

Nora Cummings, Peter Bishop, and Ron Laliberte:
Métis Political Activist Interviews (Feb 28, 29, 2004)

Tape 2

Start Time: 6:39.24.04

Ron Laliberte: ...Yeah, I was commenting that, you know, you get the sense that during that period that there was, there were bad feelings, or, over rights, or, you know, the non-status, the Métis were leaving out the non-status because they were in the *Constitution*. But that wasn't the way it was, was it?

Nora Cummings: No. No.

Peter Bishop: No.

(Video Time: 6:39.40.22) Nora Cummings: But you see some, and, and I think for some of our, even our own people like don't realize that, some of our people are related with non-status people. They're the family members for goodness sakes. And that's where the hard feelings and the hurts, I think you know, come in. Not realizing that the division, it was a political thing I think to move on but not so much political thing, I think, it's more less so that we as Métis have to move on. And that time was coming and Sinclair would always, that's what I admired about this man, when he would get up and speak he would always say, "They'll be a time where we have to make decisions and those decisions we have to stand on, on those principles." And he kind of led us to that point. And, I've always said that, that they, at the end of the day though, and this is my own personal feeling and I've always

felt this and I, I've talked to others and they felt the same. I think sometimes our leaders are too harsh on one another. I think at the end of the day I think this man was a valuable person. They should have hired him as a consultant or, or recognized him as, you know, and, and this don't happen though. And it's unfortunate, and I think things like this have to start changing, you just, just don't...

Peter Bishop: Yeah.

Nora Cummings: You know, so be at the way side and, and, and Jim Sinclair was a very, at this even point in time, he's a well respected man and carries a lot of weight in Ottawa. And I've always admired Jim. And not only did this man give his life to the Métis but he gave his family, and I talked about this earlier with you off the record. The Métis Nation, the Métis Society of Saskatchewan they organized, and started to organize a lot of things came out of this. A lot of good things, but also that came out there was a lot of hurt, there was a lot of families separation. There was a lot of all of this stuff that's happening. And again it was because I think people got so excited and wrapped up in, in organizing and the rights of our people that they become, I remember my sister saying to me, "I think you're married to your organization." Because she was feeling frustrated because, you know, I had my children, the, the other lady that I wanted to mention was Rose Boyer, who was very active with us, and she had a big family. And this Evelyn had a big family and Vic, and we as women were out there, and other women. And I think people don't realize the sacrifice that we as, as people made and, and, you know, and, and we were quite fortunate that we had

that support at home because there's just no way we could have done that. And I, I sometime after, when I kind of go back some I always felt a guilt because I left my children a lot. But I was fortunate that they were always behind me and supported me, you know, to the point where I was lucky that I never lost any of them in that, during that period of time and, but it was a tough role. And I guess if you believed in what you believed in you did what you had to do to, to survive and that's what we did. And, but I know, like Mr. Sinclair gave a lot, also gave his family, and a lot I think too, is his health because a lot of times the nerves, the tension and I don't think sometimes we recognize the sacrifices our leaders do for us.

Ron Laliberte: Yes, I agree with you.

(Video Time: 6:43.21.23) Nora Cummings: And, you know, like everyone and, and when I look at leaders there was Jimmy D., he was, he, you know, I, I know there was some indifferences, I know. But years back people were in there and, and then there was Clem and their young leader, Gerald Morin. Gerald Morin was a good leader, unfortunately, you know, issues followed him but to me I'll always respect this young man because he's a great leader. And I know some day he'll heal and come back and lead us again. And but in 1992 and '93, Gerald took there, there's a court pending on, on the land claim and it still hasn't been dealt with and so there's a lot of things. And I think this is why our government is leery because our people are now, we have educated people, we have lawyers, like ...Clem and Gerald and Dwayne Ross. A lot of these people that – just our people from, and little Jean Teillet from Ontario. This young lady there I seen her perform in the, in

the Supreme Courts of Canada. It would make you proud to be a Métis to see her. All of them. And Jason Madden, the young lawyer, so there's a lot of good, young people out there and I know it, it makes the government nervous because these people are doing a lot of good things...

Ron Laliberte: Absolutely.

Nora Cummings: ...and researching and, and lands and, and our rights as Métis.

End Time: 6:44.57.19