

Mike Mercredi, Frank Tomkins, Ron Laliberte

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

Tape 3

**Start Time: 10:07:28.29**

**(Video Time: 10:07.28.29) Ron Laliberte:** Yeah. Good point. When I think back and a, from my personal view studying our history, I see the legacy of, of Gabriel Dumont Institute as part of that activism from people like Brady and Norris because when I study their history what I found was that they were really big on organizing themselves and what were their objectives back then? It was education and jobs, I mean, you know, real life issues where you're, they're talking about putting bread on the table.

**Mike Mercredi:** Yeah.

**Ron Laliberte:** About getting people jobs, about educating our people so that we could have a secure future and when you think about that activism through the '50s and '60s and then the creation of Gabriel Dumont Institute, through people like you that, you know, followed up on that, on those objectives and created Gabriel Dumont Institute. I mean, what is that Institute about? Education, preserving our history and employment issues. And, you know, once you get an education you get jobs, so I kind of see that legacy from those early politicians. Kind of interesting when you look at that and then in comparison to the objectives now and I think your point that both of you raised about the funding, you know, that's part of that legacy too. Because once you get the funding when you take a look at where that's

going now the objectives are somewhat different. And, and I don't know if Brady and Norris would agree with where that's going now but any comments on that or would you agree with that, that there's a legacy when you look at the, the educational institutes of the Métis?

**Frank Tomkins:** Want to take it or?

**Mike Mercredi:** You go ahead, do.

**(Video Time: 10:09.01.09) Frank Tomkins:** All, as, as I said, you know the funding, today it's a, for some people it's a means of controlling the organization. Like we have Locals all over the place and Locals go after funding for little, different little projects. Lot of them are very meaningless projects but it keeps a little bit of money coming and it keeps the people from really organizing. We really haven't got an organization that, that you could say is, is a great organization. FSI are, are strong, you know, they're a strong organization. But I see that the Métis are not a very strong organization. I think if you remember, called what hell the last election went through the executive, you can't say that it was a very strong organization. You know they claim that there's Métis, they claim there is sixty thousand Métis people in, in the, in Saskatchewan but if you can only have a membership of five thousand, you know, where the hell are the other, where the hell where are the others? You know can you count on them as being part of the organization or, or not? So it goes that, the few that belong to the organization is the few that reaps some benefits from some of the programs and projects that are brought in by, by the organization and again I say that,

you know, these are just make, pro, make pro-, projects, that, that, you know not too meaningful in my opinion.

**End Time: 10:10:34.27**