

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

Tape 1

Start Time: 4:57.59.19

Peter Bishop: But this is what we were running against, the church itself. Dad had problems with the Liberal, the Liberal party. Rod ran into the same thing. You know, when Liberals were running. NDP was in power already in the southern part but I know even before then, Alan Guy, you remember that Alan Guy was a MLA?

Nora Cummings: In...

Peter Bishop: In Athabasca riding.

Nora Cummings: Oh yeah, okay. Yup.

(Video Time: 4:58.32.04) Peter Bishop: Yeah, yeah. He always got in because they, the church made sure that he got in because he was supported by the church. But in any, any case he came in third. For an Independent candidate that was a pretty good showing. Next election was, I think it was 1982. He decided to give it another run. Again we ran into the same thing. But by the time they counted all the ballots, Rod came in a strong second, defeated the other candidates. But it was the NDP candidate, Freddy Thompson, that came in. That took a lot of guts on the part of Rod. But he was so committed to the cause of the Native people. He was committed to the environment for one thing, and ways that we could save on energy. That's what he did. And he was so committed to the fishermen and

the hunters over there. He was looking to unionize these people so they could get a fair market price for their products. He tried so many ways, Rod, you know, to help out those Northern people. And that was his commitment. He preferred to work with Northern people because he was from the North himself. And anyway I remember too, like I said he was a strong activist. He had been branded a communist too as well. I remember that. I was living in Regina. David Ahenakew used to get on the Lorne Harrison radio talk show back in the '70s when Ahenakew was the FSI chief. And Lorne used to call Rod a communist because of his beliefs.

Ron Laliberte: 'Cause of his union beliefs or ...?

Peter Bishop: Yes, because of that, yeah, yeah. Because of the way he was dealing with things, because he was very aggressive, brother Rod. Oh yeah he'd been...

Ron Laliberte: He was for the people as opposed to big business?

(Video Time: 5:00.56.27) Peter Bishop: Yeah, that's right. Yeah, yeah, yeah, he was, wasn't a, a he was concerned about the uranium that was coming out of the north and posing an environmental hazard, environmental hazard. And none of the profits from uranium was going to the Northern people.

Ron Laliberte: Yeah.

Peter Bishop: Most of it was going, a, southern a, interests. And he fought against that. In 1989 we, he hosted a fishing loaves gathering where he got Northern and Southern activists to take part in that. And that's what it was, a fishing loaves gathering.

End Time: 5:01.43.17