

RE: METIS (Half Breed) COMMISSION

by

J P Brady

Transcribed by David Morin

Since February the Commission has set frequently interviewing anyone brought to them by the Metis Executive and besides these numerous others have come

Clergy of the Roman Catholic Church and the United Church were interviewed and gave their views. Their views were that we should treat the Metis or non treaty Indians by segregating (sic) them at separate points on lands reserved for them building schools churches and hospitals. This would entail a very heavy expenditure.

On June th Dr Braithwaite and Mr Rankin started for Cold Lake to interview the Metis in all localities during this trip.

At Vilna Rev Day from Goodfish Lake was met. He states that the Metis had gone away and he and Dr Eadie could give us all the information (initialed [sic] by W H D _ W W Eadie)

Dr Eadie states there is not much Venereal disease. Much T B due to conditions under which they live. Absolutely no sanitation. General health and resistance poor.

Mr Day states: There are as many Metis as Indians and Venereal Disease is more prevalent among the Metis than the Indians.

Dr Eadie states: No education on health for Metis.

Mr Day: Amongst Breeds not one successful farmer. This generation no use for farms. Only successful way of dealing with them is under proper supervision and direction. Half Breed working for himself no good at all. In one locality there is a number of teen age children who never been to school nor vaccinated. No physical examination. No ventilation in shacks. Cases worse in winter because small shacks _ might have sixteen people in them _ size x.

St Paul _ June Rev Father LaRose: Two classes of breeds. A Good B Need help regarding health. Want clothing especially in winter on account of malnutrition. No one to look after them. Educate them up to the age of sixteen.

Elk Point _ Dr Ross (Dr Miller was away): They want education clothing proper living conditions. Relief branch claim must be emergent. Police away twenty (sic) five miles sometimes an impossibility to get there due to road conditions. Suggest clinic to check up T B. Need food too. No use to do anything unless they have supervision (sic). Hopeless and helpless. Very few will do any work. Should be authority for at least monthly medical check. Skin disease should be treated. V D not too bad _ considering.

These doctors give them free services and samples of medicines and cod liver oil by the gross delivering them free.

Mr DeChene _ Bonnyville: Breeds are destitute want (sic) clothes food etc.

June nd _ Judson's (sic) Bay Co LeGoff Mr McKinnon: A bunch of Metis around here mostly on relief but some cannot get on. Men appear to be alright but not their families. Children are under nourished. They are kept off the Indian Reserves. If given work want to know how much a day get an advance then go away.

The Chairman of the School Board there states that if they are tax payers they have a chance to attend school but have no food or clothing to go with. If children are given food it is taken by the grown ups.

Mr McKinnon states he gave two children apples and saw their father take them away from them. Red Cross supplies some clothing.

June nd _ Frog Lake Telegraphed Mr Dionne (sic) to attend and help us. Over two hundred people were there. After a lot of discussion they agreed segregation (sic) for them. Asked to be allowed to take up about forty acres each around Fishing Lake.

Townships at Fishing Lake _ R and Have logs for school house Will build if allowed lumber for flooring etc windows and doors If taught health rules would help them selves Ask medical supervision or for district nurse Also asked for two braking plows and some garden (vegetable) seed

A Member a Mr Pattinea states: Majority more or less destitute If we had one or two braking plows we have no machinery a few cows and some horses and says applied last spring for garden seed but did not get it Would like potato seed if possible lots of idle land there

Another man states: People are in on Fishing Lake with deep nets This should not be allowed Will soon empty the lake

J Hould states: Over fifty kids no education should have night school for young men

To summarize from all these interviews _ What the churches propose is too expensive It is perfectly true these people are like children helpless and irresponsible They were told at Frog Lake the Government had helped them given them scrip which they had dissipated and that from now on they must depend on themselves We could promise nothing but would present their case to the Government

As a result of this investigation a talk was had with Mr Dionne (sic) and later at Calgary with Mr Christenson whose suggestion is that they be allowed to locate forty or fifty acres on land adjacent to a lake of which no one but they have the fishing rights the land only to be held by them for the Government so long as they behave themselves and work give them schools they doing the building give them one or two plows form them into a community electing their own councillors who will be responsible to a supervisor who shall be over all such communities he also to be responsible to the Government Children to be forced to go to school and there taught _ the boys gardening and the girls sewing and knitting Night school for the grown ups Health laws and sanitation taught Health Department clinic at least once a month in the summer time

This might be tried at Fishing Lake and later when the report comes in at Calling Lake and possibly at Sturgeon Lake

These places might the (sic) through if properly supervised for the following amount: to each District a supervision at a salary of and expense account of All supplies and money to go through supervisor at a probable cost of per annum for the three places This amount as against a Reserve with school hospital and church at an expense of

The Metis from Grand Cache are to be met at Entrance of Hinton on Monday August Mr Dionne (sic) will accompany the Commission