

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: JOE TERRANSO
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: FORT MACKAY
ALBERTA
INTERVIEW LOCATION: FORT MACKAY
ALBERTA
TRIBE/NATION: METIS
LANGUAGE:
DATE OF INTERVIEW: FEBRUARY 9, 1974
INTERVIEWER: RICHARD LIGHTNING
INTERPRETER:
TRANSCRIBER: J. GREENWOOD
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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Mr. Terranso, aged 84 years, describes how his father took scrip thereby denying his family treaty rights.

Richard: What is your name?

Joe: Joe Terranso.

Richard: How old are you?

Joe: I am 84 years old.

Richard: Where were you born?

Joe: Fort Chipewyan.

Richard: Have you heard any stories related to the treaties as told by the elders?

Joe: I know some. My late dad used to tell me about them. His name was Jonas L. When he was young, he stayed in the Battleford area. He was there during the time the Indians fought. You must know about that. Riel was held responsible for everything. That is when Big Bear staged a battle, Riel was accused of it all. I can't really believe that. The people we call white men help one another. They won't help the Indian halfbreed. Later I read in newspapers about Louis Riel. He had made an effort to stand for the halfbreeds. He was to be leader of the Indian halfbreeds. But I'll tell it straight the

way I read it in the papers. The white people realized that Riel had support and was going to win. So they made every attempt to go against him. They blamed everything that went wrong on Louis Riel. Finally he was brought to court and he was hanged. This is what I read. But he shouldn't have been blamed for anything as far as I'm concerned. He was going to be the chief for the Metis people. It was obvious he was going to be a winner. The white people didn't like this. They tried to stop it and they did. They hanged him.

Richard: Did you hear who was doing the interpreting when the treaties were made?

Joe: I don't know who was interpreting. But the man who was the head of it was Indian agent Conroy.

Richard: Do you have any information regarding the treaties and how the Indians were dealt with?

Joe: My late dad was not a Metis, but he wanted to make it better for himself, so he claimed he was Metis. But he should have been treaty. He got his way. He said the Metis should not be treated as the Indians were. He won his argument but

never got anywhere with it. The scrip was worth \$100.00. He took it. He was approached by the Hudson's Bay stores who told him the scrip was worthless. He sold it to him. I even lost on it, my brother lost out too. My parents were okay for a while, until the money was gone.

Richard: And when the treaty was made, they didn't get anything?

Joe: No, nothing. I would be very happy if this could be solved. But I have nobody who could speak on my behalf.

Richard: Were there many who were dealt with the same way?

Joe: It was like a dream. My late father couldn't see what was in the future. If he had known, he would have done it differently. He would have been more concerned about his family, so we would be better off today.

Richard: Thank you for giving me this information.

Joe: Nothing can be done now - it's too late. I was born in Fort Chipewyan and brought here when I was 13 years old and I have been here since. But I'm certain, I'm not blind, that underground there is much valuable mineral worth lots of money. I'm sure of it. We Metis people should have a chief, but there is nobody. If you have white skin, you will get help, but if you don't, his word is worthless. I'm telling you the truth because I'm an old man.

Richard: Thank you.

(End of Interview)

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