

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: CHARLES FOSSENEUVE
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: CUMBERLAND HOUSE,
SASKATCHEWAN
INTERVIEW LOCATION: CUMBERLAND
SASKATCHEWAN
TRIBE/NATION:
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
DATE OF INTERVIEW: AUGUST 18, 1976
INTERVIEWER: MURRAY DOBBIN
INTERPRETER:
TRANSCRIBER: HEATHER BOUCHARD
SOURCE: SASKATCHEWAN ARCHIVES BOARD
TAPE NUMBER: IH-374
DISK: TRANSCRIPT DISC 90
PAGES: 29
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CHARLES FOSSENEUVE

Charlie Fosseneuve is a long time resident of Cumberland House and was active in the Legion. He knew Jim Brady 1947 to 1951 while Jim was in Cumberland.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Jim Brady's stay in Cumberland House.
- Conditions in Cumberland including the dominant role of the Catholic church.
- CCF programs in the north.
- Brady's association with a co-op sawmill and a Credit Union. The failure of both.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Charlie Fosseneuve is a long time resident of Cumberland House and was active in the Legion. He knew Jim Brady while Brady was in Cumberland from '47-'51.

INTERVIEW:

Murray: Can you remember the first time you met Jim Brady in Cumberland House?

Charlie: Yes, before he came in here he used to travel with three people. He used to come in here in meetings. Tomkins, I think his first name is, and...

Murray: Malcolm Norris?

Charlie: Malcolm Norris, yes. The three of them. They all said they came from Lac La Biche.

Murray: What were they doing when they came to Cumberland the first time, those meetings?

Charlie: Well they're mostly administration of northern trapping and so on like this. You know, they're involved on this with the Department of Natural Resources a number of years, before the Department of Northern Saskatchewan turned things over. Administration of the land, I guess.

Murray: What were they saying? Can you remember those meetings at all? What would they talk about?

Charlie: Oh, building up dams and so on like that, to improve the trapping conditions.

Murray: So they were trying to convince people of the need for change, was that part of it?

Charlie: That's the idea. And they were quite - especially Malcolm, and Jim, was kind of militant. Militant people too. They wanted people to force, force all the time. With the government - demand, big demand, like, you know.

Murray: They use the word demand quite a bit, do they?

Charlie: Yes, because it's not like approaching people, like you know, wishes of the people, the needs of the people. They didn't put it this way. It was more or less like a demand. That's the way I have...

Murray: That's what you remember it, eh?

Charlie: That's the way I feel and that's the way I remember.

Murray: How did people respond to that sort of thing do you think? Did people understand what...?

Charlie: Some, and some didn't. And some of them said, "By God," they said, "they're a little too strong like this for a government to respond on their objects. They said, "They are too militant."

Murray: But they were working for the government, yet they were telling people, "You have to demand these things from the government."

Charlie: Yes. Demand, yes. They had to demand instead of approach the government with the needs of the people.

Murray: Do you think that some people agreed with them and responded to what they were saying?

Charlie: Oh some, no doubt. Young people did, oh yes.

Murray: It was the younger people you think that responded better to them?

Charlie: Yes, oh definitely. Definitely, it was those younger people. Because the old-timers, it was like years ago old-timers pretty well was run by ministry and a lot of religion had to do with it the years back, you know.

Murray: So the white man had run things for a long time?

Charlie: Yes, yeah. You see, what the old priest said in the goldarn churches and so like that, well that's the way people kind of push aside on that, you know, because they figured well he knows better than us. It was as simple as this. Creation of this. Oh there's lots of factors in here and there they used to be lots fight when I was a young person. And here like, Catholics and Anglicans, you know. They were fighting each other, trying to see who's going to dominate the village and so on like this.

Murray: Right, so the religious battles, eh?

Charlie: It was really amongst the people though, because the ministers forced them to do this.

Murray: The ministers wouldn't fight themselves, but they get people to fight?

Charlie: Oh yes, because they were preaching the gospels and so on like this.

Murray: Can you give me some more detail about that? I never heard that.

Charlie: You never did, eh?

Murray: No.

Charlie: Oh hell, it was all over. Like the first, I think it was Father - what the heck his name was now. Settee was a reverend and the Anglican thing and Bishop Charlebois, not Charlebois but Father Paquette, something like this. They used to travel together up north and paddling, you know, and village to village. I remember the particular time because it's kind of funny. Well, Father Paquette was ahead in Pelican Narrows, oh within three miles of them. And that particular, even in Cumberland House in that particular years when a stranger was coming in everybody almost slid in the lake, lake shores, years ago, you know. When the stranger was coming everybody went in to greet the strangers and this was the custom years back. And this particular time in Pelican, I guess, Father Paquette went

in there and they came in dressed in priest uniform, of course, and cassocks, whatever you call them. And the people all gathered up in there, shake hands with the priest and welcome, you know. And one of his helpers - "Father," he said, "Settee's coming now within two miles in the lake. They are paddling, going to the village too." And this priest didn't have time to baptize everybody so he took the holy water, that's what guys told me, he took the water, he poured the water and took his dip with a stick and said - "I baptize you the name of the Father along the Holy Ghost, and all you people are Catholics." (laughs)

Murray: (laughs) Well he got it done with no time lost, eh?

Charlie: In no time a big bunch of people like that not in village. I heard this from older persons, you know. You kind of make a joke out of it actually. (laughs)

Murray: But they say it really happened, eh?

Charlie: It happened. Oh yes, it happened in Pelican Narrows.

Murray: And that was the first time the priest had ever come there?

Charlie: Yeah, yeah. Well, there were two of them travelling, but the other guys were better paddlers, I guess. And, well, just like traders, I guess, are trying to beat each other and in villages who gets there first, well they gets the dog (inaudible).

Murray: They sell their religion if they get there first.

Charlie: That's right.

Murray: Amazing, eh.

Charlie: Oh it's amazing, you know, and this been carried on for a long time. Now its quietened down as far as religion goes and...

Murray: But religion was really a strong factor in those days, eh?

Charlie: It was a factor, yep.

Murray: Do you think that the things that religion taught people would make them sort of passive, and accepting of what the white man said?

Charlie: Oh yes, definitely, yes. Well it's the white people who brought the ministry through so he could manipulate this, change this system of living, you know. And the same schools and so on like that. It was religion dominating all these schools, you know. Like Cumberland here, it was strictly Catholic domination, years back.

Murray: So it was the Catholic church that was strongest in Cumberland?

Charlie: In Cumberland, yeah.

Murray: The Anglican church was always here as well?

Charlie: Oh yes, yes, yes. And then we kind of changed it when it was getting younger in him, because once we got to live like other people. Especially after the war. A lot of people went to the war and after the war, well this religion kind of died off little bit, you know.

Murray: It wasn't as strong after the war, eh?

Charlie: No, well the reason was, the young people seen the different type life and so on in...

Murray: In Europe.

Charlie: In Europe and (inaudible) and, kind of now...

Murray: So they viewed the church afterwards with a different angle, eh?

Charlie: Yes.

Murray: Did they turn away from the church or...?

Charlie: Oh no, no, no.

Murray: Did they just had a...?

Charlie: Now listen, listen, listen we are going to give the other people a chance, eh. We can't be dominant in one place, it would never work good that way. We never had people that educated. This is the only education we could have is gonna be a kind of free enterprise. If you wishes to go in this direction by all means do it without any fear or threat, you know. And this was gradual in coming to Cumberland House. This is the point. It is gradually changing and younger people are getting perhaps a little worse to tell you the truth, you know.

Murray: Worse in what way? As far as the church is concerned you mean?

Charlie: Yes.

Murray: They don't go to church much?

Charlie: No, no. Especially the kids that's going to high schools and (inaudible) like that, you know. They forget their church and so on like that. The rat race is pretty fast.

Murray: The schools aren't run by the church anymore?

Charlie: No.

Murray: So generally the more experience the young people had, either in the war, or in army, or in schools, the more they pull away from the church. Is that true?

Charlie: Yeah, yeah. That's true. But in a way, I guess it's not only in this community but it's all over, as far as I'm concerned.

Murray: South and north.

Charlie: South and north, pretty well militant people, aggressive type of people that's coming up now.

Murray: And this wasn't true at all...?

Charlie: It wasn't, never was.

Murray: Would you characterize Brady as being that kind of person, an aggressive person?

Charlie: He was an aggressive person, yes.

Murray: Did people see him as a leader? Did they respond to him as someone who could help them?

Charlie: No, no, no. They didn't. As far as I'm concerned I say we were quite a while here. But he was quite upset, you know. He wanted people to run their own affairs, put it that

way. He said, "In such time, that's the only place you could get along and run your own affairs. As long as someone is running your own affairs you'll never get ahead.

Murray: How did people feel about that at the time?

Charlie: Well, a lot of them did. There was quite a few young people with (inaudible) same thing as this Dr. Adams from Saskatoon. Teaching kids in there now. There's a lot of these young leaders in there that are quite militant.

Murray: Do you remember how you felt about it at the time when you first heard Brady talk like that?

Charlie: No. No, the way I felt - because I travelled pretty well myself. I was all over Europe and everything like that and I fought just as much as Brady did, I think, in front lines. And the only correspondence I had, I didn't feel too good about the war myself, but I was on it in the thick of it. But I thought to myself, why in the hell do I have to kill a person when they never done anything to me? And that's the only bad thing that come back on my mind. You know, but you still have to believe in democracy no doubt. And like Communists today, you know. It's for the poor, possibly, but I

still like my freedom.

Murray: Do you remember when Brady started talking about people running their own lives? How did you feel about that particular kind of message that he was giving?

Charlie: Well, I thought it was a good idea but at the same time people that was here, you couldn't chase the people out. They're here now. The only method I could see in that particular time was try to get along with each other. You know, they're here now so what the hell were you trying to chase them off from here?

Murray: That's what you felt at...?

Charlie: That's what I felt.

Murray: That what he was saying meant that you'd have to chase who out? The church or white business men?

Charlie: No, no. The white business men - so Indian people can take over, eh. It is something like a real tactics and so on like this. Well, I didn't feel that way, the way I felt was, oh well, sure it's a good idea to run your own affairs if the economy was just right and they correspond with the other people and don't chase everyone. Let's live together. A monarchy like this is, if you don't know anything possibly the other guy can help you out and just something, and if the other guy doesn't know too, well maybe you can help him out and just carry on with...

Murray: Cooperation.

Charlie: Yes, cooperation of the whole community.

Murray: You must have talked with Brady about that. What did he say about your kind of ideas?

Charlie: Well, he said he had been studying this type for a hell of a long time and he said, "I think the only ways to have what we got, try to get everything for ourselves." I said, "No."

Murray: He never actually said, or did he, that he had to chase people out, but that was the implication?

Charlie: No, that's the implication, yes.

Murray: He came about the time that the CCF was first elected didn't he?

Charlie: Well that's why...

Murray: But that's why he came.

Charlie: That's why he came, yes.

Murray: And they brought in quite a few programs like the trapping blocks and stuff like that. Can you remember how the community reacted to that?

Charlie: Oh yes. Well, a lot of them had, well it wasn't too much of a trapper blocks on that particular time because lots of people moved out from Cumberland that particular time. They felt like they couldn't make a living on their trapping because the cost of material was so great, and then it was only seasonal work. And then your equipment would be laying around, like traps and so on like that. Well, by golly, you go out and get a dozen traps now, costs you about \$35 a dozen, and then you just use them for maybe a couple months a year. And your money is tied up, and some of your equipment.

Murray: So things were getting tough at that time for trappers?

Charlie: Yep, real tough.

Murray: Before those years it was not so bad. It was right in that period that things were going to get...

Charlie: No, that's right, in that period. The fur was right down and the price of fur was nothing and the cost of material was so great, we saw lots of young...

Murray: So just drove people out of trapping?

Charlie: Yeah, lots of young... There's still a lot of people, young people, war veterans, there are still a lot of them out and making their own way. There are mining towns and so on like that. And they're well off now.

Murray: Can you remember, did people support the CCF programs, like the Fish Co-op, and the Provincial Air Service?

Charlie: A lot of them, a lot of them did.

Murray: But there were some who were really against the CCF?

Charlie: Well yes. There's lots of people against them, but the majority rules, you know. Even right now there's lots of NDPs, NDP is majority in here, in Cumberland House. But there's lots of people against the programs.

Murray: Why do you think people were against the programs, because I think, from what I understand, the CCF was trying to help? What did they do wrong that the people didn't support the programs?

Charlie: Well in first place in '46 I came from the army, when I got discharged in '46 in March, I got here and the Hudson's Bay was holding this township, 25 township of fur lease out and across the river in the south of Saskatchewan, where there's still lease in the 25 Township. And then it was a little late. Everybody was trapping already. Jim Carriere decided to go up

north, in twenty-eight blocks away he went to work. So in that month I got about 800 pelts I guess that spring. From the army I went trapping. After a spring trapping like that I went to work. I had a job then right away. Noranda, you see, mining exploration. So in the meantime I left my god-damn thing and brought my god-damn fur to a CCF.... Controlling everything at that particular time. They are going to develop this northern area from trappers, but they took one-third of your muskrat catch. They took that money; they didn't even ask. They said, "How many rats you got?" You got one-third and they took that god-damn money.

Murray: What was that supposed to be for?

Charlie: Putting little dams out in the lakes and here where the muskrat living, you know. Controlled dams and so on like that so you could keep the level of water so the muskrats would live through it.

Murray: So it might have been a good idea?

Charlie: It was a good idea, but nevertheless produced. But where the hell is that money went to?

Murray: So you weren't asked about the plan, you were told about the plan?

Charlie: Yes, oh yes.

Murray: So that probably made people pretty bitter, is that what happened?

Charlie: Oh that's what happened, everything.

Murray: Was there any attempt, do you remember, to explain the programs by people? Did people come from the government to try and explain why they were doing it?

Charlie: Well, the hands it was changing so damn much there's nobody know whether was coming or going. That's what happened in La Ronge right now. People don't know what the hell is going on. Employees don't know what's going on. There's so many damn many hands changing over. That's just what happened...

Murray: That was the same then, eh?

Charlie: Same administration was going on. It's just after the war when everybody was busy and had different ideas and, you know.

Murray: It was a pretty confusing time?

Charlie: It was a confusing time.

Murray: Was part of Jim's job to explain some of these programs or try to explain them?

Charlie: Well some of them, yes. When he was working for CCF, yes.

Murray: Would he have meetings or anything to explain them?

Charlie: Oh yes, he did have some meetings. Yeah, he did have some. But the first guy that was here when I came in '46 was by the name of Joe Johnson. He was in charge of this DNR then. He's the guy that took all these one-third of the money.

Murray: So that was before Brady showed up?

Charlie: That was before Brady, yes.

Murray: Did you see Malcolm Norris too before Brady came?

Charlie: Well, he used to come here but I never did talk to him personally. He was too busy to talk with everybody, I guess. He just held up the meetings.

Murray: What about the Fishing Co-op? Did the CCF set that up too?

Charlie: Yes it's all the Department of Co-operatives that set these things up.

Murray: Did people agree? Did they think that was a good program?

Charlie: Well, they did in that particular time. Everybody was for co-op. They thought this...

Murray: A better deal than they were...

Charlie: A better deal.

Murray: What happened? Did the private fish companies fight the CCF?

Charlie: A little bit to start with, but as I say, majority rules and that's it, you know. Some private keystone companies and both fish stores used to come and buy fish.

Murray: How would they fight? Would they just talk to people and try to persuade them not to sell to the government, that kind of thing?

Charlie: No, no they came in and put up higher prices for fish.

Murray: So they pay more than the government?

Charlie: Oh yes.

Murray: Did the government mind that? That's what they wanted was higher prices for the Indian people.

Charlie: Yes, oh yes, sure. Well, the guys that signed for cooperatives, they just work for cooperatives. They had their fishing gears from them, old money they had to pay back. But what I could have thought is that maybe he could have sell that fish to both fishers and get more money and pay back the money that you owed. Would have been just as...

Murray: Getting the best of both.

Charlie: Oh yes, sure. But it didn't happen that way because your...

Murray: You had to sign up for the co-op?

Charlie: Oh yes, you had to sign up for it.

Murray: So if they caught you selling fish to the private buyer you'd be in trouble, wouldn't you?

Charlie: Oh you could be in trouble, definitely.

Murray: That happened quite a bit though, eh?

Charlie: Oh yes, because they give you the material that you had to work with, equipment to work with, and if you sold some place else, well, you're in trouble. Oh there's a lot of change been going in north, Cumberland.

Murray: That was a period of quite a bit of change wasn't it? That '46 to '50s, sort of?

Charlie: Oh it was. We would change, yes.

Murray: I wanted to get back to the...

Charlie: And the trouble is administration. Guys were coming and going, you know, at the administrators. Some guys got fired, some taking over, and some different ideas coming in again, and so on.

Murray: So you never knew what was going to happen?

Charlie: Well after all, the people got confused. Who the hell was going to believe? Like old Bill MacKenzie was saying here that they resurveyed this place in here and he was talking with the surveyor, a Polish guy from Poland. "Well," he said, "in a couple of years time you'll have cement streets all over in here and you could walk without getting mud on your feet." And then he walked down to Bigstone and there was a PFRA was administrating the water level, testing the water (inaudible) how much it was flowing and they'd surveyed right from La Pas to Cumberland House, you know. It's all surveyed for agricultural land. That's what the PFRA was doing, and the PFRA told Bill, he said, "In about five years time the Cumberland will be three feet of water. You guys got to move

someplace else." He came home scratching his head, "Gee I don't know which guy to believe. I visited PFRA's. In three, four years time they said they were going to flood this dam here about three feet under water and the engineer in that survey, in a couple of years time we would walk on cement sidewalks around here." He said, "I don't know which one to believe. But it's all educated people but I think they're too much educated." That's what he said.

Murray: So that happened all through that period?

Charlie: It all happened in that period, yes, yes.

Murray: So people began to believe nobody. Is that it?

Charlie: Well that's it, yes. Because everybody was changing the programs so damn fast and they didn't know what the hell to believe. And some came help and sometimes help wouldn't come in when they needed help.

Murray: So it was badly coordinated I guess, eh?

Charlie: Oh it was, it was really (laughs). That's a big factor in this Cumberland House. Then a group of people started to getting together in here and they said, "We don't like it this way. This is not a way we live. We like to have a different way administration."

Murray: And what did the administration say to that? Did they try to change?

Charlie: Well, well if a different government comes in sort of. Politicians, it's all politics actually. And a new politician comes in there. "We'll do this, we'll do that for you and this is the way you are going to get it." Well some people who like that thing, you know.

Murray: Right. I heard that, and I don't know if this is true, but the election in probably 1948, although I'm not sure of that, the people here voted out the CCF.

Charlie: Yes.

Murray: And I heard that at that time, Brady withdrew some of the government services because of that. Do you remember that happening?

Charlie: I'm not quite sure but I think. I'm not quite familiar but I think this is true. Yeah, they voted him out once the CCF was booted out, yes. And the building and the administration in Regina was all CCF and well the poor Liberal MLA didn't have no choice. When they come to our parliament procedure I guess they told them shut up their mouth and that's it.

Murray: Do you remember them withdrawing services? I heard that they closed the fish-buying down and they closed down the

government air service. Do you remember that happening?

Charlie: Yeah.

Murray: How long did they shut it down for?

Charlie: Oh, quite a while I guess. Well they didn't have very much government services in Cumberland House.

Murray: So there wasn't too much to shut down?

Charlie: No, no it's very seldom they did. You know, everything was done by boat or (inaudible) stuff. In them years all our merchandise, even the Mounted Police, all our mail, came from Manitoba.

Murray: From The Pas?

Charlie: From The Pas. And everything was, even our grub line, everything, groceries, came from The Pas. It was barges and Bombardiers in the wintertime. Everything was going back and forth since they put the new road in here. Even Swales, when he started out bush-roading. Well the reason why there was a bush road in here well the, Knutson, they used to have a mill. That's the guy who took all the goddamn nice timber right from across the ferry landing and here. That's where he's started up, up to Mile Thirty. He cleaned the whole goddamn bush.

Murray: That was the sawmill that Brady started, isn't it?

Charlie: No, no. No, no.

Murray: And then Knutson took it over?

Charlie: No, no. No, no. Knutson was there before Brady. But they had a little chunk in there for co-op, and it was ill equipment and everything like that. Well the government said, "Well, you people can't do a job because we give you the stuff and we can't produce nothing." Well they just threw that old V8 motor in there, I guess, and for a power to pull a goddamn chain saws, you know. And they only had horses, while Knutson had tractors and cats and everything like that. Big for (inaudible) that's a big time farmer, big farmer out south in here. He is still a big farmer. In that particular time he had 200 head of cattle, Aberdeen Angus.

Murray: He was a wealthy man then?

Charlie: Well, this was just his pleasure.

Murray: Right. So that the mill that Jim started to get going wasn't really given a chance, eh?

Charlie: No, no it wasn't, never was.

Murray: Do you think that, if the government would have

supported it, it could have been...?

Charlie: Oh, it would have been one of the biggest mills in Cumberland, oh yes. They would have controlled the whole system then.

Murray: It would have been better for Cumberland if that mill had made it?

Charlie: Oh, oh yes. You see, when they first started, the government started this little sawmill right in the '40s here.

Murray: This was the CCF?

Charlie: Yes, they started a small mill and they used to employ twenty people year round. He would cut timber in wintertime, and saw it all summer long. When Knutson came over, well government just gave Knutson this opportunity because, I guess he must have donated quite a bit to the party. That's what happened.

Murray: So when Knutson came in that...

Charlie: That mill sat down.

Murray: And Brady was working with that mill was he?

Charlie: No, no, no. Not that one. That was government's own mill.

Murray: Well, that was the government mill?

Charlie: Yeah.

Murray: And then Knutson - did he take over that equipment that the government had or start his own mill?

Charlie: No, he had his own mill.

Murray: He started his own mill and the government one shut down?

Charlie: No, government shut down, yes.

Murray: And when did the one that Brady was involved with...?

Charlie: Five years after. I guess they started a mill out - oh, about Mile Forty - on the highway and across over there. That's where the co-op mill was.

Murray: And who was involved in starting that? Was it Brady and who else?

Charlie: Brady. Oh it was local people.

Murray: How long did that go before it...?

Charlie: Oh, a couple of years, I guess. Oh they had horses and they haul all their equipment from here and, nice. But it didn't work out that they didn't have the... just the horses and...

Murray: They couldn't compete?

Charlie: They couldn't compete and the goddamn horses couldn't skip them goddamn big logs. Because two trees like that went to a thousand feet of lumber. Two trees. And horses couldn't handle that. It was too big for horses.

Murray: Right.

Charlie: But Knutson had a goddamn big cat, skidding and everything. Well, no troubles.

Murray: No comparison between the...

Charlie: No comparison, yeah. They just walked away.

Murray: But the people supported the other mill?

Charlie: Oh definitely, oh yes, yeah. Maybe there's lots of them never got paid on that as of yet today. A lot of them work for nothing in there.

Murray: On which one was that?

Charlie: On the the co-op mill.

Murray: On the the co-op mill, yeah.

Charlie: Yeah.

Murray: Had the government originally promised to help the mill?

Charlie: Well, that's the reason why that thing went up, I guess.

Murray: Because they had promised that they would help?

Charlie: Well, they supplied the engine part of it and that's it, I guess. (Inaudible)

Murray: Do you know if Brady put a lot of his own money into it?

Charlie: I couldn't tell you. Somebody said he did, but them years I don't think Brady had any money at all. It's just his wages for government.

(END OF SIDE ONE)

Charlie: ...I farmed the, Peter Louthy, when he died. But he had everything there. Christ, you could go over there, buy fresh butter for 25 cents a pound, eggs.

Murray: Nice to do that today.

Charlie: Oh boy, yes. And he never was short of hay. We just had horses.

Murray: Did he die before the CCF came in?

Charlie: No.

Murray: After, eh?

Charlie: After, yeah. But he got sick in the hospital.

Murray: Right. Do you remember when the CCF first started encouraging people to get into farming?

Charlie: Well, they took the farm where the farm is now. They took the farm over and started out, encouraged the people, you know.

Murray: That was the farmer, the fellow who died?

Charlie: Yeah. That's where they took over. And then the, the big Probe grant came in and after that when the Liberal came in with the... They came and that's only about ten years ago now.

Murray: Yes, '64 they came in.

Charlie: And when the Liberal came in and they said, "Okay people, not everybody can trap, not everybody can fish. Anybody wants to take a try and farm, we'll help you out." And they started out, and they got a man by the name of Joe Johnson. Joe Johnson was a manager in here. Of course he was working for Department of Agriculture, not DNR. Then it was everything, head office was in Regina, you see. Department of Agriculture. And they had priority of everything, and they made damn good.

Murray: This was the CCF you are talking about now?

Charlie: No, that's Liberal.

Murray: Liberals. Did the CCF do the same thing back in the early days?

Charlie: No, no.

Murray: They didn't encourage farming at all?

Charlie: Oh well, they did but they didn't help those to give people a start, you know. But years ago, everybody had cattle here years ago.

Murray: Did you have, did you have some cows?

Charlie: Oh yes, oh yeah. I had ten head right when I first started with the police and that. I had ten head of cattle.

Murray: And did everybody have a bit of garden too at that time?

Charlie: Oh everybody had a garden. Everybody had a garden.

Murray: So people weren't as dependent on wages in those days?

Charlie: Oh no, no because he can live right from the land. You have a good garden. Like myself when I first started work with Mounted Police, they paid me \$80 a month. Compared with \$300. I had my own garden and I had my own cattle. Every fall I'd butcher my own steer in the fall and all the goldarn potatoes I wanted and vegetables. Hell, it didn't cost me very much for living.

Murray: When did that start to change? When did people stop having their own cattle and their own gardens?

Charlie: Well, since Social Aid came in.

Murray: That's the time, eh?

Charlie: That's the time. It was cheaper to buy potatoes from the store than putting in a garden.

Murray: What years was that about?

Charlie: The last fifteen years, I guess.

Murray: About 1960?

Charlie: Yeah. But another thing is, another point again since they started building this new houses, the goddamn lots are too damn small. You can't have a decent... Like myself here, I've only got a little size of my fence. I haven't got a decent garden there to make a good garden, enough to keep me going.

Murray: Not to last you the winter.

Charlie: No. You see the lots are... the goddamn land is big. Actually it should have been a little bigger so people can have their own gardens and everything. If somebody wants to have his own cows and would be able to have a little bit of room there you could put a barn behind his house.

Murray: When did they establish these lots? How long ago was that?

Charlie: Oh, last ten years, I guess.

Murray: Did the people at that time complain like you've been saying about the lots should be bigger so we could have gardens?

Charlie: Oh yeah, yeah. Oh yes, we told them the lots are too damn small. I said, we can't even have a garden.

Murray: What did they say?

Charlie: Well, they said that's the only way. They talking about sewer lines and so on; it's closer for organization.

Murray: It would be too expensive to have big lots.

Charlie: Yeah. Too expensive, too far away to put the lines in.

Murray: You mentioned that social aid was the...

Charlie: That's a big factor.

Murray: That was the big factor. Can you describe some other effects that social aid had on people, besides...?

Charlie: Well it's politicians again. Because I remember this MP for a long time now in the...

Murray: Berezowsky?

Charlie: Berezowsky, yeah. I heard of him right in the god-damn meeting saying, "Now you people go and get stuff for nothing. If you're hungry, if you haven't got a job, go and get aid at that damn DNR office. They have to give it to you." That's politicians have done this.

Murray: Do you think that they meant well? They thought they were helping people?

Charlie: They were just trying to get there for votes as far as I'm concerned. And they got the the votes for that respect.

Murray: Were there some people in those days who needed social aid do you think?

Charlie: Oh yeah, a few people, sure. People that was crippled and so on like that, yes.

Murray: Was that who it was meant for do you think?

Charlie: No anybody, anybody.

Murray: And everybody started taking advantage of it, eh?

Charlie: Sure, everybody said, "Why the hell should I work?" A lot of guys tell us right in the village here. They say, "Why the hell should I work. I got enough money."

Murray: To get by.

Charlie: To get by. And you know, you're not working. When

you get that laziness on you, it's pretty hard to work after that.

Murray: It stays with you.

Charlie: It stays with.

Murray: A habit.

Charlie: Yes, a habit, sure. So why work?

Murray: What happened to the trappers? Did it affect them the same way?

Charlie: A lot of them did, yeah.

Murray: A lot of people quit trapping altogether?

Charlie: Oh yes.

Murray: Or slowed down?

Charlie: Slowed right down. A lot of them quit altogether.

Murray: And you attribute it almost entirely to the existence of Social Aid?

Charlie: That's right. No, I think they have, like you said, like timbering and so on like that, if a government played fair on that, pour some money in agriculture and let people work, I think people would be a lot happier today.

Murray: Instead of the money for Social Aid?

Charlie: Yeah, instead of getting money for nothing. It's okay if women that can't work and crippled people, by all means help them. But the people that's healthy and everything, I don't see why they don't, can't work. Well, there's a lot of fee losses got kicked on that and like streets and everything. For instance, myself I'd rather go right in the main street and clean all these rocks and bush and everything like that, and get paid for it instead of getting Social Aid for nothing.

Murray: Any job rather than...

Charlie: Any job as long... and the community would be a nice community. Nice clean community. But no, you can't put people to work when you are getting the...

Murray: What, what changes took place in the community as a whole after welfare came in? Do you think it became less of a friendly and cooperative community after welfare?

Charlie: No, no. Everybody was independent then. That's the reason why people are very hard workmen, this one works many, so much and that's it. It's very, very seldom and it's forty,

forty hours policy that's coming up, and that's not a good idea either. That's why I quit the mine in Flin Flon. I worked a year underground in Flin Flon you know. That was right after the war. I looked for a job; I got a job just like that. And then I was on the mucker. When I was mucking crew in there, in the bay, in the underground, I noticed this diamond drillers were getting quite a bit more money than I have. And I was young and I was full of work and I went to the superintendent. "Listen," I said, "I been here working for three months same damn job now. Can I get another job?" "Well," he said, "we'll talk to the foreman. If we have another job, we'll try and get you another job." "No, it's no point. I'm here to make money (inaudible)," I said. "I'm young and, and I don't care what, I like to go on diamond drilling. That's my aim in the mine here. So I could make my money, so I can save money plus I need the money. If I don't make it now, I'll never make it." "Well," he said, "the longer you work in here the priority goes up." "Is that your procedure?" I said. "Yes." "Well, I don't think that way," I says. "If you see a good working man that wants to go ahead I think you should give him a chance." So he said, "We'll have that in mind." So I was in the north main, I went south main after that and another week after I got another job, but I never got to that drilling and I stayed all winter there. That's almost a year. So I told them. I went back to him and, "Listen, I'm tired of this and I couldn't get, there's no promotion on this job." I said, "I don't intend to wreck my life in there, so I might as well quit. Simple as that, while I still got my health."

Murray: They wouldn't give you another job, eh?

Charlie: No. Well it wasn't open. Everything was filled all the time, you know. He said, "I'm sorry. If there was an open place and he had long enough service, possibly you could get that." "Well," I said, "I'm not looking for many years in here. I'm looking for money. That's it." "Well, we'll try for another month," he said, "and look it over." So I stayed another month. After a month over nothing said and done so I went back to him again. "Well this is a final," I said, "and I'm quitting." "Well," he said, "we're sorry to see you go but we can't stop you but anytime you want to come back again, back on the job, we'll pick you up because you never..." I never missed one day, you know.

Murray: Right.

Charlie: I was on that job every day because give me two hours (inaudible).

Murray: I know Jim was involved in the Legion. You must have been involved in that too, eh?

Charlie: Oh yes, yeah.

Murray: Could you describe a bit, the role that the Legion played in Cumberland in those days when Brady was around? What

kind of things would the Legion be doing to help people and that sort of thing?

Charlie: Well, in the first place there was only about nineteen, twenty people and we didn't do too much. We build our own building and everything, that's about it. But we helped out with kids and students going outside. We used to give them a little bit of money. Golly, what we made in the Legion in the community, we always turn it back to the community, you know. Like hockey and so on like that, sports.

Murray: You organized sports and some teams and that?

Charlie: Yes, spend that money that way. Hell, we take out (inaudible) that's all the Legion's functions and it's dying out slowly. Guys are away, a lot of them died out now and there's a few of us left.

Murray: Was Jim pretty active in the Legion?

Charlie: No, he wasn't very active, no.

Murray: He wasn't?

Charlie: No.

Murray: Would people come to the Legion to get help?

Charlie: Oh God, yes.

Murray: What kind of problems would people come to the Legion with?

Charlie: Well like troubles, like somebody like welfare. There's few people in here like welfare couldn't get money to go out - taxi fares - something like that and the Legion would help pay the taxi to town like, you know, the hospitals and so on like this. And the veterans that's in need, we always help them out. There's always a little bit of fund for that.

Murray: Would they help him get jobs and things too?

Charlie: No, no, no.

Murray: It was usually financial help people needed, eh?

Charlie: Yes, that's all it was. Yeah, we can't, no we never got to that stage. Well, everybody's working, everybody's busy all the time and we just haven't got that time, and we haven't got enough money to have a steady man there, to employ a Legion member to do all the business, you know.

Murray: Right.

Charlie: Actually, there should be one in there with Canada Manpower. Actually there should be one Legion guy there.

Murray: Right.

Charlie: We're doing correspondence where the (inaudible).

(Interview interrupted by telephone call.)

Murray: We are talking about the Legion. Do you think it was a pretty important institution in those days?

Charlie: To start with it was, yeah. Yeah, we were the first recreations and so on like that was, a lot of people got benefit out of it. We were the first people had a little picture show going with small projectors (16mm projectors), you know. That's the only entertainment was when we first started it; really turned out very, very good. Because everybody seen pictures (inaudible). And, as I say, all the funds going back to the community.

Murray: Right. So that showed the effect that the war had on some of the veterans, eh?

Charlie: Oh yes.

Murray: They became more conscious of the community and that sort of thing?

Charlie: Yes, and more of the administrative type of people. It was mostly veterans that's running the community now.

Murray: Even now still?

Charlie: Yes.

Murray: So that the war in that sense had a good effect on Cumberland?

Charlie: Oh yes, yes. Yeah, we had a small community like that before. The reason why there's twelve hundred people in here was outside villages. One, they call it Budd's Point, that's only six miles across the lake. They moved into Cumberland. And Pine Bluff is about forty miles west, their people moved in here; and another little village in here by the name of Birch River, twenty miles down the river, they moved in here.

Murray: This was all after the war?

Charlie: Yeah. So that's the reason why the schools are getting bigger and bigger and more and that.

Murray: Did all those communities move into Cumberland about the same time?

Charlie: No, no.

Murray: Over the period of years, eh?

Charlie: Over the period. I guess the reason why Pine Bluff moved in was because their school burned down.

Murray: How long ago would that have been?

Charlie: Oh, that's about six years ago. Yep, something like that, six to eight. And we had facilities here already in the classroom and they just moved in. Instead of building another school over there. There's no room at all in there to start with, and they moved in here.

Murray: Why did some of the other communities move to Cumberland? Just easier to get supplies and things?

Charlie: Well, that's it, yeah.

Murray: So there were quite a few small places around before?

Charlie: Before this, yeah. But this was a central place in Cumberland. Everything came to Cumberland. Now they spread out from these villages, like a branch.

Murray: When did the first villages start moving into Cumberland? Was that as early as the '50s or was it later than that?

Charlie: Oh, later than that. Budd's Point in here, they came in right after the war I guess. Wartime they moved in. Yes. There was forty people went out in the war time in that particular time. Forty people and four killed out of forty. So we done pretty damn good.

Murray: There are forty people in this area that actually fought in Europe?

Charlie: Yep, and there's four killed.

Murray: Well, I should let you go. Couple more questions I wanted to ask you. One about the Credit Union in Cumberland. Do you remember that starting up? I think that started about the same time just after the CCF came.

Charlie: Yeah, yeah that's Brady, yeah. Yeah, there was two guys started up in there and made a cuckoo(?) out of it. Well they didn't know administrations; they thought they did but...

Murray: Brady was one of the people who started it up?

Charlie: Yeah, yeah. Yeah and they went broke.

Murray: How did they go broke? Did people not pay back their loans or...?

Charlie: Well that's it. People didn't pay back.

Murray: How long did the Credit Union last?

Charlie: Oh, maybe a couple of years.

Murray: Did the government help them set up?

Charlie: Yeah, they did. But there's not enough talent on it, you know.

Murray: Not enough experience to run it.

Charlie: That's it, yeah. Well, I guess they had enough experience I would say, but they weren't... they are letting things go too much. They are putting too much credits instead of...

Murray: They were loaning too much money?

Charlie: Yes, and they wouldn't fight back and try to get it back. You know, when you give something to the people like that, you gotta keep reminding them. Keep on reminding themselves when you can pay and so on like that. Do something to pay for your debt. You see, a lot of these stores were doing the same thing.

Murray: But Brady wouldn't do that. He wouldn't force people to pay, eh?

Charlie: No, no. No he wouldn't force anybody to pay. That's what's the big laugh right there.

Murray: He wasn't tough enough with people.

Charlie: Well, that's it, yeah. You see, that's what it is on this. If you go on a credit the first damn thing collecting agency sends you a goddamn note, a reminder. Says it's time for you to pay. And nothing was done like this.

Murray: So finally it just fell apart?

Charlie: Well, it fell apart and the people didn't feel like paying after so many years.

Murray: What can you tell me about Brady as a person, as you knew him? What kind of man was he?

Charlie: He kept himself quite well. He read a lot day and night. He done a lot of reading. He's hard on women.

Murray: Is that right?

Charlie: Yeah.

Murray: Did he have a lot of women around this area?

Charlie: Well, there's a few of his kids running around.

Murray: From different women? How many families do you think

he has?

Charlie: Well, I don't know. He has about three, I guess.

Murray: We know Ann Dorian is one of his children.

Charlie: Yes, and Ruth.

Murray: That's her sister?

Charlie: Yep.

Murray: How do you think he treated women?

Charlie: I guess he build himself up (inaudible).

Murray: He liked women?

Charlie: Oh yes. He liked women.

Murray: Did he spend much time with them, the families that he fathered?

Charlie: No.

Murray: Didn't pay much attention to them after they were born, eh?

Charlie: That's right.

Murray: Was he a popular man? Did people respect him and like him, do you think?

Charlie: Some did, I guess. But in the end he kept to himself quite a bit, after everything was broke down, their co-ops were going down, everything.

Murray: He wasn't a very happy man then?

Charlie: No, he wasn't. Well he wasn't that popular, either. He was the man that couldn't do the job.

Murray: He was unpopular because the things he tried failed?

Charlie: Failed, yeah.

Murray: Do you think it was his fault he failed?

Charlie: No, actually he didn't get the financial help from outside. I guess that's what happened. But as far as the Credit Union, that was his fault as far as I'm concerned.

Murray: But even in those things that wasn't his fault, people blamed him for it.

Charlie: Yeah.

Murray: Was he bitter towards the end when the things had failed? Was he a pretty unhappy man or did he keep fighting?

Charlie: No, no. He kept fighting and at last he took off, you know. Nothing for him to do in here so he took off and went to La Ronge.

Murray: Do you know if he was broke when he left?

Charlie: I guess he was broke.

Murray: Did he come back to Cumberland very often after he went to La Ronge?

Charlie: No.

Murray: Did you ever see him at all after that?

Charlie: No. No, I never did see him after that.

Murray: Did he ever talk, while he was living here, about a Metis Society or Metis Association, anything like that? Did he ever talk about organizing something like that?

Charlie: Oh yeah. Yeah, he wanted to start an association like that.

Murray: But it never actually happened, eh?

Charlie: No, it never did happen.

Murray: Do you think there would have been support for it if he had actually started, organize it?

Charlie: Well, possibly it'd work, but the people here are very cautious of everything.

Murray: Conservative, sort of?

Charlie: Oh, they are, very so, you know. They go to watch your every move.

Murray: Afraid of change?

Charlie: Change. And they're afraid of a person too.

Murray: Do you think they might be, I'm just guessing, but do you think they might be suspicious of people?

Charlie: Well, that's it.

Murray: They think they're out for their own gain.

Charlie: Yeah. Not only that but they're scared they'll get astray or something and then they'll get...

Murray: Afraid of the what? I didn't understand.

Charlie: Afraid of organizing thing, you know. They're scared they'll be so far out and nobody will look at the northern (?) policy. Government won't look at the people.

Murray: Right.

Charlie: Oh yeah, there's a lot, a lot of things going on. You got to be quite - if you want to be a leader in here you got to show your own initiative, you know.

Murray: And you got to be patient too, eh?

Charlie: And you got to be patient and initiative and you got to - when you started work with people you got to work hard. You got to show them. You got to talk with officials and bring officials in and talk like there...

Murray: Was Brady good at that sort of thing?

Charlie: No.

Murray: He didn't work at that aspect of it, eh?

Charlie: No, no, not (inaudible).

Murray: He talked a lot, is that right?

Charlie: He talked a lot, oh yeah. Especially in the house like that, he really talked a lot in the house.

Murray: Do you think he influenced people that way, to think?

Charlie: Not too much, no. You got to have them in groups.

Murray: So he would talk to individuals. He'd visit them and talk to them?

Charlie: Yeah, that's right too. No, you got to have people you talk to be interested in it. That's what I found out.

Murray: Can you remember the first time the Metis Society started organizing in Cumberland?

Charlie: By God, I...

Murray: It started in other places in around '64 in La Ronge and on the west side.

Charlie: Yeah. And in the early '60s it started in here too.

Murray: Who were the first people to come in to start to organize?

Charlie: I guess the president himself, I guess. Pierre Carriere done quite a bit.

Murray: Did Malcolm Norris never come this way?

Charlie: I believe he did, yeah.

Murray: He did?

Charlie: Yeah. He started a Metis Society.

Murray: Do you remember what year Norris would first come?

Charlie: It will be in the early '50s.

Murray: And that's when the first local was started?

Charlie: Yeah. Yes, someplace in there.

Murray: So that was the time, about the time that Brady left?

Charlie: Yeah, left. And they changed organizations and Pierre had a lot to do with it now.

Murray: So, Pierre would be able to tell me?

Charlie: Oh yes a lot better.

(END OF SIDE TWO)

(END OF TAPE)

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