were not necessarily diametrically opposite by any stretch of the imagination, but there was serious differences between the two of us, for sure.

RM [00:05:30] Well, people always regard CUPW as very, very militant and the Letter Carriers less so.

DS [00:05:35] And that's quite true. You know, it was, it was, I wouldn't say a business orientation, but it was but it was, yeah, you're right in that respect. Yeah.

RM [00:05:46] I mean, did you guys ever have a strike?

DS [00:05:49] Oh fuck, yeah.

RM [00:05:50] What was that? Ha, ha.

DS [00:05:51] Oh, yeah, for sure. No, we, we, we.

RM [00:05:53] I don't remember a Letter Carrier strike.

DS [00:05:54] No, no, we struck.

RM [00:05:54] I always knew about CUPW.

DS [00:05:54] Well, yeah. "Oh, you guys always strike at Christmastime!"

RM [00:05:59] (unclear) Went to jail, Joe Davidson, "To hell with the public!"

DS [00:06:03] Oh, yeah. No kidding. Exactly. No, no, actually, no. You know, to be honest with you, we struck the two bargaining units, our agents, rather, struck within probably six months of each other, and we were the first. Our contract was up first and they scabbed us.

RM [00:06:25] CUPW?

DS [00:06:25] No, no.

RM [00:06:26] Oh, the Post Office. Yes. No, no. Right, sorry!

DS [00:06:28] The Post Office.

RM [00:06:29] When was that?

DS [00:06:31] Well I'm trying to remember.

RM [00:06:32] Was that the mid-eighties? Because it was a, it was a Post Office strike and I just assumed, I suppose, it was CUPW and the Post Office scabbed it. And that was the first time I heard the term replacement workers. You know, which has taken off, because it's a euphemism for strike breaker. For scabs!

DS [00:06:56] Yeah. For scabs. Yeah.

RM [00:06:57] Yeah. You know, and the media. And I was part of the media, kept using this term replacement worker. It's a total euphemism. You know, and it was, they had this odious communications guy. And of course, I had to deal with him, I was I was a reporter. And he was just appalling. And he was smart though. And he coined that phrase, replacement worker. Now you find even union guys using replacement worker.

DS [00:07:23] Yeah. Yeah. I suppose it wasn't calling a spade, a spade, exactly.

RM [00:07:26] Yeah. So anyway, what do you remember about that strike?

DS [00:07:28] Well, again, we were the first ones to go. And, and, quite frankly, we, you know, we you know, like although most of us, yeah, most of us had never been on strike before. I'm just trying to think, now. I was a Steelworker back east, anyway, makes no difference. We were on strike and, you know, they bit off a little more than they could chew. And then six months later, the inside workers. The Canadian Union of Postal Workers, they went out.

RM [00:08:02] Right.

DS [00:08:03] You know, different contracts, different time periods. And same thing, you know. So helicopters. On and on she goes. We managed to end as a gain, you know, simply because the labour community here in Prince Rupert at the time. It still is to a certain extent, but, you know, was really tight. You know, a couple of phone calls.

RM [00:08:23] They tried to scab your strike here?

DS [00:08:25] Oh, shit, yeah!.

RM [00:08:26] That wasn't just in the big cities.

DS [00:08:27] They had, I guess, probably 15 scabs lined up. But we wouldn't let them in. They couldn't get past us. We just surrounded the building with—

RM [00:08:37] Really!

DS [00:08:38] With fish workers and longshoremen and anybody we knew, City workers, whoever, eh? Other union members, because we couldn't hold it down ourselves. We didn't have that many members.

RM [00:08:49] Wow! So that's pretty exciting.

DS [00:08:51] Yeah. It was a great day. I have. It was a successful strike as far as we were concerned, you know.

RM [00:08:55] And that's, that goes to what kind of a union town Prince Rupert is, eh?

DS [00:08:59] In my estimation, yeah. Yeah. It was pretty tight.

RM [00:09:03] Pulp workers. PPWC were called?

DS [00:09:04] Obviously, yeah.

RM [00:09:06] Even though they weren't in the Canadian Labour Congress.

DS [00:09:07] That really never became an issue here. In fact, we made it quite clear, and the CLC never, you know, they probably didn't like it, but they never said anything about it, was that we would always invite the Teachers and the PPWC or—

RM [00:09:27] Yeah. PPWC.

DS [00:09:29] Yeah, Local 4. To our, to our Labour Council meetings or whatever.

RM [00:09:32] Really?!

DS [00:09:32] And they would have voice, but no vote.

RM [00:09:34] Yeah, yeah.

DS [00:09:35] Well, you can't exclude, arguably a third of the working people in Prince Rupert, from whatever was going on. It would be absurd.

RM [00:09:45] And would they send people?

DS [00:09:47] Oh yeah, they had a delegates.

RM [00:09:48] Wow, that's interesting. Yeah, that's probably. And I wonder if that happened anywhere else? Probably not. You know, maybe the Kootenay Labour Council. I don't know. Anyway, that's interesting. So how did you get involved in the Labour Council? How did that all start up?

DS [00:10:02] I don't know. Probably, I guess one of the delegates, one of the other unions and we, uh. Oh, no! Well, actually, no, it was probably, it was probably the CUPW delegate was, invited me to, invited me to the, I'm trying to think now, whether I was the president of the of the Letter Carriers local here in town at the time. I can't remember to be honest with you.

RM [00:10:28] You became president of the Letter Carriers local?

DS [00:10:31] Yep. Yeah.

RM [00:10:32] How many years were you President, do you remember?

DS [00:10:35] Oh, yeah. I you know, I can't I'm trying to remember now, depending on where we were as a, when the amalgamation took place from maybe three years employed to, you know, to the amalgamation.

RM [00:10:54] Why did you get involved in the union?

DS [00:10:56] My old man was a pretty staunch union member. He is, he was, belonged to the Electrical Workers, sort of an offshoot.

RM [00:11:04] UE? The old communist union.

DS [00:11:07] That's right, yeah.

RM [00:11:07] Was he a communist?

DS [00:11:09] No. He was CP, he wasn't CP. He was CPP, you know, like that he's, you know, or NDP, whatever (unclear). But but no, he was he was pretty strong. Pretty soon he was he was negotiating contracts before I was, before I was born.

RM [00:11:24] Charlie Jackson.

DS [00:11:25] Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well, no he was, you know, he was local president, ran for the, ran for the Communists, you know, mean times. I can't remember the guy's name off the top of my head. Yeah. Yeah, well, yeah.

RM [00:11:38] Okay. So you had the union background. So you, when you were a Letter Carrier, got involved in the union, and obviously were good at it, the members liked you and, or else nobody else wanted the job.

DS [00:11:49] Well, you know how these things go, yeah, yeah. The only way you ever leave the job is to retire or die. (laughter)

RM [00:11:58] I've got a good job. I don't have to do anything. Yeah, okay. So the Labour Council, you went in as a delegate and—

DS [00:12:06] Yeah, yeah.

RM [00:12:07] And were you impressed by what you saw?

DS [00:12:10] It was interesting. Yeah, yeah. First, first for the first year or so. Just sort of. Yeah, good, really good, hardworking group of people.

RM [00:12:17] Who was head of the Labour Council?

DS [00:12:19] At that time, it would have been Lorne Quick, I believe.

RM [00:12:21] Who's he?

DS [00:12:23] Uh, PRASCU, it was, it was a CLC affiliate. And, and represented the workers down at the Co-op fish plant.

RM [00:12:32] Oh, well, controversial. Well, and was, I guess the UFAWU was part of—

DS [00:12:43] Oh yeah of course.

RM [00:12:44] And they had bad relations with the Co-op.

DS [00:12:45] No, no, it was again, you know, the town is too frickin' small to, you know, to get involved with that kind of nonsense, you know, so they, you know, they worked together, you know, obviously common work, common issues.

RM [00:13:00] Yeah, right.

DS [00:13:01] You know, so it worked out quite well. Yeah.

RM [00:13:05] And so did you get more involved in the labour movement.

DS [00:13:08] You know, on and on, same sort of thing. You get sucked in a little bit more and a little bit more. A little bit more. Yeah. Yeah.

RM [00:13:15] And then?

DS [00:13:16] Well, I became President until I retired. Well, probably, probably for the last 15 years that I worked, I was, I was President of the Labour Council, give or take, 10 years. I really can't.

RM [00:13:30] Did anyone ever oppose you?

DS [00:13:34] No. Not as I recall. No.

RM [00:13:36] And so what? So what did the Labour Council do? Like, what was. What did you guys think? What did you do that you really thought was good stuff?

DS [00:13:44] Well. You know, strike relief or strike support was a big, was a big chunk of our of our work. The, again, you'll find a little pack, little chunks of unionized workers, maybe three or four, five, six. You know, who are, you know, their bargaining agent's out of Toronto or out of Vancouver or whatever the case may be and or, you know, essentially they're on their own, for all intents and purposes, the servicing is, and I'm not putting that on the union, its simply because they're small and (unclear) works. Yeah. Kind of thing. So you know, in that respect we would, you know, they needed a hand, even if it was just, you know, meeting space or that matter kind of thing. You know, this is a Fisherman's Hall. You know, this room was always open for rent to whatever kind of thing. So, the strikes support, you know, the odd, you know, fundraiser effort and things of that nature, you know. Supporting the NDP.

RM [00:14:54] Yeah, I was going to ask about that. A lot of political support for the NDP?

DS [00:14:57] Yeah. Yeah. Most of us worked for or during the campaigns, at the very least during the campaign, you know, obviously involved ourselves with the constituency.

RM [00:15:08] Right. So, are there any strikes you remember? Where the, maybe the Labour Council played a pretty strong role?

DS [00:15:14] Probably the worst one, and it was a bad strike, was the, was the theatres.

RM [00:15:19] Oh. The motion?

DS#2 [00:15:22] The Projectionists.

RM [00:15:24] The Projectionists Union.

DS [00:15:25] The Projectionists. Well, there was two. There were two bargaining units. There was the Projectionists, which it was, like there was one here.

RM [00:15:31] Yeah.

DS [00:15:32] At the time and there was, and BCGEU represented the front of house folks, kids, they're all kids. They're all high school.

RM [00:15:39] BCGEU had certification for them?

DS [00:15:41] Yeah.

RM [00:15:42] Oh yeah.

DS [00:15:43] Or at least here they did.

RM [00:15:44] Oh, well that's interesting. Anyway.

DS [00:15:45] So at any rate. Yeah. So Hank Laid was the projectionist. He came in and he's by himself. And his mom was, was the theatre manager too, which was, it was just so weird! it was just so, so weird.

RM [00:16:06] This is what happens in a place like Prince Rupert.

DS [00:16:08] Yeah. So anyways, the, so he came and, and I guess at the time whether, you know, obviously he was going to be out on strike and the front of house people, same sort of thing. Some was, I can't recall whether it was. I guess they were going pretty soon, if not at the same time, at any rate made no difference. There was a picket line up, came and asked us for help. And. And you didn't want to promise too much because. Like how? You know. Like, how could you? You couldn't really. I wouldn't. I didn't know. I was treasurer at the time. I didn't. Like you know, I didn't want to say, "Well, yeah, we'll hold her down till death do us part", kind of thing. So I promised a weekend, you keep, you know, and that thing went on for another six weeks. And this was the only, the only theatre that I, that we managed, and we had it so awful for them that the following strike, probably the next year, quite frankly, they just shut it down. They didn't even try to open it up. So it was, it an ugly, it was like picketing a candy store. It was like it it was just, you know, all these little kids out there, you know, "I want to see, come in and see Cinderella," or whatever it was playing, and they've got like, managers inside trying, "Oh. Come on in."

RM [00:17:35] Cause they tried to keep it open, eh?

DS [00:17:36] Oh yeah, it was. Yeah. And we would just pack the entrance, like two or three deep kind of thing.

RM [00:17:43] And the BCGEU members respected the picket line.

DS [00:17:46] They, again, I'm just trying to think now whether they were. Oh, no, no, that wasn't, certainly wasn't an issue.

RM [00:17:53] It was just the public.

RM [00:17:54] Yeah. Yeah. I mean.

RM [00:17:55] Probably a lot of them were union members.

DS [00:17:57] Well, the thing is. And everybody knows everybody. So if the union member did walk through the line, to take his kid to whatever stupid movie was being offered at the time, the union, his respective union. I know the city workers were especially good at this. They would take the guy aside and just ream him out. And, and as punishment, he had to be on that picket line - for the duration of the strike.

RM [00:18:25] Wow! I like that!

DS [00:18:25] So, at any rate, it wasn't a matter of we're going to fine you 500 bucks or a couple of days pay or something like that? Oh, no. You're going to work this off.

RM [00:18:33] That is brilliant. Well, this only happens in a place like Prince Rupert. Right?

DS [00:18:37] I guess. I don't know.

RM [00:18:38] You know, you make your own solutions to things in the way you handle things. Yeah, because that was a tough strike. Because they couldn't win it. They could not win it. They absolutely could not win it.

DS [00:18:48] I was, I can't remember whether it was three years later, I had a meeting up in Prince George and they were still striking that theatre, still picketing that theatre. It was just horrible.

RM [00:18:56] You can't strike against automation and the longshore guys are going to find that out. You know, it's tough. So that, that's pretty good. But at a certain point, you took your picket line down or?

DS [00:19:07] Well, they settled the strike. Yeah. After, like I said, it was, it was a heck of a lot longer than the rest of us anticipated, which is certainly the you know, people actually out on strike.

RM [00:19:18] So that was a relief.

DS [00:19:19] Oh, please, believe you me? Oh, God. Yeah.

RM [00:19:24] Okay. Any others?

DS [00:19:25] Well, obviously, our strikes, the Post Office strikes are always usually pretty ugly, so.

RM [00:19:31] Yeah. Why were they ugly?

DS [00:19:32] Well, again, you know, we would depend on other unions for, you know, for manpower, for support, for bodies. And, because there's only, there was only 20 of us that were picketing 24 hours a day. It was just like we, I would schedule that last strike, second to last strike. The schedule that I drafted up was eight hours picketing, go home for eight hours, sleep and eat and come back for eight hours picketing, then go back home. Luckily, it was, you know, we'd just get a phone call saying that "It's your turn." They're rotating. So it would only, you don't have to put up with it for three days, four days, tops. But it was, it was gruelling.

RM [00:20:19] And so that's when the other unions really helped.

DS [00:20:21] Oh, yeah. Yeah, exactly. Or all of a sudden a truck shows up, you know, a couple of phone calls. We need 50 people down here to stop this truck, and the truck would be going around the block. (laughter) Till they finally give up.

RM [00:20:37] So that's, again, goes to Prince Rupert being a pretty strong union town. Like even now, when things are not at their best for Prince Rupert, it's still union, eh? So why can't they elect union mayors?

DS [00:20:53] We did. John Kuz was elected as the mayor.

RM [00:20:57] Oh, when was that?

DS [00:20:59] '90s, early '90s.

RM [00:20:59] Oh, really? Okay. I didn't know about that.

DS [00:21:00] He was a business agent for PRASCU. The CLC affiliate, he was business agent for them and then they moved over to the Meatcutters. UFCW whatever it was, 222 or whatever, whatever the local was.

RM [00:21:19] Yeah. So he got elected mayor.

DS [00:21:23] He got elected mayor.

RM [00:21:25] Okay, but there's still not a pro-labour, well, Joy's on council.

DS [00:21:29] No, not anymore. She dropped off. She didn't run this time.

RM [00:21:32] Oh, she didn't run. They didn't defeat her?

DS [00:21:34] No, no, no. She just didn't run. She's had it.

RM [00:21:37] Because, you know, you'd still think that there'd be more on council?

DS [00:21:39] Well, no. We got a retired teacher on council right now. We have, have a guy I helped out. Barry Cunningham, who works for the Coast Guard, so he's, you know. Yeah. So he's. Whatever, whatever...

DS#2 [00:22:00] Public Service Alliance?

DS#2 [00:22:01] Well, that. Yeah, but whatever the union is, that belongs to—

RM [00:22:04] Yeah, they got all these different components.

DS [00:22:06] Yeah, I can never keep them straight.

RM [00:22:09] So, like, how often does the Labour Council meet?

DS [00:22:12] I, honestly, these days I don't know.

RM [00:22:15] You don't ever go, for old time's sake?

DS [00:22:19] No.

RM [00:22:19] Who's the president now?

DS [00:22:21] Paula Picard. She's a postal worker as well.

RM [00:22:23] Boy, you guys are. Well, you guys are willing to do it.

DS [00:22:26] Suckers for punishment basically, yeah.

RM [00:22:27] Did you like your time with the Labour Council?

DS [00:22:28] It had its moments, you know. You know, I you know, I'm sure, quite frankly, I know, you know, if somebody's a little younger or somebody else who had shown some interest, I would have gladly stepped aside.

RM [00:22:41] Is a lot of a lot of work, really. Not paid.

DS [00:22:44] Yeah, exactly, it's all volunteer, that's for sure. Yeah. I'd be down here. Oh, mind you, I had work that I'd be working for my own union as well as as the Labour Council. But I'd be in this building four or five times a week.

RM [00:22:59] Wow. Yeah. And were there any issues that kind of divided the Labour Council that were tough issues?

DS [00:23:06] Right now they're going through a bad patch with the Unifor-CLC kerfuffle.

RM [00:23:11] Right?

DS [00:23:11] And that's, that's unfortunate.

RM [00:23:14] Yeah. Yeah. Oh, it's it's very unfortunate because it's you know, it's one of those disputes that, it's because of stuff that happened back East. Nothing to do with the people out here, right and, of course, they've got to live with what's been going on. Did you guys have that with the Nurses Union?

DS [00:23:30] Not to the same degree. Now the nurses never really participated all that much with this Labour Council. Not to any great degree they, so that when they started raiding the, raiding, um, was it the GEU? No, it was the HEU.

RM [00:23:47] HEU. Their practical nurses.

DS [00:23:51] Yeah. It didn't impact us. Obviously there was a, probably there would have been an HEU member, a delegate around that, other than the (unclear), "Well, they're still raiding us," this kind of thing.

RM [00:24:07] Yeah. Well, there's much controversy over that one than there is over Unifor, which is, you know, is tough because they would be part of the Labour Council, you know.

DS [00:24:16] Yeah, well, Fish is the affiliate here. Yeah.

RM [00:24:18] So you guys still talk to each other?

DS [00:24:22] We don't have a choice, you know? And it's just it's. It's too bad simply because, like, we, you know, we do understand what's going on? And and, you know, what are you gonna do kind of thing, so—

RM [00:24:35] Do you know guys who were on other labour councils around BC?

DS [00:24:41] Yeah. Wes Law and I. And, now, mind you, I haven't seen. He's retired BCGEU rep from Terrace.

RM [00:24:48] Yeah.

DS [00:24:49] And he's.

RM [00:24:51] Terrace has a Labour Council?

DS [00:24:51] Yeah. Terrace-Kitimat Labour Council and we, you know, had a, you know, we're pretty good buddies. Yeah, for sure. We get together as northern Labour Councils at least once a year. Usually in Prince George and kick around a few ideas and obviously you know Harrison Hot Springs, you know, all the Labour Councils would meet for a week.

RM [00:25:16] That's great, Harrison, eh?

DS [00:25:18] Yeah, yeah. I enjoyed those, those days, those seminars, whatever you want to call them.

RM [00:25:23] And then the spa.

DS [00:25:25] The spa.

RM [00:25:26] Just kidding.

DS [00:25:27] No, no. We, you know, is. I can remember when it was Wes. Actually it was all the northern Labour Council presidents. We were sitting in the hot tub, sitting in the hot pools, rather, and having a drink and stuff like that, we started, you know, we're all running into the same problems. So yeah, participation and, and things of that nature. We're all having the same, the same, its the same issue all over. So we started talking about amalgamating and we were half cut. We were drinking for, you know, we'd had a few drinks, and there's some thinking "well, what about amalgamating?" We had the Eastern BC-Northern BC Labour Council and the Western BC-Northern Labour Council kind of thing. And, to my view, you know, then, we could here, out of Prince Rupert and Terrace and Kitimat, we could, we could start taking Smithers.

DS#2 [00:26:37] Oh I think the batteries wearing out in the microphone so—

RM [00:26:42] Oh okay. Keep going. Don't worry about that. We don't care what you're saying. (laughter)

DS [00:26:49] So at any rate, and Haida Gwaii. Workers over in the IWA over in Haida Gwaii and BCGEU and on and on she goes.

DS [00:26:57] Yes.

DS [00:26:58] So at any rate, we could, we could bring in far more than what we have now, kind of thing. And if we, if we thought, you know, the CLC forced the issue in the east and then basically did that. And, without a full consensus, of all the Labour Councils. There were some really bad feelings, and here, the labour in Terrace and Kitimat were, thought it was a really good idea and we thought, yeah, we would we would do this. But here they,

you know, the delegates here would go, "Oh, no, no, no. We want to maintain our autonomy." And it just, you know, I guess Jesus Christ, you know, like well, you know. Well, let's leave it for another time.

DS [00:27:45] Yeah. Well, it's the usual thing. if you're a small fish, but you want to remain a small fish because you're, you don't want to be swallowed by what you think will be a bigger fish.

DS [00:27:53] Well, it wouldn't be, why would? The debate made absolutely no difference to me. Pluses certainly outweighed the cons.

DS [00:28:02] So is it still a problem then, here? As far as you know, about the Labour Council's participation.

DS [00:28:06] There is participation and you know, like on and on she goes and there's always a danger of losing the affiliate, losing the charters because it's, it ceases to function.

RM [00:28:15] Yeah. Yeah. So they still have meetings, people show up, eh?

DS [00:28:19] I assume so. Yeah. I, have to assume so. Well you know it's, it's always, it better be on the back of their minds. Just listen if we don't operate—

RM [00:28:29] So did you get a sense that there was something different about the Prince Rupert Labour Council that was different than other Labour Councils? I mean, the fact that you let the PPWC participate to some extent.

DS [00:28:41] This is this quite frankly, this is the only Labour Council I have ever been involved with, other than listening to stories from other folks but, you know, I've no frame of reference for.

RM [00:28:52] Yeah. Well it's got quite a history though, the old Prince Rupert Labour Council, doesn't it?

DS [00:28:56] I would imagine. Yeah.

RM [00:28:57] Hundred years.

DS [00:28:58] Oh, yeah well—

DS#2 [00:29:00] The first charter was 1912.

DS [00:29:02] Is that right, eh?

RM [00:29:03] You should know that. Come on! (laughter) All right, anything else?

DS#2 [00:29:10] I don't think so.

RM [00:29:11] Okay. Anything you want us to bring up?

DS [00:29:14] No, no, that was. Well.

RM [00:29:16] You liked, you liked being a letter carrier, eh?

DS [00:29:19] Like I said, the job. The job is great. People that I delivered mail to and were were fantastic and in most cases, but the employer, employers are, employer is an asshole.

RM [00:29:32] It was ever thus. And, did you ever get bitten?

DS [00:29:36] A couple of times. Yeah. 32 years, that's not bad. (laughter)

RM [00:29:43] Some pretty foul weather I would think.

DS [00:29:46] Well, again, like it was, you know, like if you want to put up with a little bit of rain, but it's above zero.

RM [00:29:51] Exactly.

DS [00:29:51] You know, notwithstanding the fact that, you know, it's black and white, you either love it here or you hate it, one or the other.

RM [00:29:59] All right. That's great, Dave. Thank you.

RM [00:30:01] I'm glad we worked you into the schedule.