

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: MALCOLM NORRIS MEMORIAL  
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS:  
  
INTERVIEW LOCATION: INDIAN/METIS FRIENDSHIP CENTRE,  
PRINCE ALBERT, SASKATCHEWAN  
  
TRIBE/NATION:  
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH  
DATE OF INTERVIEW: SEPTEMBER 19, 1975  
INTERVIEWER:  
INTERPRETER:  
TRANSCRIBER: JOANNE GREENWOOD  
SOURCE: SASK. SOUND ARCHIVES PROGRAMME  
TAPE NUMBER: IH-400A  
DISK: TRANSCRIPT DISC 97  
PAGES: 23  
RESTRICTIONS: NONE

HIGHLIGHTS:

- A reunion in Prince Albert to commemorate Malcolm Norris.
- Speakers recall incidents illustrating the various aspects of Norris's life.

MALCOLM NORRIS MEMORIAL

Chairman: ...honored to be able to have with us some of the closest friends of the late Malcolm Norris. We have, as a first speaker, Her Worship, the Mayor of Prince Albert, Marion Sherman.

Marion Sherman: Mr. Chairman, I am quite accustomed to speaking without microphone and I'm sure you can hear me at the back of the room, can you? I want to say what a great pleasure it is and a real joy to have the honor of welcoming the Norris family back to Prince Albert. What a delightful experience for us all to have shared the reunion with their many, many friends who are here this evening. I want to say what a great experience for those of us who knew the family. I hesitate to say how many years ago because when I look at the Norris girls who are sitting here, Mary, I remember the old days back in King George school and it takes us back many, many years to think of those very happy times which the Norris family enjoyed here in our city. And it is really a real pleasure for us to have you all here and we especially extend a very warm and cordial welcome to you all and to Mrs. Norris, those of you who have come a distance. I also want to welcome the many other visitors who are here this evening and to start using names, of course, would be to omit many people who have known the Norrises for some time. But I do want to say a special welcome to the McLellans. Nice to have Rowena and Bob and to have an opportunity to once again reminisce about those days which were

so important to us as a city when the Indian and Metis Friendship Centre was first organized. Because it was Malcolm Norris, as I recall, whose vision and whose courage and whose determination provided many, many other people. He was sort of

a catalyst, was he not, to keep everyone interested and concerned and to point the way in which we should go. And I think it's great, Mr. Chairman, that we are gathered here this evening to commemorate the life of a man who contributed so much to our city. A very warm welcome to his family. I hope you will all enjoy your stay here, that you'll renew many, many of your friends and that you'll remain with us as long as you can.

Chairman: The second speaker tonight, one of the people Mrs. Sherman mentioned, a very close friend of Malcolm Norris, Rowena McLellan.

Rowena: Well, it is a real pleasure to be here tonight and to see the Norris family and to get the girls straight again. It's a few years since we've seen each other and it does bring back a great many memories.

As I was thinking about tonight and thinking about my memories of Malcolm, I think of many conversations we had. And my main memory is, after the conversation was over, I'd go home and get out the dictionary. (laughter) I'd think, I've heard that word but what does it mean? He was a man I think who stretched our vision, who supported us in looking at new ideas. Sometimes he would disagree with what we were saying, very seriously, but there would always be that sparkle in his eye and that sense of humor that put it all in perspective and made the learning a pleasurable experience. When I was involved with the Friendship Centre, Malcolm was one of these catalysts that Mayor Sherman mentioned, who talked with us and helped us along.

And this morning, just to get another point of view, I phoned my husband's brother Gordon, who is in Toronto now but who was on the board of directors here when Malcolm was executive

director. And I said, "What do you remember about Malcolm, so I can kind of take another point of view?" And he said, "Well, he was the most conscientious worker at the Centre. And you know what board of directors are like, sometimes they need a little pushing, and he was the best person to push the board along and keep things moving." And he said he had very happy memories of his associations with Malcolm when Malcolm was working on staff at the Centre.

Then I thought of another thought I had from Malcolm and it was one of these words he gave. Now, I'm not too good on, I think it's Cree, and I'm going to... I should have had it written down. Pasaganapee(?), rawhide. Anyway, he used to tell lots of stories about how pasaganapee was so important and, you know, how you'd wrap the wheels with the rawhide when it was wet and then it would dry and hold the wheel together and make

it last. That is if you treated that rawhide properly. And I thought, pasaganapee, that kind of symbolized Malcolm to me in a way. Somebody who was really concerned with the essentials and giving to life a fuller and richer meaning and making it last. Thank you.

Chairman: Rowena was one of the first executive council members. I might add that the name of the Friendship Centre when it first started was the Indian/Metis Friendship Council and Rowena was one of the first executive council members and she worked, of course, closely with Malcolm, who was the first executive director of the Friendship Centre. Our next speaker I would like to call on is presently our present executive director. We call him Ace(?). He is properly known as Alec Primo.

Alec: Mr. Chairman, the members of family of Malcolm Norris, ladies and gentlemen: It is with a great deal of pleasure that I'm up here to be able to speak on my late departed friend,

Malcolm Norris. I want to relate to you tonight how I met Malcolm Norris. I don't remember the year but I was in the hospital with a back injury and I was there for a month and I was assigned to one of these four bed cubicles that they have in the Victoria Hospital. So Malcolm Norris and some other gentleman was on this side and they had this runway here and I was in the next bed. So there was four of us. So Malcolm at that time was coming out of the heart attack and we were taking our treatments. One particular afternoon, two gentlemen came in all dressed in their suits and they were representatives of the government. Nobody knows this, I'm telling you something. I'd never made it public and I'm making it public tonight. These two gentlemen from the government came in, and here is Malcolm Norris laying on his back suffering from a heart attack, and they come in and told him that he was fired from his job. That right, Mary? Okay. To me, I was (inaudible) at that time and to me, I thought that was one of the most cruel things that could ever happen to a person. He was laying on his back suffering from a heart attack and two guys come in, government officials in their suits and everything, and they come and tell a guy that he's fired. That was one of his good words that he used. He said, "I can argue with any paleface in respect to further rights(?)." Because Malcolm was a self-educated person and he grew up as a native and he come up from driving dog teams and so on up, up until he became a person that was, at that time when he was working for the government he was with Mines and Resources. He was helping native people to go out and prospect.

I got interested in the Indian/Metis Friendship Centre. I was chairman of the sports program with the Indian/Metis Centre for six years and Rowena McLellan, today your previous speaker, we got a house on 53 River Street East. Malcolm was the director.

Mr. Peter Tomkins had something to do with it and Frank will elaborate on that later. It started on 53 River Street East.

Later it was condemned so we moved from there to the Saan Store. Okay, then we moved from there to 1102 1st Avenue West which is the old Legion Hall, and from there we moved here. We moved from there to here in 1969.

I'm proud to be a friend of the late Malcolm Norris. I also am now going to deviate and I'm going to talk about my family. My sons became friends of the daughters of Malcolm Norris and I want to say this on behalf of Doug, my son, and he is sorry that he couldn't be here because Doug just got married and is on his honeymoon and he's sorry he couldn't be here.

As an executive director of the Friendship Centre, I am the present director, I'm thoroughly humiliated. Malcolm was a fellow who could get up and speak. He was a good orator, he was a good debater, one of the best. One of the things that Malcolm said and I can remember this and he said, "I'll argue with any paleface in the country." That's one of the reasons that the government sent a statement to the Friendship Centre here in Prince Albert that, "you fire Malcolm Norris or else you won't get your funds." And Cy Stanley(?) was the director at that time, Keith Wright was the president. So in order to be able to get our funds, I am sorry to say this because this is what happened. And I would say this, now, that if the government came to us and said a statement like that now, I don't think that we would accept it. Because to me, he wanted to do what he thought was right and what he thought was for the native people. And that's why I'm up here and I'm humiliated. But I want to say this, that because I knew Malcolm Norris and because I knew what he was going for, I'll try and do my best to carry on what he believed in.

(applause)

Chairman: ...for those words. I would be one of the first people I think, and I'm also one of the executive members of the Metis Society of Saskatchewan, I would be one of the very first people to call down the present way governments and generally people or society itself looks down on native people. But this isn't a night to probably go into a speech like this seeing as we are commemorating one of our great Metis leaders who had to come to a point in his time when he had to hitch-hike from community to community in order to attend meetings and discuss issues that our people faced in the past. Now, in the absence of Jim Sinclair, I would like to call one of our executive directors of the organization, Mr. Frank Tomkins. Frank was a close friend of Malcolm Norris and knew him for close to 40 years and Frank's dad, Peter Tomkins, used to travel with Malcolm Norris in their organizing of different communities. And now I would like to call on Mr. Frank Tomkins.

Frank: Honored members of the Norris family, ladies and gentlemen: On behalf of our president, Jim Sinclair, and the Metis Society of Saskatchewan, I would like to welcome our honored guests today while we pay tribute to not only a great

man but a great Metis leader. It is indeed with great emotion and feeling that I stand here today to speak and pay tribute to such a great man. He was not only a friend of the family but a real and dear friend for as many years as I can remember. When I was asked to speak here tonight, I thought it was really a great honor. Even though I personally did not feel worthy of doing so. So many other friends and past co-workers of Malcolm Norris could have been called upon, as this gathering certainly indicates, and many, I'm sure, would be just as honored as I am to be up here speaking.

There are many things that Malcolm can be remembered for. It is sad, but all too often great men are honored only after their passing. Such is Malcolm Norris. Malcolm first came to Grouard in Alberta in 1932 with James Brady and Joe Dion. He talked with my father about starting a native organization, because of the deplorable conditions the Metis had to live in, and this in our own land. From this came the Metis Association of Alberta. My father was so impressed with these people that he named my younger brother, who was born shortly afterwards, James Malcolm Tomkins after James P. Brady and Malcolm F. Norris. These three remained inseparable friends and remained family friends from that date. It was always Malcolm's dream that the Metis and the treaty people could some day unite as native people fighting for a common cause, that they might fight for justice and the right to live decent, human lives. It is Malcolm's (inaudible) and it holds true today, that as a united group, Metis will not take anything away from the treaty people, but would help support, defend, and strengthen their treaty rights but at the same time fighting for our own aboriginal rights. Because we are all neestows, as Malcolm used to say. We have only to open our eyes and see that disunity of native groups helps only the cause of government.

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, Malcolm joined in the service of his country, leaving temporarily the service of his people. And he served with distinction in the air force. During the post-war years Malcolm was with the Department of Mineral Resources and started the Prospectors' Incentive Plan from which many native people got the training in prospecting. And this, of course, is when the change of government came in and my friend Ace(?) there has told you what happened. Well, Malcolm made many friends and did many good things and that is what is really important. Any man who will speak up in defense

of his people and in particularly for the needs of his people will make enemies. Just think of what happened to Louis Riel. And it's only after their passing that they are honored for their deeds by all people.

Malcolm again played a major role, as we all know, in the organizing in the Metis Society of Saskatchewan. Malcolm was again playing a major role in organizing the Metis Friendship Centre here in Prince Albert. And I think it was very

appropriate that the Friendship Centre here in Prince Albert have this memorial supper in tribute to a really deserving man. Malcolm was never a very happy person. No one with as much concern for his fellow man can ever be. He was always frustrated with the seeming unconcerned attitude of government towards the problems and the needs of the native peoples. And with the native movement being as slow as it was, and still is, it must have seemed like forever for a man that likes to get things done. Though we have not achieved unity with the native groups, the type of unity that Malcolm would have liked to have seen, I just wished he could have been here today to see the native organizations stretch all across Canada and the growing of the Friendship Centre.

I would like to read a few paragraphs of a speech he made at Batoche. I was unable to be there myself because of the work I was doing at that time. But I asked Malcolm if he would give me a copy of that speech. And I'm just going to take parts of it.

We are gathered here today on the hundredth anniversary of The Royal Regiment of Canada to pay tribute and honor all those who fell in the Northwestern Rebellion of 1885. Few, if any, places on the Canadian prairies are of greater historic significance than the site upon which we are assembled today, Batoche. This is the site of the final military encounter of the uprising of the Metis people in 1885. It was a struggle of brave men on both sides.

Madam Chairman, as a representative of the Metis people, I feel we do take exception to the term 'rebellion' in the sense of rebelling against the Crown. It is unfortunate that early historians have recorded the Metis struggle for justice in this light. It is even more unfortunate that in our schools the facts of the Northwest uprising were distorted. A basic factor in the uprising was hunger, due to the disappearance of the buffalo. The threads of history are woven into the very fabric of our Canadian nationhood. I suggest you read Saskatchewan: the History of a Province by T.W. Wright, the chapter Grievances, Guns and Gallows."

It is only in recent years that some historians have delved into the historical records and documents for that period between the years 1857 to 1885 to get at the facts.

....the total number of Canadians engaged (apart from 500 Mounted Police) was 7,982 men, including transport, medical and other corps.

At the Fish Creek battle on April 24, 1885,

General Middleton's forces numbered 925 men, armed with four cannon, and at that time the latest type weapons.

Gabriel Dumont is mentioned as having 54 poorly-armed Metis - 47 occupied rifle pits in the main ravine, whilst Dumont with 6 companions were stationed in an adjoining coulee. Casualties reported are 10 killed and 40 wounded for Middleton's forces and 3 killed and 2 wounded for Dumont.

When you visit Fish Creek a few miles west of here, you will find a Historic Site cairn with these words inscribed upon a bronze metal plate:

"When General Middleton was moving to capture Batoche, his forces were attacked on the 24th of April by the halbreeds under Gabriel Dumont from concealed rifle pits near the mouth of Fish Creek. The rebels were defeated and driven from the field."

In view of historic records, this inscription on a national monument is regarded by the Metis people

of Western Canada as a falsification, deliberate or otherwise.

In conclusion, Madam Chairman, may I say that throughout the world today there are tens of millions of people who hold to a passionate desire for social justice and the right to lead decent human lives.

Because of this struggle, Canada today is a great nation, but it is necessary for me to remind you that the conditions of my people and the Indians of Canada is a blot on our country. If Canada is to continue to make progress in the years ahead, it is necessary for the Canadian people and their government to remove this blot.

That's not all, but it's signed Malcolm F. Norris, July 4th, 1962. For the people, the Metis people of Saskatchewan, that blot still remains and the struggle for our rights go on today.

I was watching Canada AM - I believe it was yesterday morning or the day before - and there was a news reporter who was talking about John Diefenbaker and he said that John Diefenbaker was reported to have said that no one ever left any footprints on the sands of time by pussyfooting around. Malcolm Norris has left some very impressive footprints on those sands of time. Thank you very much.

(applause)

Chairman: ....Metis Society. His name is Peter Bishop, his brother is here, Rod. But unfortunately he couldn't make it tonight. An RCMP news release came out stating that the Indian, the native people of Canada, were taking up arms and that, very shortly, the security of this country was being threatened because of militant Indians. And CBC managed to contact Peter Bishop. So in the morning he goes out and he's on

this talk show in the morning. And the commentator asked Peter, "Is it true Peter that the native people in Saskatchewan are taking up arms?" And Peter says, "No, I don't think it's true because what we're trying to do is negotiate peacefully with government." And then the commentator really wanted to get a firm statement from Peter so he said, "Chief Ahenakew of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians has stated that this report is erroneous and falsifying. What are your comments?" Peter stated, "It's not only erroneous and falsifying, but I don't think it's true either." (laughter)

(break in tape)

Chairman: I'd like to call on one of the closest friends Malcolm Norris ever had. This fellow is from La Ronge; he's lived there for over 25 years. Normally when he is speaking to people he says he has lived there for over a quarter of a century. That makes it sound better, he said. Allan Quandt.

Allan: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Your worship,...

(End of Side A)

(Side B)

Allan: ...Peter Tomkins. When the final pages of our history are written, they will tower among the tallest. Tonight we gather to honor Malcolm Norris. And to the Norris family I would like to say that it is with a feeling of inadequacy and humbleness that I recall the Malcolm Norris that I knew. To relate some of the individual happenings that took place in those early days of our friendship will illustrate to you the calibre of man he was.

I can recall a political meeting being held in the Labor Hall at Prince Albert and a huge crowd jammed the place. At the time the Saskatchewan Fish Board's policy was subject to a great deal of criticism by the Daily Herald. Joe Phelps was addressing the crowd which was very partisan and supported the CCF government's policies. During the question period, a La Ronge fisherman disagreed with the policy and the minister used his position from the platform and with superior debating skills reduced this fisherman to a rather hapless and almost incoherent position. It was at this stage that Malcolm asked the chairman for the floor and spoke out on behalf of Stan McAuley, the fisherman, and indeed, lectured the minister for his heavy-handed methods. Malcolm had the concern and courage to speak out at such methods, and still, he fully supported the program of the Fish Board but would not see any inarticulate

fisherman humiliated before his peers.

While he was always protective of and struggled for the ordinary worker, he was the bane of the bureaucrats. He detested phoniness and posturing, and was continually pricking balloons or baiting sacred cows in the butt. I know one civil senior servant who dreaded all the conferences that Malcolm was invited to. His feelings about Malcolm almost reached the state of paranoia. One recollection I have was his knowledge being used against the game commissioner who insisted that the provincial game regulations could be made to supercede treaty rights. Malcolm reduced him to babbling incoherency within minutes. He was always vigilant in the protection of minority rights. Any show of racial prejudice in his presence would not go unchallenged. We were at a field officers' conference in Regina and the assembly was being addressed by the purchasing officer of the department. In outlining how purchases were handled, he touched on a particular surplus purchase procedure.

These goods were being handled through a Jewish firm and in true Archie Bunker style, he used very derogatory terms in speaking of the firm's members. At the conference was Abe Raskin(?), the controller of surveys and his assistant, Max Ziminist(?), both Jewish. These pair are fine, sensitive people and were being subjected to racial slurs that would undoubtedly cause a rather unhappy scene if they challenged the speaker and probably would have suffered through without saying a word. After the speaker was finished, Malcolm asked for the floor and verbally cut the man to ribbons in no uncertain terms and humiliated him. Finally, the man apologized to the two gentlemen and the assembly for his conduct. It was rarely that Malcolm did this but when it was necessary, he did and he did so splendidly.

What a commanding figure, always flashing, superlative rhetoric, words flowing impeccably. His command of the English language would cut more deeply than any saber. It seemed he could almost regulate the flow of his adrenalin. As I follow the events today, my mind drifts back to my friendship with Malcolm and I remember the difficult and frustrating times he went through in trying to organize social and political awareness among Indian and Metis people. I sometimes think he was a man before his time. Today, he would really be in his element. But when he lashed out at the gatherings, I could only sense the feeling because he spoke in Cree. These were his friends, which made it more difficult for him. After the meeting, we went to his cabin and he wept. These were not the tears of frustration but tears shed over personal failure to communicate an idea and allow one's self to take it out on friends.

Malcolm was in the forefront to bring health care to people of northern Saskatchewan. There wasn't compulsory hospitalization and very poor facilities. On his field trips, he would pick up people and bring them to Prince Albert for hospital care.

These actions brought about many a confrontation with the Northern Health Officer, Dr. Tottin(?), but it was actions like these that finally brought better health care to northern Saskatchewan.

His work in the Department of Natural Resources was very broad and versatile. He carried out many special assignments, particularly those that fell in a sensitive political area. Malcolm Norris was completely trustworthy. His work was as widely varied as from doing social and economic surveys to those of acting as an interpreter. When the Department of Natural Resources was divided and eventually the Department of Mineral Resources was created, he transferred to that department. He was imaginative and lobbied for and finally got the Prospectors' Assistance Plan. This plan was his brainchild and he worked out the final details before it went into effect. Along with it came other projects - the prospectors' school. These creations still exist and have been expanded on. During this period of time he helped many a budding young prospector along their rocky roads with encouragement, advice, and a great deal of personal service. Not only the prospectors but many a greenhorn geologist was introduced to the Precambrian by Redskin Norris. In 1952 he led one Dr. Walter Kupsch, practically by hand, into northern Saskatchewan. Dr. Kupsch is now directing the Churchill River Study. He was reminded by the members of Northern Voices about the fact that Malcolm Norris introduced him to the north and now, while the study was being made, his experts weren't prepared to accept this expertise and the knowledge of natives which has been gathered over generations. We made our point with the students and perhaps with Kupsch also. And I think those of you that were in with Northern Voices will recall that particular incident. And Kupsch jumped up and said, "That's right, that's right, 1952," he says, "I remember when Malcolm took me into the north, that's right." So he had admitted that much anyhow. He had a wide variety of friends from university professors to the trapper and fisherman. He commanded respect from the intellectual community of several universities. His friends among trappers, fishermen and prospectors were legions. Friends who were really allowed the privilege to bear with him on the hopes and aspirations of a fuller and more sensitive mankind were few and I was privileged to be one.

When Roberta and I became engaged Malcolm played a very important role in the selection of the diamond ring. The reality of the situation was the fact that I didn't have too much money so Malcolm stated there wasn't any reason why we couldn't pick out a perfect small stone. With mineral glass in hand we went to MacDonald's Jewellers and he picked out a very small diamond but it was clear without carbon spots or scratches. I'll never forget the sour and unhappy Mrs. MacDonald as he rejected stone after stone because of imperfections and all the time, giving her a running commentary on how to recognize a good stone, and that really most jewellers didn't care about the products, but only the sale.

Another time when our two oldest children, Heather and Mark,

were badly injured in an automobile accident, Malcolm already living with pain and having partial paralysis in one side, had his son Russel drive him from Calgary to La Ronge so he could see and comfort us.

Our younger son James Malcolm - and just as much as your father did - our younger son James Malcolm was named after James Brady and Malcolm Norris. He is a quiet, sensitive humanist. He loves music, writes poetry and is thinking of writing as a career. He is in his second year of university and he achieves easily but with dedication. I'll always have that proud

feeling that with each achievement he honors the name of two great and beautiful people.

I could go on and on. He was a friend, a confidant, but really who was Malcolm Norris? No person alone can really tell. You would have to get each story from the people whose lives he touched. A man seriously proud of his Indian ancestry and always referred to himself as being halfcast, which improved the Scotch but raised hell with the Indians. He was a trader, trapper, prospector, writer, organizer, civil servant, etc, etc, etc. I can go on. He was a warrior, an anti-fascist who volunteered against Hitlerism. He was tough and unbending in the face of reaction. He was kind, warm, sincere and wept so often the tears of compassion. He was a scholar and an intellectual, self-educated. He wasn't afraid of the mighty. Often they cringed at the rapier-like rebuttals and threats. He occupied platforms and rostrums with prime ministers and premiers and considered them only as peers. And this is true as I stand here because of the speech that he spoke at the same platform was occupied by the Right Honorable J.G. Diefenbaker, the one that he gave at Batoche at the hundredth anniversary. And The Royal Regiment was represented at the same time - the spokesman, the commanding officer. This was the type of man that Malcolm Norris was. He considered no one better than him. He didn't look down upon anyone. He expected this from other people. He could be bombastic but mostly his words flowed like liquid honey. They were sweet and sincere. While he spoke of things brutal and dehumanizing, they held out hope for the future. They provided more than straws to grasp at but pointed to organization as the way to a better world. Malcolm could reach a crowd with words. He wrote in one of his letters to Jim Brady, "I was in my best form last night, Jimmy. They were in the palm of my hands." He always called Jim Brady Jimmy. And as far as this seeming arrogance, it wasn't anything but sincere self-confidence and that he possessed in full measure. He was a rebel, a gadfly and a goad. He was a shit-disturber

who usually had the fan at hand to direct the excrement.  
(laughter) He was a philosopher, humanist, and an unswerving radical socialist who knew where he was going and he took others with him.

We're all very happy that the Norris family, friends and comrades can gather in his honor tonight. For we have come to

do honor to Malcolm Norris tonight. I feel this honor could be better perpetuated by emulation. While we as individuals may not be endowed with the skills and intellectual abilities of this great Canadian, we can each in our own way strike out against bigotry, prejudice and misunderstanding. We can strive to build better understanding, to make a more equal world. We can be humanists and make life tenable for all our brothers and sisters. And in this way we honor this beautiful man each living hour.

Chairman: Before Rod speaks, I think it's getting a little hot and stuffy here. Maybe some of you are getting uncomfortable. Maybe we can turn on that fan back there. Let's see if it makes too much noise. Thanks.

Rod: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I myself am honored to be here this evening and I would particularly like to welcome the Norris family. I did not have the opportunity to meet all of the Norris family, although my association with Mr. Norris dates back to 1964. I can recall Mr. Norris as a child who worked in northern Saskatchewan. And from time to time, Mr. Norris came into our community and particularly stayed with the Bishop family. And shortly after that, of course - it was 1964 - a conference was called in Saskatoon by the government of Saskatchewan, the Liberals. And of course, this invitation was extended not only

to the non-status Indians but was also extended to the status Indians. And it was at that particular time that I became interested and tried to involve myself and my energies directed in terms of the native cause. Through some difficulties throughout the three day conference that we had, Mr. Norris, who of course was a very aggressive speaker and spoke very clearly and outspoken, decided then that we should reactivate some kind of an organization for the non-status Indians simply because of some of the conflict that took place there between ourselves as non-status Indians and the status Indians. I became very proud to have associated myself with Mr. Norris.

And at that particular time of course, many of us were inferior as we were just getting into the outside world. I can recall my friend Mr. Ross here, who was with me at that particular time. It was expected of us to try to articulate some of the problems we were experiencing in our community. And because of the inferiorization that we were going through, then we depended lots on other people. So of course, we always looked up to Mr. Norris as a man who could do lots. But it was only in due time that we began to realize that we ourselves had to actually carry out the struggle. And today that is still in existence. I can quite often hear many people, our native people, will try and put the responsibility on one particular person.

I can't help but think back at some of the things that happened. I know that Mr. Norris was involved in the formation of the Metis Association of Alberta, 1932. Not only was he involved in the formation of the Metis Association of Alberta,

but also worked hard to get the natives a brotherhood, some kind of an organization whereby the native inmates who were actually doing time could articulate their problems to the outside world. He was also instrumental in organizing the Friendship Centres and, of course again, our own organization.

Quite often today as we go along, as the struggle goes on, many of us who knew Malcolm Norris can sometimes think of him, missing him in terms of his leadership. I know today that we do have leadership, but then again it is very unfortunate that situations like that can take place. Because at any given time that anyone hold (inaudible) with the establishment or holds meetings consistent with the establishment, it is only today now, folks, that we realize of the type of cruelty, the kinds of violence that is directed towards any kind of leadership, towards native people who will not subject themselves or let themselves to become puppets of any establishment. And I think again these were some of the things that I myself learned from great leaders like Malcolm Norris. And I think that today we are here this evening, gathering, commemorating, and honoring a great man like Malcolm Norris. And I must say that Malcolm Norris would have to rate among some of the greatest leaders throughout the world that was concerned for social justice for all mankind.

(applause)

With that, folks, I would just like to say once again I am happy to be here and I would like to welcome once again the Norris family and I hope that after this get-together that we'll have the opportunity of being able to meet these people. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Rod. Now we'll have a presentation of some plaques the Friendship Centre has gotten made for appreciation of the late Malcolm Norris. One of our board members of the Friendship Centre will present the plaques, Mr. Berry Richard.

Berry: Thanks for that introduction. First I would like to say that a committee was established by the board to implement their proposal to put on this commemorative supper for Malcolm Norris. The members of that committee were Norman McCallum, Jean McKenzie, Rick Hesh and myself. I just want to give special credit to Norman McCallum. I think it was his persistency that resulted in this thing actually being put on the road. (applause)

In somewhat lighter vein, I just want to recall one or two things. I knew Malcolm fairly well. Some of his remarks which I've never forgotten, some of them were stated here tonight but not all of them and we'll never recount all of them. He had thousands. "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." "You never know a man until you've eaten a hundred pounds of flour with him." "Never judge a man until you've walked a mile in his mocassins." Something that was said to me, I think it

was one of the finest compliments and I know she is not going to say it publicly but it was one of those charming, affectionate, very personal things. Mary said to me, "He was an old bugger." (laughter) Isn't that lovely? I want to just point to the children of Malcolm Norris who are here and I'd like them to stand up, if you will please. I want the people to know how many and I want them to see what has sometimes been known as the Malcolm Norris trademark that he left on his children. Please stand up because anybody who knew him will know him. (applause)

The other thing I wanted to do, there is some little glasses on the table here and the first thought was that we should drink a toast to Malcolm Norris, but Malcolm Norris wouldn't have wanted that. Malcolm Norris would have wanted us to drink a toast to the Malcolm Norris family. So here's a toast to the Malcolm Norris family. Rise and drink to the Malcolm Norris family.

It was mentioned that a plaque was prepared by the committee. (An unfortunate thing happened at about this time. We ran out of tape on one of the cassettes and I wasn't able to make the change. As a matter of fact, I didn't know it had happened. So as a result of that, we lost the response of Mary. And I can't, of course, replace that but I will read you the wording on the plaque which I was about to do I think when the tape cut off. "In appreciation of the inspired leadership of Malcolm F. Norris who devoted his life striving for the betterment of the Indian and Metis people of Alberta and Saskatchewan. His sincere and deep concern for native people everywhere and his eloquent pleas for social justice on their behalf will be remembered always. September 19, 1975. Indian Metis Friendship Centre, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.")

(back to the memorial service)

Chairman: I'd like to remind you that we are in the bootleg business and it's in the back there. No, I guess we're not, it's free. Pardon me. (laughter) Thanks for being such a very good audience. Okay, she'd be the first one up there anyways. (laughter) Okay, I thank you again and I hope each and every one of you had a good time tonight.

Just a minute. Pardon me. One of the members of the Norris family would like to say a few words. I'd like to get you to meet Betty.

Betty: This night I think I'm prouder to have Norris as also part of my name. I want to thank you all so much for coming. For us to be together in remembrance of our father is a great occasion as a family. But I think as we came in tonight and saw all of you who also dearly loved him, I think it made us

remember him in a much larger dimension. And I want to say that we have been very proud to be his children. Prince Albert is a place in which we have had many joys. My sister and I

went today and went down to some of our old schools. We went through PACI looking for some of our old teachers. I went to the training school in which I took my nursing and found one sister there that remembered me. But Prince Albert has also been a place of a great deal of pain for our family. And in a way I was sort of glad that that was remembered tonight because there was a lot of pain in my father. Someone said he wasn't an easy man, and he definitely was not that. But for all of us, I was sitting listening tonight and thinking about putting this on. It has taken me, personally, a great deal of time to be proud of my Indian ancestry. Many of the things that my father did were great things in many people's eyes. But as his family, I think we all experienced standing in the shadow of that greatness. A lot of the very wonderful things have rubbed off on us but I'm glad to be here tonight to be able to say thank you to all of you and to be able to say to my Indian friends, I'm very sorry my dad didn't leave us the legacy of being able to speak your language. I think we are poorer as a result of that. Thank you very much for coming.

(applause)

(End of Side B)

(End of Tape)

PROPER NAME INDEX

PROPER NAME	IH NUMBER	DOC NAME	DISC #	PAGE #
NORRIS, MALCOLM	IH-400A	MEMORIAL	97	2-23

INDEX

INDEX TERM	IH NUMBER	DOC NAME	DISC #	PAGE #
METIS				
-Indian nations, relations with	IH-400A	MEMORIAL	97	8
METIS				
-political organization	IH-400A	MEMORIAL	97	8,9
POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS				
-Metis Association of Alberta	IH-400A	MEMORIAL	97	8
POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS				
-Metis Association of Saskatchewan	IH-400A	MEMORIAL	97	9,19
POLITICAL PARTIES				
-Liberal	IH-400A	MEMORIAL	97	5,6
RIEL REBELLION (1885)				
-Metis, role in	IH-400A	MEMORIAL	97	9,10
RIEL REBELLION (1885)				
-accounts of	IH-400A	MEMORIAL	97	10
RIEL REBELLION (1885)				

-attitudes toward

IH-400A

MEMORIAL

97

10,11