

Mike Mercredi, Frank Tomkins, Ron Laliberte

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

Tape 3

**Start Time: 9:33:31.19**

**Ron Laliberte:** ...I suppose but, that, when, you know, when you think about the contribution of Métis people to the Second World War, I think a lot of people don't realize the number of Métis people that went and contributed in a lot of wars, not only the Second World War. And there's also this, I don't know, maybe I'm wrong here, but I heard that a lot of Aboriginal people had skills as sharp shooters. I don't know if you know of any of that history at all? But maybe, do you have any comments about that? Is there any truth to that?

**(Video Time: 9:33.59.44) Frank Tomkins:** Oh absolutely.

**Ron Laliberte:** Yes?

**Frank Tomkins:** Absolutely there was one, he was a, in the, he was a Métis from Calgary area and he was a, a sniper in the First World War. And he was recorded of killing over a hundred enemy, you know, as a, as a sniper. And one of my cousins was a sniper during the Second World War. And, of course, we never asked him how many he, he got that, you know, snip-, sniping, of course was a very effective way of dealing with the enemy on both sides. Because, you know, these snipers would be hid away, you know, where you couldn't be seen and then they see some at a pretty good target and, you know, that was it. So sniping throughout the war was, has, has

always been used and is being used now. 'Cause that was, if you watch TV at all and I do on occasion some of the documentaries about, about the war and there's a lot of snipers being trained for exactly that type of work. And of course they got the very best of weaponry, you know, scopes, and laser beams and every damn thing. Make sure the guy hit so it's, it's, it's an ongoing thing and it always will be I guess.

**(Video Time: 9:35.16.27) Ron Laliberte:** If I could just continue the discussion a little bit in regards to those Métis people that contributed to the wars, have you got any thoughts on, on their contribution to their communities once they came back? Do you know of anybody that, well of course, Brady, we talked about Brady and, and we know that he was involved in politics prior to the war and then when he came back he was still active but, you know, speaking generally, from your view and your knowledge of the communities were a lot of those Métis people that came back after the war were they politically active? What type of things did they become involved in and, and what contributions did they make to the community? Are you aware of any of those people at all?

**(Video Time: 9:35.56.08) Frank Tomkins:** Yes both in, both with the Status Indians and the Métis. But there wasn't a great number of them because, you know, going back again in those days earlier Métis or, or Status Indian the only education you got was the, was the residential school. You didn't get much there. A lot of them came out of there without even, well I know a guy, his name is Joh-, John Ward. He's probably dead now. But in those days he stated you weren't a man until you're twenty-one. And he

stayed in the residential school until he was twenty-one years old and he come out of there he couldn't sign a thing. But he was a damn good worker because he was farmed all the time he was there and as, as a result when he come out, you know, he got involved in farming and he did quite well. But as far as an education was concerned he didn't have any so there was not too many that was, that, that had much, enough of an education to really get involved in the political part. Although some did there's no, undoubtedly they did. Both, I suppose from the Status, I know some that got them going on the Status side and, of course, a few on the Métis side, like you just mentioned Jim Brady and Malcolm, of course.

**End Time: 9:37:07.18**