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Karen: February 19, 1984. Marge Laframboise was born
November 1, 1934 in Saskatoon and she has lived here all her
life. Her parents were French-Cree and so is Marge. She grew
up with a family of eight brothers and sisters, and she's been
involved with the Metis Society for about 13, 14 years. Marge,
when you think about yourself as a person, how do you see
yourself? What kind of person are you, and what kind of person
do you try to be?

Marge: All my life since I've been grown up and there is...
which is 31 years; that is a large portion of my life. The
first 21 years I guess I devoted myself to being a good wife

and a good mother. I still do devote myself to that but I have branched out and gone to work. After I got my youngest child into school I got involved and worked in places with the Metis Society and I've been working there for ten years. In my job there I'd like to be a good member, bring a lot of new ideas and a lot of strength to the Metis Society as my contribution.

Karen: Describe a typical day you remember as a young girl, just an everyday day.

Marge: As a young child, one memory always comes to mind is playing with my one younger sibling and two older, especially one older and one younger than me, us three were inseparable as far as playing. And I can always remember summer holidays playing, building a little makeshift house across the street from where I live, and we always fantasied as to what kind of a house this would be and naturally it was one like a nice big beautiful house like, you know, white people lived in, such as next door to us. I always remember that for some reason, it stands out in my memory. And they were happy times, you know. I don't know if it was the closeness of playing together with sisters or whether it was the fantasy but that always stands out in my memory.

Karen: Describe the house you grew up in. Was it a modern... like was it a modern house with running water, electricity? How many rooms did it have?

Marge: It was a two story house. It was one large room upstairs where we had one, two, three about four beds set up, one big large double bed where myself and my two sisters slept, and one single bed where my brother slept. A stairway. And on the main floor was a large kitchen, large dining room, and a smaller front room-bedroom combined -- I don't know how they combined them; that was supposed to be the front room -- but we always, I always know of people being entertained more or less in the dining room so the front room was not really a front room as such as today. We had no running water. We had an outhouse. We had electricity, a coal-wood stove. It was a very warm house, not warm as physical warm but warm because there was so many of us. Mother always in the house, always in the home; Dad not there most of the time or some of the time, but that didn't matter because Mom was there. I loved the house; it was a really nice place.

Karen: The neighbourhood you lived in, were the Metis and white houses close together? And, like, were the houses all pretty well the same?

Marge: There was a couple of nicer houses on the block. A German family and then a Ukrainian family lived a door or two down. And there was another large family -- I didn't know at the time that they were Metis; they were a Pocha family; they were large. Also there was about eight children. Somehow we skipped the houses in between to play with those kids. We kind of migrated over to the Pocha house and always played with those kids, we always played with them, we got along well with

them, and I guess at the time I didn't know they were also Metis kids, you know. But they were so there was something there that's why we migrated over there. And that's pretty well who we stuck with. We didn't actually play too much with the other children.

Karen: When you look at your life, back at your life now and all the things that happened in it, how do you see your life? Like, was it difficult, satisfying? Was it mostly a life of work?

Marge: As a youngster it was pretty good. It wasn't... I guess as a young child you can't see anything as satisfying as such. We would have liked nicer clothes, nicer food or better food or more food. But the warmth I think always came through as being a family and being close. We were extremely close as a family.

Karen: How do you find your life different say from your mother's life?

Marge: Well, my children grew up in a home where there was modern-day conveniences, running water. We had electricity, had an electric stove, a washing machine -- my mother used to wash clothes on a board. She used to boil her clothes instead of using Javex, which we couldn't afford it or it just wasn't around, I don't know which it was. I can remember her boiling clothes with lye to whiten them, hanging them out on the line in the winter, freezing them, bringing them back in, drying them, dampening them, rolling them and ironing them with a flat iron that you heated on the stove. I mean, I did the same a thing until I got a dryer. I can remember when my children went to school I did much the same. I washed my clothes in a standard washer, hung them out, dried them, brought them in, damped them and rolled them up and then ironed them. But I know my kids used to say, "You know, we don't understand what you're doing. How come you dry the clothes, bring them in and wet them again, and roll them up?" But you had to roll them to get the... and damp them to get the wrinkles out when you iron them. Otherwise the wrinkles wouldn't come out. Now with the dryer you throw them in, perma press -- there was no such a thing as perma press years ago -- now you throw them in and take them out of the dryer and hang them up. A dryer is one of the more advanced conveniences that I had and my children are happy.

Also, I don't know, the schools are different, or they were different. There was just almost all Metis kids, we dominated the school. Like there was more white than... or more native people than there was white when we went to school. There was a bit of prejudice. My children found that yet even in schools today but not as much. Because we tried to raise our kids more like white people, you know, as far... we tried to keep up to the Jones' as far as suggesting our kids's (inaudible) so they wouldn't have the stigma of being, you know, different like we were.

Karen: What did the term road allowance people mean to you?

Marge: Actually it never meant anything, it never meant anything to me although I remembered my dad using this expression a lot, a road allowance. I really never did find out what it meant. I think in my dad's time it was somewhere where they lived, like there was roads divided into wherever, you know, native people could live. I think that's what they meant by road allowance. I really don't know that much.

Karen: Did things change when you... did things change for you when you grew up and raised a family of your own?

Marge: Yes.

Karen: How did they change?

Marge: When I grew up?

Karen: Yeah.

Marge: I think a lot of what I have just said because of all the modern day conveniences and more jobs available. I know when I first got out of school I sold popcorn. That was when I was 14 years old, I never had no more training for anything else. I know in my dream, I always wanted to get into medicine. I always admired doctors and nurses and I would have liked to have gotten into a dream.

Karen: Describe your responsibilities at home along with your brothers and sisters.

Marge: Well, we had to always do dishes, sweep the floors, very basic things. Nothing like kids have today to do. Although when my kids were growing up I always put a list on the wall. I think our older sisters did more of the basic housework than us smaller ones. Like, I was the second youngest, so there wasn't that much expected of us but doing our homework and doing dishes, making our beds. That was just about it I think.

Karen: Did your family do special things together that you would probably have memories of?

Marge: Oh yeah, we had one game we used to play all the time, Hide the Rubber. That was a beautiful game. It was really nice; it could go on for hours. We'd take an old rubber and we would hide it, and then five or six of us would look for it and oftentimes we got the older ones involved. They enjoyed it. And another thing was Hide the Button. We get a large button off my dad's overcoat. We'd cut it off and we'd hide it and that was really hard to find. And then my older sisters would make Jello in little dishes and then whoever would have the most points would get the Jello. (laughs) It was really neat. Another thing, in the winter we liked sliding with some cardboard, you know, go out sliding.

Karen: When you think of family, do you think of just your own immediate family, or do you think of your aunts and your grandparents?

Marge: Oh definitely. Because our home... I can't ever remember once that my mother and dad ever had a family dinner alone. There was no such thing. There was always my dad's sisters coming over, and my mother's brothers and, you know, always aunts and uncles around, always, always aunts and uncles.

Karen: How do you remember your mother and father?

Marge: I remember my dad as being very firm and yet very kind and fair. I think fair was the big thing. He was really fair in his judgment: Mom wasn't. Now that I'm a mother myself I can see, you know, she must have had a lot of frustrations living with a man that was... that drank a lot, or felt it was okay to have girl friends. I mean, I can't see myself in a role like that and yet that's the way they lived. My mother was very caring. She did a lot for us children; she tried to make us very comfortable and happy. She left... I know she left a lot of the, coming from a family of six girls, she left the sexual, or the sex education up to the older girls. Like, she couldn't tell us anything like this, it was strictly taboo. There was never no talk of sex in any shape or form in the house, you know. It was always behind closed doors with the older sisters, you know, type of thing. But Mom was very constant, there all the time. She didn't drink, you know. She was a very hard worker.

Karen: Are there any other family members you remember especially?

Marge: Like aunts?

Karen: Aunts, uncles...

Marge: Yeah. I can remember my Aunt Rosie. She used to always come over. My dad used to have card games every Sunday. She was always there and always her younger sister Jocelyn. She always came to these card games and came for dinner. I also remember an uncle of my mother's, or a cousin, a Billy Grey Eyes who used to come over frequently, just about every Sunday. And an Uncle Sam, he was like part of the family. That was my mother's brother. He was there all the time.

Karen: Was there... was there a strong family loyalty between your family?

Marge: Yes, there was.

Karen: What did your father do for a living?

Marge: I can remember him doing piece work, working for the Intercontinental Pork Packers, shaking (?) hides. I can remember him doing excavating for the Patricks, digging out

basements with s horse, horses and... I don't know the name of the machinery but they dug out basements: it was excavating. I can remember him a bit of the time going to trap rats, bring them in and dry them and sell them. I can remember him clearing off land when I was in my teens, (inaudible) clearing off land like stones, taking them away for the farmers. We used to live out there in tents all summer and that was really exciting through the summer holidays.

Karen: Did your family have any livestock or horse and wagon?

Marge: Yes. My dad had a team of horses, a wagon, and whatever else he needed there. He had one for years when we were kids.

Karen: Can you remember anytime that your father was unemployed?

Marge: A lot of times. A lot of times. I can remember him being unemployed more than I can him doing paid work.

Karen: How did it affect the family, him not working?

Marge: Not enough food, not enough clothes, poor housing, never no spending money.

Karen: What did your uncles or other local Metis people of the area do for a living?

Marge: Similar things except we always looked up to one uncle. He had a steady job (inaudible). He worked for a garage: he worked there for years and years and years. He was the one uncle that had steady employment that we were aware of.

Karen: What kind of employment was there around the community that you grew up in?

Marge: Well,...

Karen: Oh, for just any of the people that were there. Like was there a lot employment or...

Marge: No, there wasn't.

Karen: What was your first paying job, and how old were you?

varge: I was 14, the year I got out of school in June. There was this fellow called Mr. Pettahodds had... sold popcorn. He had a little popcorn stand set up on 2nd Avenue between 20th and 21st Street. It was just a small little building and it had a little window opened onto the street and he made popcorn and did a big business and I worked for him. I worked for him for about, oh, a year, and then I went to work at Diamond Cab. I worked there as a dispatch for a year and a half, and then from there I worked at Paradise Cafe as a waitress for about a year and a half.

Karen: What sticks in your mind about community life when you were growing up, Just everyday general life in the community?

Marge: I can't remember anything.

Karen: When you... how old were you when you were first aware of you being a Metis?

Marge: I was about 7 or 8 years old. It was (?).

Karen: Was there anything special that made you aware of that?

Marge: Oh yeah, children at school calling us dirty half-breeds.

Karen: What language was spoken in your parent's home when you were growing up?

Marge: English and Cree mixed together with a bit of French, and we answered in English.

Karen: Did your parents think and speak of themselves often as Metis people?

Marge: All the time.

Karen: And were they proud of being Metis?

Marge: Yeah. Very, very strong sense of pride in being Metis.

Karen: What about other Metis families in the community, did they show pride in being Metis, or did they even talk about it?

Marge: Yes, they seemed to be proud of it. They spoke about it. They always spoke about times years ago when they first migrated to Saskatchewan.

Karen: Did your parents or grandparents ever tell stories about Metis history?

Marge: All the time. All the time. I often heard about the Louis Riel Rebellion. My dad often talked about how he was told by his grandfather about, you know, times buffalo hunting and years ago it was so nice... you know, it kind of made you wish you had lived in that time.

Karen: Did Metis people ever get together by themselves for their own social events like weddings, parties?

Marge: All the time. They used to hold whist drives, maybe a two-day whist drive in somebody's home and the next week it would be in somebody else's home. Weddings were a two-day event. Just social get together. Everybody played a lot of cards; you know, you could play cards for a whole weekend and a lot of food... Yeah, a lot of get together, a lot of

visiting.

Karen: Did your father ever wear, like, a Metis sash or any other traditional Metis clothing?

Marge: No. Not that I remember, but I had a uncle that did -- well he was kind of an adopted uncle -- always wore a sash out there.

Karen: Did your mother dress in Metis style? Did she know some of the traditional Indian Metis skills such as beadwork, tanning hides?

Marge: No, she didn't. No, she dressed more like a Metis or a white person. And she didn't know any of those skills because she was raised... her mother died when she was 2 years old and she was raised by nuns, so she didn't. She kind of lost her culture there but she heard about it.

Karen: Did your parents know how to jig? Did they teach you or was it a part of local dances, jigging?

Marge: Yeah, jigging was, by other people. My parents didn't know how. But we... oftentimes when we had house parties there would be other people doing the step dance and jig, and somebody would be playing the violin.

Karen: Were there any fiddle players in your family? Did they play and sing Metis songs?

Marge: No. Not in my family, no.

Karen: Did any non-native relatives live around you? What was your family's relationship with them? Were there any people in your family that were non-native?

Marge: Oh yeah. My older sister's boyfriend, is that who you mean?

Karen: Anybody really associated with your family, like, that were...

Marge: Oh yeah, there was lots. Yeah. They got along well.

Karen: Did your family... did your family have a lot to do with them? Like, how were they treated?

Marge: They were treated really good by our family, yeah.

Karen: Did any... did any of the elders in your family believe in the traditional Indian religion? Did they ever use sweat lodges or any other...

Marge: No, not to my knowledge. All that I can remember were all Roman Catholic and all the traditions that go with faith, not so much religion but the faith of the Roman Catholic.

Karen: Did you keep up the tradition of the Roman Catholic, or whatever you call it, when you moved away from your family?

Marge: Yes I did. My mother and dad both had a very strong faith and I used to... myself, out of all the family... I used to sit and talk to my dad about his faith. And he used to tell me how strong and how powerful God was, and the influence it's had. And I can honestly say that it has gone through two generations down from my dad, as far as a practice of, say, taking a pledge in a church to a priest, you know, promising God a certain thing and then keeping that pledge. My husband and I have practised it and our children and our son-in-laws have now, you know, practising the same faith.

Karen: How would you describe the Metis community in Saskatoon, or would you even call it that being as though it's so spread out all over?

Marge: No, we don't have actually a real Metis community in Saskatoon. No, it's gotten too big and everybody is all over the city. We gather as kind of a family at the Metis Society and that's about the only thing we have in strength as far as numbers and who (inaudible).

Karen: When you were growing up did your family fit into the white community, and did they get along with the non-native people?

Marge: Yes, we did, to a degree. We found some people to be prejudiced, but I guess... my dad used to tell us that we should not, you know, call other people by their nationality because we were only lowering ourselves to their level of ignorance, so we tried not to.

Karen: When you were young did the white kids ever call you names referring to your Metis origin?

Marge: Oh yeah, they call us dirty half-breeds or dirty Indians when we were kids. But we stuck together as a family so it really didn't bother us that much.

Karen: Did you or other Metis ever receive less pay say than a job that a white person would be doing?

Marge: Not to my knowledge, no.

Karen: Were you ever denied a job because you were Metis?

Marge: Speaking just for myself, no.

Karen: Did you know of anybody that... in your family that...

Marge: No, I can't actually say because I don't know. Like I say, being the second youngest one, I don't know if there was any rejection. I don't think so though, because my older sisters were working at good jobs (inaudible)

Karen: Did you feel comfortable when you went into stores where there were a lot of white people?

Marge: Yes. I always did. (laughs)

Karen: Did, did the authorities of the town, like, treat your family fair?

Marge: I think so.

Karen: Did your family or other Metis people in the area that you grew up in ever go to social events that also included white people?

Marge: No, not too many, not when we were growing up, no.

Karen: Was there a special reason for it or...?

Marge: Well 'cause, well I suppose the older people like our parents would get their own events going. Maybe they were afraid of being rejected, I don't know, but we just never bothered getting into, you know, the white man's social events.

Karen: As you got older and more or less like when you first moved, got your first job and that, do you have any memories of having to deal with the government or the police or business, business people?

Marge: No.

Karen: So, it was... you know, you were never really bothered, then, by...

Marge: No.

Karen: Did the town people, or the people that were running the town ever try to force the Metis people to move away or off their property?

Marge: No. No, as long as you paid your rent they didn't do anything.

Karen: Did the church play a major role in your parent's life?

Marge: Not, well, not a major role but it certainly played a role. There was laws and rules by the Catholic Church, for instance, that did not allow a person that was previously married in the Catholic Church to divorce and remarry, but that was brought home very strongly when we were growing up. Also receiving the sacraments, my parents believed in that very much.

Karen: Were you taught to believe in it?

Marge: Yes. Yes I was. In my own exposure... I think I got a lot of Christian upbringing in the schools, because we

went to Catholic schools.

Karen: Did your parents go to church regularly or just was it seldom?

Marge: Not at all.

Karen: Not at all. Were you...

Marge: Not until their later years. Then they went quite a bit, but when we were growing up as kids, they didn't go to church hardly at all.

Karen: Was it ever expected of you to go to church?

Marge: Yes, we had to go every Sunday.

Karen: Did the priest ever visit your home?

Marge: Yes.

Karen: What would he talk about on his visits?

Marge: Oh, asking my parents why they didn't go to church.

Karen: Did... was he a... did you ever sense that, like, he was there because he wanted to be, or because he was sent there?

Marge: Well more or less that it was part of his job. He wasn't seen as a threatening type of person. He was more or less held in awe, not as an authority figure.

Karen: Did you or your parents ever go to the priest for help, like for advice?

Marge: Myself, at later years, after I was married, yes, very much so. My mother and dad, no.

(END OF SIDE A)

(SIDE B)

Karen: Did your commitment, your ties as you got older ever weaken towards the church?

Marge: No, they got stronger.

Karen: Why?

Marge: I don't know. I got married in the same church my father got married in, partly as a request from him. To me getting married meant getting married in a church and making a commitment not only to my family and my friends and to God I couldn't see getting married any other way. And I couldn't see

for myself, mostly just for myself, I couldn't see just living together with someone if they were allowed to be married in a church. And there was no complications in my marriage because my husband is the same faith as myself so there was no barriers, you know. We were engaged, and I know when I made my first communion when I was 6 years old, I was dressed in a white gown and a veil, and I can remember making a pledge to myself then saying, "Someday when I grow up I'm going to get married in a white gown and a veil." (inaudible) And I did.

I think out of all the children from both sides of my dad's marriage I was the first one to have that white church wedding. And my dad often expressed a desire that he wished one of his children would get married the way he did. He got married in 1906 in St. Paul's Cathedral, which is the mother church of the city in the Catholic faith. So I went over there and got married, more or less as a desire to, you know, (inaudible) There was only two of us left to get married in the family. And I had all my children baptized. And that was another tradition from my father and mother, that you had a child baptized very early in life, 2 or 3 weeks old, and raised them in the faith. All my children were baptized (inaudible), and then my grandchildren are. My daughter is raising her children (inaudible), like she was raised in our home.

Karen: Do you think the church is more or less influential today than it was in the past?

Marge: I think it was stronger. They had stronger, more stringent rules in the past. They're a little more liberal today, the laws, because of the (inaudible) people today the laws are a lot more liberal here.

Karen: Do you think the church has generally helped the Metis people face their difficulties?

Marge: Yes.

Karen: And what... in what way?

Marge: Well I don't know it can, the church can help them in a lot of ways. Myself, in a lot of difficulties I have had, I have done a lot of praying. I have asked guidance from God when a lot of daily activities... It's given me a lot of strength that I couldn't have gotten from any position of many skills. You know, my faith is... It's just given me a lot of strength. I know it's kept my marriage very strong because my husband has a lot of the same faith I have. It's kept our marriage sacred. So I think to myself (inaudible).

Karen: Okay, we're going to get into when you were going to school. What do you remember about going to school?

Marge: A lot of happy memories. I felt okay. I've always had a lot of self-confidence. As a matter of fact, my first day of school my mother told my sisters and brothers to watch out for me, because it was my first day of school and she

wasn't able to come with me because she had another younger daughter at home. So I ran ahead of the other kids and I remember picking up an old can and a stick, and I was seated on the top step of the school my first day of school and I was singing in a very loud voice, a Cree song I had heard with Elmer Burston at our house and I was pounding on this can to symbolize a drum. And all the school kids were around me. And my sisters were coming up the road and they didn't know what was happening with all these people around, so they came closer and then they seen me. They were so ashamed that I was singing in Cree, you know, and yet to me it all right, you know. I thought, well I'm going to entertain the kids, so I wasn't very shy. You know, they didn't have to look out for me: I was always able to look out for myself.

Karen: ...you started school you went to and your teachers...

Marge: It was quite aways from home up on Avenue T and right off 20th Street. We had about five nuns in the school. I think the one authority figure that stood out in my mind was our principal, Mr. Finn. He was a very kindly man. He had children going to school with us. As a matter of fact, the one boy went through one to eight in my room; Leo was my closest friend. He later on, you know, graduated from university and went on to become a priest. Him and I were very, very close friends. And this teacher, he was the principal, I think he sympathized because we were native people and we had a lot of living problems. Because oftentimes if something came up in the school, like we didn't have any books and we were chastised by our teachers, he would come in and take us into the office away from all the other kids and say, "What's the problem? Can you not afford the book?" He'd say, "I'll get it for you," and then he'd talk to the teacher. He was that type of person, you know.

I remember all my teachers. I can just name them all off, you know. They were all beautiful people. I liked them all except my teacher in grade two. And I think the only reason I didn't like her was because as a youngster 7 years old I would look at her and she was always very fashionably dressed, you know. She was a white woman with nice beautiful hair always done nice, long fingernails with polish on and a lot of rings. I later found out that she never did get married. She went over in the '50s, over to Germany, and was teaching the German children,,, or the Canadian church children over in Germany. But I can remember all the teachers and they all treated us very fair, really good. There was never any... they didn't treat us any different. As a matter of fact, they went out of their way. We also had a nun in grade seven, Sister Burkadean, who was really nice. She used to... if we couldn't afford something like a white dress or a white veil for our first communion like all the other kids, she used to make sure -- she'd give it to us in a shopping bag to take home so that we could also be dressed like the rest of the kids, you know. So the teachers certainly were real good.

Karen: What was the school like, the building itself?

Marge: It's still standing. It's just a square, red, old, brick place. I can never remember it as being new. It was old when I got there but good enough for... you know. There was no gym. There was just the classrooms and the office. I can remember the office; that's where people went to get strapped. That's all I can remember about it.

Karen: Were you able to speak Cree at school?

Marge: We never had no mixed language like they do in the schools today. There was no French curriculum and that was in high school. I suppose if we wanted to we could have, but we never did speak Cree. Mom and Dad spoke just in Cree, French and English at home and we answered them in English. So there was never an opportunity, or we never wanted one, to talk Cree.

Karen: What do you remember about the kinds of things they taught you at school?

Marge: Oh, I can't remember. I used to find math very hard. We had science and English and spelling, and then we had a half hour every day of religious instruction. I can't even remember (inaudible) the normal things.

Karen: Did your parents encourage you to do well at school?

Marge: Yes.

Karen: They believed very strongly that that's what you should do.

Marge: Yeah, right. But they only... I don't know whether because my dad was illiterate he figured if you went to grade eight that you were a scholar. You know, you didn't have to go any further because that was the ultimate of education. They didn't know of any post-school education being available. So then we all got to grade eight, we were all expected to go out and get a job. And there was only one that wanted to go to high school and my sister, one of my older sisters, was working and she paid her \$300 tuition at the high school. And unfortunately she didn't really like to go to school because she played a lot of hooky and dropped out by Easter. And that was it. As soon as you got to grade eight, you were... they expected you to go out and work

Karen: When you were going to school were you taught about Metis or Indian history?

Marge: No.

Karen: Not at all?

Marge: Oh, in some parts of our history books we'd read about the buffalo and, you know... but nothing that meant anything to us.

Karen: How did the majority of white students treat the

Metis children?

Marge: Some of them were okay. There was a small minority of them that treated us, you know, like we were different -- but we just stuck together.

Karen: Looking at it over all, was your experience at school a positive one or a negative one?

Marge: Negative. Because I knew... I enjoyed school and yet I knew that when I got to grade eight I had to quit and I wanted to go on. I wanted to get a better education and I knew there was no way I could get it, just no help to get the money.

Karen: We're going to get into a little politics here. What party, or did they allow... your parents vote for?

Marge: My dad was always Progressive Conservative. He didn't vote for the party, he voted for the man and that was John Diefenbaker. We had John Diefenbaker... didn't matter what ticket he run on, he used to... That's who my dad would vote for.

Karen: Were they involved in party politics or did they just vote?

Marge: No, they just voted. And did a lot of mouth-to-mouth campaigning for the Conservative party.

Karen: Did anybody influence them to vote the way that they did?

Marge: Yeah. There was a lot of fear. I can remember people coming to the house and telling me, "You have to vote this way or else... This party gets in, this is what's going to happen to you." Well, if living conditions could have been any worse anyway... but they just didn't know any different.

Karen: Did politicians ever visit your home when you were living with your parents?

Marge: I don't know if they were politicians. They were somebody from the... I can remember a representative coming one time from the CCF party and talking to Mom and Dad about why they should vote CCF.

Karen: Do you remember the reasons why?

Marge: No, I can't, I was too young. It wasn't important to me then.

Karen: Was the church involved in politics?

Marge: No.

Karen: Not at all. How did most Metis in your parents day view politics?

Marge: Well, the beginning and end of everything, you know, very, very strong. They were really, really into politics. I mean, you had to vote; I don't care if you were on your death bed, you know, when it was election day you had to go and vote. (phone rings)

Karen: How did you vote over the years, and were you influenced at all to vote the way that you did?

Marge: How did I vote? You mean what party? I became aware of politics in the '60s. I think only then did I start realizing as a young wife that certainly the country was being run by whatever government got in. I became aware... I start reading a lot in the papers, listening to TV to the different politicians what they were promising, all the mud-slinging and whatever, and then made my own decision as to who I wanted to see get in.

Karen: Did you or any of your friends take any active role in party politics or elections? Did you ever campaign for a certain candidate or...

Marge: Yes. Very much so. I did a lot of door-to-door campaigning. I went to a lot of the rallies, just about all the rallies, when the NDP government was first in power.

Karen: Did the Metis people generally see one party as the one which spoke best for the Metis people?

Marge: No, not particularly.

Karen: What about the other parties like CCF or the Conservatives? How did Metis people see these parties?

Marge: Well, I know my parents used to see the CCF as a bad government, like taking away a lot of privileges or taking away jobs. And my dad seen the PCs as providing work, medical and all the other things the government promised.

Karen: What do you recall about the Metis organization when you were younger?

Marge: I can't remember too much, but I can remember the Metis Society as such. It was in the '30s when I was young. I can remember them having meetings and doing voting. That's about all I remember about them.

Karen: You don't recall what they say they were meeting for?

Marge: No.

Karen: Did it have a local in their town?

Marge: I don't know if it was a local as such. I remember there was a bunch of Metis people got together and they called it the Metis Society. We used to have whist drives and bingos and meetings. I was too small though to know what was going

on.

Karen: What did it try to do for Metis people? Did they try to help with the relief, jobs, housing?

Marge: Yes, with jobs. I can remember my dad talking about it. And with housing, to try and get houses but I don't think they ever did. I think it kinda petered out.

Karen: Do you recall if most of the Metis people in the community were involved with the Metis Society?

Marge: I don't know. (inaudible)

Karen: What did the white people think of the Metis Society when you were younger and what you remember of it?

Marge: I don't know. I can remember the Metis Society then being a very important function, you know, with Metis people. It was something they were really proud of and that they were all going to get together and do, do different things. But, I don't remember... I suppose some of the older people would remember, but I was very young.

Karen: Okay. Now you've been working with the Metis Society for about ten years now in Saskatoon here, do you think that it has accomplished a lot since it began?

Marge: Yes.

Karen: At some of the meetings at the Saskatoon Local were talked of such as the old Metis scrips and discrimination in jobs. Are they discussed a lot?

Marge: Yes a lot.

Karen: So there is quite a bit that they're trying to do about this?

Marge: Oh yeah, definitely. They're trying to do a lot and they probably will get a lot done as long as they stay together as a strong group. There is strength in numbers in anything.

Karen: Do you think that they will remain strong?

Marge: Yes I do, I think they'll get a lot stronger.

Karen: Do the names Joe LaRocque or Joe Ross, Tom Major, Joe McKenzie or Soloman Pritchard mean anything to you?

Marge: No.

Karen: That's it, Marge, I'd like to thank you for taking the time today.

Marge: Okay, thank you ver much, Karen.

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