

Jim Brady Quotes Used by Murray Dobbin

By

Murray Dobbin

**Transcribed by David Morin**

- I The history of the rise and development of the Metis movement (It arose as a defence of democratic rights in a situation of exploitation)
  - A The rise of the movement
  - B The situation of exploitation
  
- II The present situation of the Metis in Canadian society (The Metis are today vanguard of the labor movement which will bring about the replacement of decadent capitalism by the development of socialism )
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- III The objectives and strategies which are appropriate for Metis in the current situation (It is only through the organization for certain objectives that the Metis will play their proper role of this anti colonial struggle )
  - A The objectives of the Metis Association
  - B The proper role of the Metis Association

I The Metis movement arose as a defence of democratic rights in a situation of exploitation

a the Metis movement:

"Our Metis people made a grand contribution to the democratic struggle. We have seen the passing of the buffalo, the Hudson's Bay Co. and the passing of our tradition to the militant labor movement of our time who are the true inheritors of our tradition of democratic struggle and we know that with their help we shall see the passing of the monopolists of the 19th Century." (Letter to Ben ... September p. )

"The history of the Metis of Western Canada is really the history of their attempts to defend their constitutional rights against the encroachment of nascent monopoly capital. It is incorrect to place them as bewildered victims who did not know how to protect themselves against the vicious features which marked the penetration of the white man into the Western prairies." (Alberta Metis Association Brief Preamble p. ) with M. Norris

"The Metis never had and never will have anything to do with the theory of individual outrage or conspiracies against individual persons. The theory and practice of the Metis revolts was based on a revolutionary democratic movement against the forces of a decadent monopoly which stood as a barrier to the realization of progress and freedom. That was the task of the two Metis rebellions. Only an ignoramus or idiot can confound conspiracies and terrorism with the policy of the Metis movement which was based on the promotion of a mass democratic movement." (Politics in the Metis Association...October p. )

"We must find among our own people the forces which can and by their own social position must form the power of consolidating our people, organizing the struggle which leads to realization of the aims which have paced the Metis in the vanguard of history in the struggle for a genuine industrial and political democracy." (Letter to J.F. Dion April p. )

"Our ideals are the ideals of the common people throughout the world. We rejoice at the success of the common people in other lands and exalt in our solidarity throughout the world in the common fight for human liberty, human happiness, peace and progress." (Politics in the Metis Association... October p. )

"Metis society is divided into gradations at various stages of development. The agricultural and the nomadic (sic). The fairly well to do and the exploited, and if we forget this basic division and neglect the contradictions between the agricultural and the nomadic, this means we neglect the fundamental fact. I don't deny the existence of intermediate strata who (sic) join either one side or other as the forces of economic pressure determine, or who occupy a neutral position. If we neglect this fundamental struggle between two worlds, its taking place within the whole range of Metis thinking, its outcome is decisive to the next stage of Metis development." (Politics in the Metis Association October p. )

"The principal defect in the colony program is the lack of settlers of an agricultural type... My predecessor (sic) undoubtedly favored (sic) the lake

group There are distinct indications of nomadic retrogression among the lake residents There seems to be little common ground between the lake group and the agricultural settlers of the south area " (Wolf Lake Diary December p )

"These men can be categorized as full time trappers with (sic) a high degree of proficiency in their avocation These families (sic) have been established at Wolf Lake on the north shore prior to ... The Local Metis are not opposed to registered Trap Lines They do not desire to oppose the well established white trapper Their main fear is that due to their ignorance of the legislation their interests may be disregarded Tollefson who traps beyond the Bare Naked Lakes and Rolson in the Goose Lakes area are highly regarded by the Wolf Lake Metis as craftsmen in their trade The Metis have always respected the unrecorded right of a trapper to a particular but roughly defined trapper This custom has been respected for years by the Metis and the professional white trapper Difficulties would arise if the territory lying immediately to the north of the Wolf Lake Metis area was allowed to pass into the hands of comparative newcomers Ukrainians from Fox Lake trap in the district to the east and there has never been any infringement on either side Otteberg is the only trapper who has disregarded the established ethic and is consequently disliked yby (sic) both Metis and white trappers The Metis lay claim to no other territory They only desire what they believe to be theirs by right of primary possession They have trapped this area since childhood Cordial relations have always existed between the Wolf Lake Metis and the white people of the territory (sic) and it is the common desire that this harmony continue Peter Shaeffer of Iron River for instance lays claim to all the area south of Otter Creek This description coincides with the description of the area within which George Desjarlais has trapped for the last twenty years " (Wolf Lake Diary December pp & )

"The present Area was however strongly favored by the nomadic element of Metis who were strongly opposed to the development of an agricultural area " (WLD December p )

"The Cardinal or Bearskin family have proven to be a non cooperative and obstreperous group holding a violent animus against the agricultural element and seeking to conduct the area on the basis of a nomadic economy amid social conditions retrogressive and inimical to the general program ... There has been difficulty in getting settlers of the right type Until the Area is rid of this kind of disrupting and these settlers replaced by settlers possessing stability of purpose and character there is likelihood of a marked turn in the Area's development " (WLD January pp & )

"I am quite convinced that no Metis Area can be made to function as long as you have in close proximity or conjoined together an agricultural type as well as nomadic type of Metis settler The Metis are averse to agricultural pursuits traditionally As long as the pursuit of hunting and trapping can be followed there will (sic) never be a genuine effort on the part of this type of Metis to become self sustaining (sic) Only under the impact of unbearable (sic) economic misery will the nomadic type of Metis orientate themselves in the direction of permanently attaching themselves to the soil Historically this has been proven to be the case (cites De Tremaudan) I am fully convinced that the Wolf Lake Area or any other Area can be developed where a preponderance of the settlers are of the non agricultural type or not definitely grounded by experience and

inclination with an agricultural proficiency equal to other sections of the population. At least they will never lift themselves to the individual level which is the normal condition of other settlers (sic) on a system of agriculture based on individual effort " (WLD March p )

"My experience has convinced me that where we have Metis settlers who formerly resided or who were raised on Indian Reserves we invariably discover such individuals to be antipathetic to the agricultural mode of life. Settlers whose immediate antecedents have been Treaty Indians with very few exceptions (sic) revert to the nomadic life and display an aversion to physical effort which distinguishes them markedly from other racial groups. It is my considered opinion that during the formative stages of (sic) Metis Area this type should be excluded. Only when faced by an overwhelming majority do these people make efforts toward self sustenance (sic) (cites example of Green Lake Sask)" (WLD March ) p

"It is my considered opinion that no further application should be received from any Metis with an inclination toward the nomadic life. It is evident that Paul is not an agricultural settler. Where the nomadic and agricultural (sic) type come into conflict there is no hope of establishing a well ordered community. The nomadic element detest work with all their feeling. It is evident that as long as the chase suffices or for their needs they will never root themselves in the soil " (WLD April p )

"Considerable difficulty has been experienced by the Metis administration owing to the settlement in our area of settlers of non treaty Indian status or whose immediate antecedents are Treaty Indian. These settlers invariably are worthless (sic) (as) a progressive element. Owing to their nomadic background and training they are unable to take advantage of opportunities offered (and they) are (sic) a retrogressive factor in any development that is attempted. The failure of the Wolf Lake Area to show any concrete advance is due to the selection of the original settlers who were mainly non treaty Indians. There has been a tendency for the Dominion Government to throw these people out of the Reserves whereupon they immediately attempt to enter and establish domiciles on the Metis areas " (WLD May p )

"The Fishing Lake Area, Wolf Lake and Elizabeth areas being deficient in the required elements necessary for the successful development of a good Metis area there is evident a predisposition on the part of the administration to divert agricultural settlers to areas where greater possibilities may be secured " (WLD June p )

"... I realize that any departure from the established regulations would inevitably create friction by allowing the introduction of temporary non Metis workers who would indirectly be deriving benefit (sic) from the natural resources (sic) within the area. The resultant effects would aggravate the present deep seated antagonism that the nomadic element feel for the aggressive working type of Metis. ? ... I am more than ever convinced that non Treaty Indians or persons whose immediate antecedents were non Treaty should not (sic) be permitted within Metis Areas except in special (sic) circumstances deserving of recommendation. The non Treaty element are by nature hostile to the Metis of a more advanced type like the agricultural Metis of French descent who in most cases is progressive and ambitious in outlook. At all events in any area where the non treaty or nomadic Metis constitute a

majority the internal administration is fraught with friction and disputes between the two inimical groups " (WLD November p )

"Of course the Metis as a national unity are breaking down and disintegrating This is true Our breakdown has been a complex and lengthy process It is not simply a spontaneous process but a struggle connected with the conflict of classes We have a rich historic experience of that conflict As a racial group which must leave the historic stage we are unconvinced that our role is finished We have no independent social base other than the working class With the working class as the necessary assisting force we can be strong If we go against the democratic forces we are converted into nothing " (PIMA October p )

"These persons may not like changes and their conservatism has to be fought We often hear of the conflict between the "old" and the "new" What is old is what is left of the primitive society (sic) or its survivals also "old" are the remnants of the older Euro Canadian society who maintained (sic) the equilibrium (sic) of social forces in a past historical period but whose consolidation as a basic social force would be artificial and an obstacle to well ordered northern development " (To penetrate the aura... " undated page )

"There appeared a concrete nationalist feeling inspired by the confused resistance of a semi nomadic people against the encroachments of civilization but vitiated by the ambitions of the French Catholic hierarchy for a political cultural and clerical hegemony over the developing Western prairies (sic) consonant (sic) in its envisioned outlines with the corporatism of latter day Italian Fascism " (Letter to Ben... September p )

b The situation of exploitation

"With the influx of the Ontario element had come the advance wave of pecuniary adventurism the land grabbers and exploiters of every hue and degree heralding the full blown (sic) panoply of monopoly (sic) capitalism. The sedentary Red River French and the nomadic Metis were caught in this vicious maelstrom " (Letter to Ben... September page )

"The Metis will always be the victims of deceit and self deceit as long as they have not learned to discover the interests of one or another of the classes behind any moral religious political and social phrases declarations and promises. The Metis will always be fooled by the defenders of those who support the 'status quo' policy as long as they do not realize that every institution however absurd or rotten it may appear is only a device to blind us divide us and deflect our strength our strength into abortive inner dissension and chicanery and delay the way into libertaion (sic) (Letter to JF Dion April page )

"The entire policy of clerical 'humanitarianism' in Indian and Metis affairs in general is one of the most ignominious betrayal of the real interests of Indian and Metis education. The influence of old line party politics both Tory and Grit have been intricately woven into the very web and woof of native education in the north for generations. The political awareness of the clerically controlled natives for social change has been deflected into the safe conduit of liberal politics and the game of reaction played by engrossing the enfranchised Metis in political promises calculated (sic) to divide their strength and is finally predicated on their knowing always 'home much shall we receive in how much we shall get out of this and in "how much" we can control the disfranchised Indian " (A History of the Alberta Metis Association : Education and Denominational Schools page )

"Their (the clergy) rejection of Riel and ex communication of the militant rebels was a desperate effort to rectify a political blunder which on a national scale endangered clerical prestige inflamed racial animosities disrupted national unity and if not effectively checked by the hierarchy themselves could have led to repressive measures by the Anglo Saxon majority comparable to the politically motivated expulsion of the Jesuits from France " (Letter to Ben ... September p )

"We who have been exploited sucked dry and cast aside. These Canadian purists become indignant against the supposed (non Canadianism) of the Metis ... There is much in the history of Canada that is rotten. There is the history of the robbery and practical extermination of the native indian (sic) population by the traders and ruthless Colonial governments. There is the rotten history of the fur trade and the havoc it wrought. Of the Hudson's Bay monopoly and its resistance to every expression of social progress. There is the story of the filching of Canada's natural resources by the rich. Of the C P R of the land companies the Hudson's Bay Company—a whole panorama of right and left robbery which built of the fortunes of the few in Canada " (PIMA undated p )

II The Metis are today a vanguard of the labor movement which will bring about the replacement of a decadent capitalism by the development of socialism

a the development of socialism

"Only Socialism can bring out the culture and civilization and comradeship in the relation of man to man never before equalled in human history. Civilization will scale the heights out of the Dark Age of humankind when man was pitted against man, nation against nation, race against race. We must advance unafraid to the establishment of a system that will not be smeared with the shame of human degradation (sic)." (PIMA October p )

"A Marxist must be interested not only in personal characteristics (sic) but in the social, historic and political causes which allow these characteristics to show up, develop and have weight. Criticism of education must be framed in a broader analysis of the past and a program for the future. Emphasis must fall on the objective factors that have been the causes and origins of these social phenomena. White penetration, a strong and highly centralized control of mercantile outlets and nomadic economy and a ceaseless struggle for economic survival and narrow \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ Together with administrative thinking on the subject they comprise a many (sic) faceted patrimony of ideas which is basic to any further analytical development.

"Administratively (sic) the thesis has arisen that the entire provincial (sic) educational program is an indestructible whole ... Those who hold this view reject any attempts at differentiation in the northern program. And will not consider or analyze what has moved, what has changed, what new facts have been brought forth by this or that phase of northern educational development. This attitude, arbitrary enough for any society, is totally useless when applied to northern conditions where a 'forced march' is necessary to deal with the rapid and gigantic transformations which will accompany northern development." (To Penetrate the aura, undated p )

"The Soviet worker is free from ) unemployment; ) the difficulty (sic) of getting an education; and ) the fear of illness ... The contrast between the two productive types of economy and their accompanying relations which cannot correspond. Even if an altered economy could be quickly achieved, social relations between people only change slowly. The superior strata now in command will not allow a resolution which threatens its dominant position and will resist it with all the means at their disposal. Even if these contradictions are not antagonistic, one side always acts as a restraint and has to disappear or radically change before progress can be made." (To Penetrate the aura... undated p )

"This journal is rooted in the belief that mankind is living through a major social transformation marking a decisive qualitative change in history. I believe Socialism will effect greater and more beneficent (sic) changes than any other great turning point ... I want to explain how a Metis living in modern times arrives at the viewpoint of Socialism. Such an illustration can be made either abstractly or concretely." (Vanished Campfires, undated page )

"Many of us have seen that the dominant race barbarously suppressed all that was living and sublime in the Indian culture ... In recording certain personal experiences it may indicate how one starting from a mutilated culture may receive other social and moral values—a metamorphosis from the romanticism (sic) of the past to the present day reality of the H Bomb.

It deals with a period closed by anti colonial struggle forever." (Vanished Campfires, undated p )

"My generation of Metis were the grandsons and grand daughteers (sic) of those militant fighters of "La Nouvelle Nation" whose dreams of independence were crushed in military defeat    years ago on the banks of the Saskatchewan " (Vanaished (sic) Campfires undated p )

"Human life has become enmeshed in the web of fear and hatred it has woven that is shringking (sic) and drawing out little world together    Distance in the physical sense no longer exists    In the realm of thought and reason there is no longer isolation    A fact which statesmen and politicians refuse to admit    Human fellowship is today a fact but too many continue to think in terms of Race and Creed    Manking (sic) has outgrown these narrow bounds and must think in terms of Common Unity    The alternative is Chaos and Oblivion " (Letter to Peter Tomkins Jr April    page )



b The nature of contemporary capitalist society

"One of the most common accusations against the Metis is our lack of understanding of the duties and responsibilities of citizenship (sic) There is an unconscious disposition to relegate us to the category of second class citizens There is an essential kinship between these statements and the Herrenvolk methods of German fascism "

"Only a blind optimist will fail to see we have come to a time when men question the validity of simple faith as our first duty to man It is clear that social and economic degeneration proceeds on an ever widening scale It is evident that the whole theory upon which we have built the progress of our society is underquestion (sic) " (Emasculation of the Metis Association undated p )

"According to the cynical blase (sic) philosophy that American and English people are taught to accept it is almost an axiom that nothing succeeds (sic) like success and the proof of whether anything is good is whether it will work or not They say "nothing succeeds like success" and "does it work?" These have been glorified as absolute tests... The Executive Committee (which is being replaced by a bureaucratic group) in the past has served to express the demands of the Metis This proposition of dual organizations created by this change) is quite ambiguous very vague although I have no doubt that many people would say "well that's all right We have no objection so long as they satisfies (sic) the need " (Emasculation of the Metis Association undated p )

"Behind all this is the unspoken theory that natives need tutelage as if by themselves they cannot choose their leaders intelligently and make sensible decisions We do not have the right of silence before errors but the duty to fight until they are corrected Otherwise we shall never be able to overcome local bureaucratic obstacles and impostions (sic) " (To Penetrate the Aura... undated p )

"There has taken place a general aloofness from the real practical life around them which has resulted in a fossilization of thought Remedies have to be drastic (sic) resolute and wide ranging Life and its manifestation must be studied (sic) concretely and not squeezed into formulas which have been conceived and used in other places under other circumstances ... The typical malady of the bureaucrat the determination to take no risks to have one's back always covered and secure Such mentalities result in administrative vagueness and indeterminacy " (TPTA undated p )

"... a party which proclaims and advocates Socialist principles in theory and in practise deliberately diverge from their principles by refusing the rights of constitutional petition (sic) to a down trodden (sic) section of the population and on every other hand they bow (sic) to the Financial Plutocracy " (letter to M Norris April )

"When you see the love and pride of the women of your country offered up on the Altar of Mammon in despair and brawny men walk the street facing the wintry breezes No hope no inspiration—poor beaten creatures that drift with the tide Living epitaphs of dead souls (sic) I thought of and seen (sic) destitute working mothers and famished children and I thought (sic) too of the bloodstained gold of Canada's rulers and where could find more eloquent witnesses that criminals are enthroned in positions of power in Canada today

I thought too of our own people our unfortunate ones woefully unequipped fearing the rocks of life too many life meaningless and empty no guidance drifting with the remorseless tide of life that stirs the deep of the vast forces that toy with puny humanity ... Today it almost seems a denial of life I have seen it so much Children ill clothed..." (Letter to Peter Tomkins Jr April page )

"Beneath all this shadow of human sconsciousness (sic) I see the modern customs we call civilized Beneath it the fear and greed of the jungle The brutish law of Self Survival The Anceint (sic) law which lives on today in our Age of Boasted Intelligence in all its pristine Sprit (sic) The Age of Scarcity in the midst of Plent (sic) Surplus in the midst of Want Surplus on every hand Commodities Services Profits and yes even surplus Man whose Crimson Death by millions might be a grim answer to the problem today which is ingh (sic) insoluble " (Letter to Peter Tomkins Jr April )p

- III It is only through the organization for certain objectives that the Metis will play their proper role in this anti colonial struggle
- a The objectives of the Metis organization

"Our first objective and the one in which we have the deepest interest the one which more than anything called our movement into being is to see that adequate provision is made for our homeless and destitute families and those who find it difficult to get along and support their families (sic)

The transformation of this country into closely settled communities has in many cases destroyed their (sic) means of livelihood Misery and poverty among a great many (sic) has replaced that easy life of Old Civilization has not bettered the conditions but have rendered them worse Scattered in all directions many no longer have steady (sic) abodes or lands to till Many are to be found living a wandering and uncertain life around the cities and towns A very large number are in a very miserable condition We have felt that an ordered scheme of settlement in special reserved areas would attain (sic) our purpose of righting this deplorable social condition

Our second objective (sic) -to see that proper provision is made for the education of our Metis children " (Letter to Peter Tomkins Jr January p ) (in Alberta Metis Association Correspondence)

"The Native worker in Northern Saskatchewan depends upon casual or temporary labor in the unskilled classifications which provides no real security The same applies to women workers in the fish processing industry A very limited income is received by women workers in native handicrafts This source is unorganized and (sic) provides small returns for the laborious time expended Complexity processing both the raw materials and the finished (sic) product and which must be disposed of in a precarious and uncertain market A table of comparative wages would mean very little because of its complexity a different criteria of value must be employed Because (sic) of the higher living costs in northern areas The native especially the untrained young adolescent man has fears for his future within (sic) the constricted confines of a trapping and fishing economy Their mentality is not being transformed; no new concept of life is evolving where life can be exciting challenging and intensely interesting This is an aspect which cannot be measured in a 'standard (sic) of living' analysis (sic) it is as equally important as any statistics (sic) that could be quoted " (TPTA undated p ) (sic)

"The fundamental error is taking away from the co op store its most effective propaganda weapon an effective financial stimulus (sic) for the native members (sic) If we do so we shall have a situation where the better conducted units will have to make up for the retarded ones by extension of more central credit with the result that the first will be deprived of incentives to dispose of their production through the store and the second will be encouraged in a dangerous parasitic tendency Without this incentive the newer psychology (sic) of collective ownership cannot be implanted If cooperative volume cannot be achieved gross income just fall None can deny that the old S G T was regarded as a transitory expedient If we fail in this psychological task it will increase the rupture between the uneducated backward native member The true cause of our difficulty will not be recognized (sic) by the senior (sic) administrative forms and doubts (sic) will develop among the members as to the economic role of the coop in the community It will channel the development of growing productive forces in the north and their economic concentration (sic) in private hands Development must be carefully stimulated

or these internal tensions will develop. True, there is a need to build up the indispensable reserves for times of economic stress. If unilateral decisions from above and arbitrarily imposed, you will get the opposite results with the natives. We will have to find a solution to this problem sufficiently powerful to satisfy this demand for visible proof among the members which cannot be postponed as the existing structure did not have the slower, surer advantage of having been started as a spontaneous self-organized group among the natives and the necessary educational period of learning by doing was by passed.

A crucial factor for further improvement will be whatever stimulates the interest of the native member. This is not a concession to the individualistic spirit. The appeal to self interest is essential in this work among natives; when it is lacking, disaster follows.

By its radical character the transition raises theoretical problems. Is it right for a CCF government to hand over to the cooperatives the plant and capital resources which belong to the whole people? The SGT units are based on temporary conditions. With the continued economic difficulties facing the natives their role proved static and even a 'step back' owing to their rigidity and deterioration into a economic role in the community is essence akin to the Hudson's Bay Company, the free traders. Their retail price structure in many cases not meeting the competition of private enterprise" (TPTA undated p. )

"Under the present system any enlargement of production is dependent on the private profit motive Capital (sic) gravitates towards the branches of economy where the rate of profit is highest You cannot compel a government to cause themselves loss for the sake of Metis requirements Without getting rid of capitalism and abandoning the principle of private ownership in the means of production you cannot bring about Metis rehabilitation (sic) If we begin with minor cooperative ventures (sic) bringing about Metis rehabilitation depends to a great extent on the organizers on the skilled technical workers who can be won step by step to the side of cooperative (sic) principles (sic) of organization In essence there is not and (sic) cannot (sic) be an irreconcilable contrast between (sic) the interest of the separate (sic) individual and interests (sic) of the collective body It gives the only stable guarantee of safeguarding the interests of the separate (sic) persons " (PIMA October p )

A list of twelve basic points for Metis education: ) equality of educational opportunity; ) grants to raise salaries and thereby educational standards; ) special scholarships; ) education more related to the economic and social problems (sic) of the Metis; ) enforcement of compulsory education; ) courses aiding the development of Metis cultural rights; ) abolition of fees and provision of textbooks (sic); ) introduction of democratic student government; ) student aid program; ) adult educational facilities; ) rehabilitation for disabled persons; ) all schools to be secular non-denominational (History of the Alberta Metis Assn Education and Denominational schools undated page )

"The system of church controlled education has it not delivered them into the hands of their enemies? We know our ideas are shaped by our environment (sic) Consequently the native upon whom to a greater degree falls the buffering caused by an outworn social system senses the necessity for change from the old to the new We also know there is a class (sic) who profit from our continued degradation and social backwardness This class is perfectly unaware of the necessity for change Because their ideas are also formed by their environment we cannot blame them if they persist (sic) in perpetuating the present conditions among the Indians and Metis because of the special advantages they draw therefrom The Metis (sic) leaders see clearly the inevitability (sic) of the struggle to right the wrongs under which they suffer but the clergy see only the wrong that would be perpetuated (sic) were (sic) they forced to surrender the spiritual tyranny and terrorism which has dominated Indian and Metis (sic) education for generations " (HAMS Education and Denominational (sic) Schools undated pp )

Brady used the following citation numerous (sic) times to indicate his views of the attitudes (sic) of clerics toward education for the Metis: Bishop Breynat: I don't think he (the Metis) should be given too much education He needs a little help I think just until they are or years old probably" Source p of Ewing Commission April

also the role of the clergy generally But that is not of prime importance here

"Today it almost seems a denial of life I have seen it so much Children ill clothed and ragged living on insufficient food with a lack of variety (sic) that causes disease and malnutrition that kills us Our young men hanging around the towns precariously hanging on to the thread of existence amid the disgusting conditions (sic) that rot out the soul of Manhood Hunger

Unemployment and teh direct physical and moral need Our girsl (sic) prey to those human vultures with their smug complacency and superiour (sic) hauteur who imagine that a Metis can be boughty (sic) for a bottle of whisky and their women for a piece of silver Ive (sic) felt and seen all this degredation (sic) misery and filth wehere (sic) it should have been love and laughter I often wonder if this was the pre ordained fate of our poeple (sic) and of our lives wre (sic) laid out for us thus to the utter end of time Shall we always stagger beneath this load?" (Letter to Peter Tomkins April page )

b The proper role of the Metis Association

"You must admit we have reached a critical stage in the history of the Metis. In giving my adhesion to the Conference I feel there comes a time in the history of men and movements when a definite stand must be taken. Movements and great causes can only advance when they produce leaders of integrity whom the rank and file can trust and rely. Leaders should not be above criticism. Let us admit bluntly that as leaders we have allowed a condition of disunity to confuse those whose interests were confided to our charge. We must recognize (sic) our mistakes now and have the courage to admit them freely and follow a course of action which is steadfast and will ensure an adequate defence of our social and economic interests. That I know is the feeling of the democratic majority of our people. If we are to survive we must hold to our traditions of our Metis leaders whose (sic) were the forerunners and heralds of democracy in the last Great West. The majority must rule. Unless a radical change is effected the ideals for which we struggled will be degraded to the nauseating level of political chicanery and petty officialdom.

I readily recognize the long fight made for recognition of the Metis question was impelled by the desire to be of service to our fellow men. I know that during this critical period you will agree that whatever sacrifices are demanded will be met lest the struggle go on without us. Principles are inflexible and eternal. In justice to our unfortunate brethren laboring under the load of poverty, ignorance and lacking the things which make life decent, you will readily understand there can be no equivocation or hesitation. To us who have been in the forefront we conscientiously (know) our humble Metis body symbolizes our contribution to the struggle for the liberation of humanity. We must not fail." (Letter to J.F. Dion March \_\_\_\_\_ pages & )

"You will also realize that in matters that affect the future of our people there can be no compromise. One must be able to analyze a situation and the concrete conditions which pertain to it. We cannot invent a recipe that will provide a ready made solution to our problems and follow the line of least resistance. "Laissez faire" would be the retreat (sic) of misleaders who refuse to face facts. To retreat from difficult or intricate situations would brand us as simple charlatans (sic). The Metis will always be the victims of deceit and self-deceit as long as they have not learned to discover the interests of one or another of the classes behind and moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises. The Metis will always be fooled by defenders of those who support the 'status quo' policy as long as they do not realize that every institution, however absurd or rotten is only a device to blind us, divide us and deflect our strength (sic) from the way of liberation. We must find among our own people the forces which can and by their social position must from the power of consolidating our people (sic) organizing the struggle which leads to realization of the aims which have placed the Metis in the vanguard of history in the struggle for a genuine industrial and political democracy.

A survey of our activities since \_\_\_\_\_ will reveal that there have been many mistakes committed for which I and my colleagues will readily accept criticism. The attitude of a leadership to its mistakes is one of the most important and surest gauges of the seriousness of that leadership and how it fulfills (sic) in practice its obligations to its own principles and the masses who (sic) have brought them to leadership. To admit a mistake openly, to disclose its reasons, to analyze the conditions which gave rise to it, to study attentively the means of correcting it, these are the signs of serious leadership and organization; this

means the performance of our duties this means the education and training of our best members as present and future leaders and finally the building of a sincere and loyal organization around us



D a

The Metis have no other weapon except organization. In order that they might learn to understand their interest their position to pursue their policy it is necessary \_\_\_\_\_ and at all costs to reorganize the advanced and interested elements of the Metis even should this element constitute an insignificant fraction of the Metis. The Metis Association has been the organizer of our struggles it has in its ranks the most devoted section of our people ready to sacrifice and able to view the struggle not only in its immediate ramifications but in its ultimate aim of re establishment of our Metis people

We must guard against the conception that it is the leading members who make four our successes. The Alberta Metis population must make the final decisions. The Executive must act only as the organizers and leaders of the struggle. Without it the Metis are like an army without a general staff. There must be a merciless struggle against underestimation of the forces which must be overcome to guarantee (sic) genuine progress. We must avoid the implications of being "brain trusters" and avoid the general quack medicines put forward by political apologists as cures for the ills which afflict our people. We must guard jealously against any tendency which will divorce us from the confidence of the mass of Metis. If so the Metis leaders would isolate themselves by succumbing to non Metis views in a short time (sic) we would no longer enjoy the moral authority and confidence placed in us in the past. We cannot be satisfied with an ahead (sic) mic (sic) understanding of so called Metis objectives. If so we will develop a contemptuous attitude to our own people. We would actually foster "backwardness" and be guilty of snobbery and failing in our duty. To root our organization deeply among the Metis we must concentrate our work in every settlement area. Each colony must become a stronghold of the Metis Association here we must take up the smallest grievances teaching them the value of education and struggle. Our program must be always formulated in close touch with the practical activity of the colonies and the every day life of our people. We must secure a flexibility an ability to readjust ourselves to the rapidly changing conditions of our struggle we must be able to recognize a changed situation. It is the lack of understanding of realities and the substitution of sober analysis by piteous wlaques (sic) that leads us against opportunism and the infiltration of political influences which negate the authority and promote dissensions within our ranks. Our Association must be reorganized and the tremendous gap between our narrow influence and larger numerical strength closed. If (sic) necessary we must boldly (sic) promote new forces into leading and responsible positions. And not fear them. As old fighters in the Metis movement you will agree that the future of our people will be decided by those whom we train and lead to leadership. The cause as a whole will benefit tremendously and there will be only a extremely brief setback.

I have not received your views on the proposed convention. However you will agree that this convention must decide the basic program which the Metis will follow in the next stage of our struggle. I am willing to go before this convention and accept the comradely criticism which I deserve for my sins of commission. It (sic) is only by critical measures that we can once more enjoy the position of leadership. The convention will be held in Edmonton May 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>. I hope I have the opportunity before this gathering. Trusting to hear from you. Yours...(?) (Letter to J F Dion April )

"The immediate intention of the Government is to erect the tribunal bring in a report favoring deferred action which will delay action till an election and then incorporate our question into the vast election propaganda of the machine

they are commencing to tell the Metis that they will never get anything as long as they (sic) are led by the present Executive and that if different men headed the Association they would get results. Their aim is to alienate a number of followers, set up an opposing faction of malcontents and force us to openly use our franchise. This would disunite us with internal friction and force the movement to lose the splendid force of cooperation and cohesion that has carried us so far. It was our determination and spirit that carried us through in when we were bluffing on no pair with no support and organization. They are also warning some about the Secretary telling them not to support the Association as the Secretary is a white man and will lead all the Nestows into trouble." (Letter to Peter Tomkins Jr. April \_\_\_\_\_ pages & Confidential)

"The Metis Association is not a compulsory society. It is based on the voluntary obligation of its members to pursue a policy on the basis of a program of the conventions of the Metis Association and to subject themselves to the discipline and decisions of the majority of the Association (sic). We demand this of the members (sic) of our Association and all the more yet of such members as occupy leading posts in the Metis movement.

The aim followed by the Bureau of Public Welfare was dictated on the basis of circumstances created by our system of economic disorder and crisis. They want to get rid of the Metis question on the basis of private capitalist activity without, in the least, changing the economic base of the Metis. They are striving to reduce to the minimum the devastation and loss caused by the existing economic system. Even if they achieve their aim partially, that is, reduce their cost to a minimum (sic) in this case they will not destroy the roots of the general conditions of economic degradation (sic) among the Metis inherent in the nature of the present system. Thus at best it will not be a question of Metis rehabilitation or destroying the social order which gives rise to the Metis question, but of restricting certain undesirable sides of it and limiting certain excesses. Subjectively, they (sic) possibly think they are reorganizing the Metis' future, but objectively the present base of society is preserved among them. Therefore objectively no reconstruction of the Metis will come about.

What is Metis rehabilitation? What are its various features? Rehabilitation strives to abolish Metis inequality. Let us suppose that while maintaining the capitalist system the Metis' position can be reduced to a certain minimum (sic). No capitalist government could ever put complete rehabilitation (sic) into effect. For instance, no capitalist government would ever agree to the complete abolition of the Metis question. The Metis are part of the reserve army of unemployed whose mission is to put pressure on the labor market to ensure low paid workers (sic). Here there is already one 'hiatus' in Metis rehabilitation." (PIMA, October \_\_\_\_\_ p. \_\_\_\_\_)

"The authorities have not intimated or enunciated a definite program. Certain actions of the commission are prejudicial to the best interests of the Metis people. One outstanding example is the attempt of the Commission to inaugurate small (sic) associations (sic) in the various localities who would deal directly with the authorities (sic) thus relegating the Metis Association to the position where it would have no ability to deal directly or act directly as spokesmen for the Metis population. This duality of organization would thus destroy the unity which the Metis have achieved after much effort and would decapitate the movement by effectively (text stops here) and changes.

The draft was not directed to the Provincial Secretariat. The Association was not officially consulted as little information was given the Secretariat. At

the outset (here again the sentence breaks off) The Executive Committee in the past has served to express the demands of the Metis. This proposition of dual organizations is quite ambiguous very vague although I have no doubt that many people would say "Well that's all right we have no objection so long as it satisfies the need (sic) "

We fully agree that in the individual rights of decision and action of all individuals should be preserved. But can we successfully coordinate our various local policies (sic) in such a way as to assist one another under such a plan. The mere fact that these various localities (sic) possessed complete autonomy to deal directly would encourage factional blocs some of them would be more or less hampered by local political considerations which would mean that the strength of the Metis would be incapable of mobilization in accordance with the requirements of the general policy or upon the scale necessary to make that policy effective. That is pretty clear. It does not leave much to be said. As long as the locals maintain their independence faction; They would be unable to provide sufficient force or strength capable of dealing (sic) with an emergency that would arise.

The policy of the government (sic) remains as we have analyzed them at our previous session: i.e. "to emasculate the Metis Association " (Emasculation of the Metis Association undated page )

"The difference that exist with respect to locations etc should be fully cleared up in a democratic way because the present disorganization indicates weaknesses which should be remedied at once. The most necessary thing at this time is a unified policy on the cardinal points which we have considered of main importance to the success of our movement. "The proposed Governmental regulations make no provision for the continuance of our organization by official recognition. On the contrary the set up on the Reserved areas would indicate that Government intends to foster rival or dual organizations (sic). Experience teaches us that a furtherance (sic) of such organizational structure (sic) would divide us and localize our forces to a small area when the prime necessity at this time is for undivided Metis support and loyalty on a Province wide front (sic). The Executive committee would be excluded from any effective participation in the defence of Metis interests. It would neutralize us as the spokesman of the Metis people and would reduce the local government sponsored associations to the condition whereby they would have to accept the governmental directions as laid down by the caprice of petty governmental officials. You can imagine the results for yourself. The rehabilitation can only come by normal democratic growth and education. In this case the main hope of creating for ourselves small local autonomous (sic) conducted (sic) according to the best democratic tradition and behaviour in which we Metis have given example of historical devotion would be wiped out from the start. Retrogression and degeneration would be our lot. We want cooperation but not cooperation on the lines of a slave in a garden who must needs obey the dictates of a feudal lord because there is no alternative. Frankly Joe you know without the Executive Committee the government created organizations would be putty in the hands of political panderers and opportunists.

I have given this matter considerable thought (sic). You know also the reason why the St. Paul Reserve was characterized as a dismal failure and the Metis held up to ridicule and opprobrium (sic). If we had had the democratic (sic) right of deciding our own policies at that time the results of today (sic) would have justified the attitude taken by the Metis of that time who did not want any interference from any source clerical or secular. If our Executive is reduced to that position then I say our struggle has been in vain and we may as

well return to our own interests and wait for the day when the historical forces now shaping will call us forth to struggle and die for the democratic ideals which animates the Metis who were the forerunners of all that was best in the pioneer period of a new democracy " (Letter to J F Dion March pp & )

" The present trend in Metis rehabilitation will inevitably evolve a segregated form of destitution The inclusion of Metis administration under the Relief Authorities indicates the Government have not considered or will not consider treating the Metis except on the basis of (sic) public indigence I feel the majority sentiment of the Metis is in favor of an independent governmental program Continuance of the present form will never provide an equitable solution "

I am informed that the old slate of officers are not recognized by the Metis Commission as the representatives of the Alberta Metis population " (Letter to J F Dion March page )

"The time has now come when we must take some decisive action In other words we must hasten to strengthen our defences They broke through our first line (ordinary petition) We must commence to consolidate our second line of defence (constitutional and legal rights) You understand we are the last phase of the struggle has seen the Government pass from the defensive to the offensive WE are forced to assume a defensive position on our second defensive position You also understand that our third and last line of defence is (franchise) failing in which we are defeated I heartily hope that we can hold them on our second reserve line

The plan is this: the Executive will petition the Lieutenant Governor in Council to petition the Court

The points on which I base our case is as follows:

Admission of the principle i.e. circulation of the questionnaire form An undeniable admission

The Decehene amended motion of carried unanimously by the Legislative Assembly of Alberta and subsequently ignored

Proof of fraudulent (sic) legislative practices duplicity and malpractices unworthy of British parliamentary practice and of Minister of the Crown (Letter to Peter Tomkins Jr April pages & CONFIDENTIAL)

"To penetrate the aura of reserve which isolates whites from grasping the realities of Indian mental processes

seek for judgements which reflect and sustain their preconceived notions; re examine judgements which time has stratified;

certain habits even political habits that can be damaging if carried too long which may have some historical justification

It is easy to observe pick up gestures words reactions But what meaning have these gestures words and reactions if you dont (sic) know their antecedents if you dont (sic) understand what motives and thoughts old or new have pushed them forth?

First hand impressions can be chaotic and contradictory often even inexplicable It is easy to pick up curious facts

not disillusion but disorientation

unsuspected problems a picture based on abstract ideas and total ignorance of the facts

the negative aspects always leap to the eye while positive features require a deeper search;

It requires a new sense of human relationships Impressions are not always sufficient They ahve (sic) lived through bitter struggles and dramatic events These men undergo severe hardships and engage in ceaseless activity " (To penetrate the aura ) undated p