

Mike Mercredi, Frank Tomkins, Ron Laliberte

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

Tape 3

Start Time: 9:56:35.28

(Video Time: 9:56.35.28) Mike Mercredi: I came into Saskatchewan in 1979 and AMNSIS was going full bore at that time and I'm just sort of guessing on my own now that one of the reasons to bring the Métis and the Non-Status together was numbers, 'cause the numbers came to the government. There's more people and you're going to get more dollars. For me that's a very sad situation where we have to be funded by government, it's one of the things that I'm hoping for our future is that we can generate our own revenue and our own wealth and our funds. As long as we survive based on, on government generosity and the government at the time is one political party, it doesn't matter a damn whether it's the Conservatives or the Liberals or the NDP, they are a political party and when one political party like the NDP, for example, is putting money into a so-called Aboriginal, Métis political party the funder has control. And I don't think that's what Brady or your Dad or Norris was really looking for. I think they were looking for independence and I think they were basing that on the independence of our ancestors. When they, when they started surveying the land in Red River Settlements, the Métis didn't like that because you know they had the long lots at that time. And they didn't like that so they moved west where there were no government regulations. And they established communities in, in

Western Canada. In the new century opened up Western Canada. So each of them were independent as a son of a gun and, and I don't know right now whether we can claim... **(Inaudible)** ...Métis or whether we can claim Métis independence as long as we're being paid by government. As long as our, as our politicians are being paid by government. What would it be like if the, if, what's this new party, the Progressive Conservatives of Canada, no, the Conservative Party of Canada. What would it be like if they were getting all of their funds from the governing Liberal party? Eh? What... **(Inaudible)** ...

Ron Laliberte: I understand what you're...

Mike Mercredi: What would that be...

Ron Laliberte: ...getting at.

Mike Mercredi: ...be like? Yet here we are, we're trying get a political movement going within ourselves and we continually go to, to the governments. And the term I use is "Beg for money and dance to their tune." And some of them don't, can't even play a jig so we can't dance to that either, you know, but, so we dance to their tune. You know those are the kind of things, I think, we need to be looking at is that how soon, how can we get out of government financial control? And like, I didn't know Brady, I certainly didn't know Norris or your Dad. But what I have read about them is that, I think, they were fiercely independent and they were striving for that. They were trying to get out of the, the clutches of the government at any one time.

End Time: 10:00:07.19