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ANDRE BOUTHILLETTE

Andre Bouthillette worked in Cumberland House from 1948 to 1950. He was a field officer with DNR and an assistant to Jim Brady. He left to work for the CNR.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Life in Cumberland House in the late 1940s.
- Jim Brady: his work, his relationships, his interests.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Andre Bouthillette was an assistant to Jim Brady when he was a field officer with the Department of Natural Resources in Cumberland House from 1948-1950. In this interview he describes his knowledge of Brady, Brady's character and activity in the town, the work they did in the town and what he knew of Brady's private life, and Brady's personal standing in the community.

INTERVIEW:

Murray:odd position in Cumberland house then. He was respected and liked but not really part of the community?

Andre: I did not feel that he was part of the community unless... you see, here we are speaking about a government official, whether Metis or not is beside the point. A government official who stands up there...

Murray: Who is set apart from people.

Andre: Who is set apart from people. Now it could very well be that apart from the policies that he took towards the people, there may have been some, well I know there were some interaction between the people and him. First of all, he had children there, a family, so to speak. And maybe he had friends. Now what happened in the social hours, now I don't have too much idea of that. But the way I remember Jim is a person by himself and kind of lonely, a very lonely person - with friends, but nevertheless lonely. It's all I can say. I just don't know too much about the interaction between...

Murray: Right. The phrase just came to mind when you were talking, you sort of almost said as if he was self-exiled into himself in a way.

Andre: Well, I don't think I would put it that way. I don't know how many friends he had outside of Cumberland House. Let's say, in Regina, Winnipeg. I just don't know how many friends he had at that time. But he was not, like you put it, you know, self-exiled. But he was approachable if he was there. In other words, he liked to be by himself. Did a lot of work I understand. I've seen him do it. But I'm sure he did a lot of work in his house. I saw his library once; I went to his house. He wasn't too happy that I did. But he was not an exile, so to speak.

Murray: Right...

Andre: ...he was of course. You know, and this of course reflects not the Metis nor the white, it reflectS the type of intellect that he had. And of course, it's sad. And yet some people have worked in this type of, any environment, with the same attitude that produced great things. And I was amazed of Jim that he produced some good tapes. He produced some good stuff I believe for the Centre of Community Studies. I've seen a little bit of it, not very much. But I was kind of surprised that he didn't produce anything more. I'm sure, for instance, he's formulated plans for co-ops, fish co-ops and lumber co-ops. I don't know what happened to them. Maybe they are in with his papers, I don't know. But the last time I saw him was in 1965. I must admit, he had mellowed a lot. Of course, he told me to read that book. And he had mellowed a lot.

Murray: In other ways too?

Andre: He felt more, well, to me, he felt more satisfied. It's hard to put into words...

Murray: More at peace with himself than he would have been?

Andre: Yes, at that time. This is when he was leaving for the north. He was going to do geology work. That was the last time I saw Jim. I've heard about him of course. When was the year he died?

Murray: 1967.

Andre: 1967. 1965 yes, the last year I saw him. That's when of course, the Centre folded up like, to quit.

Murray: Could you elaborate a bit on the feeling that you had that he had mellowed? What kinds of things did he say that would have given you that impression?

Andre: Well, the first thing that surprised me, of course, is for him to suggest to me to read Hoffer's *The True Believer* because I had read the book and I told him that particular night that I felt that the book was anti-authoritarian, anti-socialistic. And I mentioned that to him and he says, "Well, yet, it's a very good book because people do get taken in." Or words to that effect, you see. And so I kept on thinking that he had mellowed. Up to this day, I would say that this was the impression that I had. But nevertheless, I can't say what would have happened the next day if something would have come along and there would have been a chance for him to grasp something. Perhaps that's what was missing, the fact that he had lost touch, eh.

Murray: I know that someone else mentioned that, and this was earlier on I think, probably in the 1950s, when he would still consider himself a Marxist-Leninist. He advised someone to read *The Rosicrucians*. And this was a book that was in his library. So he had quite a range of material.

Andre: Yes, but of course, I mean a personality like that is full of contradictions, eh. All great people have, you know, are full of contradictions. I'm not saying he is a great person, he was a....

Murray: But he had a great intellect, I think.

Andre: Oh yes, he was a very humane person, a lot of compassion for people. And, of course, this is what, personally, this is what I admire in people most of all, compassion.

Murray: That's interesting because I'm writing about both Norris and Brady and I'm struck sometimes by the incredible differences and yet they were obviously drawn to each other for political reasons.

Andre: Yes, well, of course these are the differences that I felt. Of course I didn't know Norris as well as I did Jim Brady. I met Norris about, maybe, ten times. The last two times was at Arthur Davis's place at a party. The last time he was very flamboyant, very - he had had at that time, a massive heart attack. But he was there with his wife and very proud of his daughter who had just become a nurse. You see, this is what I mean. The daughter made it in the white man's world, so to speak, and this was great to him. And on the other hand, he preached still at that time, I don't think he toned down a bit. He preached and...

Murray: Redskin Norris was what he...

Andre: That's right. On the other hand, he was one of the men who went with the Papineau regiment to fight with the white Russians, didn't he?

Murray: Oh, this was when he was 16.

Andre: That's right.

Murray: He didn't actually go. I think there is a conflicting story. Either his mother found out about the possibility of him going to the Soviet Union and had him taken out, or the other story is that the RCMP themselves had established an age limit of 18 which cut him off. But he used to, he thought that was quite amusing.

Andre: Well, he talked of that that night too. I remember that because he had a few drinks. But that is the difference, I don't think he ever toned down. I've heard legends about him, of course.

Murray: You mentioned Jim's compassion. I got the feeling and maybe you can confirm or deny this, that in a situation say where a native person had had too much to drink and might have been undignified in some way, Jim would not look askance at that or be upset by that whereas Malcolm would be upset because it would reflect on the native ancestry. This is one of the feelings I've had about the two men, that Jim would be more tolerant of that sort of thing than Malcolm.

Andre: Yeah, but would you call that compassion? Well, perhaps it is compassion or maybe weakness. I don't know. You know, this is one of the facets of Jim's life that I just don't know anything about. His reaction towards alcoholism.

Murray: He didn't drink that much obviously, or not to excess anyway.

Andre: No, no, no, no. You know I've talked belatedly to people of the Cultural college here. You know, they had a cultural festival at the Mendel Art Gallery. I talked to one or two of them about alcoholism amongst Indians. And they didn't feel compassion, they just felt so angry, you know, that I brought the subject up. And finally we talked about it and they said that one of the things that, "If we cannot lick that, we cannot lick anything." And of course, this is, he says beautifully, "This is why the Cultural College. We want to give these people pride." You see. Now, of course, if Jim Brady was living today, now I don't know whether that's the way he would feel. Whereas Malcolm Norris of course, is altogether different. A drunk is a drunk, whether he is Indian or not.

Murray: He felt very strongly about that. But I wonder, I never did know how Jim would feel about it.

Andre: Well, I can't tell you that. Jim, of course, in that respect, I've never seen him - maybe that's why he didn't want to go and get Jim Carriere.

Murray: Because he knew he had been partying.

Andre: Yes. I would be prone to say that Jim would perhaps look askance at that. Perhaps would, not because of revulsion

but because of, I don't know whether I should say this, perhaps because it would be beneath his dignity perhaps. Jim's intellect could control everything, you know. And yet, like I said, he was a very compassionate person which is, like we said before, is somewhat unusual. But still he had his likes and dislikes. Now, perhaps drunkenness was one of his dislikes. I cannot say. I just cannot say.

Murray: We have sort of touched on the thing a couple of times about his two children. Did most of the community look upon that as being something that was all right or was it condemned by anyone? How did the community react to that?

Andre: Unfortunately I can't say anything on that. First of all, may I say that he was regarded by the white community as something to talk about. Not out of reverence, out of spite, but perhaps in the fact that Indians have low morals. Which, if it's a person's attitude, it's not spite, if you know what I mean.

Murray: Right, right.

Andre: If it's a prejudice, it's not... Of course, there are degrees, you know, but it seems to me that's what it was. He wasn't talked about very much. I can't say that.

Murray: But he wasn't part of the white community either. I mean, as a general rule?

Andre: Oh no, no. You mean Jim, himself?

Murray: Yeah. Did he have any friends among the white community? Other than this older fellow you mentioned?

Andre: No, I can't say he had any friends and he wasn't liked and everybody was waiting for him to go.

Murray: Was that partly because of his politics or what was the...?

Andre: It had something to do with that. Now, that is very nebulous in my mind. For instance, there's a Dick Brownridge was the first Saskatchewan trading store, Saskatchewan Co-op manager in Cumberland House. He came in from Deschambault Lake. He came in and ran the store. Heartily disliked Jim Brady. Then somebody else came and took over, I forget his name, took over from the Dick Brownridge after he left. And I remember one of the remarks that he uttered, that now that Jim

Brady was gone, now it would be a chance for somebody to come up, they can come up here and make a killing and get out. Now that really surprised me. Even as young as I was then, that surprised me because it struck in my mind that these were the things that people talked about years ago. What kind of money can be made in Cumberland House today, you see. And I was just wondering if what they were talking about was there'd be collusion between the Metis and white as far as fur trapping was concerned, you see.

Murray: Breaking the rules somewhere.

Andre: That's right. So, you see, you had this type of mentality. It was not too verbal but it was there, eh. On the other hand, you had others - Gordon Crawford was the RCMP officer at the time I was there. Gordon Crawford was very, very fair, I thought. Walked down the street for instance and didn't turn his head. People very seldom were brought up for drunkenness. I remember one time he knocked at my door, Sunday morning about eight o'clock in the morning. I was still in bed, as a matter of fact. It was cold; it was in the fall. He says, "Let's go, we have to go to one of the McAuleys," he says. "I've just got a tip that we have to go and see if they killed the swans." Apparently it had been reported they had killed swans. Of course, you can't kill a swan; nobody can. So I put my clothes on and we went to this place and he told me before we go in he says, "You go upstairs, I'll take the downstairs. You go right upstairs and you search, you rip the pillows apart, the mattress apart." You know, he wanted to find the feathers. So I go upstairs and there is three girls sleeping in the bed and I told them when I walked in who I was, of course. And I told them not to worry, that I just come to look around. Of course, I didn't look around. Meanwhile he had found them downstairs, you see. Well, to make a long story short, this fellow was brought in in front of Reverend Parker who at that time was the Justice of the Peace. He sentenced him right there and then to seven days in jail, took the game away from him and took his gun away from him, forever. He took his gun. You know, in the name of the Crown.

Murray: Confiscated it.

Andre: Yes. And there was a man of the cloth, you know. A week later, somebody, I think it was Gordon Crawford, told me, "We have all been invited to the hospital for a meeting." So, we went. There was my wife and I from the government. There was, I think it was Dick Brownridge and his wife, the Hudson's Bay factor and his wife. I think that was all. And we had the

swan. You see, of course, unbeknownst to most of these people there. It was told later on, you see. You see, what happens to confiscated game is that it is given to non-profitable organizations.

Murray: (chuckles) Like the hospital.

Andre: And what got me was the fact that these people did not kill the swan because they wanted to kill the swan, they killed the swan because they wanted to eat. To finish the story, the reason that Gordon Crawford had to do it, because somebody had told him, a Metis, told him that so and so had killed a swan.

Murray: So if he hadn't done something, it would have been over.

Andre: It would have been reported, you see. So he had no choice. So there are jealousies and when we are talking about jealousies but this is jealousies amongst the Metis themselves.

Murray: It was a Metis who had told him?

Andre: That's right. You see, so there was no way out, you see.

Murray: Did that happen - of course not that precise kind of incident wouldn't happen often - but that...?

Andre: I don't think so.

Murray: But those jealousies did come up once in a while, that kind of thing, I suppose.

Andre: Oh yes, oh yes. And I didn't witness too many of them. But I mean, in a course of a day's activities, you find people who like each other and people who don't.

Murray: Like anywhere else.

Andre: That's right, yes.

Murray: You mentioned that in sort of the last six months that Jim was there, you became aware of something happening, politicking within the department. Can you describe those things as you were aware of them at the time?

Andre: Well, the first thing that I became aware of this was when quite a few people started coming into the settlement. You see, Earl Dodds came in, in and out. Ross Maclean came and I had gone out that time so I never met the man. He had come and somebody else had come.

Murray: More often than was reasonable.

Andre: It seemed to me. This is what happened at that time. And there was long conversations on walks, you know. He used to leave, if I remember Earl Dodds and Jim Brady walking away from the office, going down Main Street, slow walk. Obviously discussing, I can still visualize it. You know, discussing things. Gesticulating and all this sort of thing. But of course, I couldn't get anything from Jim. It seems to me that I must have asked him too, "What's going on?" and probably just

shrugged his shoulders. He did that many times, shrugged his shoulders and....

Murray: And that meant he wasn't talking.

Andre: That's right, that's right. And finally, of course, Ralph Whitlock came and I heard about it. That he had been sent to, I think it was Squaw Rapids?

Murray: Uranium City.

Andre: Uranium City. And of course, didn't want to go. It's the same as sending him to Regina or anywhere else. These are about the only things that I can... I didn't see any memos. I couldn't see any of the mail because it was addressed to him and of course, no memos I don't think. If memos would have come I would have seen them. Now, you say you have memos of that...?

Murray: Well, this was not to Brady, but this was between Maclean and Churchill.

Andre: I see, because I would have seen them, I don't recall seeing any memos concerning that. And J.W. Churchill, is he still there?

Murray: He worked for DNS for the first two years. They brought him out of retirement to head DNS and he was on a two-year contract.

Andre: I see.

Murray: I think he is now retired again.

Andre: So that's about the only way that I can depict a change.

Murray: So there is a heightened activity for a period and then he was gone?

Andre: That's right, yes. He stayed in the settlement for a while.

Murray: That's another period that I'm interested in because he had a timber co-op that wasn't government sponsored, it was sort of a community sponsored...

Andre: That's right.

Murray: What can you tell me about that?

Andre: I can't tell you very much about it except that as far as I know, it operated the first fall and...

Murray: This is what, the fall of 1949?

Andre: No, the fall of 1950.

Murray: After he quit?

Andre: After he quit, you see. Because I left there in February. I went to work for the CNR then up at Lynn Lake.

Murray: February, 1951?

Andre: 1951, yes. But I know the first fall it worked. They were selling; they were cutting lumber. Now, I don't know how the operations turned out or how it operated then. But Jim Brady was around. Not all the time. I just can't think now where he lived because he had to get all of his stuff out of there because Whitlock moved in. Carload full of books.

(Phone rang, break in tape.)

Andre:really. Of course, I knew he was a Marxist then, even in my ignorance at that age.

Murray: Just from opinions he would express?

Andre: That's right, that's right. And of course, I wasn't frightened. I was totally apolitical at that time. But

I don't think he could rouse anything you know. I mean, he had a good speech. Have you ever met the man?

Murray: No.

Andre: No, he had a good speech. He spoke well, really. He enunciated his words good, spoke French. We spoke French once in a while; he spoke good French. And he always lamented the Irish, his father was Irish. And he knew so much. I was very impressed. I was 20 years old, like I say. I was very, very impressed by his knowledge.

Murray: He had a tremendous knowledge of history specifically too, I think.

Andre: That's right, that's right. I still have one of his books here, unfortunately the man didn't live long enough for me to return it. It's a book by Jackson, one of the better books on Ireland called Ireland Her Own. Of course, Jackson was a Marxist but a very good book nevertheless. And I still have his book and of course now I cherish it. I've got one of his books by Lenin. What Is To Be Done? I think that's the one I have here. He was very impressed by it. Of course, you have to be very impressed by it because a person faced with starvation, you know, what do you do? What is to be done?

Murray: Right, it's a very urgent question.

Andre: But he could not go up and do what Lenin did. He said, "What is to be done?" in front of millions. He wasn't that type of person, that...

Murray: And he recognized that himself.

Andre: Oh yeah. But that was his temperament you see. And Malcolm Norris perhaps could never have got fired. The shoe would have been on the other foot.

Murray: They worked together in Alberta and were a tremendous team because together they had everything.

Andre: That's right. Apart, one was fairly uncouth and perhaps not as diplomatic as he should be.

Murray: Indiscreet, yeah.

Andre: Indiscreet is a better word. And the other one was knowledgeable, but through his compassion he became meek and at outbursts...

Murray: Unable to move.

Andre: That's right, at outbursts, but this was his character. But as a whole, he was a fairly meek person. Did not suffer fools lightly, because he talked about the people he worked with. Deverell, he is in town here now. He did a series of articles, or tried to do a series of articles. He came up and sat on the step of a cabin throughout the time he was there. Now, I don't know what he wrote, and Jim wondered about that too.

Murray: He used to stay with Deverells when he came to Saskatoon once in a while.

Andre: He did, eh?

Murray: Yeah.

Andre: Of course, Deverell was an old CCF person. And then there was a fellow by the name of Kingsland who studied muskrats up there. Thoroughly hated Brady. But it's just on the side, actually. It's nothing. He just came in for three months, studied the muskrats and didn't like Brady. That's all I can say. But to reiterate, the people of Cumberland House liked Jim. Others, there were some others who didn't like him as well, as much. But he was not disliked. He was disliked by the white community.

Murray: Sometimes I think Brady was a leader almost by default, almost because there was no one else among the Metis people to do that. I mean, he would sometimes drag himself out of the lethargy. Art Davis interviewed Brady and I have those tapes. He mentioned that he held adult education classes in Cumberland. So that he would, on occasion, in certain ways, become a leader. Although I don't think he saw himself as that. Do you think that people in Cumberland saw him as a leader in the sense that they might see Carriere? Only to a lesser extent perhaps?

Andre: Well, for some people I'm quite sure that Brady was a leader because they've learned. I mean, Cumberland House today is not the Cumberland House it was twenty, thirty years ago.

It's a fairly progressive settlement. I mean, they have the amenities of life. They have got good gravel roads, they have got electricity, and they have, if capitalism means anything, they have got some of the enterprising entrepreneurs there. And they are doing very well. You know, whether they are capitalists or not, they are doing very well. They have learned good. Now, what they have learned is to bring themselves up by their bootstraps, so to speak. That's what they have learned. Now, whether they have diverged from one line to the other, you know, but they have learned one thing and that is to stand up for themselves. Now, I cannot say that it's because of Brady. I know Brady must have instilled something like that.

Murray: Must have contributed to that.

Andre: But these people, of course, are sons of people who have been overseas. And the people who were talking earlier, they are the exact ones who did go overseas. And they spent time in Holland, France, Italy. It doesn't matter how crude your education is, there must be some kind of a...

Murray: You had to learn from that experience.

Andre: Yes. And they have learned. And of what I've learned, after the Second World War, 1945, 1946, apparently when they came back, that's when they started raising hell.

Murray: About conditions and...?

Andre: Yes.

Murray: Yeah.

Andre: And of course, at that time, that's when Brady came, in 1946 I believe.

Murray: It was later than that. It would be 1948.

Andre: 1948. And they thought they better do something, you see.

Murray: So they were on their way by the time Brady got there in terms of looking at things from a different perspective.

Andre: Oh, yes. There were councils already set up and the people coming in, the bureaucrats out of Regina...

(End of Side A)
(Side B)

Andre: I'm not a builder, I'm a destructor, you see. And this

is what Brady was. And of course, every time he took a job at the government or the powers that be, everybody liked that, you see. But I would say very few disliked him. I should say none disliked him. But a few did not like him as well as they should have. But...

Murray: Was there any jealousy involved in some of those situations do you think?

Andre: There could have been jealousy. Now, jealousy of course, you are speaking in terms of jobs?

Murray: Well, a lot of the native leaders I've spoken to in the north who have been active for years and years have mentioned that one of the problems in organizing the Metis has been that there is a jealousy of leadership. Just for the fact that the leader somehow has more prestige or more status and they often suspect him of making gain for himself. I don't know if that would be true in Cumberland; it's more in the developed communities.

Andre: Well, first of all, of course, you mustn't forget that Brady was an outsider. And you know, as much interaction as I had with the Metis, my wife and I, which wasn't very much... It isn't because we didn't want to it was just... we went to the odd dances and... but there was no doubt that Pierre Carriere was the one that the people talked to. I mean, this is what I could feel. I didn't see them do it physically but I mean that there was no doubt that...

Murray: He was the dominant personality in town?

Andre: That's right, yes. Because, I mean let's face it, Jim Brady was an outsider.

Murray: And he was only there for a couple years really.

Andre: That's right, yeah. And of course, Jim Brady was also a person who was very much by himself. He was a loner, so to speak, to use a cliché. He was in his house and in his book-filled room and he didn't do much. Of course, he handed out the trapper's licenses and fishing licenses and all this sort of thing. And he talked as far as the community projects were concerned. But I don't know, I never felt that Jim was a part of the community, you know.

Murray: I'm not sure he was ever a part of the communities.

Andre: Of anything.

Murray: Yeah, he was aloof from certain aspects of things.

Andre: That's right, that's right. I remember well, I mean the first few weeks I was there, I couldn't figure out what he was doing at first. I found out later, of course. But I used to come in early in the morning, about 7:30 and the Metis

people were outside and I opened the door and I would walk in and I would issue fishing licenses or trapper's license or receive their fur and things of that effect.

Murray: Routine sort of stuff.

Andre: That's right. And Jim would come in about 8:00, 8:30. And that was in the wintertime, eh. And he would wear a balaclava on his head all rolled up, just a light shirt opened up all the way down to the navel almost, and - he had a huge hairy chest, you see - munching on a raw onion. That was his breakfast, you see. He would sit down, he had a little desk there, and he proceeded to translate Le Metis Canadien, you see. And I was doing the work and this is what he was doing, you see. It went on for months.

Murray: (chuckles) This is what he would do all morning would he, or all day?

Andre: That's right. Well, not all day, no, no. He would work at it for a couple of hours and then some people would come in and start to talk. And I remember the first day I got there, I just about got fired. I drove the snowmobile in from The Pas; that was my job to do, you see. They had left it there to be repaired so I drove it in from the The Pas with some Metis. And after I walked into the office, I started talking. There was quite a few people around. They had come in there to see who the new fellow was, you see.

Murray: Look you over.

Andre: And so, what he was doing, he was selling out or some kind of goods, now I just can't think of what it was. But anyway, there was some kind of argument whether they should pay education tax or not. And of course, I said right away that they should have to pay education tax and he said they shouldn't, you see. And we kept on back and forth. So he didn't say anything. So I went somewhere else and I looked

around and after he finished his business, he came back and he said, "Don't you ever do that in front of these people again because these people are like children. Don't ever do that." Now this is a good example of Jim Brady, you see. Somehow he did not fit those people and socially he did not fit the whites. Hence, his aloofness and his aloneness. And this is throughout my whole stay, this is what I felt about Jim. I did respect him. I did not respect him at first, I must say that. But the last six months I would say, I did respect him, the way he stood up to some of the things that was happening around him. I didn't know anything about what was happening around him until much later, of course. But I knew something was up.

Murray: In terms of the politics of the department?

Andre: That's right, that's right, yes.

Murray: Now he said, in that one instance that you were

talking about, that he didn't want you to say that in front of those people. Could you expand on that a bit? What did you feel he meant by that?

Andre: Of course, what he meant by that was that we should never argue a point, both of us being government officials.

Murray: Your authority should be unified in your approach.

Andre: That's right, that we should never do that in front of the people in order to show them that there is a weakness, you see. Because, in his words, because these people are children. I kept thinking back in my mind, of far gone memories of what I had read and even Rousseau is always talking about this noble savage, you know. And he was talking to me about these children, you see. I didn't pay too much attention to that. What really got me is that that was my first day and it was a bad day and I had a bad trip in from The Pas, the first time I had ever driven a vehicle of any kind. And this I resented a bit. But then, of course, he was right. I mean, it doesn't matter what organization, you know, you should never show any sign of weakness. You know what I mean?

Murray: Right.

Andre: And of course, I realize that now, but I soon forgot about this. And there were other things, too. You know, altercations between Metis themselves. I mean, I remember one Saturday morning, we were to go out on a patrol to the angling channels and Jim Carriere had not arrived yet at work, you see.

So he told me, "Well, you better go over there and get him," you see. So I went to his house and they had just had a party and I was a bit leery because he can get pretty wild.

Murray: He is pretty big.

Andre: And I came back and he says, "You know, I want you to get him right now and tell him." He said, "These people, you must not show any weakness. You must tell them right away to come right down." And I told him, I said, "They were partying. I was scared." "Well," he said, "you try to do something." So I went there and I talked to a fellow by the name of McAuley. He says, "Okay, I'll have him sent." So he finally came down, you see. But that was another instance where I thought perhaps that Jim should have gone himself, but he sent me. Now, I don't know whether he sent me in order to teach me how to handle people...

Murray: And to have yourself established with them...

Andre: Yes, or I just don't know that. I would be prone to say that perhaps Jim couldn't do it himself. That Jim Brady couldn't do it himself.

Murray: He was shy about those kinds of confrontations maybe?

Andre: Well, first of all, Jim was not much of a drinker. He was not much of a social animal, so to speak. And he could have been scared. Now, I'm just saying that in retrospect. It's hard for me to think whether he was scared or not, you know. Anyway, the incident closed. But this is fairly significant in Jim Brady. At that time at least.

Murray: There were things at least that he would do that you couldn't figure the motivation out for right away.

Andre: Well, yes. Of course this also reflected my inexperience. You know, I mean there is two sides to any story and my inexperience then was so great. I was only about 20 years old. I had just been married. My wife and my family was still down south. And I had no idea how I was going to approach the problem of dealing with these people. You know, it was more imbued romanticism than anything else, than a job. I was going up north and I had had in mind for years...

Murray: Frontier sort of....

Andre: Oh yes, and this is actually, it's legitimate to have these things, you know, at that age. And he had a good friend there by the name of Paul Sicotte. Paul Sicotte was a man, at that time, in his sixties, was married to a much younger Metis woman that had a daughter and a son, whose daughter subsequently had two children by Jim Carriere. But the rapport between Jim Brady and Paul Sicotte, he was a wise man, French-Canadian from Montreal, very good. He was a school teacher at Pine Bluff which I would say is about twenty-five miles from the main settlement of Cumberland House. We were there a few times and Paul was a remarkable person. I don't know whether you want a story about Paul or are you interested?

Murray: No, I am interested. I haven't heard his name before.

Andre: What has happened, of course, is that Paul Sicotte was a product of the Royal Military College in Ottawa. Went to the First World War, came back and got into a partnership with a fellow from Boston into making - get this - glass coffins. And apparently, you know, in those years, if you were a French-Canadian, could afford to go to the Royal Military College, that means you had money and background. So he went into business and apparently what happened is that his partner took off with the money. And Paul Sicotte was... flee the country, he just took off. Ended up in Winnipeg. Now beyond that is just secondhand. I understand that he got a job from the bishop there, teaching at somewhere around Norway House. Then he left there subsequently and then came to Cumberland House and married a thirteen year old girl and then raised his children and taught at Pine Bluff. But I remember the time when I first met him. He came in. He was going to The Pas and he had to go through Cumberland House, you see. And he was coming through on the snowmobile with a Medric Poiriere who was a drayman. Wintertime he had a snowmobile, in the summertime he had a barge. And he had heard about me, a French-Canadian, you see. And he walked into the hut, woke me up. He came in

at two o'clock in the morning, and he told me who he was. Very affable person. But Jim and he had good rapport together and when the new field officer came after Jim Brady left, that rapport was just closed. Because it was Ralph Whitlock. I don't know whether you know Ralph Whitlock or not.

Murray: I know the name, yeah. I've heard some stories of him.

Andre: Yeah, tremendous administrator. A good administrator but a very unsensitive person.

Murray: Again two things you don't often find in combination, a good administrator with a...

Andre: You can't be. If you are a good administrator, you have got to be a brutalist.

Murray: Right, and Jim was the opposite in a way, I think.

Andre: That's right, he found it hard, a hard time to organize things. He had compassion for people; he had compassion for me towards the end. And of course later on, I mean in 1964 and 1965, I worked at the Centre for Community Studies for four years. Well, that's where I met Davis, of course; he was my boss. Of course, I met Brady a few times. I had him over to our place for social. So in other words, we had had a first life and then we formulated a new one after.

Murray: In the 1960s.

Andre: Yes. That's why I was really shocked when I heard he had died. And, of course, the fact that he drowned to me, is you know,...

Murray: I don't think anyone knows how he died.

Andre: No.

Murray: His body was never found. I've done as much investigation as anybody.

Andre: That in itself of course, is... for the body not to be found. He died in, well apparently in Lac La Ronge. Was it Lac La Ronge?

Murray: It was in the Foster Lake area.

Andre: Foster Lake area. So many things could have happened really. Now as far as foul play is concerned, I don't know. I think it was too late in the game for that.

Murray: It seems pretty remote to me too, but it's really, it's a classic mystery, really.

Andre: Yes, I can see perhaps, in the 1950s...

Murray: Or in the 1930s more likely even.

Andre: Yes, but now Jim was mild. The last time I met him in 1965, he was a mild person.

Murray: He described himself as a tired radical even as early as 1961 or 1962.

Andre: Oh, yeah. He told me to read a book by Hoffer for instance called The True Believer. Well, The True Believer, I don't know whether you've read the book or not, it's a antithesis of what Brady always thought. Brady thought that Lenin was the greatest man. He worshipped Lenin, you see. Well, The True Believer breaks all that down, that people had been had. You know, whether it's true or not is beside the point. He told me to read it.

Murray: Obviously telling you this in terms of it being a positive thing.

Andre: Yes, yes. But of course, that's what happens to a man that turns fifty. You know.

Murray: Maybe, yeah, it seems that way.

Andre: You know, you don't want to think about that, but I'm fifty now. I used to organize for the CCF back in the 1955, 1956. I did some organization in Regina. But I remember being shot down by the premier then, T.C. Douglas.

Murray: You weren't alone in that. (chuckles)

Andre: That's right, yeah. But it's all great experience. Still, I mean, more people should do these things.

Murray: For sure. I'm interested in many things, but the anecdote you told about Jim coming in eating an onion is really interesting. Can you think of any other anecdotes like that that would sort of describe Jim because this is the kind of thing that....

Andre: Well, there is nothing mundane, you know. For instance, through his years I would imagine in Europe, you know... first of all he was not what you would call an addictive smoker. But he smoked once in a while to be sociable. And he held his cigarette the way Europeans do. Mostly eastern Europeans. This is one thing.

He was a man of all hours. I mean, I could sometimes, many times, could see his light in the house at two o'clock in the morning for instance. Sometimes he didn't come in until ten o'clock, sometimes twelve o'clock. There were talks, of course, about his two children. And by the way, he took good

care of his children. So, I mean, of course we are talking in terms of the early 1950s which is different from the...

Murray: The morality then was considerably different, yeah.

Andre: Yes. Not the morality but what people thought was morality.

Murray: Right.

Andre: Did you know, by the way, that he spent some time in Paris with Marcel Giraud?

Murray: Yes.

Andre: Oh you knew that, I see.

Murray: Debating points about Le Metis Canadien.

Andre: Oh yes, and of course he worked, he was interviewed by Marcel Giraud and I was interested to hear his copies in Regina. I thought Adams got that copy.

Murray: No. There is some suspicion that Adams got some other material. I don't know if Brady... I think most of Brady's stuff is intact.

Andre: The sadness about Brady and Malcolm Norris is that they were always going to sit down and write up the history of the Metis movement. The wealth of material that he had. I don't know whether they had written anything up but I know that most of it must have died with them.

Murray: Bits and pieces of it they've written.

Andre: Yeah.

Murray: Brady has a tremendous collection of papers and basically that's what I'm doing is writing up that history from what I can gather. But certainly it would only be a shadow of what those two men could have put together by themselves.

Andre: That's right. Well, Malcolm Norris towards his last year was sick and he had a couple of massive heart attacks.

Murray: And a stroke in his last year.

Andre: That's right. Very, very disillusioned person. Very bitter, you know.

Murray: But he never quit either.

Andre: No, no. No, no. I've heard of an incident where they dedicated a monument to Dumont I believe, and they had the ministers there and all this and he made his scurrilous attack, which Brady would never do. Jim Brady would never do that. He was a different type of person but what's-his-name did. Malcolm Norris.

Murray: Yeah, they were as different as...

Andre: He did. And I heard it was very bad taste even from people who were close to the Metis. As a matter of fact, it could be that Davis told me that too. I'm not quite sure. I can't confirm that.

Murray: I have a tape of that speech and it's funny, it doesn't...

Andre: It doesn't ring that, eh?

Murray: No, it seemed to me that he was, I mean he was speaking in terms of Riel as being a patriot.

Andre: Yes.

Murray: But of course, at that time you didn't talk about that.

Andre: Well, that wasn't that long ago but nevertheless, it... Even our prime minister here, his eulogy to Louis Riel, it's unbelievable. I mean it's unbelievable in terms of the 1960s. But nevertheless, it's so. And this is what I heard. Now I didn't hear the speech. I may have it somewhere but that's neither here nor there. But that was the difference.

Murray: But that was the kind of person.

Andre: Yes.

Murray: Where Brady was not a public individual nearly as much as Norris was.

Andre: He was a very much person alone.

Murray: A private man.

Andre: That's right, a very private, hard to know. Not as hard to know as Arthur Kay but hard to know.

Murray: (chuckles) Right.

Andre: And a very affable person, very pleasant. I don't recall ever seeing Jim out of sort for instance. Not in a sense. He's been mad but that's beside the point; that's a good reaction. But people are morose, you know...

Murray: But he was even.

Andre: He was never morose in that sense. Well, that's because maybe he didn't speak very much. You know, he wasn't a person to... although we had him here at a party. That was in 1965, the party I was talking about previously, and he talked a lot that night. He had a lot to say. He was talking about old times, for a little while, not very much. He wasn't the type to talk old times. At least not to me. You know, but we

had good rapport together and he was looking forward to go to work in the bush.

Murray: That's what he liked most I think, isn't it?

Andre: That's right. But he was not a canoe man. Contrary to what a lot of people thought, he was not a canoe man at all. He couldn't even paddle a canoe that good, as far as I'm concerned.

Murray: He wasn't a bushman, like a trapper would be a bushman. Well, he eventually became a prospector.

Andre: Prospector, yes.

Murray: Quite a difference between those two.

Andre: That's right, he knew his geology I'm quite sure of that. I mean as a matter of fact he was a fairly valuable man and he was making fairly good money at the end, I heard that too. But he was not a trapper. I believe you can say perhaps that Jim didn't want to lower himself to become a trapper, you know.

Murray: Go ahead.

Andre: In his ideas of people, I mean, there was no doubt that to him there could have been classes of people. You know, 'his children.' I mean nowadays who could call anybody his children. He didn't call them his children, but they were children. I mean,...

Murray: In their social sophistication and that....

Andre: That's right, that's right. And of course, that's not true. I mean, those people have been... I mean, Jim was in Korea. His brother was in Europe. They had travelled around; they have seen the world. That alone is something and it came back with ideas. Meanwhile, Jim had just come in from Alberta, you see. Also had ideas.

Murray: Right. Did he not distinguish between people like the Carrieres and others? Did he class them all sort of in the same?

Andre: Oh, I can't say that, no. I remember him talking to Pierre Carriere a lot. I don't quite know what they would be talking about but I would imagine it would be problems of the community.

Murray: Economics to a large extent I expect, from what Pierre said. Trying to get economic development and that sort of thing.

Andre: That's right, that's right. I didn't hear any conversations between the two. But he talked with him a lot.

Murray: Did you have the feeling that he respected Carriere?

Andre: Oh, yes. He respected Carriere, yes. He respected a lot of people. I would imagine respected people who were willing to listen to him. Now, I don't know what Pierre Carriere's schooling was. I don't think it was very much. But I'm quite sure that Jim Brady did a lot perhaps to enlighten Carriere. Now this is supposition, eh. Because at that time, I mean, I don't recall, I mean, you know. That's another thing. I mean, to be a white person, to work with Metis and Indians and be in government service, it's another thing to be chummy, you know. That's one thing he could never develop there at all. Like I said earlier, Charley Fosseneuve, who was the Mountie's patrolman, was always a little bit skeptical about Brady.

Murray: I interviewed him, yeah.

Andre: Always skeptical about Pierre Carriere, too. Because through affiliation, eh. And he was not skeptical about me. Now Charley Fosseneuve, he must be retired by now.

Murray: Yes.

Andre: And his boss, Gordon - who is now chief of police in Moose Jaw - Gordon Crawford. I mean, Crawford knew how to choose, you know. He was part of the 'Holy Trinity'. He knew which one to choose. He was a good patrolman; there is no doubt about it. He was a good worker and conscientious. But it's what we were talking about earlier, that there were people who disliked Brady, a few people who disliked him. He was one of them. But as far as the older people, like the McAuleys, I think most of the McAuleys, especially the older generation, they liked Brady. There was no animosity there.

Murray: There was a simple reason for liking him, he was just a....

Andre: It was just because he was a government man who was Metis.

Murray: That made a lot of difference to people, did it?

Andre: But Pierre was different I think. I think that is the difference here. I think Pierre had a certain degree of awareness.

Murray: A more sophisticated reason for respecting Brady than just that he was...

Andre: Oh yes, I would imagine so, yes.

Murray: But did the fact that Jim was Metis, did people see that as a positive thing? Were they proud of that at all or did they think of it in those terms? That a Metis would be a man in a position of authority?

Andre: Well, it's hard for me to answer that. I accept that I'm sure some of their satisfaction came from the fact that he was Metis. Some dissatisfaction about me is the fact that I was not Metis. Now, these are the things that I felt. It's not the things that they would tell me. You know, this is some of the criticism...

Murray: Over a period of time, you get that feeling about things.

Andre: That's right, that's right. And it isn't... you know, they showed courtesy. They didn't say anything to me about it. They treated my wife very well, which today I think would be much more difficult, for a white person to have this kind of rapport now, because of all the awareness seething you know, in

these people. It would be similar to going to Quebec nowadays with all the seething going on. The rapport would be so different than what it was.

Murray: There is a high state of tension sort of. It is difficult to break through.

Andre: That's right. And of course it hits both parties, not just one. But I would say that his Metisage, there's no doubt, was something to do for people who like him here.

(End of Side B)

(Side A, Tape IH-424A)

Murray: I'm just going to start talking about the Hudson's Bay lease and how certain people saw it as a positive thing and others...

Andre: Oh yes, this was one of the concessions of the CCF government, that some of the existing leases by the Hudson's Bay were to be retained and they were to have their trappers, which, incidentally, were people of the settlement too, you see.

Murray: But they had exclusive rights to these.

Andre: That's right, trap the muskrats and ship to the markets through the Hudson's Bay Company.

Murray: This was the only exception to the compulsory fur marketing program of the CCF then was it?

Andre: That's right, yes. And of course, I'm sure there was a certain amount of jealousy between the lease trappers and the fur marketing trappers. I have no doubt, of course, that the fur marketing trappers made, in the long run, much better because the program was set up to help the trappers, you see.

Murray: It was specifically for that purpose?

Andre: That's right, that's right. And now, I don't know whether the Hudson's Bay lease is still existing. This would be something that would be very, very hard to take away from the Hudson's Bay.

Murray: Well, there was a struggle to take that away though was there? I mean there was agitation in the community to have that...?

Andre: That I don't recall, whether there was agitation within the community itself. I always felt that somehow government officials felt it to be an aberration. And of course, which it was. It's just like the new timber policy that came in with the CCF government. You know, policy for instance that only a certain height of stump should be left. I mean I've walked through area that have been cut by the lumber company that the stumps are two, three feet high. It was just accomodating the person who cut it, eh. So, new policies were established on the timber board, new policies were established with the fur marketing board. So there were still small pockets of - it did not hurt the government of course. Unless the Hudson's Bay trappers made more money. Which, I'm quite sure the Hudson's Bay made sure that they did.

Murray: Didn't, no they did.

Andre: They did make more money, you see.

Murray: To keep them on their...?

Andre: Yes. I've met a few factors. Of course, they all came from Scotland. They all came through Churchill. They never came through Toronto and across; they came through Churchill. They were all young.

Murray: As of old.

Andre: Yes, they were all young, of course, and very loyal to the company. In a sense, rightly so. They have given them a, you know, they had a good life. One thing the company provided of course, was good library for them. Now, whether they read or not, that's beside the point. But there was always good rapport. You see, the thing is this, between the two evils you always take the lesser one. You know, the Saskatchewan government trading store employees will mix with the Hudson's Bay Company employees. That's the lesser of the two evils because they are both white, you see. They stick together very well. They vie for the young girls, the young Metis girls, beautiful girls. But they don't overstep their bounds, you know. They never did at that time, when I was there anyway. Jim didn't have much to say about the Hudson's Bay Company. He was always fairly bitter about the Hudson's Bay Company. Although he liked the people, you know, he was - I'm thinking here in terms of the company. It has nothing to do with the people.

Murray: The institution, yeah.

Andre: As an institution. It was still blood-sucking, he felt. Of course, the 'Holy Trinity', the priest, the Hudson's Bay Company and the government. And while I was there, I met a person by the name - he was an anthropologist - Vic Valentine. You know Vic Valentine?

Murray: I've tried to correspond with him but haven't had any response. I've read his reports that he did.

Andre: I've got one that I loaned out here in Saskatoon, I have not received it back yet. It's marked confidential on it. It's a very good report. It shows exactly what the 'Holy Trinity' is.

Murray: Was that the Black Lake Co-op report or was that a different one?

Andre: Yeah, something like that, yes. And the way that the cheques were handled.

Murray: I don't know if I've read it all but I think, I know that I have one that was marked confidential.

Andre: Anyway, Vic Valentine, he would be a good person to talk to. I've met him since, since that time. That was years ago.

Murray: That's when the cheques were all handed over to the Hudson's Bay, was that how?

Andre: That's right.

Murray: And they cashed them and...

Andre: That's right, yes. In a sense, I had an argument with Vic. I told him, in a sense, that there was no other way. Did he feel that there was other ways of doing it? You know, in a situation of the Hudson's Bay Company, I mean I'm not taking a side, but in a fact, that you are here...

Murray: Not a moral judgement but a...

Andre: No, no.

Murray: But a reality judgement.

Andre: That's right. And he felt that perhaps there was not. But that was not the point, you see. That was not the point. In a sense, he was right.

Anyway, there were other people. Earl Dodds was a very nice person but also he was at the top and he was a bureaucrat and he had to do what he wanted to do and what he had to do.

Murray: And there were certain rules that he thought he had

to follow.

Andre: That's right. I liked Earl.

Murray: One thing you mentioned that interests me, that the employees of the trading posts, the government trading posts and the Hudson's Bay, probably ended up being friends whereas institutionally they supposedly would have been at odds with each other. But that ties between them as whites were greater than any antagonism politically that might have set them apart.

Andre: Well, physically in a remote settlement, perhaps not as remote now as it was then, remote settlement, there is the feel for survival so to speak. Not as dramatic as survival from death...

Murray: Psychological sort of...

Andre: Yes. And of course, this plays a role and of course these two segments of these employees of the opposite companies getting together, it's perfectly normal. There were some that were joking. I remember walking down, beside the Bigstone River one nice spring day, chunks of ice were forming on the ice and on one chunk there was a beautiful muskrat on it. And walking beside me was one of the factors from the Hudson's Bay Company. He had a .22. He pulled up his gun and shot it and killed it. And I immediately asked him how does he expect me to feel? Being a field officer, I had the right to arrest anybody who had broken the law. "What am I supposed to do?" He said, "Of course, we're white. You can't, and I know it and it just doesn't happen," you see. Of course, it didn't happen.

Murray: You couldn't do it.

Andre: Not because of that. Because I was so mixed up in my mind. Because I was not, perhaps, mature enough in my mind that I didn't think in those terms, that "because we were white." I didn't think in those terms. But I was just impotent on thinking what I could do. And you're right, obviously that's what it was. You see, this is insidious. You don't know it but it's there.

Murray: It works on you, yeah.

Andre: And so why not the two opposite companies, socially? I mean, like I said, it's survival. And there were bridge parties. My wife and I don't play cards and we were drawn into that for a while. It wasn't too successful. We weren't too friendly. We weren't too friendly with anybody actually. My wife did not particularly like it up there herself. I liked it. But there was not much interaction socially. Not that we recall. Except for those bridge games which we thoroughly hated. We didn't like at all.

Murray: Were the bridge games sort of a symbol of the difference between the whites and the native people? Was

there that to it at all or was it more subtle than that?

Andre: I don't think it was - no, the only thing I can feel here is that it was just a matter of people perhaps being lonely, getting together. This is just what it was.

Murray: Right. The simple basic need.

Andre: That's right. It did not have that...

Murray: The racial overtone or anything...

Andre: It did not have this idea of master-servant type of thing, you know, where everybody gathers and you have servants and this type of thing.

Murray: Like you might have been in colonial India and...

Andre: That's right. It wasn't that at all. It was just people getting together for a few drinks, playing cards, talking at home. And, which is, in a sense, an isolated area, is a very needed thing. And perhaps this is what Jim Brady did not have, even in that settlement.

Murray: He didn't have either did he, really in a way?

Andre: Yeah, the thing that being able to sit with someone and enjoy a conversation about... it's pleasant to talk about the past sometimes, you know. If you have your feet firmly planted on the ground, the sky is the limit. And this is what we were doing. Just talking about home and this type of thing. It had definitely no racial overtone. As a matter of fact, I cannot recall many incidents of racial overtone. Comments that are made, subtleties...

Murray: But not nasty comments.

Andre: No, no. Subtleties. But let's not fool ourselves, these are impregnated in people, so they are in a sense. But not to this overt dirty dog type of thing. There seems to have been respect. I know that the RCMP had respect to a certain point. I don't recall ever having any... like I say, perhaps inadvertently you are thinking of something and you act differently and then of course this is prejudice, eh. It is very subtle but these are the things that you don't notice.

Murray: You don't identify them at the time.

Andre: That's right.

Murray: It's as natural as breathing almost.

Andre: That's right and I've never noticed anything as - not that I recall prejudice in a sense of hatred. Not that I recall at all. But in the trading practices I would presume...

Murray: Business was business. (chuckles)

Andre: That's right. But not because the people were Metis. It was because the people were simple.

Murray: If there would have been a simple white trapper, you would have got the same treatment.

Andre: Of course. I'm not saying that they were being stolen blind. I'm not saying that at all. But in a community I'm quite sure there are certain things that are overlooked. For instance, staples like sugar that people need, coffee that people need, is sky high you know. And trinkets that are worth nothing...

Murray: High-priced.

Andre: But this is because they are a bartering people, I suppose. Not because they are Indians, I don't think. That's been one of the things about the history of the Hudson's Bay Company, I would say, is that... of course they had the colonial mind, eh... is that they did not mistreat Indians in that sense. Although I've always felt personally that the French-Canadian voyageurs were the ones that really treated the Indians better than any other ones. I always felt that, through the history I read. But you see, the colonial mind is insidious alright.

Murray: It's a well-ordered mind.

Andre: But yes, but that's right. That's just what I was, you took the words right out of my mouth. It's orderly, it's peaceful. Everybody eat.

Murray: They certainly are, right.

Andre: Everybody eats, it's just, it's a...

Murray: There is no disruption.

Andre: Yeah, but of course this was not that up there. Perhaps in a minuscule way, you had this.

Murray: There were aspects of it.

Andre: Yes. But the trading, the Saskatchewan government trading definitely was not an institution for that purpose. It was instituted to fight the Hudson's Bay and give people there cheaper food.

Murray: Did it do that?

Andre: To my knowledge, no.

Murray: Because I was wondering whether, well I know that talking to one of the managers of one of the stores, and I've never come across this in any document as official policy, but unofficial policy was, don't get the prices too low so that you

put the Bay out of business. Which I would have thought could have been the purpose right! But obviously it wasn't. I mean the government instructed their managers to give the native people a break but not too big a break and it was supposed to break even, the operation.

Andre: That's right.

Murray: It wasn't a money-losing operation.

Andre: That's right. Of course, it lost in Cumberland House. They tried to make a co-op out of it. I understand that failed. That was disastrous.

Murray: This was in the late 1950s wasn't it that they turned them into co-ops?

Andre: Yes, but the manager there was hampered by the same attitude as the managers of any other stores. You see, you

have to show a balance. Maybe they weren't advised to cutthroat, maybe they were just advised to go ahead and give them a break and this type of thing, but this guy was not trained in co-op work, he was trained as a business man. Well, personally I don't think he was, but that is Dick Browridge, but nevertheless that is the mentality that he showed, you see. And a customer is a customer is a customer, you know. And I could say that the Saskatchewan government trading was there in all its power to... it had great embryo but it just stayed there.

Murray: I'm wondering too whether the fact that the employees were friends of the Hudson's Bay, whether as a group they might end up having a fairly jaundiced view of what the philosophy behind government trading might have been. Because they were employees of the store; they were selling things.

Andre: They had no philosophy. I don't recall any philosophy.

Murray: But, I mean, at a certain level there might have been. A certain level of the people who set it up.

Andre: Oh, yes. You mean at the director level? Oh, yes.

Murray: Yeah.

Andre: Oh, I thought that you meant the people working at the store.

Murray: No, but I mean they would just have viewed it as another store. I mean, the people who worked in the government co-op trading, they wouldn't have viewed it as...

Andre: Oh, definitely. The Indians felt the same way. You know, this was one of the ironies, the fact that the Indians did not feel this was their store.

Murray: And that's what it was supposed to be obviously.

Andre: Yes.

Murray: Was there any attempt at an education policy on the part of the government for things like the co-op fisheries, the fur trading and the government trading store? Was there an attempt to educate native people as to what these things were supposed to be?

Andre: I think the only way that to educate the people is that they wanted to educate the field officers. That it was up to the field officers...

Murray: To do the education.

Andre: That's right. There was nothing like the early Wheat Pools where they had gathers, you know, they would give them good background. None of this at all. They had nothing like that, as far as I know. I was there a year and a half only.

Murray: But as far as you could tell, it wasn't even an explicit part of the job of the field officer. It was something that he was supposed to do sort of as part of...

Andre: That's right. Whatever Jim Brady did on his own was, what I said, on his own.

Murray: Right, so if you happened to be a socialist or a person who believed in the co-operative philosophy, you would have pushed it. If you were a field officer who was hired, who didn't have that philosophy before you started, you wouldn't likely have pushed it.

Andre: That's right.

Murray: It was a matter of who happened to be in the job?

Andre: That's right, I mean they were hired, I would presume, on competence rather than political stripe. I'm talking about field officers like me.

Murray: As a practical man.

Andre: That's right, yes. And so I went there and tried to do a job. I don't recall that I'd done a particularly good job. I don't think I'm that proud of that job. I mean, the job that I did, because I knew so damn little. Jim Brady was not the greatest person to...

Murray: Teach.

Andre: Yes. So, however.

Murray: So Brady would have expected...

Andre: That I'd known something.

Murray: Right, right.

Andre: Well, first of all, he was disappointed because I was a white person. No, I must retract that. He was disappointed because I was from Regina.

Murray: And not from the north at least.

Andre: Right. So, I must emphasize that. Because I never felt any animosity towards me because I was white, but because I was an outsider. The same feeling that I'm sure he felt from the people in there who didn't like him because he was an outsider, not because he was a Metis.

Murray: He expressed that in his tape in fact. He said the first few months he was there, he really got the feeling that he was an outsider but that that gradually dissipated.

Andre: You see, that's the essence of small communities. Even today, you go to small towns, how do you integrate? You just can't do it. How do you break the lines? You can't.

Murray: You live there for twenty years. (chuckles)

Andre: That's right. You know. And this is the way that Jim Brady was, I'm quite sure.

Murray: And of course, he wasn't there very long either. Certainly not long enough to break that kind of barrier down I suppose.

Andre: No.

Murray: And he wasn't Cree either. He didn't speak Cree.

Andre: He was not Cree.

Murray: No, he was Sioux.

Andre: Sioux.

Murray: But he didn't speak any Indian language in fact. Although some people, it's funny, some people claim he understood Cree but didn't speak it. But French and English were his two languages.

Andre: Well, that's right, but there is no doubt he understood Cree because Cree was spoken in the office and when I was there

I learned a little bit of Cree, so I'm sure he must have learned some.

Murray: He had a mind for that kind of thing and he had a tremendous memory.

Andre: He liked words. He liked words and he liked translating. He had a few good dictionaries that I recall. He had the Oxford. He liked philology. He was an interesting person.

Murray: How much of Giraud's book did he translate? Do you have any idea?

Andre: I would say he must have translated about three chapters, and if I recall now the chapters were towards the middle, perhaps a little more towards the end of the book.

Murray: Chapters that interested him in particular, I suppose.

Andre: It's unfortunate that I... you know, these are things in retrospect now the things... but unfortunately...

Murray: You didn't think it was at the time.

Andre: It was towards the end of the book. Yeah.

Murray: Because that seems to have disappeared from his papers, the translation of that. It should be interesting to see. Because it's now being translated in Calgary, I guess.

Andre: Yes, I was just wondering. Of course, some translations have been published through Saskatchewan History.

Murray: Right, right, certain chapters. I had a reference to which volume and year that was and I've lost it. I'll have to go down and look through it again but I know that there were a few chapters done.

Andre: Yes. Now, I would say about three chapters. It took him quite a long time. He was a literal translator.

Murray: Meticulous about things.

Andre: But he was literal. He was meticulous but I think at that time he wanted to use it for some kind of project or something and that was one of the reasons why he translated. For a translator to go ahead and type out a translation, it

has to be literal. You know, this will never go to the press. Never go to the press because it just isn't...

Murray: Isn't readable.

Andre: Yes, it is a facsimile of the French in English, you see. So, this is why I feel he wanted it for some kind of literary work or for...

Murray: For his own purposes, not for a publication.

Andre: That's right. So wherever his books went... I know he had books in shacks all over the north.

Murray: The Glenbow has described it as 'one of the best political and historical libraries in western Canada.' There were over 2000 volumes.

Andre: That's right. And this amazes me because the only thing written about Jim Brady is in that commission.

Murray: Yeah, I wrote that.

Andre: You wrote that did you?

Murray: The woman I live with put out that, the booklet.

Andre: Did she?

Murray: And I wrote the one on Norris and Brady.

Andre: Oh I see, oh I see. That's the only piece that's...

Murray: Well, you know, there is another one. There is a fellow by the name of Ken Hatt who... (break in tape). I was wondering whether you recalled any of the details about the Credit Union that, as I understand, Jim had gotten started in Cumberland House and it didn't last that long.

Andre: I'm sorry, I can't tell you anything on that at all.

Murray: Do you remember it existing at all or...?

Andre: I have heard things mentioned about it at that time. I don't recall anything really.

Murray: So it was probably not a prominent institution at the time?

Andre: Well, if it would have been, it would have been in his house, I suppose.

Murray: I understand that it failed eventually, basically because it was too easy on its debtors.

Andre: I see. Well, it could be too that the Saskatchewan Government Trading could have had. I don't know. Of course Jim Brady and Saskatchewan Government Trading weren't on very good terms, you know. So, actually I can't tell you very much on the Credit Union at all.

Murray: What was your perception of the role of the church in the town? Was it an explicit role or did it stick pretty much to its religious preachings?

Andre: Well, actually my criticism of it of course was that - well, first of all the church had a role to play, always has a role to play. At that time it was being invaded by the Evangelicals. They were coming in from The Pas and further south. But the role of Catholicism was a role that was really

being played but that had weak leaders. Father Dionne(?) was a very weak person. But it taught the young girls how to sew, taught them the three R's. I'm talking about girls because these were the most decisive. About the age of 14 they go to The Pas, the bright lights, and come back with all sorts of problems, as you can imagine. Not because they are Indians but because of isolation brought in to a town like The Pas. And to me, those educations were just nil, just meant nothing to these people. Absolutely irrelevant. I doubt very much, I cannot swear on this, but I doubt very much that they had any cooking experience at all, in school for instance. Now as far as the Anglican church, and the Anglican church was prominent only for the fact of Reverend Parker who was also the judge and magistrate and everything else. And the post office for quite some time.

Murray: So his influence was non-religious more than religious?

Andre: I would say so. He had a church, I remember that. The church was painted on one side only. The reason it wasn't painted on the other side was because by the time he reached the other side he had apparently had a fight with the bishop in Winnipeg and lost out the fight so he didn't paint the other side. But, anyway he was a very weak person also. There was no leadership contention in between the Reverend Parker and Father Dionne(?).

Murray: They were both weak so they had no...

Andre: Personally I felt they were weak. You see, I mean I've had a background of strong, ecclesiastical hand over me, you know. Quebec Catholicism and that...

Murray: So you know what to compare it to, yeah.

Andre: Yes. You had this feel that there was no role that these people played outside their small enclave. You know, you never saw none downtown, down on the main street.

Murray: Mixing with people or anything.

Andre: No, never. Except at funerals and things like that. But that is nothing out of the ordinary. That's how parishes operate in the north; they are all the same, you see. I would imagine that's perhaps because the community was more, perhaps more progressive I'm sure in areas like, perhaps, Deschambault Lake or La Loche.

Murray: Ile-a-la-Crosse. The church had tremendous influence there but other places not so much.

Andre: Yeah, even in giving out garden produce, this type of thing.

Murray: Encourage people to grow gardens, yeah.

Andre: There it just didn't have. I mean there was a farm there for instance that the provincial government tried very hard to make a go of. They had Tom Leia(?) who was the first manager of the farm there.

Murray: They made a serious effort then at establishing...

Andre: They made a serious effort but now I understand that the community is doing better in that field now than they were at that time. Again it's a case of either teaching people or showing to them. Teaching is a bad term. Showing them how to do things rather than have a manager having so and so do this, so and so do that; this type of thing. See, it's administered from above and I presume that people like the Metis would resent this type of thing and of course, being traditionally trappers and....

Murray: Very independent sort of people.

Andre: Sure. So perhaps it did not fail, perhaps this was a part of the long drawn affair of learning.

Murray: Which has to go on, yes.

Andre: So I don't know.

Murray: Well, Carriere made an interesting remark about that too. He said that it finally became successful when the people who were on it were unable to do anything else. They didn't know how to trap because they had been brought up on the farm, all they knew was farming. They didn't have the opportunity to say, "To heck with this, I'll go trapping or fishing," or whatever.

Andre: So they had to do it.

Murray: So they had to do it, and I thought that was an interesting point. That if you put a trapper on a farm and he becomes frustrated, it's the easiest thing in the world for him to do to go back to the bush.

Andre: That's right.

Murray: And eventually, after a generation, that opportunity as an institution was removed. So that may be part of the answer as to the success of it.

Andre: That could be, oh yes, sure.

Murray: Did Brady ever talk about the church at all or did he know the priests or....?

Andre: He knew Father Dionne(?). They were good friends. But then Father Dionne(?) was a very weak person, did not assert himself at all. But Jim Brady was kind to him.

Murray: Always polite I would think.

Andre: Yes. I think Jim Brady had good recollection of the church when he was young. This could very well be, in Lac La Biche. I don't recall him saying anything about the church in the sense of... oh ya, he really spoke about the pope and the money he has, this type of thing. But nothing, this is conversation pieces, eh.

Murray: Nothing....

Andre: Local things, local - I've never seen him talk about the type of schooling they were having and nothing like that at all.

(End of Side A & Interview)

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