CREE MARRIED COUPLES
WORKSHOP 4
JOE MACHISKENIS, MRS. GEORGE MANTEE, MRS. DAN PELLETIER, MRS.
FELIX SUGAR, MRS. JAMES CROOKEDNECK MRS. JIM KANIPITETEW, MRS. J.B.
STANLEY, MRS. BELLA WAPASS, MRS. WASKEWITCH, MABEL PAGUET, GRACE
BONAISE, MRS. LAWRENCE TOBACCO, MRS. ALEX POORMAN, ED LALIBERTE,
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INTERVIEW LOCATION: PARKTOWN MOTOR HOTEL SASKATOON, SASK.

TRIBE/NATION: CREE LANGUAGE: CREE/ENGLISH

DATE OF INTERVIEW: MARCH 13, 1974 INTERVIEWER:

INTERPRETER: JOANNE GREENWOOD

TRANSCRIBER: SASK. INDIAN CULTURAL COLLEGE

SOURCE: SASK. INDIAN CULTURAL COLLEGE

TAPE NUMBER: IH-448 DISK: TRANSCRIPT DISC 65

PAGES: 16 RESTRICTIONS: NONE

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Role of elders in setting young people on the right road.
- Importance of breast-feeding and giving up alcohol.
- Need for a tipi on each reserve, to be kept for prayer, pipe ceremonies and the counselling of the young.

CREE MARRIED COUPLES WORKSHOP 3

JOE MACHISKENIS:

My friends and relatives, I have come a long ways to be with you. One of the fieldworkers invited me here. I never go to any of these going-ons by myself because I can't make it. But this man invites me whenever he's going so I go along. Both of us we have no parents left. But today what I have heard you people say I have enjoyed very much. That's when you speak Cree, but when you speak English I don't understand you.

I will try to explain about kindness which was given to us. Our
children and our grandchildren, these ones we have to be very kind to, and to love them for this was given to us. Never bite a child or try to hit them, I was told many times. It is not right to hit a child, but I see some people they knock their children down when they are small. This is not the way. This person doesn't know about kindness to do this. This is what I think of such persons. We were all that small once, and this makes me think that there was someone around that loved me that time. And I do this now myself. I love children. Whenever I see little children some place and they are being left out, I say, "Here," and I give them a little money to buy candy. These little children are very thankful when they are treated this way. Try and love your children and your wives; never try to harm them in any way. They have someone watching them also for they were given a woman mediator to watch out for them, and this one sees when a woman is mistreated. She's kind to all women and children. And we should work at this. I have always followed this. I have never hit a woman in my life, and this is what we should try and tell our young today. There's a lot of these people in jails because they hit a woman, or they hit anybody who crosses them. And this is not our way of doing things. We were given kindness and to love one another, not to fight one another.

Long ago there were elders and each of these elders said prayers in turn and each took the pipe, and this is what we should do here. There are a lot of these elders and they should have their turn to do the pipe ceremony not only me. I don't think this is right. I'm not saying that I don't like doing it, but these older elders should be given the pipe too. But just the same I thank you for wanting me to talk to you. As this is my life, this is what is going to speak for us. That which we are asking for, that will be given to us if we ask through this. We are still from our forefathers; we are still carrying and we are still carrying on the traditions. They were wise and there was voices they heard. Whenever they went somewhere there would be something that spoke to them. But today we have nothing like that. We are just walking in the dark; we don't know where we are going. When we ask for what we want you won't see him where he gives it to you. The elders used to say this and long ago the elders when they were in the Sundance lodge they would sing and the woman would be sitting outside and they would be crying. And how when we see that today we hear a person say why is she crying for, as I heard this. This person that says this is crazy; he doesn't know anything. The reason that the woman is crying is she's asking for this elder to get what he's asking for and that is for his prayers to be answered. She gets strength from there to pass on to her children and grandchildren. It is very hard as we are very poor, us Indians. We try and put on our ceremonies but the young people don't pay any attention to us. They don't have respect anymore. "What the hell does this guy know?" This is their favorite saying. The young people put us down pretty good, but I don't listen to them too much. I have many grandchildren and these are the ones that I try and teach. I have 21 great-grandchildren and these are my very own
grandchildren. I love them all and this is why I'm here to come and get something that I can take back to these children. I thought the people here were going to be discussing about the old way of life. And I'm very happy that it's just that way. I like the way these people welcomed us there. This is my only life now as I can't do anything for myself. I can't even get wood for myself anymore. But I thank you people for what you are trying to do. I hope Manitou gives you strength and kindness to show to the people. All of us that are sitting here, I hope we get what we are asking for. We want our grandchildren to go a long ways, and their days be bright. And I wish to thank you again for letting me say a few words again. I have enjoyed being with you. May our Manitou give us strength and life so we may meet again, and for these people to carry on the good work they are doing. Thank you.

MRS. GEORGE MANTEE:

I am very surprised that I was picked to speak here I don't know what to say or where to begin. If someone would have gone ahead of me and let me know what to talk about. I can give someone hell but I guess that's not what we want. It is true that there are a lot of these young people who don't understand Cree. I have one of my nieces here and she doesn't understand all of it, but only a little. Like if she was to speak she wouldn't be able to speak Cree and she has been here twice. And this is the way with a lot of our young people. I raised three of my nieces. I didn't raise them right from the very start but they lost their mother suddenly and then I started looking them then. And this is the youngest one here that's keeping me now and I've had her since she was five years old. And after I was discharged from the hospital after I had the accident, she asked that she keep me and this is where I am now; she's looking after me now. And she understands a little Cree and speaks a few words here and there. But now my old man understands her a little as he talks Cree to her all the time. When they were growing up I interpreted for them all along. I spoke English to them as this was the way they were raised. My children, they all spoke Cree as their father is a Cree. And we try what we were told by our elders to pass on to these girls, like we were told about the tipis, and these ceremonies. Like this every month we are not right, and some of these young people I tell them they were to respect these ceremonies at these times. And when we have this sickness we weren't supposed to go into these places. And we weren't supposed to bring in fire, where elders were smoking. And not to go out smoking. We were to put out what we were smoking whenever we were going out. And this I in turn told my girls. And I try to teach them these small Cree words, so they understand a little. And this is one that's keeping us now. We can understand her pretty good now. Sometime she says the wrong thing, but she's trying. And I'm going to have a daughter-in-law and she doesn't speak Cree either. And when we are talking she doesn't understand, but she listens and maybe in the future she will understand, just like these others I raised. They speak a little Cree now. Their mother was Saulteaux, and this is why they were spoken to in English all
the time. We were Cree ourselves and she was Saulteaux; it didn't work. I was that way myself. My mother was Saulteaux, but I was raised by my grandparents. And when I was seven years old this is when my grandparents let go to school, and this is the way when children are raised this way. When they get old enough and know their parents, this is a very rotten feeling. When the first time that you know who your real parent is. And you were raised in another place. And so I throw away my grandparents. I didn't even want to be related to them. And now I think back and I think I must have been out of my mind to do that. They raised me and loved me, but I knew my real parents now and I had younger brother; this is what I went to. And I don't know what else I can say so this will be all for now. Thank you.

MRS. DAN PELLETIER:

I greet you all and I'm happy to see you here. This is a very difficult job we are working at. As we all know, these elders had a hard life. Our grandfathers and grandmothers had a very hard time trying to bring us up. My grandfather and grandmother raised me so I was with them all the time. I was taught along with their children about the Indian way of life. I used to listen to them discuss ways of bringing up their children the right way. Regarding a young woman with a child, it was felt she should breast-feed since this life was given to us women to carry around with us. This was very strong language. It was recommended that as soon as the baby was born it should be breast-fed. I did this with all my children. Now that they are grown up I tell my daughters and my daughters-in-law to do the same. A child doesn't get sick so often when he is breast-fed. It is not the same when they are on the bottle. Sometimes the bottle is not sterilized and sometimes the milk is sour. My children have followed my advice and now have families that are growing nicely.

I'm a great-grandmother already, once over. My granddaughter breast-feeds her little baby. I'm very happy for them that they listen to what they are told. We see that these little children don't get sick as often as the other babies who are raised on the bottle. I would like all the women present to tell their daughters about this. This advice was given to us on how to raise our children.

An elder mentioned here yesterday that a woman shouldn't drink when she is carrying a child and this is true. I have watched women drink when they are pregnant. I don't like this but what can a person do? I don't have the authority to go around telling people what to do - I can only watch and see what happens when their children are born.

I used to watch one certain woman. She would get drunk while she was pregnant. When the baby was born, it was small and weak. It could barely cry. Whereas a normal baby makes lots of noise, this one was different. I think that maybe the alcohol had something to do with it and so this is what we should try
to make everyone understand. Our children will be born strong
and healthy if we use our bodies the right way - if we can tell
our daughters to breast-feed their young ones. Start telling
these girls when they are young so they will learn to
understand.

We will also have to tell our young women about the elders'
ceremonies and we must tell the young to have respect for them.
Help them to understand what these ceremonies mean to an Indian
and to themselves. Tell them that if they are sick they must
never go to a Sundance or to any ceremony that the elders make.

When I was young I lost my mother but I had an aunt who gave us
a cup. Only I was to use it when I became ill. So every once in
a while I would use this cup - no one else. This shows how
strongly they believed in these ceremonies. They loved us -
these ones who have gone before us. Now it is our turn to tell
our children and grandchildren about what we were taught if we
are to succeed in what we are trying to do. We have to be exact,
making sure to always use the right words. So I hope you women
who are here today will help us in what we are trying to do.

But our work is very difficult today. When girls go to the
city, the white man makes fools of them. This is when most of
these girls start to drink. I'm glad that my grandmother told
me, when I was a young woman, never to talk to a white man.
These are the people who are going to make fools of Indian
girls. I believed my grandmother and never went with a white
man, but today it is different. But I sure give these white
men a piece of my mind when I see them!

This will be all for now. You women will know what to say, I
only told my part - about the advice I was given and the way I
brought up my children. You will find what to say to these
elders. Thank you.

MRS. FELIX SUGAR:

I am not used to speaking in front of a crowd. I feel myself
too humble to be speaking to people. This will be the first
time that I have spoken but I'm very glad that I was able to
attend this workshop. I'm very thankful to the elders for
waking me up. I'm very happy for the lectures the elders are
giving - and also their pipe ceremony and prayers for our
children and ourselves. I will tell this to my grandchildren
when I go home.

I always feel myself not worthy of lecturing someone else as I
can't even lecture myself but today I'm very thankful to both
the elders and old women in the good words they are giving us.
I hope that every one of us will have a good journey home. May
our Maker shine a light upon our road. I greet you all. Thank
you.

MRS. JAMES CROOKEDNECK:
My fellow women - it has been very nice to listen to you and what you have been saying is true. I raised some young women myself and I believe what I have heard about alcohol and what it does to babies. There are all kinds of ways these white men poison us. I have one daughter who drinks heavily. Not so long ago, just at the start of winter, she told me that she was sick. This had happened all of a sudden, so right away I went over when my son-in-law came for me.

She said, "I don't know what's wrong with me, mother."

So I asked just where the pain was thinking maybe she had miscarried. She said maybe she had so I told her we couldn't keep her there, that we'd have to take her to the hospital. It was getting late at night. The hospital was already closed - the doctor wasn't home. The R.C.M.P. were there so I went to tell them of our trouble. I asked them if we would get the blame if we had trouble on the road and something wrong happened. They told us we wouldn't get blamed for anything. They told us to take her to another hospital so we started out again. At times she was very low while we were on the road but finally we reached the hospital. She was wheeled in. The doctor asked me to come with him. He asked me if my daughter drank alcohol. I didn't lie - I told him that she was a heavy drinker. He wanted to know what she drank so I told him that she drinks any kind of hard liquor she can get. The doctor told my daughter that there was no hope of seeing her child being born because it was already burned to death and that also she had to be sent away to another hospital where they could save her. She was taken away in an ambulance. After we returned home we phoned and were told that she was alright and feeling better.

It was here in Saskatoon that they brought her. I came the next day to see the doctor that examined my daughter. I asked him just what exactly had happened to her that she had this trouble. The doctor told me it was the alcohol that killed the baby. He said the baby was just burned inside. This is why I agree wholeheartedly with what the other ladies have been saying.

There is another thing that I hate - these pills that some of the women use. We were meant to have children, to love them and to be kind to them. These are why the doctors get angry with us. It's you that are young today that are using them. In the old days the women never used anything like this. That's why we all have children that are grown up now.

I would like to thank all the women that spoke. I have many grandchildren and I'm also a great-grandmother already. I try my best to tell all these happenings of the past to my children, especially the pipe ceremony. I always tell them never to walk in front of an elder who is saying prayers. I tell them never to go in when they have their sickness. I keep telling them these things, because I want my children and grandchildren to have respect. I don't just say this to my own children but to
girls who come to visit us. I tell them about what my elders used to tell me. The elders of the past were very strict. They said things over and over so we would understand. This was the way they, themselves, were brought up.

This will be all. I've tried to tell how I brought up children. I'm thankful they are all grown up. I have eight girls and one boy.

I pray to Manitou that we will all have a safe journey home. My daughter who is with me here prefers not to speak but is very happy to listen to you women. That's all for now. I greet you all. Thank you.

MRS. JIM KANIPITETEW:

I'm just here as an observer and am not a good speaker. I am just glad to be here to listen to the elders and the women. I have grandchildren of my own, three young women and one man. It is the same way with me - I try to tell them all the things that were told to me by my elders and you people have covered all of what I tell them. I tell my young women about the things they should understand and I tell them in a way that they will understand. I can't say much more as I'm not feeling well today so I will greet you all. I can't say any more. Thank you.

MRS. J.B. STANLEY:

I will say a few words myself although I'm not used to speaking at these places or meetings. I have enjoyed listening to the elders. I have a hard time myself and many headaches. I have lots of young men who I'm bringing up. I try my best to tell them something but it's very hard when a young person doesn't want to listen. I have a very troubled mind at times and I feel just like I'm getting sick when they won't listen. We were raised ourselves by our grandmother who always told us how to respect the ceremonies that the elders performed. Sometimes we would get tired of hearing our grandmother, but she used to drill these lectures into our heads. I see now that we made mistakes in not listening to her.

I have only two girls and I also tell these ones what I have been told.

This is the first time I have been here and I'm very happy at what I hear. We have two of our sons here with us. I would be very happy if they would listen to these elders and try to understand Indian culture as they aren't very interested in anything. They won't even go to an Indian ceremony. This is why I'm very happy that they hear these elders and get an idea of what the ceremony means to an Indian. We keep at our children all the time to have respect for this Sundance and the other ceremonies.

I have one son in Edmonton and I'm very happy to say that this one has not lost his Indian identity even though he's with
white men all the time. He never forgets the ceremonies. I also have lots of grandchildren. Thank you.

MRS. BELLA WAPASS:

I'm happy to hear what the elders and my fellow women had to say. I have a big family myself and I'm sorry to say that alcohol has gotten the best of them. I only hope that there will be some way to make these people understand or there is someone they will listen to or if there were good jobs for these young people. I'm teaching the little girls beadwork, hoping they will live our way when they get older. I never tire of this job I'm given - working with little children. I try my best to show them everything.

I would be very happy if we could get our young people to listen to these elders. I know it would help a young person a lot to hear these elders as some have never heard these things or maybe have never listened to what they were told. We old people have all been told this before but I would like very much for the young people to be here. There would at least be one who would want to follow the good Indian way of life.

Thank you.

MRS. WASKEWITCH:

I will say a few words myself, about what my sister mentioned about these young women using these pills, birth control pills, as I have young women of my own. I don't like this at all and I try to persuade my daughters not to use them. They have all kinds of sickness from them. Some of the babies, when born, are deformed. If we can make the younger ones who are growing up, understand, it would be very nice. Many people are against these medicines, these pills. This has never happened in the past. We never used them when we were young.

The elders were always warning us. They told us all about everything. They wanted us to respect people, to be kind, to love one another, to listen to an elder and to respect all Indian ceremonies. This is what I do myself as I think every parent does. I tell my kids all these things. I do the same with my sons. I think they listen to me, but I hope all young people listen to their parents the same way. I wish the best of luck to everyone. Thank you.

MABEL PAGUET:

I enjoyed listening to all of these women who have been talking here and as I think back, all these things were told to me also, but I never listened. I have children myself. And I have grandchildren.

I have been an alcoholic from an early age. I did the things that I was told not to do. I had thought these people had no business telling me anything. I guess I was a bad person.

Now, I have seen a lot of hard times. All this last winter I was in the hospital. I had two big operations and I guess that woke
me up about my alcoholism since it was the main cause of my sickness. Now I'm glad to be alive and I'm getting better every day.

I have been thinking of helping people who are trying to help themselves. I have my phone number here but I can't invite anyone right now as my sister is staying with us but when I get a new house I will be able to help anyone that has an alcoholic problem, especially young women. I want them to understand what alcohol can do to them. I want them to understand what happened to me - and this I would like to do for all of my fellow Indian women - and also the people, because I saw quite a few things when I was drinking.

This is all for me. I greet you all. I really enjoyed being here, listening to your lectures. I hope the Maker looks down on these workers so the things they are working at will be a success. Thank you.

GRACE BONAISE:

I am very glad to be here. It has been very good to be able to listen to these women and the elders. I enjoyed their lectures, the pipe ceremony they have every morning, and their prayers. These have helped me a lot. I enjoyed hearing all these, as I'm not too old myself. My parents died when I was small. I was told my mother died before I was one year old. I can just barely remember my father. I was maybe 8 years old when he died. From then on I was raised by my aunt, and also James Blackman, who was our chief at that time. My aunt told me of many things that they, themselves, had been taught by their elders. And today I hear these words again. They make me think that I do respect an elder, either women or man, and I respect all the Indian ceremonies. Last summer my husband got better when I took him to Indian ceremonies. The doctor had told us that he didn't have a chance. Today I thank my Manitou for my husband being alive. He is with me here today. I thank each and every one of you here for your words. I have eight children of my own and also two grandchildren. I talk to them all the time. I hope that I will see them in good health when I go home. This will be all. Thank you.

MRS. LAWRENCE TOBACCO:

I can't say very much, my fellow women, but I've been taught by elders myself. I lived with my grandparents when I was young and every day all these sayings were told to me. Respect, kindness and love were the old time teachings. I have grandchildren myself now and this is what I try to teach them. I tell them to respect Indian ceremonies and I take them to all the ceremonies. I tell them to watch and this is the way I try to teach them. But you all know how the young people are today. They don't listen to us very much. They want to be with the crowd and sometimes they get into trouble but as far as alcohol is concerned I never let them bring any into my house. I break every bottle when they do. I'm trying to teach them every way
and I hope the young people will listen to us someday. This will be all. I greet you all, my fellow women.

Thank you.

MRS. ALEX POORMAN:

I'm very glad to see you all and I'm enjoying this meeting that just us women are having. I'm very happy about what I've heard so far. I don't think that we should have much trouble teaching our young people something if we could all get together and work. Where we are from we are trying to do this. We are trying to get all the women together and then we will speak to these young people about the Indian way of doing things. But we are not too good at speaking and so we would like someone to come and lecture our young people to give us a start. I think this is the only way it would work. Invite elders and a few of these workers to come and explain.

I would like to thank everyone that is here. I hope you all have a safe journey home. Thank you.

ED LALIBERTE:

In my job I find that young people's married life is not right. My work is to talk to these people. These people would be able to be spoken to at these tipis where they would be lectured properly. Than their marriages can be saved or set right. I think this is the only way but we also must never forget that the pipe ceremony must be performed first - and the sweetgrass scenting.

There are many things that we must think about. I went to visit an old woman who was dying. She told me that if there was anyone that had hurt you, you should feel it in your heart to forgive him. I still follow this advice. I never take whatever a person says seriously. I forgive this person and I speak for him by using the pipe.

What you have said has been good and when we go home let's follow this advice and also spread it so it won't just have been said here.

I will say a little more on these tipis. I want a resolution made on this immediately. I make a motion that on every reserve in Saskatchewan there will be one of these tents. You can select an elder to go into this tipi to hold lectures for the young people. This is what we discussed this morning. I will be very thankful if you think this is a good way of doing this. This may help our young people.

In the last two days we discussed schools. Some have made suggestions saying they would like elders to go to the classrooms to talk to students. What are you going to do about this? I would like to know because I have to tell my schools
of their coming.

MRS. DAN PELLETIER:

I will try to tell you what these other women and I discussed here. I'm not very good at Cree even though it is my language but I will try anyway. We discussed how difficult it is for us to raise our children. We took turns speaking. I spoke on what I was taught by my parents and grandparents. They would always tell me that when I had a child I was to breast-feed it since it was believed that our Maker meant for us to breast-feed our young children. We see today that the young women are not following this advice. I would like these women to tell their daughters and granddaughters about this because it is one of the important things in raising children.

As I think back on my life, I liked doing what I was told by my parents. I was always trying to do what they wanted so I breast-fed all my children. I was told that that is where life is and I tell this to my daughters and granddaughters. I'm glad that they listen to me.

I don't feel right speaking but I was hired to work. It's difficult for me to tell someone else how to raise their children. I don't like doing this but I have enjoyed being with these women. They have all seen hard times.

One of the things discussed was birth control pills. For instance, the doctors are handing out pills now. This is one of the things that is very bad. This wasn't meant for Indians. We read in the papers what it does to a woman. Babies are born that are not well.

In every way today it is very hard to be woman. We talked about women who drink. If a woman is pregnant, she should not drink. This will only hurt the child.

It was hoped that the leaders could arrange to have older women available to travel to different reserves to speak to young people. They would go to try to persuade these young women to get off the pill and to breast-feed their young babies, who, we believe, are loaned to the mother from above. This is what is wanted by us women so if you can think about this. This is all I can say. Thank you.

JONAS LARIVIERE:

I would like to find out more about these tipis - I wonder if they are to be left standing all the time? On my reserve, for instance, it would be very difficult to have this tipi set up all the time. Would it work if the poles remained standing, the canvas taken off and put away until it is needed again? It wouldn't take too long to set up. So this is what I would like to ask - how this would work. The reason I am asking this is because of the way I see my people. It is true that they might respect it, but still this is not a safe bet. Some of the young
people are very bullheaded. They don't understand anything.

BILL WAPASS:

My relatives, I will tell you. We have had this thing going on, on our reserve in Thunderchild, for quite a while now. I have also been to Hobbema, Alberta, where they have tipis and things are well looked after. We travel there every year. They discuss prayers of the elders and we sit just the way we are here, as in a meeting. We asked about the tipis and one man told us, yes, he would bring everything and so he did. He brought everything the Indian used long ago, even wooden dishes.

We gave a parcel of land to be set aside for sacred purposes. We have rocks all around on the ground - we only make a fire in one place. However, we didn't own this tipi. When the lectures were over this man took his tipi home.

So what you brought up here sounds very good, I think, as one of the servants of Indian workings. It would be very good if we could get these tipis on our reserves. I hope our leaders will work on this to see if they can come up with something. They want us all to discuss it here and help them all we can. The chiefs want information they can write down so that what we say here now will be read by a student in the future.

As you all know we all have things we are afraid of. What we are doing today is not ours alone. We have our Maker watching us. He gives us brains to think with, he gives these elders wisdom and understanding to speak to us. And right today they have woken us up with their words. They have told us of the life time work and it's up to us to carry on. I won't take too long on this but I want to talk a little further on the tipis. These tipis are used for the sole purpose of the pipe ceremony, prayers and counselling or lecturing. If a person comes wanting to discuss something else, we stop him. We will discuss this at another place and time.

Someone mentioned fire. Well, we have a place where we scent our pipe. When this is done I sit up all night fanning this fire with feathers so it won't go out. I continue with this until everything is over. It's very difficult to do this but as I said, what we Indians believe in, we do. I have done this a few times already and the reason for doing it is to keep up the scent of the sweetgrass. This was passed onto us and this is the way we do it. I hope this answers your question. Everything that is discussed in these tipis is of good things - other things are not allowed. When it's over the tipis come down. We have another meeting to discuss whatever else the people wish to talk about, just like the way we are here today. We just discuss what we would like to see happen. This is the way with us. Even if you have other ways of doing it, this is the way it is with us. I, myself, am in favor of having a tipi on the reserves. If we could get them it would greatly help us. Thank you.
JIM KANIPITETEW:

I brought this up long ago - I asked for these tipis to be on reserves, to be used as lecture lodges. Some of you people were here when I asked for this two years ago. I told them I wanted one tipi to be used for lectures and pipe ceremonies, for the elders to speak to people of all ages. These people were afraid that these tipis would be used for something else but we had this all settled once. We emphasized that they would only be used for lectures and prayers, the lectures given to the young people to try to wake them up so they will follow their Indian way of life.

I also went to Meadow Lake to see some people who are involved in this same thing. They told me this summer that they would help all they could but I got tired of waiting. So today I'm very glad that you people brought this up.

This man was absolutely right when he said that the tipi is only to be used for one purpose.

People on our reserve do not listen to us but I think they would listen to elders from other reserves - that is why I'm asking for this. We want elders to lecture our children, our grandchildren and all the other people. On our reserve when a few of us elders are having a pipe ceremony, we hear that people are laughing at us. But if we have these lecture places, these people would learn things to tell their children, to wake them up. All this I had in mind when asking for these tipis. Thank you.

ED THUNDERCHILD:

I will say a few words on this, too. What my brother-in-law said is true. We had one of these tipis brought to our reserve from Alberta. We did this four days at a time. So I just want to bring up what was said here. He was right when he said that a person might go over to this place and want to use this tipi for a different purpose but if we settle beforehand just exactly what we want it for, that is for lecturing, pipe ceremonies and prayers, this problem would be solved. I would think that if we had this, along with the Indian teaching that's taking place in the schools, we would be standing on firmer ground. I would like to see these youngsters go to listen to an elder's advice on what's good and bad, so they will have this to guide them in the future. This is all I can say. I thank you for listening to me. Thank you.

MORRIS LEWIS:

I am glad to hear you and what you are discussing. Having these tipis on reserves is a very good idea as far as I'm concerned but we also have to think back on all that our elders have done in the past. For example, an elder was always afraid of rushing into things or grabbing anything that came along. From what my relatives told me, the fire is not to go out
during these sessions. So, if from lack of knowledge through rushing into this, we, for instance, made the mistake of letting the fire die, my relatives, we would have sinned. So perhaps we should wait - I'm not saying that I hate this suggestion - I'm saying we should find out just what this tipi means, just how the Indian was given this when he was put on earth - how to go about this? Why is the fire not supposed to go out? As I see, my relatives, in our reserves there are many of us who are completely lost in our Indian way of life and if we do something that we think we know, our relatives will think we are crazy. We will sin because we don't know what we are getting into and we'll hurt these people also. When we have all the answers we can go ahead and do this but let's understand more about it. This is what I would like done.

The leader said it would be nice if we had a parcel of land on our reserves to use for this purpose. This is what we did on our reserve at Onion Lake. All of us in the council made a law providing for land on which to have our Sundances. In writing is the provision that no person from that reserve is to take this piece of land. This piece of land is used as a sacred ground and is only meant for religious purposes. I like it done this way. This is all I have to say. I greet you all, my relatives. Thank you.

THOMAS ASHAWN:

My relatives, I'm not going to fight you - I'm glad myself. I have followed the Indian way of life but you will find that on many reserves in Saskatchewan there is absolutely no Indian way of life.

When I go home to Kamsack I will be putting on a Sundance in the summer. I will discuss with the elders what you people have been saying here.

We are very crazy ourselves over there - at least, the young men are crazy. But I think we could figure a way to respect this sort of thing. Also the leaders should look into this.

I myself, am very afraid of it, but I can't say anything here because I'm alone.

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