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INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: STANLEY MISSION,
SASKATCHEWAN
INTERVIEW LOCATION: STANLEY MISSION,
SASKATCHEWAN
TRIBE/NATION: CREE
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INTERVIEWER: MURRAY DOBBIN
INTERPRETER:
TRANSCRIBER: JOANNE GREENWOOD
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MALAKAI MCLEOD

Malakai McLeod is a long-time resident of Stanley Mission.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Conditions in the north and the changes brought about by the CCF government to help the native people.
- Brady, Norris and Tomkins and their work for the native people.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Malakai McLeod is a resident of Stanley Mission and was a good friend of Jim Brady. He was one of the men Jim would talk politics to.

INTERVIEW:

Murray: I'm wondering if you could tell me what things were like back in the old days before the war. What was the community like?

(Inaudible conversation - Malakai speaks in native tongue to someone else in the room which is inaudible when they speak)

Murray: No jobs, no money, no work. It was hard for Indian people then. Do you remember whether there was much contact with the south, with the white society in the south? Were there many politicians or government people in those days?

(Inaudible conversation and translation)

Murray: Store managers and teachers were the only white people.

Third Person: Yeah. (Inaudible)

Murray: Did doctors come very often?

Third Person: No, just about two times a year.

Murray: What happened when people got sick?

Third Person: (Inaudible)

Murray: Herbs and things from nature.

Third Person: Yeah.

Murray: And if a man broke his leg? Did that ever happen?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Murray: Do you remember when the CCF government came to Saskatchewan? What were the changes when the CCF came?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: He says came (inaudible).

Murray: Things were better. What kinds of things were better? Were there more jobs?

Third Person: Yeah. And (inaudible) and schools. That's it, schools. (Inaudible) family allowances.

Murray: Family allowance too?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: And the old age pension.

Murray: They had fur marketing and fish marketing. Did the people see that as being good for them?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: Yeah.

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: (Inaudible)

Murray: Did the government try to explain these programs like fish marketing and fur marketing? Did they come in and talk to the people?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: Yes. (inaudible)

Murray: To the trappers' meeting?

Malakai: Yeah.

Murray: Those trappers' meetings started after the CCF came?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: Yeah.

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: That's what the... you took your claims (inaudible).

Murray: Took their claims to these meetings?

Third Person: Yeah. Before that, he (inaudible).

Murray: Right.

Malakai: Yeah, it was pretty hard up that time.

Murray: During, after the war? When did you first meet Jim Brady?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: (native tongue)

Murray: What kind of man was Jim Brady?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: (Inaudible)

Murray: He tried to help people?

Third Person: Yeah.

Murray: Was he a leader? That kind of man?

Third Person: (Inaudible)

Murray: Did he come to Stanley often?

Third Person: (Inaudible)

Malakai: (native tongue)

Murray: Did he have many friends in Stanley? Are there other people here who know...?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: Yeah.

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: (Inaudible) a bunch of times.

Murray: Who?

Third Person: John did.

Murray: John Cook?

Third Person: Yeah.

Murray: And he lives here, eh?

Third Person: Yeah.

Murray: Does he live on the reserve? On the reserve, eh.

Third Person: Yeah.

Murray: And Joe MacKenzie?

Malakai: And Joe MacKenzie.

Murray: Can you think of any other names of people I could talk to?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: George Roberts, I think.

Murray: George Roberts? Is he on the reserve too?

Third Person: (Inaudible)

Malakai: At Otter Lake.

Murray: He's at Otter.

Malakai: Yeah.

Murray: In Missinipe, eh?

Malakai: Yeah.

Murray: Did Jim try and organize the Metis Association in Stanley at all?

Third Person: (Inaudible)

Murray: Do you remember what year that was? 1964 or '65 maybe?

Third Person: Before that.

Malakai: (native tongue)... 1949, '50.

Murray: First time in 1949, eh. Were there people in Stanley who were members of the Metis Association that Jim tried to start? Do you know if there were very many? Two or three or maybe more?

Third Person: (Inaudible conversation with Malakai)

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: If somebody wants to go to La Ronge, he told them to stay.

Murray: He told them to stay in Stanley?

Third Person: No.

Malakai: La Ronge.

Third Person: (Inaudible)

Murray: Oh. Everybody used to sleep there if they didn't have a house, eh?

Malakai: Yeah.

Murray: What kinds of things did Jim talk about when he talked to you? Did he talk about politics?

Third Person: (Inaudible)

Murray: Did he try and tell native people to be proud of themselves?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Third Person: (Inaudible)

Malakai: (native tongue)

Murray: I'm talking to Malakai about Jim Brady. Do you know Jim at all?

Fourth Person: (Inaudible)

Murray: You were pretty young when he was around, eh?

Fourth Person: Yeah.

Murray: I'm asking Malakai how many people were in the Metis Association. Jim organized the Metis Association, I think, in 1964 and 1965 and I'm wondering how many people at that time were part of that Association?

Fourth Person: (native tongue)

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: Yeah, he talked about organizing the Metis Society but he doesn't know anything about it. He didn't go. He wasn't around when the Metis Society was finally organized from the south.

Murray: Oh, I see. So there weren't very many people in Stanley who were members, eh?

Fourth Person: No.

Murray: Didn't get this far, I guess, until later on.

Fourth Person: No, but he talked about organizing.

Murray: This is what Jim talked about, eh?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: These three people, native...

Murray: Peter Tomkins, Malcolm Norris and Brady.

Fourth Person: Yeah, he talked about that organizing.

Murray: They all came from Alberta. Did people understand what they were saying? Did people understand what they wanted to do?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: No. Some did and some didn't.

Murray: Did Malcolm Norris ever visit Stanley Mission?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: Twice a year, once a year.

Murray: Did he organize meetings in Stanley and talk to people?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He came to meetings but they were about prospecting.

Murray: I see. And so they weren't political meetings?

Fourth Person: No.

Murray: This was the Prospectors' Assistance Plan.

Fourth Person: Yeah.

Murray: Did Malcolm and Jim work for the CCF party during the elections? Do you remember that?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: (Inaudible)

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: Four years, about four years after the CCF party first came in this government, (inaudible) this part of Saskatchewan when they started to make a few promises and done a lot of things.

Murray: So, the CCF was good in those days, it helped people?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: (Inaudible)

Murray: Were other CCF politicians good people as well? Do you think the CCF, when the CCF had elections, were the people good people? Were they different than the Liberals?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He says the Liberal party was up here before the CCF came into Saskatchewan. They would set up a penalty for a small snare for a rabbit; a \$10 fine was your sentence. And he said that the resource officers went around trying to catch people in the act of snaring rabbits. When the CCF party finally came in they had a (inaudible) in Prince Albert and they said they'd do something about these laws...

Murray: So that people could snare rabbits without going to jail.

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: In fact, removed most of the quotas on all the animals.

Murray: So there were no penalties any more.

Fourth Person: Yeah, as far as he knows.

Murray: Did most people think that the CCF was good in Stanley? The people you knew?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He says (inaudible) they didn't like the Liberals no more after the CCF had been here.

Murray: Right. During the elections, did the Liberals give people a lot of liquor and beer, that sort of thing? Is that something the Liberals used to do?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He says a long time ago they didn't but later on, a little while back. I think the election for the last one is when they give out a lot of liquor.

Murray: But not in the old days, during, before the war and that?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He says that....

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: The second time they tried to come into power, he said that's when they brought a lot of liquor.

Murray: In 1964.

Fourth Person: Yeah. Try and get the votes. (Inaudible).

Murray: Did that work? Did the people vote for the Liberals?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He says a lot of people liked voting for them, the ones that liked to drink the alcohol.

Murray: Right. That was when Allan Guy was running, eh? For the Liberals, Allan Guy?

Malakai: Yeah, yes, Allan Guy. (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He said it's a wonder that Guy is still alive. I wanted to kill him myself.

(laughter)

Murray: Lots of other people too. (chuckles)

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: Jim Brady used to tell him that he had two

kids in Cumberland House. (Inaudible)

Murray: Yeah. Ann Dorion. She is in La Ronge right now and I think his other daughter is in Prince Albert. And their mother, Mrs. Dorion, is living in Prince Albert as well. They are not in Cumberland any more.

Do you remember if the family allowances and the welfare had a good effect on native people? On their life? You know, on trapping and things, did it change the lives of native people?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He says it was a big help to people, especially family allowances.

Murray: Did everybody feel that way? Did everybody feel that this was good?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: Yeah, I guess everybody thought so.

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: But the old age pensions (inaudible).

Murray: The what?

Fourth Person: The old age pensions.

Murray: Oh yeah, the pensions, yeah.

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He said way back then the old people got something like that but it was only about \$25 and that wasn't until they were eighty years old.

Murray: Had to live a long time to get it.

Malakai: Yeah.

Murray: Can you tell me anything else about Jim Brady or Malcolm Norris that you can remember? About what they used to talk about or if people liked them?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He says that they helped people in all sorts of different ways.

Murray: Could you tell me some of those ways that he used to help people? What kinds of things would he help them with?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He says they used to talk to people if they saw them out in the street or whatever and they talked about starting to get things moving up north to organize meetings.

Murray: Work together instead of separately.

Fourth Person: Yeah.

Murray: If people had trouble dealing with government would Jim and Malcolm help them with that sort of thing too?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: Yes, he says.

Murray: What about things like if you were in La Ronge and you were broke and couldn't get back to Stanley, would people go to Jim and ask for help there too?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: Lots of times, he says, he brought people back here.

Murray: He'd bring them back by boat.

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: Paid for a plane.

Murray: Paid for a plane.

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: It was like lending them money.

Murray: When he came to Stanley, would he go from house to house and visit people? Jim Brady? Or did he have just a few friends that he would see?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: Mostly at many places but he didn't talk no Cree.

Murray: So he could only speak to those who spoke English.

Fourth Person: Yeah.

Murray: But Malcolm Norris spoke Cree.

Malakai: Yeah.

Fourth Person: Yeah.

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: Peter Tomkins.

Murray: Did Peter Tomkins come to Stanley and talk about politics and the same kinds of things as Jim?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: Sometimes.

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: One time one of the government guys or somebody of that nature came along. They followed them here and had meetings.

Murray: Is that right?

Fourth Person: Yeah.

Murray: So they were sort of like a watchdog on the government, eh?

Fourth Person: Yeah.

Murray: Watching to see that the government didn't harm the people?

Malakai: Yeah. (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He says that's what they worked at most is to try and help people who are Metis.

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He says one time he went to La Ronge, took his furs to La Ronge and they didn't come out to much, a lot of money. And he saw Malcolm over there and Malcolm asked him how much money he got from his furs and he said, "Not very much." And he said, "You must be having a hard time supporting your family," and he said, "Yeah, I'm having a hard time." So Malcolm said, "Come along," and took him to the DNR office and he talked to the people there for quite a while and then the guy behind the desk there made out a cheque of \$60 and took him to the store to buy some food.

Murray: And Malcolm would do this for lots of people, eh?

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He says he must've done that.

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: He thinks that these three people started the idea of a person getting \$60 a month. That's where it started.

Malakai: (native tongue)

Fourth Person: And also for the widows.

Murray: They got money as well.

Fourth Person: Yeah.

Murray: Well, I think that's all I...

(End of Side A)

(End of Interview)

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