

Mike Mercredi, Frank Tomkins, Ron Laliberte

Métis Political Activist Interviews (Jan 24, 25, 2004)

Tape 1

Start Time: 10:32:29.35

(Video Time: 10:32.29.25) Ron Laliberte: So I guess when you think back on it they were probably those Métis politicians that were the greatest influence on the way you saw politics or your political consciousness or would you say there's other people?

(Video Time: 10:32.40.13) Frank Tomkins: I suppose to some degree. What killed the organization more than anything else I think was, well first of all they got rid of my father, there's one thing. Malcolm was in the Army or the Air Force, Brady was in the Army and Malcolm was sup-, my Dad was the supervisor of the Métis settlements and he was pretty well all by his lonesome then. You know, everybody was gone and doing something different. And there was a fire broke out, broke out on the Métis settlement, at a place called East Prairie about 25 miles north of Jousard where we lived. And, you know, Dad took it upon himself to go to the store buy a bunch of raisins and bacon and flour and baking powder and tea, sugar, the main staples for going out and he took his team of horses and we drove out there recruited some guys in the settlement to go fire fighting. So on his return he wrote a report saying that, you know, they went and had this fire and worked on and put it out and was making a report on it. By this time there was another supervisor in Edmonton, you know, taken over from, Dr.

Cross had passed on, I guess, and, and somebody else had taken over, some other bureaucrat got in there and their game and main aim, I suppose, was to get rid of Dad and take over the concerns of this settlement. And he wrote back to my father and he told him under no condition in the event that another fire broke out, that under no condition was he suppose-, go to go and take it upon himself to buy groceries for fire fighting for a picnic. He wanted my Dad to write him a letter asking permission so he could do this so they could go fire fighting. And the train ran three times a week in those days so you can see how ridiculous the whole idea was. Dad, you know, writing him a letter so, of course, the kind of person my father was, he wasn't going to take that and he wrote back and he says, he knew that he was going to be kicked out for insubordination but he submitted his signature and that was the end of that.

End Time: 10:34:58.12