

**Interview: Stan Shewaga (SS)**  
**Interviewer: Rod Mickleburgh (RM)**  
**Date: August 2, 2023**  
**Location: Gabriola Island, BC**  
**Transcription: Jane Player**

**RM** [00:00:05] I don't know much about your background—where you grew up, where, you know, and so on, and your parents and what kind of upbringing you had. So take us right back.

**SS** [00:00:13] Yeah, well I was born in the Saint Boniface, Manitoba, though we lived in close to the north end of Winnipeg. I was born in the Catholic hospital and baptised Roman Catholic, even though my parents weren't. (laughter) They were Greek Orthodox. Anyways, I went to the elementary school in Winnipeg, Point Douglas. Then my mother and father broke up. My mother moved to Hamilton, Ontario. A couple of years later, I moved to Hamilton with her. I stayed there a couple of years and then went back to Winnipeg. I was on my own for a while. I went back to high school in Winnipeg. From there, you know, it's pretty hard to remember. (laughter)

**RM** [00:01:14] Well, it's a long time ago.

**SS** [00:01:15] Yeah, a long time. Anyways, I wound up going down in the States and I worked down around Louisiana and those places. I got involved in the in the army, American Army.

**RM** [00:01:33] Wow.

**SS** [00:01:36] I decided not to stay there too long, though. (laughter)

**RM** [00:01:39] Do you remember what year that was you were in the U.S. Army?

**SS** [00:01:44] Well, I was about 17.

**RM** [00:01:45] Nineteen fifty?

**SS** [00:01:47] It was in the fifties, yeah.

**RM** [00:01:47] Korean War?

**SS** [00:01:48] Yeah. Korean War was still on when we finished basic. Yeah, they were sending most of the guys to Korea, but you had an option. You could go to jump school. That was airborne. If you went to airborne, you didn't go to Korea, so I signed up for the airborne and finished that. I was stationed in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, when I decided to go back to Canada. So I left.

**RM** [00:02:23] You didn't desert or anything?

**SS** [00:02:25] No, I just left.

**RM** [00:02:26] Yeah. Wow, that was an experience.

**SS** [00:02:30] Yeah. I hitchhiked all through Canada. Wound up in B.C. working in the logging camps, and I took up rigging—learnt rigging in the logging camps.

**RM** [00:02:45] Wow.

**SS** [00:02:45] I was living in Port Alberni when they started expanding the pulp mill there and they were hiring lots of iron workers. The iron workers did all the rigging for all the trades in those days, and they were short. It was a five-year apprenticeship for the iron workers but because I knew rigging and they needed a lot of riggers that I signed on with a permit with the iron workers and started working on the pulp mill expansion. After I think it was 90 days, we went to the Vancouver office, 97 the National Ironworkers [Ironworkers 97, International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental, and Reinforcing Ironworkers] and they had a test. If you pass the test, you didn't have to go through the apprenticeship. You get your journeyman ticket. That's what I did, and I became a journeyman iron worker.

**RM** [00:03:51] So the test was just how much you knew about iron, you know, being a rigger and an iron worker and so on?

**SS** [00:03:56] I can't even remember all the questions, but I managed to pass it anyways.

**RM** [00:04:00] It was more than just, what's your name.

**SS** [00:04:01] Yeah. (laughter). So, yeah, it went pretty good. Let's see, where do I go from there? Well, then I decided that I was going to settle down. I'd had enough of construction, and they were looking for millwrights at Harmac [Harmac Pulp Operations]. That's where I wound up getting a millwrights job. There was a lot of rigging involved so it was pretty similar to the millwrighting what we did. At that time at Harmac you didn't have need of an apprenticeship there. So, you got a helper four years and then you became a journeyman if there was an opening. If there was no opening you could stay at fourth year helper for years. I went through that routine. Passed that test. Got my millwright's ticket.

**RM** [00:05:14] So you got your ticket?

**SS** [00:05:15] Got my ticket.

**RM** [00:05:16] Do you remember what year that was?

**SS** [00:05:18] God. Not really.

**RM** [00:05:24] Mid sixties? Somewhere around there?

**SS** [00:05:26] Yeah, somewhere like that. When we finally got the certification, the PPWC [Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada, now Public and Private Workers of Canada] in Harmac, then we negotiated an apprenticeship program, a proper one with the government. You did your four years. You went to apprenticeship school every year and you got a proper B.C. apprenticeship program.

**RM** [00:05:55] When you were at Harmac, though, initially were you a member of the Iron Workers Union or did you have to? While you—

**SS** [00:06:02] No, well I just, yeah—no, I gave it up.

**RM** [00:06:06] Now, were you involved in—like, somehow, I have a recollection that you were involved in the ironworkers. You know, they had a big split in the Iron Workers [International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental, and Reinforcing Ironworkers] and Tommy McGrath tried to take them Canadian. Were you involved in that at all?

**SS** [00:06:20] No kid. What happened was—they were just building the Second Narrows Bridge. That was a big opening there. I went to my mum, I went to visit her in Hamilton, and I stayed there for a few years, started working there.

**RM** [00:06:42] In the steel mills?

**SS** [00:06:43] Pardon?

**RM** [00:06:44] Were you working in the steel mills?

**SS** [00:06:45] No, as an ironworker. Yeah. What happened was, while that was going on, Tommy McGrath was a business agent at—.

**RM** [00:07:01] 97.

**SS** [00:07:02] Ninety-seven, right. After the collapse of the bridge, they wouldn't send guys out on the job because still there were certain conditions about making it safe. So, with the—Dominion Bridge was the company, what they did was—St Louis was the head office of the union, and what they did was they sent the message to the head office. The head office sent a couple of guys down to Local 97's office and said, 'Okay, get the boys out on the job.' Tommy refused, so they fired him. Threw him out, and that's when he formed the Canadian Ironworkers, yeah, Canadian Ironworkers local. It was Local 1 of the Ironworkers.

**RM** [00:08:05] Were you ever part of that?

**SS** [00:08:08] Well, kind of, but not officially, no.

**RM** [00:08:12] He ended up at Harmac.

**SS** [00:08:14] Because—but what happened was that they eventually started losing out in 97, and that was that, anyways. I knew Tommy quite well. He'd come down to Nanaimo to visit.

**RM** [00:08:31] A wonderful guy.

**SS** [00:08:33] Yeah, I liked Tommy quite—well, he got his, got all his training as a seaman and then—

**RM** [00:08:40] Yeah, a merchant seaman.

**SS** [00:08:42] Yeah, they did all the rigging. That's where all the ironworkers at that point, did all the rigging for all the other trades. They don't anymore, but that's what it was in those days.

**RM** [00:08:53] So you ended up in Harmac. I mean, that was a long time ago. Do you remember what your first experience with being in a pulp mill? So, what were the conditions like in those old pulp mills?

**SS** [00:09:05] Well, they didn't seem all that bad to me because I was used to pretty tough conditions. They weren't—they were not all that—tolerable. But, you know, there's no safety procedures. Guys would work chemicals without a mask and, you know, you'd get sick. It was pretty bad in that respect, but that eventually changed. But I got involved—met Gordie Wickham, and then got involved in the union there.

**RM** [00:09:39] That was the Pulp Sulphur—what was the name?

**SS** [00:09:41] Pulp Sulphite [International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite, and Paper Mill Workers] and their president, international president, was a guy by the name of Tonelli.

**RM** [00:09:52] Joseph Tonelli.

**SS** [00:09:53] Joseph Tonelli. Joe. Yeah. Anyways, the—I forget, I think it was '64, '65 convention in New York.

**RM** [00:10:08] Because you—I'm not trying to put words in your mouth but you weren't very happy with the international union.

**SS** [00:10:14] No. What about—

**RM** [00:10:15] You supported the international union?

**SS** [00:10:16] No, well we believed, I believed in internationalism, but the way the international was structured was that each had a vice president. For instance, in our area, it was British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan. That area had one vice-president. That vice-president was elected at a convention. After the convention was over, he came back. All that area, of course, it required quite a bit of business agents and helpers, etcetera, working for the union. All those guys were hired by the vice-president with no election. There was absolutely no democracy involved in the structure you get, and the rank and file had no say about who the vice-president was because he was elected by convention delegates from all over North America. We were annoyed with that. We said, no, we got to change that and the only way to change is at the convention. We had a resolution from our local (that was 6-9-5) that we change the structure.

**RM** [00:11:35] Where was the convention?

**SS** [00:11:37] The convention was in New York, and we went—anyway, in any event we said we wanted the vice-president to be elected by the rank and file and want to hold all the business agents to be elected as well. Of course, that was turned down. I think I told you that once before the guy, the guy told us, 'Well, you don't need that kind of stuff. You tell us who you want, and we'll elect them for you.' (laughter) And we said, 'Well—.' It went down in defeat anyway. We never—.

**RM** [00:12:15] Was that the end of your support for the international?

**SS** [00:12:17] Yeah. I remember coming back home when Gordie and I were on the ferry and going from Vancouver to Nanaimo. In those days, you could get a state room on the

ferry—a state room and a bottle of whisky and drink. We said, 'Yeah,' and looked at one another and said, 'I think it's time we left the international.' So, we got a campaign going in the mill, and within a week we signed up 98 percent of the guys in the mill.

**RM** [00:12:56] Was that with the PPWC?

**SS** [00:12:58] Yeah.

**RM** [00:12:59] You knew about them?

**SS** [00:13:00] Yeah, we knew about them, but at the time for what New York we thought it was still possible because I said I believe in internationalism. It was possible to change the structure and I finally realized that it wasn't possible. We weren't going to change it. It was time to leave, so we signed up into the PPWC. Well, we applied for certification, but they said 98 percent sign up and the Labour Relations Board turned us down. I asked them, 'Well, why? Why are we being turned down?' 'You're not a union within the meaning of the act.' 'Well, what the hell does that mean? (laughter) Well, they never could tell us (laughter) just that we were turned down. We had signed up revoked slips. We were paying union dues to the international and [unclear] we said, 'Okay, we're not going to pay union dues.' Of course, they know the international said to the company, 'Okay, fire those guys. They're not paying union dues.'

**RM** [00:14:07] They were going to fire 800 guys?

**SS** [00:14:09] Well, that's what they wanted. The company said, 'Well, look, we're not going to shut the mill down just because—' (laughter) He says, 'Okay. Well, there will be a compromise. Any new employee will have to join the international, but the old guys (laughter) we'll leave them alone.' We carried on for the whole year. We had, you know, monthly meetings to keep the spirit of the guys up. We'd marched on the Victoria and demonstrations and all that saying, you know, 'All we want is a vote. Just give us the vote.' Came time to apply the next year, we applied again, and they gave us certification without a vote. (laughter)

**RM** [00:14:52] Now, I remember, or I think I know, that you received your certification on July the first, 1967, the 100th birthday of Canada. Remember that?

**SS** [00:15:05] Yeah, it was quite a moment. But ah—

**RM** [00:15:09] What do you remember about that?

**SS** [00:15:11] Not much. (laughter) Just that we got certified with them. Happy that we went on a celebration. That's all I remember. (laughter)

**RM** [00:15:21] And you—that's about all you remember. Yeah. What attracted you to the PPWC?

**SS** [00:15:27] Well, first of all, the autonomy and at that time they hadn't finalised the constitution. We went to the convention in Prince Rupert. We were going to finalise the constitution and that's where— because at that time there was no restriction on the presidency of the PPWC and so we had a couple of—one resolution came in to keep it as it is. One was from our local with the president be three years and I forget which local whether the Castlegar put in the resolution for five years. We got talking prior to the vote,

the guys from Harmac. We said, 'Well, if we keep fighting one another between three and five years, we're gonna lose it. Both of us are going to lose out.' We put our support to the five year term.

**RM** [00:16:26] That five year term, you still had to be elected every year?

**SS** [00:16:30] Every year there was a convention and you had to be elected every year—you had to run for election every year. That's right. Five years.

**RM** [00:16:38] And then what happened after five years?

**SS** [00:16:39] You had to go back to work in the workplace. It is really refreshing because becoming a pork chop—we call them pork choppers, guys who go on full time for the union—is that after a while you sort of lose the identity of the workplace. I mean, your work's different. You have your own hours, so to speak, you're your own boss, and it doesn't take long for you to start losing or feeling the interest of what it's like to be a worker. So, it's a good thing. Good refresher for a guy to go back in the mill. I know when I went back it was—I really enjoyed the year I had to go back before I could run for fulltime office again. Yeah.

**RM** [00:17:30] That's pretty unique for the PPWC, I mean for the trade union, I mean, and not many other unions have that.

**SS** [00:17:37] No, not that I know of anyways.

**RM** [00:17:40] Now, you were involved in those early days of the PPWC, and they did a lot of organizing in those days and you were part of that. You really believed in organizing. And I'll just talk about one. Some failed, some succeeded, but there was a big split over the smelter in Kitimat, which some people in the PPWC did not want to organize. They were desperate to get out of the Steel Workers [United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union], and some, like yourself, thought they should be organized and raided. Want to talk about that?

**SS** [00:18:16] Yeah. Well, we had the office in Burnaby then, the PPWC office. I was president—that was the year that I was president—the first year, and we got a call in the office from a identified source saying they were interested in joining a union. I wrote back to him. I said, 'Well, there's two ways of doing it. You can either form your own union, or you can join ours, which I had no business saying that because I had gotten the clearance yet. Sometime later I got a—I think it was a letter back. It was from the president of the local, Steelworkers local said, 'Well, we'd be interested in joining the PPWC. I said, 'Okay, well, I'll get back to you.' The next meeting, we had—we used to have meetings every three months I think it was. Different, all the different local presidents. I brought it up about going for certification of the Kitimat. Most of the guys agreed, except Angus. Angus was the only one—

**RM** [00:19:52] That's Angus McPhee.

**SS** [00:19:53] Angus McPhee was the only one who said no. We had no business being in the Steelworkers union or having them in our union. I think Angus was second vice at the time I was president, but he disagreed but he was he was outnumbered, and out voted and I got the okay to go in there. Oh, it was quite a struggle. We signed up the majority, but we never did get the vote. We got turned down.

**RM** [00:20:30] Now, that was quite a heavy campaign, like—

**SS** [00:20:33] Oh yeah.

**RM** [00:20:34] Were you threatened or intimidated?

**SS** [00:20:38] Not really. Not that I can recall now, but the—

**RM** [00:20:43] The Steelworkers could play pretty tough.

**SS** [00:20:46] They played pretty tough, but, you know, we had the majority of the workers there were for us and really no one to threaten us. At least I wasn't threatened anyways. Well, anyways, we never got the vote and of course I lost the election because of that. (laughter) Guys thought I was crazy.

**RM** [00:21:10] Do you still think that was the right decision?

**SS** [00:21:12] I think at the time, yeah, because, you know, we—let's look at the history now. They've changed their name though, because they're prepared to take in anything that requires workers. I think it's just that I was a little too early for it.

**RM** [00:21:31] I heard that there was a big sign that said, you know, PPWC is a communist front or something.

**SS** [00:21:38] Oh, you know—

**RM** [00:21:39] Do you remember that? That was up in Kitimat.

**SS** [00:21:41] Yeah, we were red baited and the whole thing. Of course, it didn't help that I had been to international convention in Budapest, which was sort of a communist-dominated convention.

**RM** [00:22:00] You sued them, didn't you?

**SS** [00:22:03] No, I was, I was going to, but I forget who told me that you're just wasting your time so—

**RM** [00:22:13] That brings up—you mentioned it—that you got labelled Budapest Stan.

**SS** [00:22:19] Yeah, O'Neill was responsible for that one.

**RM** [00:22:24] We'll talk about him in a sec. Tell us about Budapest Stan. What was that all about?

**SS** [00:22:29] Well, just because I went to the convention in Budapest. The delegation, I went as an observer and I was—four English guys, trade unionists from England—and I was thrown in with them. The guy leading us around there, he worked for the World Federation of Trade Unions, which head office was in Prague. He was an English guy there that worked out of Prague, and he was our sort of chauffeur, took us around Budapest, showed us some places. Anyways, at the convention, he said, 'You know, you're the only North American here, and you should make a speech'. I said, 'Oh no, I

don't (laughter). It was like the United Nations. You had earplugs and it was translated into five official languages, Russian, English—I forget, French—

**RM** [00:23:26] Albanian.

**SS** [00:23:27] Yeah. So, finally I said, 'Okay.' One morning, I dashed out the speech at breakfast, what I was going to talk about and give it to the gal, one of the translators. She said, 'Well, because we've got five different translators, you're going to have to speak exceptionally slowly so we can pick you up.' Basically, what I spoke of was why we formed the Canadian union the way we did and we were unhappy with that brand of internationalism that they had, that it wasn't really internationalism. It was just American unionism. Basically, that's what I said, spoke of. When it was over, it was time to go for a lunch. Our English friend came by and said, 'You know, your speech went over pretty good.' He said, 'I know that there's quite a few delegates that are going to invite you to their country.' He said, 'I know the Czechs are going to invite you for sure. I want you to keep that one open because I can show you around Prague, [unclear] well be back home, or back to the office [unclear].' Okay. So, I got—I did get quite a few invitations, but I had limited time because I was on leave of absence from work. I always wanted to go see what was happening in Russia, so the Russians invited me and the East Germans—a whole bunch. I accepted the Germans, Russian and the Czech one. I went to Moscow with the Russian delegation. Flew back of their—they had their own plane. We got to Moscow, and it was pretty busy with the summertime then. They put me up in the suburbs and came pick me up in the morning, meet the president of the Russian Woodworkers' Federation. Had a membership of three million. (laughter) I had quite a chat with him. He said afterwards, 'This is what we'd like to do.' Said, 'We'd like you to show you around some of the pulp mills we have here around Moscow. After we do that, we're building a new plant in Siberia, and we'll fly you out there.' That plant that they were building in Siberia was further from Moscow, than it was from Moscow to Montreal. (laughter) He says, 'After you come from there, you'll be kind of tired. We got some resorts on the Black Sea. We'll take you and you can—'. I says, 'Hold it.' (laughter). 'I haven't got that kind of time.' 'Okay,' he says, 'We'll do it in Moscow. Go to Kiev. From Kiev to Leningrad and back to Moscow. And it would take about seven days.' So that's what I did. Took the train to Kiev. It was a late train and there was—I had travelling with me the guy worked for the union. He could speak French and Russian, but not English (laughter) but had a young translator, a young journalist, Russian journalist, so he could speak pretty good American type English, and he was our translator. We were on the train, and he was having a couple of drinks in the room, and he had a room apartment on the train, and I had one. There was a strange woman sitting in this apartment. Turns out she was a physician going to some sort of conference in Kiev, but they had bunked me in with her. (laughter) So, we're drinking, and it was time for them to go to bed. They left me alone with this gal sitting there wondering what the hell was going to happen now. She said to me, 'Well, are you ready to go to bed?' (laughter) I almost flipped [unclear] I said, 'Yeah, sure.' She says, 'Okay. well turn around and I'll get dressed for bed, and I'll turn around and you can get ready.' That was it.

**RM** [00:27:50] What was your impression of, you know, Russia and this, you know, their other countries?

**SS** [00:27:55] Yeah, well, it was, you know when you're a visiting guest treated like that, you know, it's pretty hard to get a real feel of it. I tried someone. I remember going to a big party, some kind of little Russian and that, and I thought well, you don't think I'll show off and show them I can speak a bit of Russian. It was time to toast, and I said, 'Za Boga', (laughter) which is Here's to God. Well, there was deathly silence. (laughter) I think I just



boo booed because the way they toast was 'Vot za tvoyo zdorov'ye', Here's to your health, (laughter) but there wasn't a peep. No [unclear] (laughter). Anyways, I got over that.

**RM** [00:28:48] All right, let's go back to Canada. The guy that named you Budapest Stan, obviously, as an insult was Pat O'Neill.

**SS** [00:28:57] Oh, Paddy, yeah.

**RM** [00:28:59] The former president of the B.C. Federation of Labour. He left that job because the PPWC were knocking off pulp mills left and right from the international, so that he went back to sort of stop the raids. He was quite a legendary character, Pat O'Neil. Do you want to just talk about your impressions of Pat O'Neil?

**SS** [00:29:21] Well, I always liked, Pat. Everyone liked Pat; he was quite a great character. When I first met him, he was still working for the B.C. Fed, and he came when we were breaking away. I know prior to the vote, he came to our meeting and we let him in. He tried to—'You guys don't know what you're doing.' Yak, yak. He tried to talk us out of it. Of course, no one listened to him, so, that was that. But we had the—I forget we had a convention a couple of years later and our convention was bugged. The way we found out was that we were having a break, and we were moving some tables, had some tables and something fell off a table. We've checked it; it was a mike. Right next to the room was, at that time, his name was Craig. He was president from Castlegar. He was a PPWC president, and his bedroom right next to the hall. We checked into his bedroom. We found his bedroom was bugged, too. Then we checked out the guy who was bugging it. Found his room and all the apparatus and that. He told us it was the international bugged the room. At that time, Pat O'Neill had become either vice-president or adviser to get the—I forget the title. It seemed that Pat O'Neill had bugged our god damn convention. 'Aww, you guys, even kids get measles, you blame me for it!' (laughter) Anyway, found out that, yeah, he did bug our convention.

**RM** [00:31:27] That's a great story. You were there then at that convention? The Ritz Hotel in Vancouver.

**SS** [00:31:32] The Ritz Hotel. Yeah. We used to like going to the Ritz. All the union guys used to go to the Ritz Hotel. Liked the beer parlour there.

**RM** [00:31:42] Did you ever talk to Pat about it afterwards?

**SS** [00:31:45] No, not really. By that time, we were no longer on talking terms.

**RM** [00:31:51] Well, how are we doing for time there Donna? Okay. You mentioned when he came to Nanaimo for a meeting, is that when he brought Joseph Tonelli?

**SS** [00:32:03] Yeah. Well—

**RM** [00:32:04] The international President? Talk about what happened when he came.

**SS** [00:32:08] Yeah, well, he came in and had about four henchmen with him, and they all came in and Tonelli got up to make a speech. He said, 'You guys from Heymac [sic], don't know what you're doing.' He was a piss poor speaker.

**RM** [00:32:25] And he called Harmac Heymac?

**SS** [00:32:28] Yeah. Heymac and he completely, I mean, he did us a favour because if anybody there wasn't in favour of it, they sure were after he was finished with—

**RM** [00:32:39] Now another controversial saying that PPWC did in those days, you started to raid IWA [International Woodworkers of America] sawmills, and you were in the forefront of those specially on Vancouver Island. That was more of a tough slog. Do you want to just talk about what it was like raiding those sawmills and going up against the IWA?

**SS** [00:32:58] Well, it wasn't easy. I think the first mill that we went through was in Chemainus. I forget, though, how many people we signed up, but we never—I don't know if we get the vote or not, but we never did get the certification. Oh, it had to be, put on a pretty tough campaign, and so we but we won the—there was—. Well, forget the mill, some sawmills outside of Nanaimo that we got the certification for from the IWA. The other new—the new ones we went after, but we didn't get too many sawmills from the IWA.

**RM** [00:33:52] You were into organizing. What was organizing like in these mills and so on. Because you, you know, you did a lot of that organizing. What—

**SS** [00:33:59] Yeah. organizing worked well. I know the one, the one mill that we did get was in Ladysmith Forest Products. Yeah, Ladysmith. Well, it was like we'd go have meetings and you'd go in 4:00 o'clock in the morning. Have a meeting with guys at lunchtime and that. I remember running into [unclear] Jack Monro in Ladysmith (laughter) at the meeting.

**RM** [00:34:30] What was that like?

**SS** [00:34:31] That was pretty good, you know. No exceptionally hard feelings, but we stated our case, and it was that I happened to win out that one. It wasn't too many I was winning from Jack but that was one.

**RM** [00:34:53] What did you like about organizing?

**SS** [00:34:56] Oh, I don't know if I liked it or disliked it. It's just something that had to be done, and when I was vice-president of the PPWC, that was the vice president's job [unclear] was in charge of organizing. Just something you had to do and I did it. (laughter) Best I could.

**RM** [00:35:15] But it's not your ordinary person that goes out and organizing. It's hard, isn't it?

**SS** [00:35:18] Yeah, well it's not easy.

**RM** [00:35:20] Not in your comfort level really.

**SS** [00:35:23] I used to just sort of ignore it and do it. I didn't mind it, it just—

**RM** [00:35:29] And you believed in it?

**SS** [00:35:30] Yeah, I believed in what I was selling, and I thought it was a good union we were providing because, you know, when we set up our constitution, we said elections every year. Yeah. You couldn't run after five years, had to go back to the workplace for a

year [unclear] The other thing about the international pork choppers is, I mean, their salary was different from the workers, and they had their own pension plan, and that was divorced from the workers that they represented. We said, 'Well, it's only fair. The people you represent, you have to live like them, otherwise you're not properly representing them.' We structured it that the pension plan, if you were a paid pork chopper, you paid into the union pension plan, that your salary was set at shift mechanic salary. A shift mechanic made more money because of a shift differential. If you had a job that paid higher, then you carry your wage with you. Like, for instance, we had second engineers and stuff like that. The rate was quite a bit higher than the mechanics so they would carry if you got elected to a union pay job, you carried your higher wage with you. That structure was to make sure that it was the workers union, not some policy of some guys that thought they were better than the people they were representing.

**RM** [00:37:16] How much of a factor was it that the PPWC was a Canadian union?

**SS** [00:37:22] Well, it became quite a factor.

**RM** [00:37:26] You were called flag wavers.

**SS** [00:37:27] Yeah, well, I was a flag waver because I happened to believe in it at the time. I mean, I even though I believed in internationalism, I'm still, foremost a Canadian, and proud of being a Canadian, and that we're big enough, strong enough to form our own union and run our own union. We didn't need an American union to—because all the international unions we had in Canada were really American unions. They weren't international unions. The American structure and I thought, well, we Canadians we could run our own union.

**RM** [00:38:02] Let's look at this issue of raiding, because as you know, a lot of unions really hate raiding because they think it divides the labour movement when they should all be together. They would say, why don't you organize the unorganized instead of raiding and organizing workers who already have a union?

**SS** [00:38:19] Yeah, well we did that. We organized a lot of non-union places, but I believe that, you know, that people shouldn't be trapped in the union they didn't like. Now, if they—whether it was a good union or a bad union—if they wanted to change unions and they thought our union was a better one and I thought they should have the opportunity to do that. I didn't see anything wrong with it. I still don't.

**RM** [00:38:45] A lot of people didn't like you guys did they?

**SS** [00:38:48] Oh, no.

**RM** [00:38:49] What was that like? You know, you couldn't be part of the mainstream labour movement.

**SS** [00:38:53] Well, you get used to it. I mean, some of the people didn't like me. I didn't like them neither. So. (laughter)

**RM** [00:39:02] All right, let's get into some nitty gritty here. The 1970 negotiations—.

**SS** [00:39:10] '70?

**RM** [00:39:10] 1970, yes. I think that's when the Pulp Bureau was formed, and so I think, didn't you try a bit to negotiate jointly with the International Pulp Union at that time?

**SS** [00:39:21] Uh—.

**RM** [00:39:22] Maybe not. I'll go to—

**SS** [00:39:25] I can't recall if we did or didn't.

**RM** [00:39:26] In 1970, with the negotiations, the International union settled first.

**SS** [00:39:32] That's right. Okay, yeah.

**RM** [00:39:34] Then, of course, they were promised that the PPWC mills—there were eight of them or whatever they were—would not get any more. Yet you guys thought you could break that pattern and went out on an eight and a half week strike.

**SS** [00:39:48] That's right.

**RM** [00:39:49] So, was that a mistake because you didn't get—you couldn't break the pattern, right?

**SS** [00:39:55] Well, it was a mistake, and it wasn't, I guess. It certainly brought us together more than ever. You know, we had a strike in Local 8—the old fire hall. We set it up as a store, and we'd go to Victoria to get meat products, and we got all over the province, getting food as cheap as we could to give it out to the members on strike because we didn't have any strike pay. It brought us together that way and to making the guys stick together. Now we thought that there was a good possibility we could break the bridge the strike, or not break the strike—

**RM** [00:40:43] To break the pattern.

**SS** [00:40:44] Break the pattern. I was one of the guys that was still wasn't prepared to give up. I got out voted in that one and they voted to go back to work when the—I forget now the circumstances of the vote now. Anyways, we had to go back to work.

**RM** [00:41:08] You were out for eight and a half weeks. Wasn't easy, and yet the membership didn't blame the union?

**SS** [00:41:14] No. Well, there's always someone blames the union no matter what. The majority of the guys understood what we were trying to do, and they blamed the international for settling so cheaply. That's what was the end result of that particular strike, which made the guys hate the international even more.

**RM** [00:41:37] All right. Then, the pulp, the international pulp unions went Canadian—to the Canadian Paper Workers Union [CPU].

**SS** [00:41:47] Yeah.

**RM** [00:41:48] Did that have an impact on your ability to raid more pulp mills? Talk about that.

**SS** [00:41:54] No, I don't think we raided any more pulp mills after that. Not—

**RM** [00:42:00] Did they become a better union as the CPU?

**SS** [00:42:04] Well, they were easier to work with. Then we went into joint negotiations a couple of times, but '75 was the first one. I still didn't like their structure; the structure hadn't changed, not like ours. But, you know, if the members were happy with it, we weren't going to interfere with that anymore.

**RM** [00:42:25] They were a Canadian union.

**SS** [00:42:26] They were a Canadian union, that's right. So, they took that away from us, [unclear] able to raid them anyways.

**RM** [00:42:34] All right. Let's talk about 1975. That was a time when you sat down with the CPU—your old rivals.

**SS** [00:42:44] Yep.

**RM** [00:42:45] And you agreed to work together. Can you talk about that?

**SS** [00:42:50] Well. The negotiations went pretty smoothly actually, for two unions, first time that they worked together. The way we altered the—as Reg Ginn was our president and I was first vice. As first vice, I chaired the PPWC caucus meetings. We had a joint caucus meeting. One day I would chair the meeting. The next day—I think it was Gruntman.

**RM** [00:43:19] Art Gruntman.

**SS** [00:43:19] Art would chair the next one. Art and I got along pretty good actually for having been rivals all those years. Yeah, we worked pretty good, and then, of course, when we went on strike, of course, in those days secondary picketing was allowed.

**RM** [00:43:44] All 20 mills went down.

**SS** [00:43:46] Yeah. All mills went down, and we started shuttin' down the sawmills—the secondary picketing. Well, that annoyed Jack to no end but he come cursing at me [unclear] (laughter) I said, 'Jack, if you want to cross the picket line, go ahead. But I'm not taking that lying down.' So, of course, he never crossed it.

**RM** [00:44:06] But there was bad blood, wasn't there?

**SS** [00:44:07] Oh, yeah. IWA, they certainly didn't like that secondary picketing. Most of the members of the IWA respected those picket lines. They didn't cross them.

**RM** [00:44:22] Weren't there some incidents on the picket line that were pretty tough?

**SS** [00:44:25] No, there might but I can't remember them now.

**RM** [00:44:29] What was it like going on strike with your old rivals because you had to work together?

**SS** [00:44:32] We worked together. We worked really well. I remember the head office in Vancouver we had guys from the other union come down looking for direction, where to send them to secondary picket. Got along great, actually. Best we ever did. Brought the two unions closer together than before, but we still had our differences.

**RM** [00:44:57] Do you remember what the issues were? It was wages, I guess, eh?

**SS** [00:45:00] Yeah, wages.

**RM** [00:45:01] You had pretty (laughter) pretty high demands, if I recall correctly.

**SS** [00:45:04] You know, it's so long ago I can't even remember what they were now.

**RM** [00:45:08] Like 20 percent increase or something like that. They were—

**SS** [00:45:11] . Well, we didn't—

**RM** [00:45:13] Pretty high.

**SS** [00:45:13] Yeah, well we didn't get them anyways. (laughter)

**RM** [00:45:17] As you know, this was under the NDP government of Dave Barrett.

**SS** [00:45:21] Yeah, well, we had heard rumours that we were going to be ordered back to work and I was in Nanaimo for some reason or other. I forget now. Dave Stupich was our MLA NDP. One of the shop stewards, we had meeting at his place, and we invited the Dave to it. Dave came down. We talked. I said, 'Dave, I hear that we're going to be ordered back to work.' 'No, no Stan. That's not going to happen. That'll never happen.' A week later, we were ordered back to work. Yeah. I was pretty mad at Dave.

**RM** [00:46:03] At Stupich or at Dave Barrett?

**SS** [00:46:05] Well, I was mad at both of them.

**RM** [00:46:06] And Bill King?

**SS** [00:46:07] Yeah. All of them. Yeah.

**RM** [00:46:11] I think if I recall correctly, you were hoping that somehow you could resist and continue your strike. Did that enter your mind once you were ordered back to work by the NDP?

**SS** [00:46:24] Yeah, it entered my mind, but it just wasn't going to work. It was too much factors against us.

**RM** [00:46:37] What were those factors?

**SS** [00:46:38] Well, the government that you supported against you, you would lose a lot of sympathy from people that were supporting the strike, and figured, well, just go back and hopefully that the arbitrator they gave us would give us, you know, some sort of a compromise. That's basically what would happen.

**RM** [00:47:04] Were you disappointed there was not more fight in the membership? Because I remember your statements initially, right, when the back to work legislation was passed, you were going to resist the legislation.

**SS** [00:47:16] Yeah. Well, there's always disappointment, but there comes a time we have to realize when the chips are down, and you're beaten, and you no use prolonging it making life miserable for everyone. So.

**RM** [00:47:35] I mean, my recollection too was that the strike was having problems. I mean, been out for, I don't know, two months, whatever, it was—

**SS** [00:47:43] Yeah, close to three months.

**RM** [00:47:44] Yeah, and people were having a tough time economically and it was just tough out there. Can you talk about that?

**SS** [00:47:55] Well, not too much.

**RM** [00:47:57] Well, and there didn't seem to be any chance of meeting—of your demands being met because the IWA had already settled.

**SS** [00:48:06] Yeah. Well, you know, you hope against hope, but it comes a point in time, you know, when you realize the fight's over and it's no use carrying it on and just making it a lot more miserable than life already is. You know, you could—I could have tried harder I guess to keep the guys out, but I—the fight was over. I could see it was and there's no use prolonging, beating a dead horse.

**RM** [00:48:36] Did the CPU you agree with you?

**SS** [00:48:37] Yeah. Oh yeah.

**RM** [00:48:38] What was it like behind closed doors trying to figure out what to do next? Because there must have been a lot of anger at the same time.

**SS** [00:48:43] Yeah, well. I can't really remember too much anymore, except that what it made everyone in our caucus mad at the NDP. I voted NDP all the time, and I never voted NDP after that. I quit voting for the NDP. It just annoyed me, you know, the fact is the way they ordered us back to work, particularly with Dave, when he's said, 'Oh no, we would never order you back to work,' and then ordered us back.

**RM** [00:49:20] Well, in fairness to Dave Stupich, I mean, I'm sure it came as a shock to him too.

**SS** [00:49:25] Well, I don't know.

**RM** [00:49:26] But he said that, and Art Gruntman was pretty—was furious too.

**SS** [00:49:31] Yeah. Oh sure. No one was happy with—yeah, we had invested quite a bit of time and effort in the three months, almost three months and being on strike. It's no fun being on strike. It's no, you know, it's not a picnic.

**RM** [00:49:48] In the end, the wage increase you got was what the IWA got.

**SS** [00:49:52] Yeah, basically.

**RM** [00:49:54] Which actually wasn't a bad deal.

**SS** [00:49:56] Well. It wasn't. Yeah, it was a bad deal for being out for three months.

**RM** [00:50:03] Right. So, what, you know, what was the life of the union like? Like after those negotiations were you weaker because of it, or were you stronger or how? What were the issues that went—

**SS** [00:50:16] Oh, no. Life. Life carried on as usual. There was no major effect either way. We were still trying to organize the unorganized, and still trying next negotiations to negotiate a better deal. None of that changed the bit.

**RM** [00:50:35] Were you still getting along with the CPU?

**SS** [00:50:37] Yeah, we got along not too bad. I mean, we weren't raiding them anymore (laughter) and, of course, they weren't raiding us, so.

**RM** [00:50:46] Then the PPWC got into organizing like university staff and all sorts of different things. Was that a good move by the union?

**SS** [00:50:56] Yeah. [unclear] It's a good move to organize the unorganized. I think it's a good move. Whether it's called PPWC or something else, IWA, it doesn't matter as long as it's a good union that represents the people properly and gives them a vote on who represents them. Sure.

**RM** [00:51:18] Now, you presided over a lot of negotiations.

**SS** [00:51:22] Yeah, some.

**RM** [00:51:23] Talk a bit about what it's like to be a negotiator. What did you bring to the negotiating table? What was, you know, you were pretty experienced. What did you find worked?

**SS** [00:51:34] Well, worked (laughter) if you're successful getting a raise

**RM** [00:51:37] But, I mean, you know, it takes a certain kind of a person to be a negotiator.

**SS** [00:51:42] Well, you have to—yeah, you lay out the points, and then you have to have—the company will lay out their position, and you have to make contradictions on what's wrong with their position and try and justify your position and give, you know, have a bunch of samples, examples ready to give. Why you need this. It's just a matter of doing your homework on a lot of things and what happens in the workplace, for instance, because a lot of things a lot of negotiations have to do with—weren't just strictly wages, you know. It's living—working conditions and things of that nature. For instance, we wanted a protection booth or something for operators. They were out in the open hearing all that noise and sucking up all that gas fumes. You had to negotiate all that. The company didn't give us any of that stuff.

**RM** [00:52:38] Were you a tough negotiator, do you think?



**SS** [00:52:40] I don't know (laughter). You'd have to ask—

**RM** [00:52:43] You had a reputation as being a tough negotiator.

**SS** [00:52:45] You'd have to talk to the company about that.

**RM** [00:52:48] Did you like negotiating?

**SS** [00:52:50] Well, something you had to do. Yeah, I didn't mind it. No.

**RM** [00:52:54] One of the things that—I don't know whether was unique about the PPWC, but you'd have your overall negotiations, the master set of negotiations, and then each local would have what they called bull sessions.

**SS** [00:53:07] Bull sessions, yeah. Well, there was local conditions that only apply to the to that particular local yeah.

**RM** [00:53:11] And sometimes you'd strike on them?

**SS** [00:53:14] We could. Yeah.

**RM** [00:53:15] Did that happen at Harmac?

**SS** [00:53:17] I can't think of striking on a bull session. I get—I can't recall now.

**RM** [00:53:25] Weren't you fired once for picketing Harmac?

**SS** [00:53:28] Yeah. [unclear]

**RM** [00:53:29] What happened there?

**SS** [00:53:31] Well, what happened was that I'd just got back, I think it was just finished serving two and a half years as first-vice—

**RM** [00:53:43] You make it sound like a prison sentence. (laughter)

**SS** [00:53:47] And, well, the convention, they changed. That's why the half year was instead of running the full year, I did half a year because the convention changed to a—I forget now. It used to be in in January, I think, and then it changed to June or something. Anyways, the change was two and a half years. I went back to the workplace, and that's when they were on strike at it. I had nothing to do with that picket line, but we were on strike, and I just happened to go on the picket line to give—to encourage the guys. The next day there was—company called a meeting of the union standing committee and invited me to it. So, I went to the meeting and company said, 'Yeah, well, we're firing you, you, you, and you (laughter) being on the picket line.' I forget how many of us they fired—four or five. I remember one of the guys they fired wasn't even a union activist. He just happened to be on picket duty. They fired us and when they fired us, we just got into position for legal striking. So, then we were in a legal strike and were on strike for six or seven weeks. The issue was to get the jobs back.

**RM** [00:55:10] Wow.

**SS** [00:55:13] We got our jobs back.

**RM** [00:55:15] Your workers came and supported you?

**SS** [00:55:16] Yeah.

**RM** [00:55:17] That's solidarity, eh?

**SS** [00:55:19] Yeah.

**RM** [00:55:21] It was considered a very tough workforce at Harmac, was it not? The worst labour relations record in North America, or something?

**SS** [00:55:28] Well, I don't know, but we, the guys, were used to getting what they wanted, right? They were prepared to fight for it.

**RM** [00:55:36] Any of that to do with you?

**SS** [00:55:40] No. Lots of people involved. Gordy Wickham was a pretty tough negotiator. A lot of guys in the local. Buddy Hare. He was a pretty good guy at the time. I mean, there was a lot, all kinds of guys in Harmac that were capable of doing the same thing I had to do. Yeah, a bunch of good guys.

**RM** [00:56:03] How are we doing for time? Okay. Well, let's—what drew you—I'm bouncing around a bit here—but what drew you to the union movement? Why did you get involved in the unions from the from the start, basically?

**SS** [00:56:19] Oh, I don't know. I guess probably my background. You know, my father wasn't a union activist, but he supported the union. That whole—my whole north end of Winnipeg were all union-oriented people there and the sort of inbred background it'd be. You know, when you go in the workplace, the first thing you did you'd look for where the union was, if there was a union. Just basically the way my life developed, I guess, and I always believed in the idea of supporting the workers, that they should have a decent wage, decent working conditions. We had to fight—the best way to fight is to have a union.

**RM** [00:57:12] Were you a bit of a radical?

**SS** [00:57:15] I don't know. What does that mean, radical?

**RM** [00:57:18] Well, I don't know. On the left.

**SS** [00:57:21] Oh, I'm certain I wouldn't be considered a right winger.

**RM** [00:57:24] I don't think anybody ever accused you of that. (laughter) Were you ideological? Did you join any left wing party or anything like that?

**SS** [00:57:34] I tried to try to join the Communist Party when I was a kid. The guy in the office said, 'Well, son, why don't you wait a bit before (laughter) you make that final decision?'

**RM** [00:57:54] And you did?

**SS** [00:57:56] I did. (laughter)

**RM** [00:57:56] Did you ever join?

**SS** [00:57:57] No.

**RM** [00:57:59] All right. Another topic that we haven't brought up. At some point, the PPWC joined the CCU, the Confederation of Canadian Unions, or whatever its name was, Council of Canadian Unions. It changed its name. What, for an independent organization like the PPWC, was that a hard decision to join another organization like the CCU?

**SS** [00:58:20] Well, joining other workers, I mean there was no drawback in joining it. The CCU could make no demands on you that you weren't prepared to give. You're completely autonomous in joining it, and it gave you a sort of, some insight in what's happening in other parts of the country involved with other unions. I didn't go to too many of those meetings myself (I had too much to do at home), but I'd go to the odd convention, CCU convention, and that.

**RM** [00:58:53] Were you sort of disappointed that the CCU didn't become larger? That the independent Canadian union movement—I mean, it certainly has had its successes and so on, but it didn't—I mean, the mainstream labour movement still remained pretty much—

**SS** [00:59:10] Yeah, I wasn't disappointed, no, because I really wasn't all that active in the CCU anyways. The guys wanted to support it, and I went along with it, and I wasn't too interested in it myself.

**RM** [00:59:27] That reminds me of—there were times when the PPWC and Harmac, and maybe in other mills, went along with protests organized by the B.C. Federation of Labour. They shut down a region, or they want Vancouver Island shut down to protest a certain labour situation, and you guys supported that, is that right?

**SS** [00:59:52] I can't recall any specific incident now, but certainly we would have supported anything that required—

**RM** [00:59:59] Even if it was organized by the BC Fed?

**SS** [01:00:01] Oh yeah, sure. If it was going to give an end result of better conditions or working conditions— anything for the worker, why wouldn't you support it? Sure, but I can't recall any specific incident.

**RM** [01:00:15] I think once they shut—did a shut down of Vancouver Island for a day and Harmac went out.

**SS** [01:00:20] Yeah, I can't remember that. (laughter)

**RM** [01:00:25] Because you would have expected them to go out?

**SS** [01:00:26] Yeah.

**RM** [01:00:27] Do you want to say anything about Operation Solidarity?

**SS** [01:00:33] No. Not too much. (laughter)

**RM** [01:00:35] I mean you supported the Operation Solidarity? You were part of it.

**SS** [01:00:39] Yeah, but I wasn't involved in it myself personally.

**RM** [01:00:46] So, Stan, you were telling me that before the 1975 negotiations—for reasons I'm not quite sure—is that there was a situation as to who was become the president of the PPWC between yourself and Reg Ginn. Could you just talk about how that was decided and what led up to it?

**SS** [01:01:06] Well, what happened was that I'd been back in the workplace. I got defeated as president by Fred Mullins, so I had to go back to work. Fred, president—I think he was president for about two years—and he, for some reason, he let it go. There was the convention. There was two openings for the national presidency and the first vice. Reg Ginn showed an interest in running for president, but so did I. I said, 'I think I'm going to run for president.' We talked about it. And I guess [unclear] said, 'Well, it's no use running against each other. So, the best way to settle this we'll flip a coin to see who runs for president and who runs for the first vice.' So we flipped the coin. Reg won, so he said he'd run for president, and I'd run for first vice. As it turned out both jobs we got in by acclamation.

**RM** [01:02:20] So much for the membership deciding. (laughter)

**SS** [01:02:23] Well, they did. They didn't vote.

**RM** [01:02:26] Who flipped the coin?

**SS** [01:02:29] You know that's something I can't recall.

**RM** [01:02:33] All right. Let's talk about some people within the PPWC who you may have known. Did you know Orville Bratton well?

**SS** [01:02:40] Yeah. I knew him.

**RM** [01:02:41] He was one of the founders of the PPWC. Do you want to talk about him?

**SS** [01:02:44] Orville come from the converting plant in Vancouver. I don't know really what to say about him. He was a nice guy. A good negotiator. He became president of the PPWC. He was a good president that I could see. I don't have much else to say about him, but just a hell of a good guy.

**RM** [01:03:13] Angus McPhee.

**SS** [01:03:15] Well, Angus was Angus.

**RM** [01:03:17] What does that mean?

**SS** [01:03:18] Well, Angus and I disagreed on a lot of issues but I liked the old codgar. (laughter) I liked him quite a bit. I think he liked me to a certain extent, but we argued a lot. In the end, we sort of agreed on what we would do.

**RM** [01:03:35] Was he hard to get along with?

**SS** [01:03:36] No, he wasn't. He wasn't any harder than I was. (laughter)

**RM** [01:03:39] I was just going to ask. Were you hard to get along with?

**SS** [01:03:41] Yeah, sometimes. (laughter)

**RM** [01:03:43] Why did you want to be president? What attracted you to that? To play that role within the union. It's easier maybe not to.

**SS** [01:03:51] I don't know. I guess when you become an activist, you know, why did you become a shop steward? You start off as a shop steward, and you get involved in the union, you say, 'Well, maybe I could do something better.' It's just sort of a natural development. Anybody who is a union activist. 'Well, I saw that guy, I can probably do a better job than he can.' Whether you could or not didn't matter.

**RM** [01:04:18] How many times were you president?

**SS** [01:04:21] Three times.

**RM** [01:04:22] For five years each?

**SS** [01:04:24] No. For the first year, one year I got defeated.

**RM** [01:04:27] Oh, that's right.

**SS** [01:04:28] Then I did five years. Went back in the workplace. Did another five years.

**RM** [01:04:37] What was it like going back to the workplace?

**SS** [01:04:39] Well, I really enjoyed it. It made you feel good. It made the guys feel good saying, 'Oh, he's one of our guys. We saw him on TV the other day but look there he is pulling the goddamn wrench just like I do.' Yeah, it was good. It's a good feeling, but that's why we structured it that way. Not only good the membership, it's good for the guy too. Involvement and unionism because you can become a full time union—I said earlier, your life changes, your lifestyle changes, and it's really good to reacquaint yourself with what it's like to be a regular worker.

**RM** [01:05:24] You retired, I believe, in 1996, is that right?

**SS** [01:05:29] Or thereabouts, yeah.

**RM** [01:05:29] What were you doing with the—you know, what were you doing for the union at that time?

**SS** [01:05:33] No, I just finished my job as president—

**RM** [01:05:39] There's a lot of years missing here. Were you like other positions within the union? Do you remember what years you were president?

**SS** [01:05:49] Well, no. I said, well, let's go backwards then.

**RM** [01:05:53] Yes.

**SS** [01:05:55] I was—did five years. After I did the five years I went back—I was supposed to go back to workplace. I retired. I was 63. So, five years from that and then one year—

**RM** [01:06:12] Okay. Got it.

**SS** [01:06:12] In the workplace. Then another five years.

**RM** [01:06:16] That's '85.

**SS** [01:06:18] And then I was back in the mill for about three years.

**RM** [01:06:22] Three years?

**SS** [01:06:23] Yeah, and then in '71 I was president for the one year. So that's—

**RM** [01:06:35] Did you like being president?

**SS** [01:06:37] I didn't mind it. I didn't sort of look at it in terms of whether I liked it or not it was just something I wanted to do and I did it. Yeah. Meet all the guys in meetings and that. Yeah.

**RM** [01:06:56] Talk about some of these PPWC guys. You know, good people in the union. There's something different about them?

**SS** [01:07:04] Oh, I don't know if they're different.

**RM** [01:07:06] Well, because of their structure, maybe they were more involved in the union, or they were more independent, or they made life difficult for you.

**SS** [01:07:13] Oh, I mean, everybody makes life difficult for you. (laughter) No, it's just—sure it—but you find that kind of independence anywhere. Not just our union. We're just structured differently, but I think the workers are basically the same no matter where the hell they are and who represents them.

**RM** [01:07:35] I have another question about those 1975 negotiations because there was real bitter fallout between the pulp unions and the IWA and Jack Munro did a different course. Do you want to talk about that? That was pretty tough.

**SS** [01:07:52] Not too much. Jack and I never got along want too well. Anyways, but—

**RM** [01:07:59] Did you feel you'd been sold out by the IWA?

**SS** [01:08:03] Oh, I don't know. It's pretty hard to determine that, you know. You just feel disappointed. I know that Jack wouldn't intentionally sell anybody out. Neither would Gruntman or, you know, anybody. Just—we disagreed on tactics. That's all. And our bureaucracy, they could—Jack was quite a bureaucrat, you know, and he believed in the way the IWA was structured because he was part of it, you know, but I think—I didn't like the way it was structured.

**RM** [01:08:46] I mean, it was pretty hard to win your strike without the IWA. Is that fair to say?

**SS** [01:08:52] How's that?

**RM** [01:08:52] It's pretty hard to win your demands and your strike without the IWA when they went their own way because they settled first.

**SS** [01:09:00] Yeah, but they never worked with us even when we were part of the international, part of the BC Fed. The IWA never worked with us. We had to work on our own. They weren't a help to us. Sure, they didn't make it easy when they settled, but we settled a lot of times after the IWA, and better than the IWA. Our wage structure was better. Our seniority clauses were better than the IWA. That's because we stayed out longer.

**RM** [01:09:30] A question about raiding again. I mean, it's—it can be bitter. It's like a civil war. Is there anything more bitter than a civil war because you lose friendships and it's friend against friends sometimes. Did you experience that when you were—when PPWC were raiding—had that kind of impact on people?

**SS** [01:09:49] Not really, because most of the guys when I was raiding, the guys that were—ah, no I didn't feel that [unclear]. Sure, sometimes you didn't like a guy, but there's a lot of guys even in your own union you don't like, and they don't like you. Sort of natural human development.

**RM** [01:10:14] Maybe a last question. At a certain point, a lot of unions within the CCU joined the Canadian Auto Workers. CAIMAW [Canadian Association of Industrial Mechanical and Allied Workers] certainly did. CASAW [Canadian Association of Smelter and Allied Workers] did. ICTU [Independent Canadian Transit Union]. You know, a bunch of them joined the auto workers, but the PPWC—because they respected the auto workers, and they promised help to them for whatever their reasons were—but the PPWC didn't. Did you agree with that?

**SS** [01:10:40] Yeah, I did too.

**RM** [01:10:41] Why?

**SS** [01:10:42] Because we were, like you say, we're structured quite differently from other unions, and we could survive on our own without that kind of unity. I there's any kind of joint action required, why sure, we would join them. We didn't have to be under their umbrella. We wanted to be under an umbrella like the CCU unions that sort of structured basically like we were or close to it. It was no advantage for us to join the larger.

**RM** [01:11:18] You know, more resources. You'd be part of the mainstream labour movement. You'd get to—you would have a voice at convention and voting. The autoworkers under Bob White, it was a pretty good union.

**SS** [01:11:30] We didn't want to be autoworkers.

**RM** [01:11:32] Well, I mean, they represented lots of people.

**SS** [01:11:34] Yeah, I know

**RM** [01:11:36] You were, you know, as a large, significant force within the CCU, you were pretty well alone in that decision.

**SS** [01:11:43] Yeah. Those guys—I was long retired when all that took place. Those guys joined after I left. I wasn't involved in it anyways.

**RM** [01:11:55] So, what did you love about the PPWC? You know, if you're looking back and remembering those days—

**SS** [01:12:03] The friendship that you develop, the people you meet. That probably can happen to any organization.

**RM** [01:12:12] But there's—don't you think there was something special about the PPWC?

**SS** [01:12:15] Well, sure, it was special. The way we restructured it.

**RM** [01:12:19] That's boring. I mean, (laughter) the rewards of that, just the structure? (laughter)

**SS** [01:12:22] Well, no.

**RM** [01:12:24] (laughter) It produced the different guys in the mills, and so on?

**SS** [01:12:26] What it does is that by having a guy that represents you going back into the workplace, it's a unique for an organization because what happens—how can a worker relate to Monro when he hasn't seen Monro work at all, you know. There's no relationship that develops there then. For Jack, he can't relate to them because he hasn't worked in years, himself, you know, I mean, physically. It becomes a distinct difference. I don't know what kind of—there's a difference insofar as respect is concerned, but certainly in our union makes you feel closer to the guys and just the organization that you get to like. I don't know; it's just the way it was.

**RM** [01:13:28] Did the fact that they were the main, you know, the House of Labour we'll call it that, the BC Federation of Labour unions—I mean, they really hated you guys to a large extent. They really hated CAIMAW too and so on. Was that hard to live with?

**SS** [01:13:43] No.

**RM** [01:13:46] You were taking away their members.

**SS** [01:13:48] Yeah. Well, why would it be hard for me? It was hard for them.

**RM** [01:13:53] Don't you like to be liked?

**SS** [01:13:55] Only by people I respect, you know. If I don't respect somebody, I don't give a damn whether he likes me or doesn't.

**RM** [01:14:02] So, lastly, because I just want to get this on the record. When Pat O'Neill—well, actually, one question out of this—Pat O'Neil and Tonelli came to talk to the workers at Harmac in a last attempt to dissuade them from going PPWC didn't somebody on the shop floor yell something at Pat O'Neill?



**SS** [01:14:24] I think he said something to the effect that asked when Pat ever worked on graveyard shift himself.

**RM** [01:14:30] You fat pork chopper.

**SS** [01:14:32] Yeah, fat pork chopper. (laughter) I forgot that he used that term.

**RM** [01:14:38] Let's, talk about Pat O'Neill again. He was effective in kind of stopping the bleeding, don't you think? Of your raids. At some point it looked like you were going to take every mill in BC.

**SS** [01:14:51] Oh, he was an effective organizer. He was a well-liked guy by a lot of people. Yeah. Certainly, what made things worse was when the when they left the international.

**RM** [01:15:12] Was he part of that?

**SS** [01:15:13] No, I don't think he was part of that. It came later.

**RM** [01:15:16] You say you got along with him?

**SS** [01:15:17] I got along personally. I didn't mind Pat. Sometimes I thought he acted like an ass. I'm sure he thought the same about me.

**RM** [01:15:27] Didn't you invite him to your convention once?

**SS** [01:15:29] Yeah.

**RM** [01:15:30] What was that like?

**SS** [01:15:32] He never came. (laughter)

**RM** [01:15:35] Why would you invite him to your convention?

**SS** [01:15:37] Show him what we operated like.

**RM** [01:15:40] All right. That's good. Anything you want to add? Something we didn't cover or it was not clear.

**DS** [01:15:47] No.

**RM** [01:15:47] What about you, Stan?

**SS** [01:15:48] No.

**RM** [01:15:49] That's enough?

**SS** [01:15:49] That's enough for me.