

Nora Cummings, Peter Bishop, and Ron Laliberte:
Métis Political Activist Interviews (Feb 28, 29, 2004)

Tape 1

Start Time: 5:03.31.24

Ron Laliberte: Any other politicians that you can think of that, even Métis or anything that influenced your way of seeing things other than Rod? Was there anybody else, did Brady, for example, have an influence on you?

(Video Time: 5:03.42.16) Peter Bishop: I, I didn't know him all that well. It's just what I read in the paper but their, their stories are well documented in *One-And-A-Half Men* anyway. I didn't know them personally. But there's one guy in a sense that did interest me too. Howard Adams. Yeah. I was impressed with him. 'Cause as you know, I think, during the radical '60s, you know, he had gone to school in Berkley, California. Hot bed of radical activity then. The blacks were there too and that's where they, Black Panther Party originated from, as I understand it. You know, from Berkley Campus.

Ron Laliberte: Right.

Peter Bishop: People like Stokely Carmichael, Eldridge Cleaver and a whole host of others.

Ron Laliberte: Malcolm X. He heard Malcolm X speak.

Peter Bishop: Yeah, Mal-, Malcolm X too as well. And I remember they usually raise their fist up in the air like that. You know, they used to wear black leather gloves and shouting....

Ron Laliberte: Yeah.

Peter Bishop: ...“Power to the black people” and “Black is beautiful” and all that. Howard picked up on that. So when he came back to Saskatchewan he decided that’s what I’m going to use on these people. I’m going to politicize them one way or the other. So...

Ron Laliberte: Yeah he was big on the, the nationalist, sort of...

Peter Bishop: Yeah.

Ron Laliberte: ...ideology that...(Inaudible)...you know, give, give people self-esteem and...

Peter Bishop: Oh yeah. Definitely.

Ron Laliberte: Yeah.

(Video Time: 5:05.08.16) Peter Bishop: And Rod was one of the first guys that he met. And Rod was impressed with him too, as well. Not all the time, he used to get into conflict with different leaders besides Rod. There was Jim Sinclair too, as well. But they always knew how to deal with each other after. You know, after their conflicts. But he would rise up at meetings anywhere, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Regina. The same right arm going up like this: “I am the vanguard of the Métis Nation,” as a slogan he used to...

Ron Laliberte: Is that what he used to...

Peter Bishop: Yeah.

Ron Laliberte: ...say?

Peter Bishop: Yeah.

Ron Laliberte: Interesting, yeah.

Peter Bishop: Yeah. Yeah. Howard Adams. So in a sense I was impressed with him. But there was one time that he felt at, at odds with, he ran, he ran

into some problems with Rod, eh? Rod ran against Jim Sinclair in 1971. Was it '71 when we had our first Back To Batoche Annual meeting held?

Nora Cummings: Oh yeah '71....

(Video Time: 5:06.11.07) Peter Bishop: Because the big political machine was on one side, like Jim Sinclair and Nap Fontaine and Mederic McDougall. And, of course, Howard Adams. They were all behind Jim Sinclair. So Jim Sinclair had that election sewn up even before it started. I still remember he had handed out medallions to all the delegates that arrived. Do you remember that time?

Nora Cummings: Yeah.

Peter Bishop: Yup. They're all made the same way. To me in a sense that was a means of buying votes. Guess better than giving them a bottle of wine but, that's what he did.

Nora Cummings: There was a lady that ran too, Agnes Snyder, Snyder...

Peter Bishop: I think so.

Nora Cummings: ...she ran for secretary.

Peter Bishop: Yeah.

Nora Cummings: That was in the early 70s I think.

Peter Bishop: Or, or was it Agnes Stanley?

Nora Cummings: Agnes Stanley.

Peter Bishop: Stanley. Yeah, yeah.

Nora Cummings: I think she only had one term, eh?

Peter Bishop: Yeah, yeah and there was Rose Henry, too.

Nora Cummings: See I don't remember...(Inaudible)...stood out....

Peter Bishop: Yeah, yeah.

Nora Cummings: ...because I think she won as the secretary.

Peter Bishop: Right.

Nora Cummings: And we used to tell her that was just a token...(Inaudible)...

Peter Bishop: So anyway, he lost by twelve vo-, no he only got 12 votes from the Regina local.

Ron Laliberte: Who lost, sorry?

Peter Bishop: Rod.

Ron Laliberte: Oh Rod did...(Inaudible)...Yes, okay. Yeah.

Peter Bishop: Lionel Deschambault, he was called to vote Bishop.

Nora Cummings: Yeah.

Ron Laliberte: I know that, I know that Howard and, and your brother, Rod, were even, until up to Howard's death were, they used to communicate quite a bit.

Peter Bishop: Oh yes, definitely.

(Video Time: 5:07.49.09) Ron Laliberte: Because I, I remember that, I think if I, if I re-, recall correctly Rod phoned up to Howard when he was here teaching a class at the University and it was about the, the land claim in Green Lake. And I could hear Howard on the phone talking to him. He says, "Well, is the media going to be there?" You know, he wanted to make sure that the media was there because if the media was there then he was going to come down, otherwise it was a waste of his time...

End Time: 5:08.09.26