

**Interview: Terry Engler (TE)**  
**Interviewer: Sean Griffin (SG)**  
**Date: November 4, 2024**  
**Location: Burnaby, B.C.**  
**Transcription: Pam Moodie**

**SG** [00:00:05] Maybe you can start Terry, just by outlining your full name and birth date, where you were born.

**TE** [00:00:10] My name is Terry Engler. I was born November 5th, 1954, in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.

**SG** [00:00:18] Do you have any siblings?

**TE** [00:00:20] I have. I had five siblings, four brothers and a sister. My two oldest brothers have passed away and I'm the youngest of the family.

**SG** [00:00:31] That's a fairly big family for, even for that time, eh? For sure.

**TE** [00:00:36] Well, in a Catholic family, six. Like, I don't think my parents expected either myself or my brother Garry, who is a year and a half older than me. I think they thought when my brother Jerome, who's about four years older than us, or five years, I think that was probably what they thought was the end. And then they had Garry, and then a year and a half later they had me. And then I think my mother ended up having a hysterectomy after that.

**SG** [00:01:02] So what did your parents do for a living?

**TE** [00:01:05] My mother was just a, was a homemaker, and my father worked at the Robin Hood Mills in Moose Jaw.

**SG** [00:01:12] Oh, the Robin Hood flour mill. That's a fairly big employer at that time, too.

**TE** [00:01:17] Yeah, it was a big, big employer. And then and I think it would have been in 1966, I think they closed, or '65 they closed the mill in Moose Jaw. They had mills in a number of places and they closed the one in Moose Jaw, so my dad was able to get a transfer to the Robin Hood mill in Calgary, which then closed about 3 or 4 years later. So he ended up working—finishing his career working in a cabinet-making factory.

**SG** [00:01:48] I see. So as I understand it, the Robin Hood mill at that time was United Packing House Workers certified? So your dad was a, would have been a member of the union?

**TE** [00:01:59] Yes. My dad and my uncle, there was there. I heard stories. I don't recall much of the details, but I think prior to when I was born or when I was very little, there was a big strike in Moose Jaw that my uncle was involved in, and my dad, they were sort of involved in. It was another—I'm not sure what kind of a mill or whatever it was, but it was closed down again, I think. As well. So there was, yeah, there was certainly union. My dad didn't do, like he wasn't a shop steward or anything like that. Basically, they worked ten hour days. I think at the time when I was little and then went to a shorter. So, not a lot of time for much else other than working and sleeping and eating.

**SG** [00:02:49] Right. Do you have any recollection growing up of his union activity or of it being part of his life?

**TE** [00:02:55] Not much, actually. Like he was a, we used to go to the union Christmas party. I remember that quite well. The union and the company, the Robin Hood Mills had a, had a Christmas party that I remember. Other than that, I don't remember. I didn't pay a lot of attention to what was going on when I was little. I was having lots of fun being little and doing those things.

**SG** [00:03:17] As were most of us when we were little. That's true. But after your Dad's transfer to Calgary, did your family stay there for a while? In that city?

**TE** [00:03:26] Yeah. My parents stayed in Calgary until my dad was unable to really take care of himself in Calgary. My sister was in Edmonton, so she moved him up to Edmonton. My mum died when she was 72, of brain cancer. Where I sort of the, the strongest sort of influence, trade union influence was from my brother Alan who is 15 years, was 15 years older than me. He's passed away. Passed away just this year. And he was very involved in the—I remember him talking about the, there was a Dare strike in Toronto many, many years ago where they brought in—

**SG** [00:04:16] The company that makes cookies.

**TE** [00:04:18] Yeah. Dare Cookies and they brought in, that was the first time they brought in the company that was doing sort of scab, running scabs in the States. And so there was a fairly big dispute there, that I think—Alan didn't work at that place or anything, but he did, he was involved in that. And he was very involved in politics. So we were quite aware when, he sent us a book about the Sharpeville Massacre when I was probably about 9 or 10. And that was quite formative for me, to see sort of what was going on in South Africa, the pictures and there was just the story of what had happened in the Sharpeville massacre, where the South African government basically shot at demonstrators demonstrating.

**SG** [00:05:07] So I think that was a shock that went around the world to a great extent, that particular event.

**TE** [00:05:12] Yeah.

**SG** [00:05:13] So you recall that as growing up?

**TE** [00:05:16] Yeah. That that was something that was, that was important and that was big and that was something to. My father, my parents were quite anti-racist. They're both Catholic, but not—my mother was very Catholic, but she was also more a liberal Catholic, but a proper Catholic as well. She, when we, when I talked with her about things that I had discovered during this, reading plays during the Second World War, that how bad the Pope, the Vatican was during the Second World War, how close they were to the Nazis, she would not have none of that, but—

**SG** [00:05:53] Interesting.

**TE** [00:05:55] But that was, that was the deal. She was the Mum. A Catholic mother is supposed to bring you up Catholic. That is their job. That is their responsibility. So she did her best, but none of the kids ended up remaining Catholic.

**SG** [00:06:09] So her job in that sense wasn't done, I guess. (laughter)

**TE** [00:06:13] Well, I think she tried as hard as she could.

**SG** [00:06:15] Yeah. I mean, the times were not exactly right for the Catholic Church at that point, for a lot of people growing up, too. It's true. So you mentioned that working class politics were frequently a topic around the Engler household. And you told me about an incident when we were talking on the phone with your older brother, Gary, in grade six that he wrote an impassioned essay.

**TE** [00:06:38] On socialism. Yeah, on socialism. And well, like the NDP, the CCF was the talk at that time was around. Again, I didn't pay much attention to what was going on. I was just playing, having fun. But there was the, the writer, the beginnings of Medicare.

**SG** [00:06:56] Right.

**TE** [00:06:58] And I know Alan was involved in sort of pushing for that, and others in the family were quite in support of that. So it was, politics was always around the house, and we were family. We always talked at dinners. Like there was no— My wife's family, they talk, but they don't want to talk, they don't like to talk about anything that anybody would get angry about. But in my family, we talked about all kinds of things, and my mum and dad disagreed with each other on all kinds of things. And the discussion at the table was not just allowed. It was sort of expected. You were going to be, people were going to talk. So mostly when I was wee little, I listened. And then when I got older, I sort of joined in. But, it was definitely an open— and family, my wife's family members sort of visit and say, 'You guys talk about all kinds of stuff.' Well, that's what we always did was talk about things. So it was an open, very open household in terms of politics.

**SG** [00:08:01] In that sense, very un-Catholic because that certainly wasn't the Catholic tradition to have a lot of wide-ranging discussion around the dinner table.

**TE** [00:08:09] Yeah, that was like my mother was sort of, she. I think had she been Latin American, she would have been a, she would have been part of the Catholics that were revolutionary, that the teachings were more socialism than they were the capitalism. But growing up in Saskatchewan, and she was in the CWL and she, 'till she couldn't anymore, she cleaned the church and like.

**SG** [00:08:36] What's the CWL?

**TE** [00:08:38] The Catholics Women's League.

**SG** [00:08:39] Oh, I see. Right.

**TE** [00:08:40] So basically that was her social group as well, was she would spend days cleaning the church with other church ladies and they would visit and have lunch and stuff. That was, I think that was a lot of her. So that was where her social groupings came from, was from the Catholic Church and the Catholic Women's League and then family would be the other group, but other than that, a lot of it was that side of it.

**SG** [00:09:08] Then I guess having a much older sibling in Alan who brought his own politics to the table, it would have been very different from a lot of families where the children were the children and the parents were the parents. You had a wide range of generations almost.

**TE** [00:09:24] Yeah. And my father, too. One of my favorite memories of my father was. After my mother passed away, my father went on a tour around, did a world cruise, and did some other traveling. And ended up meeting a woman that they got along really well together, did some traveling together, spent a lot of time together. We invited them out here for my Dad's, I think was his 80th birthday. And at one point, Liz (his woman friend), sort of said 'I believe that a man should, that men should make the decisions.' And my father's response was, 'Whatever you say, dear.' So it was not a family that, my dad was not in any way sort of patriarchal. He was, without question, he was the father. But it was not such that he made all the decisions. I think my mother made more decisions around the house and around the home—

**SG** [00:10:19] It certainly sounds like it.

**TE** [00:10:20] —than he did. She did the banking. So it was a much more, it was a very egalitarian household.

**SG** [00:10:28] What was your experience like in high school at this time? Because this was also, as you say, a very formative period for a lot of people of our generation.

**TE** [00:10:35] Well, high school was—the first sort of demonstration I was ever on was when the Amchitka nuclear test—

**SG** [00:10:46] In 1971. Right.

**TE** [00:10:47] Yeah. I was in school and we actually, in Calgary, we actually had a student walkout. And we sort of walked with a bunch of students. We walked through a number of high schools to try to get more students to walk out. That was my first experience with a any kind of a real political demonstration. It was lots of fun going to.

**SG** [00:11:14] So where did the inspiration for you personally come for that?

**TE** [00:11:18] Well, I think it was, it was sort of part of my family was that, being involved in things. Like, being someone who always spoke, like in the household we all, everyone spoke, and public speaking was something that we all did. My father was a musician. I had no idea until I was in my 20s that he actually was a musician. So he was 54 when I was, or 44 when I was born. So he was, he was always an old guy. I never really—

**SG** [00:11:56] But isn't it interesting that you had no idea that he had. Did he not do any music at home?

**TE** [00:12:02] He didn't do any. He didn't do any music, much music at home. My brother Jerome had an accordion and played the accordion. I tried guitar, but I was too lazy to practice. So I would actually fake practicing, which is about as dumb as you can imagine.

**SG** [00:12:19] Almost as hard as practicing (laughter).

**TE** [00:12:22] I thought that afterwards, but at the time it seemed, okay, I'm not practicing this stuff.

**SG** [00:12:26] I see, isn't that funny, but apparently at one point you did go to a theater school though.

**TE** [00:12:32] Well, that was in high school. My brother Gary was into theater, and I was two years behind him. So in Alberta, high school was 10 to 12. They have a junior high school 7, 8, 9, and then 10, 11 and 12 are high school. So for the first year I was in high school, my brother Gary was in grade 12. He was really into theater. And so I got dragged along into theater. I enjoyed it, and then in through my time in high school, I really enjoyed doing theater, went to national theater school in Montreal. Found that really interesting and really exciting. Didn't finish. I had—it was in a two year technical course. Did a year and a half, and then I kind of ran out of money. Alberta had scholarships for students, out-of-province students, and they were \$500 scholarships. And there were four of us from Alberta that got in that year, and two of them were quite high in sort of Social Credit Party circles. And instead of giving the \$500 each to four of us, they decided they'll give they give a \$1,000 to the two people that had rich, rich parents.

**SG** [00:13:50] They were Socreds. So you were cast out.

**TE** [00:13:54] So we didn't count. We didn't. So in the end, I sort of decided I didn't really have enough money. And the show that they were going to be doing coming up in the latter part of the term was with a director I didn't really want to work with anymore because he was into saying that Brecht was not political and I was like, Brecht was about as political—

**SG** [00:14:13] As they come. That's right.

**TE** [00:14:14] —as they come. So I decided I didn't really want to finish. I didn't really want to be the stage manager for this dumb director, and I was running out of money. They, Alberta actually said, close to the end when I already had decided to go back, oh they were going to give it that \$500 to myself and to Monty (the other guy that was from Alberta wasn't from a wealthy family). But I had made my decision and moved back to Calgary and then we moved to Vancouver.

**SG** [00:14:46] The family did, or?

**TE** [00:14:48] My, just myself and my current spouse who we've been together for 50 years. Since high school. We met doing theater in high school and we moved to Vancouver to start up a theater company. We had a name: Ginger Goodwin Theater Company, and we were going to do lefty theater. And then my unemployment ran out. And so my brother Al was working on the tugboats. I liked cooking and Al was a cook. And so he said, 'Why don't you do cooking?' And I said, 'Okay.' So I went down to the hall, sat in the hall for three months, and got a job working as a cook. Did it for about a year, thought it was the stupidest job I'd ever done in my life and quit. Then did work, worked at the Arts Club Theater for six months and decided, no, actually this is stupider and the people there are anti-union and—

**SG** [00:15:42] Right.

**TE** [00:15:43] This silly artistic ideal that you have to be impoverished to do art. And I was like, 'No, having coffee breaks and having reasonable hours is a good thing, whether you're an artist or not.' But they would, if you're an IATSE guy, then you don't have to do hardly anything. There's all this free artistic which didn't, I didn't get into any, I thought it was just stupid. So I left that, went back to work on the tugboats. Tugboats paid way better, and you got two weeks off a month. So I started doing that. I got used to it. Once I decided that's what I was going to do. I didn't—first year I would count down the days from the very beginning, and then it just drove me crazy. The last few days, the count down, the last couple days, and then just you just don't think about it. You're at work.

**SG** [00:16:35] It's just part of the schedule.

**TE** [00:16:37] You don't see anybody. You get up, you make dinner, you make breakfast, you go back to bed, you get up, you make lunch, back to bed. You get lots of sleep, lots of reading done. A lot of reading done. And it was a great union. I really enjoyed working, doing stuff in Local 400. They were very open and receptive. I had an, you know, my brother Al was already there and he had been quite active. He was quite active in Local 400, so that was a bit of an opening. But I always felt, I was in a—when I was in Calgary working in Calgary for the City, I was in a CUPE local and I always felt comfortable. I would go to meetings and if I thought something was needed saying, I would say it. And I always felt that way. And, and then we did—it was on a picket line in Calgary at a battery factory that, they went on strike. It was kind of a strange scenario, like everybody worked overtime before the strike happened to get all the batteries out of the plant, which seemed to be counterproductive if we were going to picket an empty plant. But, on the other hand, the guys needed, they were going to be not having any income when they're on strike. So the incentive is, okay, we'll get, I'll make a bunch of extra money now on overtime and that maybe that'll tide, hold me through the strike. I was a student at the time, so I was going to leave anyway.

**SG** [00:18:05] Yeah.

**TE** [00:18:06] But I really enjoyed that first strike.

**SG** [00:18:10] So at this time. It's a fairly unique time in the sense that you could get a job on a tugboat without really having any training or any particular, any job experience. As that I recall, right.

**TE** [00:18:20] Yeah, that was—the generation that I came into in the tugboats, a lot of really good sailors never did much more than maybe a grade 5 because they just hated school and they liked working on the boat. And like, some started as galley hands at like 14 years old, and a lot of them lied about how old they were. If you were big, you'd lie. And then you'd get a job. And a lot of small operators are perfectly fine with kids, and and you know in Local 400 you all, you got, like basically you got, you got dispatched as a green guy. So you were not—the company would put you with somebody. Like in the end it's kind of challenging because you do, you do a watch. So you're working with either the Mate or the Captain as a deckhand. As a cook, I sort of arranged, like it was all up to me to order the food, cook the food, decide what was going to be on, what I was going to cook. So that was a, it was a nice job because I didn't really have a boss. That was kind of very interesting to have a job where I had—the bosses were everybody that was on a tugboat and the captain, especially the boss. But nobody really told me what I—people made suggestions, asked for things, and I was always pretty good at trying to find a way to make whatever they wanted. Because on a tugboat, the only fun you have is eating.

**SG** [00:19:52] Well, I guess there's no real chain of command when it comes to food either, is there? I mean, that's again, like sailing.

**TE** [00:19:57] And yeah, the worst is sometimes captains have very picky—mostly they were good, but there were a few captains that wanted everything done their way. And then you try. And then everybody else would get mad at you because you're cooking all fish and chicken, because the captain wants fish and chicken at every meal. And so the other guys, 'Where are we? Kentucky Fried Chicken?' Okay. Okay. So you had to be able to sort of block out that noise to be a successful cook. You had to be able to. Because if you tried to do what everybody asked you and wanted you to do, everybody would ask and want you to do more and more and more. And you would get into this thing where you're cooking for this guy and then this guy's mad at you. So now you're cooking for this guy. So you'd do 'This is what I'm going to make and I'm going to, this is what I'm going to do. You want this? Okay. I'll try to get this in in the next two weeks that you want it.' But, I'm the one who decides what I'm making for dinner and what, and also, what's available on the boat. That also decides what you make. So it was a nice, it was a very interesting job for a young man of 19, 20. That I was sort of in charge of cooking for these people. I never did any training as a cook. Now you're supposed to have a Red Seal.

**SG** [00:21:15] Right? Just take me through a day on a tugboat. I mean, most people don't really know what goes on on a coastal tugboat here. Just take me through the average day. What? What would it look like on a tugboat?

**TE** [00:21:27] You're on the boat for 24 hours a day for, generally, two weeks. Your trip is two weeks long. So you'd come aboard generally at noon, because the deckhand would work—one deckhand would work from 12 to 6, and the other deckhand would work from 6 to 12. So they would, you get six hours on, six hours off, and you do that for two weeks as the deckhand or the cook deckhand, which is what I was at the end. And then as the cook, you would get up at 4:30 in the morning and make breakfast for the crew so the crew would have breakfast from 5:30 to 6:30. So that enables the guy who's coming on shift to eat his meal before going on shift. And then the other one is off shift. So he'd eat the meal at 6:00 or whenever. They'd often go up a little bit earlier, quarter-to, whatever if they were done and the other one would come down. And then once you're finished, then you go back to bed, and then you get up and you bake, and then you make lunch, and then you go back to bed, and then you make dinner, and then you go back to bed. It probably worked out to about a ten-hour day average. You're paid for 12.

**SG** [00:22:43] But you're on-and-off and on-and-off, sort of, over the course of the day, Yeah.

**TE** [00:22:47] Yeah. So when I compiled my hours, it was around ten hours a day.

**SG** [00:22:51] So what's the tug doing? Are you towing?

**TE** [00:22:55] Towing barges.

**SG** [00:22:55] To where typically?

**TE** [00:22:57] Well that, that's really changed. What I started there was a lot of wood chips. A lot of pulp mills up and down the coast, lot of sawmills up and down the coast, so you'd get wood chips from the sawmills. You would take the wood chips to the pulp mills to be

processed into paper. Then you'd take paper back and you take chemicals up to the mills. So most of the work when I started, the outside work was, was basically feeding the major mills on the coast. And then you do the fuel as well. We did fuel barges up and down the coast. Gibsons to—there's one of the smaller companies. They did, they had a little coastal freighter that had a winch on it. They would load stuff and they would go up the coast. You'd do a seven-day trip and you'd run to all the different little, bunch of different logging camps and drop off propane, food, some kind of equipment, whatever, like whatever they needed there. They would call this company up. And that was a funny job where you'd work—the first day you worked about 18 hours straight because you had to load the ship. And then, as a cook, you had to have every four hours people were allowed a meal, so you had to have sandwiches sort of throughout all that period of time, you had to have meals every—and then after that you went basically the same scenario as on a tugboat, which is six-on six-off, and you're loading and moving whatever, mostly to the mills, fuel to towns.

**SG** [00:24:35] So they were real lifeline supply line for all of these coastal communities and mills then.

**TE** [00:24:41] Yeah yeah B.C. Ferries bought out the coast, all the coastal ferries. Because they wanted it all. They, in order for their, for it to work for them they wanted—so they bought out those little coastal ferries. They're gone now. Now, there are some companies that still do that. Little bit of, North Arm does that. They take, they do the houses, the chalets, that they tow chalets up to the Haida Gwaii and that so rich people fly in and they stay in a chalet and go fishing for, like \$5000 or \$6000 for a couple of days? You get your fish. A damned expensive fish, but I'm sure it's a lovely time.

**SG** [00:25:20] Yeah. No. Some of those charters cost a fortune.

**TE** [00:25:22] Yeah. So the deckhands would basically. They were doing—the main job you did was moving barges. So you take a barge, a woodchip barge, a bunch of woodchip barges up to Powell River. Powell River or to Comox or to—and you'd drop those barges off. You'd pick up either empties, empty barges or paper or something else from there, and then take that there. And then you'd basically just swap. So you're constantly moving, on a tugboat. You're, for the two weeks you're there you might get a. You might get a few hours at a dock, but you also might just be back and forth with barges and a couple of tugs used to run to Duncan Bay full time. Like they were two or three tugs that that's all they did was carry woodchips up, paper products back, woodchips up, paper products. And they'd just do that.

**SG** [00:26:12] So you're on the water for the full two weeks.

**TE** [00:26:13] For the full two weeks. You don't get it. You might not even see the dock in two weeks if they're busy. The bigger ones had log barges, which, that's a very interesting experience. The big old log barges, they load all the logs on the barge. The barge sort of sinks and then they inflate. They load a bunch of water on one side and the barge tips and all the logs flow off.

**SG** [00:26:36] Right.

**TE** [00:26:37] Into the water, which is very interesting to watch, to see. And if it doesn't work, it's a real problem because then they got to go back on this barge that's like that, with a bunch of logs that are who knows when they're going to slip or fall.



**SG** [00:26:50] And some of those tugs or those ones are self-propelled.

**TE** [00:26:53] There was one. There were two, Haida Brave and the Haida Monarch, I think. There were two of those built that were self-propelled log barges.

**SG** [00:27:02] Were they part of Local 400 as well?

**TE** [00:27:04] They were part of the, they were in Riv Tow, which had both SIU and Local 400. And they had the Haida Brave and the Haida Monarch. And my favorite story of that is they went into—supposedly these ships, these barge ships could, they could go through anything, was the line. And so they went out in a big, big storm and all the glass in the wheelhouse caved in. And so they were in real serious, there were real serious problems. Now any ship that says it can go, it will never sink, it's like 'okay.' (laughter)

**SG** [00:27:40] You know, that's what they said about the Titanic. So you'd also mentioned to me at the beginning that, that you particularly liked the union side of the work when you came into working on boats. Can you elaborate on that?

**TE** [00:27:55] Well, the meetings were very open. We had a really large executive. So I was on the executive, I got elected on to the executive from virtually from the very beginning. 16, we had 16 members at large. So I got on to the executive. The union had a policy that any members involved could go to negotiations and be involved and speak at negotiations. And so as a, again as a 20 year old, 21 year old, I was on negotiating committees. I didn't say that much at the very beginning as I was just learning. Tom McGrath was a wonderful, wonderful trade union leader. He was the president at the time that I started. And Dave Crane was another great trade union leader. And they were both very open to if you were interested in doing something, if you wanted to help, they didn't close any doors. Like I spoke at a city council meeting when we lost the fire boats because they didn't have, Local 400 didn't have anyone. And Tom McGrath said, 'Do you want? Can you do that?' I was 'Sure. I'll do that. Give me whatever information I need. I'll go speak to City Hall about fire boats.'

**SG** [00:29:16] Right.

**TE** [00:29:17] So it was very open to, to speak. And I was very comfortable speaking and a very strong lefty union. I did all kinds of donations to Billy [ed: Bobby] Sands, which some guys were not thrilled about in terms of the dispute, which I guess I was somewhat somewhat naive about, about the I.R.A. I know people talked about how, you know, these are military. Like, I get that because I am anti-war and all. But politically, we donated a lot of money to the SORWUC strike at Muckamuck. And I often, every meeting I would advance the giving, the giving a donation. It was very open to being involved. We had a Christmas party that was really good for families, all the kids would come. And the last few years we had the Christmas party, we probably ended up with more—we had some First Nations members that would bring all kinds of kids from the reserve. They didn't have another Christmas party to go to. And we had money and lots of—it was a great time in the Hall. Originally at the Fish Hall, that's where we had it. And then the Maritime Labour Center. So, the last few years, we kind of ended it because most of our members don't live in close enough to come to the Christmas party.

**SG** [00:30:49] Oh so that's really changed, I guess.

**TE** [00:30:51] Like most people don't live. When I started, a lot of people lived in East Side. Now it's too expensive for people to live—

**SG** [00:30:58] Yeah, that's true.

**TE** [00:30:59] —in the East side. So they live in Surrey, white Rock. You can live in wherever you like. Like we have people that live in Kamloops. We have people that live in Vancouver, on Vancouver Island. And we had one guy years ago who actually lived half of his time in Texas. He worked the long boats.

**SG** [00:31:18] There's a lot of history in the tugboat union, too. I mean, it goes back originally to the old Inland Boatman's Union on the other side of the border. Tell me a bit about that.

**TE** [00:31:28] Well, Local 400 was formed, I believe, in the late '50s. And it was formed because the SIU had become the union, the Maritime Union of the CLC. So they ordered, they tried to order the Marine Local 400 people (what became Local 400), to scab on a Longshore strike. And they refused. We refused. And then we formed Local 400 to leave so that we didn't have—because we could not be part of the SIU. And that's the same thing that happened south of the border with the IBU. They were around for a long, long time but they, I think, got the same thing with the SIU. I don't know exactly how, but they were the Marine Union.

**SG** [00:32:24] Well, they had been affiliated to the ISU, which was the international Seamens' Union, but then they went defunct and said to all their members, 'Go find a union.' Which is what they did with the International Fishermen, too. So I guess that's where, where the two on both sides of the border became sort of lost. Orphaned.

**TE** [00:32:44] Yeah. And then when we, we now have—I'm actually going to the IBU Convention next week. We have now developed, since the Inland Boatmen's Union—since we joined Longshore, the IBU is part of Longshore in the States. So they're, well, they're not an affiliate. We were an affiliate. They're actual members. We for a while were an affiliate because the politics and the dues structure in Local—in ILWU that needed to be changed for us to really fit. Because their dues structure (and it now has been changed), and so we work well with the Longshore and we invite people up from the IBU and we go down to their conventions.

**SG** [00:33:38] For a number of years you were, Local 400 was Local 400 of the CBRT though, wasn't it?

**TE** [00:33:43] Yes. From the beginnings until like I think 1993.

**SG** [00:33:47] So that was the original sort of Local 400, was CBRT? Right. Okay. Yeah. It remained Local 400 when it affiliated with ILWU?

**TE** [00:33:56] Yeah, we. Well, we—

**SG** [00:33:59] Gets complicated.

**TE** [00:34:00] Yeah. CBRT. We were told we couldn't join ILWU, which was what we wanted to do in '59 because they said they don't have jurisdiction for on-the-water. Their jurisdiction is on the dock and the overhang of the crane, or there's some language about

that, that that's their jurisdiction. It didn't go into the water. So the CBRT did have (because they had ferries and stuff back east). So when we joined—the CBRT decided to become part of CAW, we said we're going to be— We don't want to, we have a lot of respect for the CAW, but we want to join the ILWU. And we met with them and we had a vote. 97 percent members voted in favor of joining ILWU. We were technically—under the rules of the CLC it was a raid. Technically, but the CAW didn't go to the CLC and charge us with, charge Longshore with raiding. They demanded that we listen to them. So we invited them out to speak, and they spoke to a general membership meeting. They spoke to executive meeting. And then we said we want to join, that we don't want to fight with you, but we're going to be in ILWU. And we had good friends in Jess Succamore who knew Tom McGrath very well. And he was at that time very, very one of the top people in CAW, especially on this coast. And he said— My understanding is he said 'This is one of the, Local 400 is one of the best locals in this country, but if they want to go, we have to let them go.' The other reason we needed to go was because CAW was a much larger organization and their rules in terms of local is like a thousand members to be a local. And we've never been much more than 400. More 2-300, 400 members. So we would have just been absorbed into a CAW local, which would have meant the end of our ability to sort of fight for seafarers because we would have—not like the CAW doesn't deal with that but the CAW (now Unifor), has their transportation sides are all bigger than the marine side, so it's not the most important issue for them. They have rail, they have air, they have trucking. They're all bigger than the marine side. So the marine side is not one of their priority issues, which, that's all we do.

**SG** [00:36:43] So what was the primary issue, in your opinion, as to why you wanted to go with the ILWU rather than—

**TE** [00:36:49] Independence. Our ability to remain the local we'd always been, was the main reason. Inside the CBRT we had special status through negotiations with McGrath and Crane that we got significantly more of the money. Like it was the old structure where all of the dues money went to Ottawa and then they sent the money back. We got much more of that back because we did all of our own negotiations, all of our own bargaining, all of our own WCB cases, all of our own grievances, arbitrations. We did everything ourselves. So we didn't have any need for the CAW to send negotiators down for us because we had been doing that quite well all along and their structure wouldn't have enabled it and Longshore structure did. So in the end, along with the fact that we work with them all the time. In the marine side, we put a barge in, they're on the docks often and we hand the lines to them.

**SG** [00:37:55] Right. And there's a longstanding relationship there that went back quite a ways.

**TE** [00:37:59] Yeah. And we were in the same building. Or we ended up in the same building. It was a, it was a much better fit for the local. It maintained our ability to be vocal and to be—We are, Local 400 is the most active sort-of marine-side union in Canada, in terms of the ITF. The SIU takes credit for a lot of stuff, and they are bigger because they have most of the lakes, or a lot of the lakes, and they're a business union. And so, they have easier time because they go to the boss to convince them to sign a contract, whereas we go to the workers and we, with the workers, convince the boss they have to sign a contract. So they can sidestep. And so they're able to grow. They've actually grown a little bit here in B.C., unfortunately, because they have brought in a company that isn't paying—it's a Quebec company that, they're paying the rates they're paying in Quebec and probably more than they're paying in Quebec, but they're not up to the rates that the

Guild, the Officers' union and we pay here. The working conditions and stuff, they're lesser. The Guild was asked if they wanted to sign a deal, but just for one union. And the Guild said 'no, if they're going to do this, it should be with Local 400. We will take the officers. Local 400 takes the unlicensed.' And they said, 'No, we don't want to do that.' So the SIU took the whole thing.

**SG** [00:39:35] Oh, I see.

**TE** [00:39:37] Yeah. So that's what's happened now. And the industry has changed drastically from when I worked mostly, because the mills have closed. Almost all the mills, the pulp mills. There's a few left, but not many. And the log—those places are gone. The fish canneries that, that like most of. Some of the jobs we did, one year we towed cans up to Prince Rupert. Empty cans, and then towed fish back in cans. So, but a lot of that work has just gone to globalization, I guess.

**SG** [00:40:19] Well, the canneries are gone, too. There's none left except the one in Nanaimo which does basically custom processing. But, just going back to your beginnings, when you came into the union, you were a fairly young green guy with some seasoned seafarers that were in the membership. How, how did the relationship develop in terms of leadership there? How was that for you?

**TE** [00:40:44] In terms of learning the job? Well, first I started off as cook. Supposedly I knew the job when I got it. I'd never cooked professionally before. My brother, sort of, who had been working as a cook, said he said, 'This is what you got to do. Every day. You got to have, you know, meat and potatoes. For dessert. You got to have, you got to bake. You've got to do these things.' And so I sort of practiced making roasts and turkey. And then started the job and learned. One of the first times cooking on the west coast was interesting as they have a griddle on a big stove, they have a griddle for frying pancakes and stuff on, and eggs. First time out and the boats' doing this (indicates rocking) and I sort of crack an egg on the griddle and it goes, ssssh, off into the grease tray, and I go 'ok.' Crack an egg and it goes over that way. Okay. That doesn't work. It's not going to work in this weather.

**SG** [00:41:42] Right.

**TE** [00:41:43] So you use a fry pan because it can't fall off into the side. You learn by experience. One time decided I'd be clever and put the chili in the oven because you have all kinds of things to—on top of the stove you have bars and ring and wires to—because things'll keep going. So you gotta, they've got to be solidly attached to where they are. So the stoves are all set up to do that and I go, well, I'm going to be clever. I'll just put it in this, in the oven. And that wasn't a good idea because then the pot is crashing around, in the oven. And so, yeah, it was a lot of interesting learning experiences. And then getting seasick, and having food ready to serve people while I'm seasick was an interesting sort of bizarre experience.

**SG** [00:42:32] So what was it like also developing a union relationship with these guys? How did that go?

**TE** [00:42:39] It was actually very inspiring. Because the group of people that formed Local 400, that were the active members of Local 400 when I joined. They were either CSU members, Canadian Seamen's Union members, or they were sort of part of that struggle, against the SIU. A lot of the guys were blacklisted on the Lakes for not being in. So it was

a walking into history, and militant history. Walking into, the Canadian Seamen's Union was the first union to get an eight-hour day, I believe, during or right after the war. They were, like they had ship's delegates. Well, they were thrown out of the CLC for being communist, which, they did have communist members in them, but so did lots of other organizations have communist members. They were expelled, not because they had communist members, but because they were a very militant union. And that was exciting for me, wanting to be a militant trade union.

**SG** [00:43:48] And you were aware of that history or you learned it?

**TE** [00:43:50] Yeah. As soon as you arrive, you get that history. The older guys are telling you those stories, the stories of Tom McGrath and Crane being in South Africa during the '49 strike and demanding not to go into White jail. 'Cause they were thrown in jail for, while they were on strike in Durban, and they said, 'No, no, we're not going in the White jail. You're going to put us in the jail with the Black people because that's the people that we are.' So that was an incredibly inspiring—like the international understanding of the Canadian Seamen's Union was, was incredible. That strike was just a, it was all around the world. Like they had people on strike in Durban and in Australia, around Australia. All over Europe. It was sort of one of the most exciting—Arriving in that, someone who wants to be a trade union, militant trade union member: it was exciting. and learning from these guys that had gone through it. It wasn't sort of, this is their past. This was these guys when they were young kids like I was, and what they had done. And so it was very inspiring. It was easy to get excited to want to— And our meetings, we were. We supported the Fishermen's Union when they were expelled for being communist. It was a very militant union and it was militant to its core. And you walk in the door and that's sort of what fueled me was this this incredible.

**SG** [00:45:26] And so if you respected that and admired it, then that would have given you a leg up immediately as well, I'm sure.

**TE** [00:45:32] Yeah. Oh yeah. No, and again, they, they had the same thing that we, I brought in in my time too, which is, is that if you've got young people that are around and they want to do something, give them something to do. And not just something silly or something to keep them busy. Give them something to do. Give them, give them some agency, give them something. That's how I got into the union and that's how we've sort of continued. And the current president of the Local is continuing to do that. The young guys that come in, or young women that come in.

**TE** [00:46:08] Not a lot of women in our industry. Like that's, when I started there was women cooks. Now there's, there's now there are women deckhands because the job has changed. A tugboat deckhand in the past was, you have to be very strong in your upper body because you were picking lines, like a line that weighs 80, 90 pounds. You have a pipe pole that's 12 or 18 foot long and you're sort of lifting it up, standing on the side of a barge. You have to have a very strong upper body to do that. Now, most of the work that towboaters do now is ship docking and escorts. So that's just, you take a line and the line is tied on to the tug and the captain runs and you're there to go do whatever you need to do. But the physical nature of the job has changed drastically from the earlier times where it was, it was a very physical job. We didn't really have in my time, we didn't really have any women that were able to get through the industry as a tugboat deckhand. There are couple of women that became captains through other means. So they did their marine hours and their marine work working on other vessels and then could move in. But being a deckhand was really challenging. We had one that tried. And what ended up happening is

she ended up being, everybody kind of helped her. But then by the time she was supposed to do the job, she didn't really know the job because everybody was being, everybody was 'Okay, you don't need to do that. I'll do that for you.' And it's like, no no, but you do need to do that. People were being, they weren't being mean or anything, or sexist. They were just being—well, they were being probably sexist because they were mostly men from that period of time, which most, you know, that's we do live in that patriarchal world. And tugboats are pretty male-oriented.

**SG** [00:48:02] So your tenure as an executive officer of the union has really kind of coincided with a lot of changes, not only in the industry, but in the union, in the industry, too.

**TE** [00:48:13] Yeah. Yeah, it was very I did, yeah, it was an exciting period. The 20 years that I was president of the local, we went through major, major battles with both companies and with the SIU.

**SG** [00:48:28] Give me an example of one of those battles that's particularly striking to you. No pun unintended.

**TE** [00:48:34] Yeah. The last, Seaspan, which is the biggest tugboat company on the West Coast, brought in a new CEO, young guy, had all kinds of business degrees and shit. He decided that he was going to remake our collective agreement in I think it would have been, was it 2010? Or more, I think around 2010, that he was going to gut our agreement. He would, he said to people, 'Okay, right now you get 2.24 days off for every day you work. Well, we'll cut that down. We'll cut that down. So you'll just have to work more hours. You'll work an extra month a year, for free, because that will make us make more money. We need money from you to build this company, to be this great company.' And so he wanted to change pretty well everything in the collective agreement. The people that had been their executive that had worked with what we'd negotiated before, all told him 'It's not going to work. They're not going to do this. They're not going to agree.' He didn't care because he was CEO. He knew. And if you don't agree with him, you're a stopper. You're not somebody, you're not trying to help him get the job done that he wanted to get done. That was his attitude. So he basically said we were going to do this and he wanted us to go on strike and we said, 'No, we're going to, we want a negotiated collective agreement. There's no way we're agreeing to this.' There was talk about them locking us out. And so in the end, they didn't want to do that.

**TE** [00:50:18] So in the end, we went for conciliation. And we got a conciliator. Dalton Larson, I think was his name. The CLC assisted in finding him. I gave the Labour Minister, Canadian Labour Minister, real shit over the phone and woke up really—she phoned me early in the morning and I was really grouchy. I blasted her big time about what the company was doing and so they appointed a mediator and he spent nearly three years and it cost us \$120,000, cost the company probably maybe as much as \$1 million. And, he was really into it. He was having fun. He was enjoying it. He has billable hours, too. Nobody understands the towboat industry because our hours are weird. Like, we get paid half days. We don't get paid hourly. We get paid half-days. Our overtime is strange. We get lay days. It's all very—so, in order to understand, to mediate, it takes a long time. So he was into it. Taking all this time. The employer thought, 'We'll just get this guy. He'll come in, he'll do whatever we want.' But that's not how arbitration works. We, so we just hammered him and hammered him and hammered with the Guild for three years, and then they said, 'We're tired of this. Can we bargain?' And we said, 'Yeah.' And within a week we had a contract, and we didn't give any concessions in that period.

**SG** [00:51:58] What happened to the CEO?

**TE** [00:52:00] He's gone now.

**SG** [00:52:01] He's gone. (laughter)

**TE** [00:52:02] But that's not unusual. CEO's, five years is kind of a CEO lifetime with a company and then they go off someplace else to make lots of money.

**SG** [00:52:09] But nonetheless, you basically were able to hold your position.

**TE** [00:52:12] We did hold our position. We got good wage increases. We didn't give up anything. And that was because we stood tall. We had a dues increase. We had arranged a loan from Local 502, LW Local 502 if we needed it, to continue the battle. We used Leo McGrady as our, and Jamie Baugh as our lawyers. So it was very interesting. Dalton Larson loved it, had a great time doing it. And in the end we hung in. We didn't break down. When the company first opened, we got all of our people, Longshore and stuff. We were, we were at them right from the beginning that, okay, we don't want to shut the industry down. We want to negotiate a good collective agreement. And that's what we want to do and that's what we're going to do, This company wants to change everything. They want to gut our collective agreement. And that's not going to happen. They're going to destroy everything. And after two years of that, the company said— like one of the big things was the benefit plan. They want, they wanted to get out of our benefit plan because we were having some difficulties with long term disability in it. But we were able to change and it's a benefit plan, it was a good benefit plan that was co-, like an unusual one, in that we had it was the company and the unions (both the SIU and Local 400) are in this, in the B.C. Marine Industry Pension and Benefit Plan. And they wanted to go to some other plan that 'Oh yeah.' And we had our, Harvey Mason who was the head of—D.A. Townley did a spreadsheet showing all of the differences in their, in their benefit plan to what our benefit plan, because that was their big, the big thing is they wanted to kill our ben—they wanted to get out of our benefit plan and set up their own thing, that would be much cheaper, which they could find much cheaper, but not better.

**TE** [00:54:18] So that, that was a big fight and we were able to. And that is, in the end, the best thing that we negotiated in my time was a retiree benefit. So right now all, I get the same medical benefits as a member working, as a working member. And the dental isn't, the dental is smaller, but I get the same chiro, the same massage, the same drugs, the same basically everything except for (same eyeglasses), except for dental. That we bargained with the company. The company originally paid for it. And then the last while we have taken half cent or one penny here and there and put it into this plan on ours as well as to maintain this. And, yeah it's an incredibly beneficial plan for—I knew it before I got retired, but now that I'm retired, certainly can.

**SG** [00:55:14] And the membership is pretty much with you throughout this whole thing. We never had difficulties.

**TE** [00:55:19] Yeah. No, the membership has always been very good. Like it's, we went through votes where the SIU were arguing. We had a big vote at Seaspan where the SIU finally agreed to a vote because I think they were greedy. They thought they could convince our people to join because when Seaspan—Seaspan was Local 400: Kingcome, SeaForth, there were three parts, CATEs were part of the SIU. And then they all became

part of Seaspan. So there was one company and there was two separate unions for a number of years. The company wanted that. And then we got in a battle because, we had to, because the company, the SIU had signed a seven-year agreement when the Guild and Local 400 signed a four year agreement, and the seven-year agreement had signing bonuses in each of those years. And they got whatever we would negotiate. The Guild had been on strike about a year or two before that in the logging side. And the SIU actually had directed their members to cross picket lines. We told our members, 'You don't have to. And what you need to do is you tell, you tell anybody who says, 'I'm threatened by the fact, if I go cross a captain's picket line, that's going to harm my career. I want to be a captain one day, and they're not going to let me be a captain one day if I scab on them. So I'm not doing it.' Like, so you can't, the union can't tell people or you're involved in now, our world now. But your members can say, 'No, I'm just. No, I can't. The idea of doing that, crossing an officer's picket line, no way. No, I'm not doing that.' And the SIU told them to cross the picket lines. So we knew that in four years when our contract expires and the guild's contract expires, we've lost a hell of a lot of bargaining power because one union is there saying 'We don't need to do anything, we're just going to sit here and, whatever you get, we'll get \$1,500 more.'

**SG** [00:57:24] Yeah, because we get the signing bonus too.

**TE** [00:57:26] We get the signing bonus. And, the idea that they might come in and do our jobs is certainly there as well. So we decided we had to deal with that. And we did a, we attempted a raid. It didn't work. We weren't able to get enough members to sign. It was very strange. We got names. We got a list of the names from an SIU, former SIU had a business agent here, that was here. And he told us, these are the guys that you, that are easiest to call. You can call. I called and George called. First, one guy, and I got a call from the SIU, five minutes later. The guy phoned up, 'So, the Local 400's calling. Want to know if you want to sign cards?' Okay. So we continued and weren't able to get the cards and we told the company this isn't over and we had a big fight over ship, over who got which tugboats because, and so the company threw up their hands and said, 'Okay, this is not working.' And the SIU agreed to a vote and we had a vote, three months or something. And the SIU did their best to attack me personally, which didn't really bother me. Said I was giving all of, we're sending all the workers' dues to Guatemala, to the Sandinista.

**SG** [00:58:44] To Guatemala for the Sandinistas?

**TE** [00:58:46] Yeah, they didn't really, they didn't really pay that much attention.

**SG** [00:58:52] They didn't even know what Sandinistas were, right! Yeah, well, that would have been interesting, though. And so what happened with the vote?

**TE** [00:58:55] They, we voted, the members voted to be in Local 400. And that was a bit of a challenge because there were some pretty serious SIU guys that were. I'd walked down to the boat and they'd be 'There's some stink coming here now. Fuck Off! Get out of here!' 'Okay. Okay.' But since that time, after that time, those guys who were really—well, they understood we were a bunch of commie lunatics, and we're just going to waste all of our member's money. And they were told we all got Cadillacs, which is one of the things that the SIU, that's kind of this thing where, the stories about Hal Banks is he got a new Cadillac every year. The stories were there but we treated them the same as all of our members. You can come to a meeting, you can yell at me, to an extent. You can yell, you can bring people and you can organize amongst yourselves and come and in the end, they



realized—especially Seaspan interceded by being really, really stupid, with the CEO wanting to push everything out, wanting to get rid of the towboat industry.

**SG** [01:00:08] So that coincided with this.

**TE** [01:00:09] It was a little bit later, but it really fit nicely because it, for about a year or two prior to that, there was this, the battle going on with—there was some SIU guys who were really pissed at having to pay more dues. But then they got to go to union meetings and actually make decisions which there wasn't the—the SIU, I think had, may have had meetings out here years ago, but they don't really have a local. They have, they're run from Montreal and Thorold, and so I don't—they haven't though had union meetings here for years.

**SG** [01:00:42] They used to have a representative here.

**TE** [01:00:43] They do.

**SG** [01:00:44] Tiny Hindes was the guy.

**TE** [01:00:45] He was here for years. I remember Tiny Hindes.

**SG** [01:00:47] I don't know what he ever did. Others than go to meetings (of the B.C. Fed that was), and conventions.

**TE** [01:00:54] Well and they don't go to many of them even. They don't really take much part.

**SG** [01:00:58] So do these former SIU members now participate in Local 400?

**TE** [01:01:02] Yeah. The current president of Local 400 was an SIU member who came over. On the executive, a couple of the guys, the big loud, big loud guys from the SIU were on our executive and after the fight with Seaspan, they're all on side because they saw what we did. That we listened. We talked. We struggled and we ended up winning in the end. And so, and we listened to them. Where they do have the ability to—being a member, where you really have no say (which is the case in the SIU because of the way they're structured. They're cheaper. But in terms of doing stuff, they don't do a lot.) And the members saw that we did. We do our WCB cases, which is a really, really lot of work. Hard, but really important and people can't do that. Like the idea that an injured worker is going to be able to get their way through a WCB and any kind of complex cases, like they can't. It's just not. They're dealing with enough with the injury that they've received and what that does to the rest of their lives to have to sort of deal with an incredible bureaucracy. So they saw what we did. I did WCB cases for these guys and and, don't win all the time, but they saw the effort and you know. I had enough experience doing WCB cases that there was very few mistakes and able to get some really positive things. One of the things that came out was the. When they the Liberals destroyed the WCB, now your WCB ends at 65. Unless you can prove that you were going to retire late.

**SG** [01:02:59] Right.

**TE** [01:03:00] There was a horrible circumstance of a guy, an electrician in the shipyard, I believe at Seaspan, who was like sixty-four and a half, and got a really horrible electrocution and bad burns and bad. And at 65 it ended. So he had six months of WCB.

Before that, you get hurt, your fingers don't grow back if you lose a finger at work. When he turned 65, that doesn't automatically return it and your back doesn't get better, when you turn 65. So, one of the things that I did was is that, in figuring this stuff out, this is what I told people to do, was to write a letter to the company saying, 'I intend to work to 75.' Keep a copy of that. There's evidence, there's paper evidence that that's what you were going to do. I had a guy who was. It was horrible. He was 65, nearly 65 when he got hurt. And so they said, 'We'll give you another year.' And he said, 'Okay.' And his injury wasn't done in another year, but because he had said 'okay, that's when I was going to retire,' I couldn't do anything for him.

**SG** [01:04:16] You couldn't argue.

**TE** [01:04:16] So. But if a guy—all's you need to do, and I didn't have a problem in sort of a guy saying, 'I'll write a letter to you saying, Yeah, I talked to you and you said you were going to work till 75.'

**SG** [01:04:25] So have you met, has this resulted in any successful appeals on that basis?

**TE** [01:04:30] Yeah. A number of people up to 72. I haven't gotten anybody 75 but 70 and 72. A number of people there, which is an incredible relief when you're—like WCB, you already earn less money.

**SG** [01:04:43] Yeah, exactly.

**TE** [01:04:44] So then when you retire, it's gone. So at least another five years of WCB puts you in a pretty reasonable state rather than just this kind of state that you're in.

**SG** [01:04:58] Yeah.

**TE** [01:04:59] Which is injured and no money.

**SG** [01:05:02] All of this must have taken, I mean your job description sounds like it's expanding here all the time in many ways in this job. It must have taken a bit of a toll on you. Do you feel that it was like, a lot of work?

**TE** [01:05:16] It was, without question, it's a lot of work, a lot of stress. But it was, it worked out incredibly successfully in that a few years before I retired, the Secretary Treasurer. We have two full time people in Local 400, president and the secretary-treasurer and the secretary-treasurer at the time decided—he's my age, actually a year older than me, he said 'There's some young guys coming up. We need to get them in the office and working with you so that they can be able to replace you.' Because Paul couldn't replace me because he's the same age as me. When I retire, he's retireable too. So we needed some other people. So we looked and found a couple of people and then they ran for secretary-treasurer. Paul ran for vice-president, which wasn't a full-time position. And so we had Jason Woods as our secretary-treasurer for the last four years. I was in the office and so we did bargaining together. We did WCB.

**SG** [01:06:19] And he's the guy that was former SIU member?

**TE** [01:06:23] Yeah. And his dad was a very fierce SIU member who, in the end is real fond of Local 400 now. He was the guy that bargained the deal for the SIU. Which was a really good deal for the SIU members! That you don't have to, you don't have to go on

strike. You'll stay working and you'll get whatever they bargained and \$1,500 more. And the company was willing to do that because, okay, that takes away the Guilds' and Local 400's bargaining power. So like, on the personal point of view, and we basically said that was a scab contract because it was from our perspective. And he was the person that sort of got that through. And in the end, the thing is, is that he understood after sort of going through the bargaining sessions. Like they, our arbitration that we did, again, was open to any members that wanted to come. So we'd often have 20 people in our arbitration case. So it was always there to bring people. People want to come? Yeah, come. We want you there. We need your support. We need your understanding. So it's always been—and I liked, I liked the challenge. And, in the end, the job also led me to working with the ITF (International Transport Workers Federation), which enabled me to travel. So I was able to go to and really learn a lot of stuff about international, the international work. The ITF is an incredibly positive, another really good organization. What they do here in Vancouver with the ITF inspector, where they inspect the ships that come to town, make sure the sailors are being paid properly. There's a full, there's two full-time guys here doing that. One is just retired. The ITF, so we did stuff with Tugboats and the ITF. I was able to travel to South Africa, to Cape Town and to Sofia to go to Congress and meet with seafarers from around the world. And it was very interesting learning what goes on around the world. One of the things that I learned, which I'm still kind of shocked about, is that I think Canada is the only country in the world that has the Rand formula.

**SG** [01:08:38] Is that right?

**TE** [01:08:39] I think so, yeah. European countries that you can't be forced to join a union. They have, they join industry-wide and stuff. You can be members—like in a factory there can be members of different unions and things. Like they're different everywhere. But Canada is the only place that—I was totally shocked by that. I thought most places had that.

**SG** [01:08:59] It was a Canadian Justice after which it's named. But still it's, I didn't realize that. So I wonder how other jurisdictions deal with it.

**TE** [01:09:08] Well, in the States they have the worst situation where you have to vote.

**SG** [01:09:12] Yeah.

**TE** [01:09:13] On any expenditures from the union. And the union has to have—like, basically what they've ordered the unions to do, is to spend all of their time doing paperwork and filling out all these forms and all this other shit. And so that, and so members can—so a lot of members don't. Like, it's a bizarre situation where a member who doesn't pay dues, but you have to represent him in exactly the same way because, for fairness. So the member who's a member who's always there doing their job and another one who would be perfectly happy to scab on you, you have to treat them exactly the same. They don't have to join the union. Like I said, it does change how unions are because you then have to be a bit more out there because if people don't want to vote, don't want to want to pay their dues, they don't have to.

**SG** [01:10:07] But at the same time.

**TE** [01:10:08] It really hobbles the unions if there's no money coming in. Although, on the other hand, I guess we're also hobbled in some ways by that in terms of, you know, what

can you do? You can't go so far because in the end it is the union, it is the members that you're representing.

**SG** [01:10:25] So one of the things that I've really noticed about Local 400 over the years is that you kind of find new dimensions of work to do in terms of international advocacy and that kind of thing. You've also done some things around encouraging Indigenous people to become members and get work for them, and that sort of thing.

**TE** [01:10:44] Yeah, well, Local 400 has always had First Nations members. My term in, as president—the first ten years were, the secretary-treasurer was a First Nations person. And then the last six years and the last four years were with a member who lives on the Squamish reserve. His son is in the Squamish reserve; he's from Ireland. So, there's always been that element. I kind of remember when I was a kid in Moose Jaw (so I would have been like 9 or 10), at the barbershop, and it was during the civil rights movement. It would have been in the beginning sort of that. And I remember him, the barber, saying, 'Yeah, you know, ' I'm not sure colored is probably what he said, but I'm not sure what word, 'They're, they are at least fighting. These, these Indians, they don't do anything.' And then as I learned, it was like, it was against the law for them to do anything, they could be thrown in jail. Lawyers could be thrown in jail for pleading a case for Indians. So, it seemed to me from sort of from that upbringing, First Nations people are the most downtrodden people in our country, by what we've done. And they deserve a lot better. And from that basis, to working on the boats, it's a place where First Nations people have always been. Like the coastal First Nations. I actually talked to Atleo when he was the head of the Canadian, the head chief in Canada. I mentioned this to him. Because we were, we were looking at trying to go there, trying to talk to First Nations and recruiting, getting people from First Nations communities. But then the industry went for shit. Unfortunately, the industry basically stopped growing. And so, to go to people and say 'train, and then, maybe you'll get a job' was challenging.

**TE** [01:12:54] But when we started, we thought things were going to grow, everything was going to get bigger. And so we met with some First Nations people. We went to a couple of First Nations conferences and then in the end worked with some people through the ITF and through, that we're working with First Nations people here. And then this stuff was going on up in Kitimat. And so we sort of got up to Kitimat and I went up to Kitimat and talked to people up there, went to see people to talk to them about the fact that we wanted them to be on the boats. We wanted them to be doing the work. That we wanted them to be in Local 400 to get the same pay, to get the same conditions as we are working down south. But they should be the ones doing that work, and we wanted to facilitate that and work with them to do that. And then the company Seaspan had a relationship with, has developed a relationship with the Haisla. So they were working with the Haisla. We worked out an agreement for the Haisla, for people that were working up there, a separate agreement so that they were protected. They had that work up there. They could come down here, but they didn't bring all of their seniority down for layoff—they brought their seniority down for layoffs and for holidays and stuff, but they were ju—they could come down to Vancouver as juniors, with experience, and nobody could bump them out of their positions up in Kitimat. If there weren't enough people, enough people that wanted the jobs in Kitimat, we'd send up deckhands to do that. And then there were slowdowns up there where they would come down to Vancouver and work out of Vancouver, and so then we've sort of worked for years on developing that relationship. We have a member there who's, I think it's now three generations of his are now on the boats. He's, I was up there last year.

**SG** [01:14:48] So what exactly is the work they're doing up there?

**TE** [01:14:51] They're ship docking. Ship docking and escorts for the elevated LNG.

**SG** [01:14:55] Right. I see.

**TE** [01:14:58] Basically one of the things we learned, I learned through the ITF (in working with CEP), I went to an offshore oil conference in Newfoundland through the ITF. And it was very interesting to understand. So the perspective was, is that we're not necessarily in favor of this work, but if you're going to do this work, you're going to do this work properly under union conditions. So, like, we're not saying 'we want LNG, we want more oil and gas, we want any of these things' but if you're going to do it, we're going to be there. And we're going to have our people there and they're going to be paid properly, and you're not going to be able to rip people off. And we'll be there as stewards as well. We don't want to be there as just, we're just—we just, we don't do anything. We want to, if we see something wrong, we have the ability to respond to it because we have a good job. We have a union that will support us if we bring something up. So if we see something that people are doing wrong, bring it up. We'll deal with it for you and nothing will happen to you. Like that's our basically our argument for people to join in small companies too.

**SG** [01:16:13] I guess a lot of this work is just really getting underway now.

**TE** [01:16:18] [Unclear] just ended-up up there. They've been doing that for, with the work going into both the Kitimat, they did a big re-thing on the on the mill, as well as building the facility. So they've been working up there for about ten years now. Seaspan had some tugboats up there for the past ten years. Now they're tugboats from the, called HaiSea. They're majority owned, I believe, by the Haisla Nation.

**SG** [01:16:48] Oh, I see. So are these people participating actively in the union local and whatnot?

**TE** [01:16:54] Yes. When we had, I was at a Local 400's biennial conference in June. And the young man that is the nephew of Ed, also the bro—he's the brother of the MLA from the, who was the chief?

**SG** [01:17:13] Ellis? Ross.

**TE** [01:17:14] Yeah. Ellis Ross. Ed Ross is his brother. He's, he's been in Local 400 for over ten years. So we have a very nice connection there in terms of. So we wanted to sort of use the, be in there to support. One of the problems that the trade union movement has with First Nations communities (and I understand the entire reasons for it, is organizing a band—band offices. They have, they should be organized and they should have seniority and stuff, but in a small community, the only jobs that are there are in the band office. So somebody gets elected, they want to bring in their own people into that office. So that, that has created a bit of animosity between sort of band councils and unions because, like no union will be there without seniority, like the seniority—that's what you're there to protect, to a large extent. So we wanted to get in the door before sort of they got into talking to CLAC, for instance, which are all over the place.

**SG** [01:18:18] Are they?

**TE** [01:18:18] Yeah. They're everywhere. They're everywhere. We actually raided them and the Labour Board said we had to—we couldn't just raid the tugboat side. They have a little tugboat company. We had to raid their truckers and their loggers as well. That's their collective agreement. They, the Labour Board gave them a collective agreement that includes truckers, loggers, office workers and tugboaters. So to organize that.

**SG** [01:18:48] Well, not only that, but the terms of work that CLAC organizes for a lot of its certs are so wide ranging and you're allowed to do almost anything. We would not be allowed in the labour movement to do those things. Yeah.

**TE** [01:18:59] Yeah.

**SG** [01:18:59] There you go.

**TE** [01:19:00] Yeah. So that was the other thing was to get ahead of CLAC, because CLAC is everywhere. Everywhere on the coast, Everywhere you run construction everywhere. Yeah, First Nations communities we've done. We were trying to, we did some work with the coastal First Nations down here, too. We had we had a meeting with chiefs from, from what nation? The Fraser River, because there was talk of short sea shipping, which was another—short sea shipping is basically tug boating. But what they mainly do is instead of having everything go to the dock and then you have to drive through everywhere—instead of just doing that, you set up docks downtown. You set up them on the river, so that instead of—so then you take a barge. Instead of going, you take the barge from the ship to up the river, and then they source it there on the rail and then they move it. And that could be really good in B.C. and would improve our highways, would improve our congestion, would be good for the environment. But the only problem with it is that we've been to conferences with Mexico and the United States and Canada, and it's like, 'how can we do it without having union involvement?' Is basically what the conferences are about. And it's like, well, we're not going to let you. So it kind of—

**SG** [01:20:29] So a new dimension for the struggle opening up there, I guess.

**TE** [01:20:34] Yeah. And we've had the port has looked into it and there's lots of positives. But again, they want to be able to do it in a way that they control it and, and they don't want unions there.

**SG** [01:20:44] So I was going to ask, you know, when you've been retired now for three years, but so as the tradition continues. And it sounds like it is continuing in Local 400 much as it has.

**TE** [01:20:54] Yeah. Yeah. No, I'm very proud of that. That's what made the end of my career very positive, is that I was able to do some things that I never thought I would do in terms of traveling and working with the ITF stuff. And I was able to bring in people so that Local 400 was able to move forward on the same basis as that it had from Dave Crane and Tom McGrath. And I was very honored. My local nominated me, elected me to be the President Emeritus of Local 400. So yeah, so it's very nice. And I have the history. So whenever they do arbitrations that go back any time the company has no history left because they've gotten rid of everybody. But I go back a long way.

**SG** [01:21:43] Right.

**TE** [01:21:44] When there's a case from five, ten, 15 years ago. Yeah, I remember that. And they have no idea what happened then. They just look in a paper. So we've won lots of arbitrations with Seaspan over that where they—

**SG** [01:21:56] Yeah, no. Memory is a good thing in that sense.

**TE** [01:22:01] It fades, unfortunately.

**SG** [01:22:02] It does fade, but still. That sounds like a good place to wrap up, Terry. I appreciate your coming in.

**TE** [01:22:07] That was lovely.

**SG** [01:22:08] It's great.