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HIGHLIGHTS:

- General account of his life.
- Account of the Riel Rebellion of 1885.
Davis: Now you worked on this native prospectors assistance plan in the summer of '59 (at least part of it). What was this plan and how did it work?

Brady: Well, the native prospectors assistance plan is under the direction of the Department of Mineral Resources and they provide equipment, transportation and a certain amount of subsistence for prospectors. In this case, under the native plan they send these parties out usually for 30 day periods, because the experience of the mine, mineral resources was, you see, the Indians are favorably situated as far as a lot of this territory is concerned, because many of the areas are their trapping grounds. Consequently, you see, there is a greater possibility of them at least finding surface indications of mineralization. It was thought that these people should be given an opportunity if there were any possibility in any of these areas that they were familiar with, that an opportunity should be given to them to exploit them and if possible stake them. And I was employed during the summer to... You see, most of these Indians, they know the ground quite well but they have no knowledge of the technique of prospecting. In some cases they are deficient in recognition of minerals. So consequently the Department felt they should be given some assistance in that respect so that they would be able to recognize. In other

words, a sort of a training program, put them in the field. During the summer of 1959 I was engaged by the Department of Mineral Resources for three months. I travelled with various Indian prospectors. Principally I was on the Sturgeon-Weir River and I was in the Churchill River Basin and I spent part of the summer on the second drainage system west of Great Bear Lake.

Davis: Great Bear Lake?

Brady: Oh no, correction, I should say Reindeer Lake.

Davis: Now your job was to help these prospectors learn about rocks and geology and so on?

Brady: Yes, in other words to impart to them their recognition of minerals and particularly techniques of prospecting. Also the necessary work that goes to develop a showing.

Davis: Now how many prospectors did you assist or instruct in this way?

Brady: Oh, at various times, I haven't the exact figure at hand but I imagine that I taught at least about 17 or 18 of them during the summer of 1959.

Davis: What results do you think this program has had?

Brady: Well, there's what they call a prospector's assistance plan for white prospectors, which is conducted currently with the native prospectors plan. I would say in 1959 season that native prospectors, as far as visible results was concerned, actually turned up better finds than any of the white prospectors, particularly at Waddy Lake, where one party had a particularly good gold showing. They later dealt with a syndicate and the syndicate undertook to do the development work on it for them. In fact they were given an option by this particular company.

Davis: At this point do you think it will be continued?

Brady: Well, I was engaged with them this summer for a number of months. But you see, as far as base metal prospecting has been concerned this summer, in the Saskatchewan field it has been rather restrictive on account of the bad economic situation facing the base mineral market. Consequently the activities were not as large, and furthermore this summer we had a bad situation in the North where we had the worst fire season since 1936. And a lot of our prospectors were unable to (these parties) we were unable to get them into the field because a lot of them had to go away and fight fires. It is compulsory.

As a matter of fact, three parties in particular that I had organized, in anticipation that I was going to go to the

field with them, it was impossible for them to go on account of the fire situation.

I found myself in the position when I went to Pelican Narrows that I had to go on a fire myself. I had to take charge of a crew and went down southeast of Ballantyne Bay because of a particularly bad fire on the Hanson Lake Road.

Davis: How long did you have to stop off to fight that?

Brady: Well, I actually fought this fire at Ballantyne Bay for four days. I was on the fire line for four days and then returned, but I couldn't get the parties organized due to this disorganization that went on.

Davis: They had all been picked up?

Brady: Yes. That's another thing that has created a little animosity against the Department of Natural Resources, both last

summer and this summer, it is because when fires begin the DNR officials picked up all the firefighters and generally they take them from the fishermen.

Davis: How much do they pay them?

Brady: \$4 a day.

Davis: And what could they make if they were fishing?

Brady: Well, it would all depend. For instance, one fisherman at Lac la Ronge in one day's catch produced \$114 worth of fish in one day, and then he was taken off and compelled to go to a fire. It creates a lot of bad feeling because, for instance, the Indian guides who operate for the tourist operators are rather in a privileged position because the department never compels their guides to fight fires. There is an unofficial policy whereby the DNR exempt these guides because they are employed by a tourist operator. The burden of fighting a fire falls mainly on the Indian population. Not only that, but as far as the fishing industry is concerned, particularly this summer, it has had a very disruptive effect on our co-operatives. It is manifestly unfair.

Then again, I think we should question this whole policy of the DNR firefighting program, because it is questionable that much of these areas that are burned have any real value.

Davis: As far as you know, have there been any representations made to DNR about this policy, any kicks?

Brady: Well, there had been verbal representations made, but it was recently brought to the attention of the Department of Co-operatives. Representations have been made, particularly to

the Cabinet.

Davis: That was all?

Brady: These recommendations are contained in a brief which was submitted by the Lac la Ronge club recently to the Cabinet, because there is a feeling among the co-ops or co-operative people that at least if this firefighting is necessary, let it be equitable and let the burden be distributed fairly. After all, they could bring unemployment people from Prince Albert or elsewhere. But it is actually working to the detriment of our co-operative movement. They take our fishermen away from their fishing at a time when they should be fishing and making their money because their work is entirely seasonable.

Davis: Do you find that La Ronge, week in and week out, is a pretty interesting place?

Brady: Yes, I have always found anywhere I have been interesting because it is a matter of people. People are interesting wherever you go. You can make life interesting after you get to know people. But I have always found La Ronge interesting. During the years I have been in La Ronge I would imagine I have been in at least well over 50 percent of the native houses in that community and I know them all quite well.

Davis: What about the white houses? What percent?

Brady: Well, I have lived in La Ronge for 9 years and outside of Barrie Richards and Allan Quant and another family, I have never been invited into any white house in La Ronge.

Davis: Just those two?

Brady: But then, you see, I should qualify that, because after all, Barrie and Allan -- I knew them before I came to La Ronge. And not only that I am quite close to them as personal friends even before I came to La Ronge.

Davis: You have a lot of books up there and I heard of you long before I ever saw the North. Do any of the tourists ever seek you out, any of the visitors, the white people, do they ever seek you out?

Brady: No, I have never found any white people who came to La Ronge who wanted to be introduced to me.

Davis: Well, I know a couple, one economics professor here and another chap who works for Federated Co-ops. They were camping at Waskesiu. They are friends of mine. They went up looking for you but you were out in the bush, I guess. This was last summer and I guess Barrie was out in the bush too because they just turned around. They stopped in the Handicraft Shop and came back. I wonder if that happens very often. I guess it doesn't.

Brady: Well, of course the lady also, in the Handicraft Shop, I have been on quite friendly terms with her because I also knew her before she came to La Ronge during the CCF campaign in 1948 at Cumberland.

Davis: Oh, she used to live over there?

Brady: Yes, and I used to know her and her husband when they lived in Flin Flon. On two occasions when I was in Flin Flon I went to visit them at their home.

Davis: La Ronge strikes me as a sort of a small community with great distances inside it.

Brady: Well, it is rather difficult to explain, but the social distinctions and differences are definitely polarized at opposite ends in that community. The natives, you see, are not acceptable to the whites socially.

Davis: Are there any natives up there, so far as you know, that do get invited into white houses, say fairly periodically?

Brady: Well, the only occasion that I ever noticed that is they may invite a certain type of native to their cabins or their houses, providing they bring their women folk with them.

Davis: Well, we will pass over that. I meant socially speaking.

Brady: No, socially I would say that there is very little of what I think Negroes refer to it as socializing. But there is a certain type of transient white who comes to La Ronge, principally tourists, who show an interest in this so-called socializing, with rather regrettable results sometimes.

Davis: I suppose the outfitters sort of cater to this kind of...

Brady: Well, I have observed on several occasions there are a few of them who put themselves in the position of being actual panderers.

Davis: Well, I've got to go and put some money in that meter now.

Now this document is called the History of the Alberta Metis Association, and it is one that you drafted in 1950 and it is just an outline.

Brady: It was just an outline because I had intended writing a short history of the activities of the Alberta Metis Association during the years that I was associated with them. Of course before drawing it up I had to give a good deal of historical background.

Davis: I have a rather interesting slant here on the second page. You speak of Louis Riel and his democratic ideals -- his

solution of the national and economic questions, what Riel really meant before and under socialism. Now this Riel lad is usually interpreted as kind of a religious prophet. I would be interested to hear you sound on this.

Brady: Well, I had some correspondence with a party in Edmonton one time on this question of Riel and the Rebellion, and the economic and political meaning of it. If you were to read that it would give you some indication of the general trend of that proposed article.

Davis: Now this is material that this chap sent you from Edmonton?

Brady: No, it was just a matter that I had read an article that he had written on Riel and I had occasion to point out what I considered were a few errors.

Davis: Now when did this appear? This is your letter. When did this appear?

Brady: It appeared in November, 1953.

Davis: Oh yes. (inaudible) Now this grandfather of yours, this was on your mother's side?

Brady: Yes, my maternal grandfather. He served as a soldier in Riel's army. He was enrolled when the Red River Metis organized a military force to repel the (?) that threatened Manitoba.

Davis: Oh yes, coming up from the South.

Brady: Yes.

Davis: What was your grandfather's name?

Brady: His name was Larone Garneau. Following the Red River insurrection he was (well in other words he became practically a refugee) he was chased out of Manitoba by the whites.

Davis: Well, this article explains your association with Tompkins, who married the daughter of Poundmaker.

(PART MISSING)

Brady: That's so long ago that it is only a family tradition among our family. It possibly wouldn't have any value to anyone except our family. Of course we give it belief and credits.

Davis: Well, he still couldn't have hit this quite so much on the head as he did if there wasn't something to it. Did he read much?

Brady: No, he was a pagan Indian from the Plains and he was completely illiterate. But being an Indian medicine man, you see, he was highly adept in the field of psychic phenomena, and he was also a medium and clairvoyant, as many Indian medicine men were.

Davis: And that was how he knew about the people across the salt sea?

Brady: Well, he had contact with what white people consider to be the spiritual world. In other words, he was able to function in what white people would call, or like what theosophists call the astral plane.

Davis: What was the date of this occasion?

Brady: This would have been 1906. It was before I was born, but I heard it recounted in our family by the people who were present and heard him speak.

Davis: Where was he living at that time?

Brady: Well, he was living with us on the half-breed reservation at St. Paul. Originally the band to which he belonged had a small reservation at Strathcona just south of Edmonton. Today it is actually part of the city of Edmonton. The original reserve, and his band had accepted that reservation at the time of the number A Treaty, the Treaty of 1876. They remained on that reserve -- the reserve of course was abolished in 1892.

Davis: That was when the railroad came up from Calgary, you were telling about that.

Brady: Well, when the railroad was being built from Calgary they found that the right-of-way had to cross the reservation and the Indians were very opposed to the idea of sieving any more land because they had been promised (solemnly promised) at the time of the Treaty of 1876 that there would never be any more demands made upon them for any more land. Naturally the Indians, the majority of them, refused to agree to surrendering any more land and they refused to do so because they wanted to retain this small reservation, because they could see that (you might say the only haven that they had) and the result was that they incurred the enmity of a lot of white people, because white people were interested in having the railroad built into Edmonton. Consequently, when the Indians took this attitude, it incurred a lot of ill feeling among the whites, because the whites were determined that the railroad had to reach Edmonton. But after several refusals the railroad company, they took the attitude, "Well, if we can't get the right-of-way through the Indian reserve, we will just construct the railway to the reserve and that will be the terminus." Immediately the white people discovered this they were up in arms. They took the attitude that the Indians were standing in the way of progress and as usual, when dealing with native and backward races, they had to go then.

Davis: So the whites got the land, of course?

Brady: Yes, they did get the land because they...

Davis: Did they pay for it?

Brady: Oh yes, they received compensation for it. They entered into negotiations with them, but then the land was surrendered by the Indians.

Davis: I suppose you remember that old treaty (I think this is true of a good many treaties -- in the States anyway) they use this phrase "that the land shall belong to the Indians as long as the grass grows and the water runs." Or something like that.

Brady: That's been quoted in Canada too. Well, the land was surrendered because Papasteido, who was the chief, and the medicine man and you might say their spiritual leader of the tribe was convinced, as he explained it to the tribal council, that if the land was not surrendered the white people, he said, will exterminate every one of us, man, woman and child if necessary, to possess this land. He could quite clearly see if the tribe was brought into a condition of hostility against the whites that it would be a disaster to the band. Consequently, after consulting the tribal spirit (the Great Spirit), the decision was made to surrender our land, which they did accordingly. Then they moved away.

Davis: This was when they went up to the northeast then?

Brady: No, most of them moved towards the foothills, towards the Rockies. My grandfather's homestead was just on the outside of the reserve. It just adjoined it. My grandfather homesteaded part of the land on which the campus of the University of Alberta is today. As a matter of fact a part of south Edmonton still has our family name.

Davis: What is the name?

Brady: His name was Garneau.

Davis: Well, how long did your family stay around Edmonton?

Brady: Well, my grandfather came to Edmonton in 1874 from the Red River settlement. He had taken part in the troubles in Manitoba as a soldier of Riel's.

Davis: Yes, I remember.

Brady: Consequently, any of Riel's followers were very unpopular after in Manitoba, particularly when the country began to fill up with white people. At that time a lot of the half-breeds or Metis in Manitoba wouldn't have helped the economic pressure, in many cases even the physical pressure

that was put upon them to remove them. So he abandoned his holding in Manitoba and he migrated further West. There was a large exodus from the Red River settlement at that time of the Metis towards the West. He was in that wave of migration.

Davis: Some of them went to Duck Lake, didn't they, up in the north of Saskatchewan?

Brady: Well, the settlement at Duck Lake was founded earlier, before this. Most of them around the Duck Lake area reached that country before the '70s, that is around 1868.

Davis: I see.

Brady: But my grandfather came to Alberta and to Edmonton in 1874, the year following the arrival the Mounted Police. He took a homestead on the south side of the river.

Davis: How long did he keep that homestead?

Brady: Oh, that remained in our family for possibly 30 years. His old homestead was around 111th Street in the Saskatchewan Guide, where the original building stood. But then my grandfather, you see, he also became involved in the Riel Rebellion.

Davis: Oh, did he? Whereabouts was he operating?

Brady: Well, he lived in Edmonton at the time that he... He was accused by the police of having had intelligence with Riel and acting as one of Riel's agents, spies.

Davis: I read this book that came out recently by Ed McCourt called Revolt in the Northwest. It is a book for boys but it is not a bad book for adults too. I don't know if you have seen it.

Brady: No, it's regrettable, I have not.

Davis: Well, I will try to send you a copy. It is a new book, it came out this past year. He speaks in here of Riel, there at Batoche sending out runners all around to the Indians, mostly Crees to the West, I think, so I suppose that was it.

Brady: Well, the Mounted Police fears at the time actually were well-founded, because my grandfather had had intelligence with Riel. A half-breed messenger in the Saskatchewan rally[?]

reached Edmonton just a few days before the outbreak of the rebellion, before the people in Edmonton were fully aware of what had happened in Saskatchewan. Already the Indians and the Metis knew what had happened. The Indians particularly knew, and of course so did the half-breeds, who were favorable to Riel.

According to the family tradition there was a young

French Metis from Duck Lake by the name of St. Germain who was the messenger, and he brought this message to the half-breeds before the police were even aware that the rebellion had broken out. My grandfather actually received a letter but unfortunately (it would have become a family heirloom but for the fact that it was destroyed).

Davis: What were the basic causes of this Riel Rebellion?

Brady: Well, the basic causes were the same as the causes of any war, they were economic mainly.

Davis: Land?

Brady: Land.

Davis: This was quite an event, you know. If you look in the old history, the official histories of Saskatchewan, this was strictly a police action against some unruly and stubborn and misguided rebels.

Brady: Well, I would not say that entirely, because a study of the relevant documents of the period proves beyond any doubt that Riel's agitation when he first entered the Saskatchewan

valley was supported by all sections of the population, including the whites. One has only got to go back into the records of the old Settler's Union to find that prior to the rebellion the Settler's Union, which represented the organized whites, supported wholeheartedly the Metis demands on Ottawa, so did the clergy. So did many important people who had been in the government. As a matter of fact, people like Inspector Herchmer, Inspector Walker of the Mounted Police, not only supported the Metis in their demands but warned Ottawa that if progress of these grievances was not given, that there would be trouble. The Settler's Union, particularly, were as vocal in their demands on Ottawa as were the Metis. But the only difference was that when it came to a question of violent insurrection the Settler's Union, the main bulk of the Settler's Union withdrew, they supported the government. In many cases they provided military forces against the Metis movement. There was one notable exception in the Settler's Union, the secretary William Henry Jackson, and in reality I have always considered that he is really a forgotten democrat of the Old West.

Davis: Where does he live?

Brady: He lives in Prince Albert.

Davis: Yes, that rings a bell. Now in the McCourt book there is a statement somewhere to the effect that up in Prince Albert these people got support for a while until the actual outbreak at Batoche, and I guess until the fight at Duck Lake.

Brady: Well, the point was that the English-speaking settlers, you see, were determined to have their grievances

redressed but wouldn't follow the French half-breeds to the point of armed rebellion.

Davis: Riel himself was of two minds on this, wasn't he?

Brady: Yes, it is regrettable that he was of two minds because if he had acted decisively he might have altered the whole course of history in western Canada. He could very well have created a situation that would have thrown Canada into the arms of the United States. The French half-breeds almost resolutely opposed any annexationist movement. I think it can be proven conclusively, beyond any doubt, historically speaking, that if the Canadian West is under the British flag today they owe it to the fact that the Metis of the West refused to become involved in any annexationist movement. As a matter of fact, the Metis of Red River repelled the unions in the 1870s because there was a strong feeling among the French Metis (well, they were basically anti-American in the nationalist feelings), they were impelled that way on account of their French language and culture.

Davis: I got the impression that Riel was uncertain and wavering in his stand.

Brady: Yes, but Riel on this particular issue could only express what was the opinion of the rank and file of the Metis who supported him, and the rank and file of the Metis nation (the Metis nation as a whole) were opposed to annexation or any interference from American sources.

Davis: Yes. Well, the whites won themselves a victory in that scrap.

Brady: Well, considering the strategy, and logistically speaking, a native victory was impossible anyway. It was a question of supply and that was a situation which the Metis could not overcome even under most favorable conditions. Logistically it was an impossible feat for them to accomplish because they completely lacked the necessary equipment and supplies to wage an effective campaign. For one thing, they possessed no artillery whatsoever.

Davis: It was really kind of a desperate last ditch bid from the first, wasn't it?

Brady: Well, yes, but the Metis at that time accepted those odds because they felt that they were fighting against what they considered foreign aggression.

Davis: Has this ever been written up with any really good account that you know of?

Brady: Well, I have always found that the best descriptive works on both Indian and Metis history are in the French language. And it is unfortunate that many of these works haven't been translated into English because I believe that on

the whole they give a fairer and a more objective view of that historical period than do the English writings, although I do consider that one of the best works, if you wish to study that historical period, is Kinsey Howard's work Straight Jim Prior.

Davis: That's the book that you brought down, isn't it?

Brady: In this particular work I find that he is very sympathetic and he doesn't belabor any point too much. I think it was a remarkable achievement for an American because as a rule, dealing with a period in western history, let's say when

it was so bunged up with religious and political and racial animosity, it is very difficult even for a French Canadian or an Anglo-Saxon Canadian to keep their sense of bias. In that respect I think Howard has accomplished a very remarkable thing because you can sometimes write in a very dispassionate way. I find, you see, that his judgment is remarkably sound in interpreting many of the historical... in other words the causative factors that led to this outbreak, because he seems to have an understanding of the basic causes which impelled not only the Indians and the Metis, but the whites, to act in the manner that they did. He seems to be able to analyze that much more clearly than any other writer that I have read in English.

Davis: Have you ever read Howard Hass's book, The Last Frontier?

Brady: Yes, I have had the pleasure of reading it.

Davis: What do you think of that?

Brady: Well, for a study of that period in American history, it is the best I have. There is only one that is equal to it and that's the work of Cheyenne Autumn by Mary Sandle.

Davis: Mary Sandle?

Brady: Sandle. Cheyenne Autumn? It is well worth reading.

Davis: I have read some books on the Cheyenne but not that one.

You were speaking last night about the co-operative nature of Indian culture and I thought afterward that there is one area in which they seem to be quite competitive (at least on the Plains) and that was in the competition for counting coup. Now is that right, or am I wrong?

Brady: Well, you are right there, but I don't see any dissimilarity between that and, let's say, the actions of a white man who is anxious possibly to win the Congressional Medal of Honor, or the DC, or something of that kind. It's just a matter which marked him as being a person whose personal

favor as a warrior was recognized. After all, anyone who has been in the army knows perfectly well that there are always a lot of boys around who are bucking to make a sergeant stripe.

Davis: Oh yes, but it was never carried to the point of being so competitive as to be deflective, was it?

Brady: No, as a matter of fact, if you counted coup on an enemy you didn't necessarily have to kill him, and the fact that you were the first to reach the enemy and touch him was sufficient to prove you were there.

Davis: That was what really counted, wasn't it?

Brady: The fact, for instance, if you assaulted the enemy, that you could be the first to reach him and touch him, come into personal contact with him. You didn't necessarily have to kill him as long as you struck at him and touched him.

Davis: One anthropologist I recall has an account of the Cheyenne in which these two warriors are racing on horseback to be the first to touch the enemy -- he was on horseback

somewhere else -- and one had a club and the other had a lance. And the horses were racing neck and neck so it appeared that they would get there about the same time. This method, the Indian with the lance could reach out farthest and thrust and he would count coup the first. When they were almost there upon the enemy the other man threw away a club and reached over and he grabbed the lance of the other fellow and put his hand on the lance in front of the owner's hands. So his hand was nearest the enemy and that lance touched the enemy first, but his hand was in front so he got credit for being the first to count coup.

Brady: Well, the very fact that his hand was ahead would remove any precedence from doubt.

Davis: But this is getting it down to a pretty fine point, isn't it?

Brady: When I was telling you about this message of my grandfather's, I forgot to tell you what actually happened to this message.

When the military reached Edmonton they put the fort under martial law and they ordered all the civil inhabitants to withdraw within the confines of Fort Edmonton so the garrison could protect them. But my grandfather and a friend of his who had also been a soldier of Riel's in Manitoba, an old French Metis by the name of Ben Vandal who lived at the White Mud Creek above Edmonton -- I believe about eight miles above Edmonton -- they were on good terms with the Indians and consequently they knew the Indians would not harm them. And they refused to obey the order to retire within the fort, and by some means the military commander had found out that both

Vandal and my grandfather had had intelligence with Riel. As a matter of fact, my grandfather had acted rather naively because he didn't destroy the letter after he received it. He laid it on top of a cupboard in the cabin that he lived in.

My grandfather was an accomplished violinist. He was a remarkable musician, he had considerable talent and, of course, he was in demand at all the dances and social functions and he had gone across the river to play at a dance on the north side of the river. He had played all night and he came back in the early hours of the morning and went upstairs to sleep so he was asleep. My grandmother made breakfast and she was preparing to do the family washing and she had had a tub, and she suddenly heard a noise and the clatter of hoofbeats and she looked out through the door and a Mounted Police Sergeant and four Mounted Police Constables drove into the yard. The Mounted Police Sergeant entered the building and he asked my grandmother where my grandfather was. She said, "He's upstairs sleeping." But just previously, before the police trotted into the yard, my grandmother looked up and suddenly remembered that Riel's letter was on top of this cupboard, so she quietly reached up and seized the letter and put it in the washtub and started rubbing it out on the washboard. When the police sergeant entered he ordered all the constables to search the building. They did thoroughly but they never found any letter because while they were searching for it she had rubbed it out on the washboard. So they went upstairs and they put my grandfather under arrest. Eventually, as a result of it, he served six months in prison.

Davis: On what charge?

Brady: On a charge of treason, having had intelligence with the enemy. As a matter of fact he and Vandal were sentenced by a military court martial to be shot.

Davis: He had a pretty close escape.

Brady: Well, he would have been executed if it hadn't been for the intervention of a group of very prominent citizens in Fort Edmonton who protested about this. There was a request also from the Stoney Plain Indians. The Stoney Plain Indians at that time were a formidable body of men. He was sentenced to death by a court martial held by Colonel Ouellette who was the military commander of the garrison.

Davis: But there weren't any real outbreaks in Alberta, were there, as there were in Saskatchewan?

Brady: No, outside of the Frog Lake Massacre there really were no... But it was due mainly to the intervention of prominent white people like the Hon. Frank Oliver and prominent traders. And even most of the Mounted Police officers were opposed to this idea of executing my grandfather and Vandal. But the most important factor in saving their lives was the

fact that the Roman Catholic missionaries were at work among the Stoney Plain Indians, because the missionaries had found out that there were two emissaries or agents from Riel in Saskatchewan who were at work among the Stoney Plain Indians, inciting them to rise and attack Fort Edmonton. As a matter of fact, the situation was so serious that Bishop Grandin himself had gone to Stoney Plain to assist his missionaries in keeping the Indians peaceful.

Davis: This was true really in all the tribes in that area, wasn't it? The Cree's almost rose.

Brady: Well, another instance of that occurred at the Battle of Cut Knife Hill.

Davis: Well, there the Indians were attacked.

Brady: Yes, the Indians were attacked and they repelled the police. But actually Cut Knife Hill, the battle, could really have been a terrible disaster to Canadian arms if it hadn't been for the intervention of an Oblate missionary. At the time when the police and the soldiers attacked Poundmaker at Cut Knife Hill there happened to be in his camp an Oblate missionary by the name of Father Bissonette. After seven hours of fighting the troops were beaten back and the retreat to Battleford began, and it could have been converted into a real rout because the young warriors wanted to pursue the troops. Naturally, if they had caught them in all the coolies not one single one of them would have got back to Battleford, because the Indians would have totally annihilated them. It would have been a disaster probably worse than what Custer met with at Little Big Horn. But when the retreat began the young warriors wanted to follow them. But Father Bissonette went to Poundmaker and used his influence and told him, "Let them go, they are beaten."

Poundmaker was the war chief of the band and his word was authoritative and every warrior had to follow the war chief, so he seized a lash and he threatened the young warriors. He said, "No, let the white men go, they are beaten. The Great Spirit will punish us if we spill blood unnecessarily." It was due to this intervention of Father Bissonette and his influence upon Poundmaker that prevented the complete destruction of Colonel Otter's column at Cut Knife Hill.

When they came upon Poundmaker's camp, you see, the truth of the matter is that no Indian camp ever actually sleeps. There is always someone awake in it at all times. They did come up in one sense but they didn't completely surprise the camp because one Indian who was up early and walking suddenly discovered the police and Otter and his men before they had an opportunity to deploy and surround the camp.

The Canadian attack at Cut Knife Hill was actually, well, tactically it was unsound because the commander himself,

Otter, seemed to display a complete lack of knowledge of how to fight Indians.

The old-timers who were present at Cut Knife Hill will say that Sergeant Dan, who led the detail of Mounted Police, the mounted men who initiated the first attack, when they rushed upon the Indian camp Seargeant Dan immediately wanted to fall upon the Indian camp (in other words ride right through the first line of warriors and into the village) and destroy the camp. If he had done so, or had been permitted to do so, the Indians would have had to come out and defend their women and children. But the result was that he charged up the hill and he had no sooner reached the top of the hill than he was ordered by Colonel Otter to dig in, although the police who had some knowledge of Indian fighting knew perfectly well that unless you destroy the enemy, the enemy's camp and cut off his pony herds, he will escape and fight again.

The scouts who were present with the soldiers, they found it very unrealistic because they couldn't understand why the Canadian soldiers used such a method of fighting Indians. The scouts and the police knew perfectly well that that was not

the way to fight Indians. The result of it was that when they charged up the hill they were halted and the police were left out in the open. Immediately then, when the Indians suddenly realized that the police charge had been halted and that the village was under no immediate threat, they simply retired down into the coolies and took cover. In the meantime the women, children and the older men and the rear guard party drove off all the horses and left nothing there but the Indians to fight.

After about seven hours of battling the police suddenly discovered that the Indian strength had grown and it was impossible to dislodge them. So Otter, realizing the truth, ordered the retreat. It could well have been turned into a rout at that time if it hadn't been for Father Bissonette. As a matter of fact, it wasn't the Canadians who saved themselves at Cut Knife Hill, it was the fact that they were saved by a Catholic missionary.

Davis: Poundmaker didn't give him any thanks for his moderation, did he?

Brady: No. As a matter of fact, he received a minimum of kindness with a maximum of details.

Davis: He was kept in prison for some time, wasn't he?

Brady: Yes, he was.

Davis: After the rebellion was put down? Well, he probably should have kept after the white troops. Might as well die a sheep as a lamb.

Brady: Well, the trouble too, you see, with the Indians, as

Kinsey Howard remarks in his work, what destroyed it in a military sense was what Kinsey Howard referred to as an inordinate sense of democracy. They talked too much and couldn't agree. Possibly within a lighter projection they were somewhat like the modern French republic.

Davis: Oh yes.

Brady: They could simply not grasp the fact that while they were orating the enemy were acting.

Davis: The trouble with the French, I think, is in France, that is, they have never completed their great revolution. They went through its middle class stage and that's about all.

Brady: That revolutionary task in France is still uncompleted.

Davis: Yes. The Algerians will have to complete it now.

Brady: The Algerians may possibly be the most potent political force in the bringing about of the final stage of the French revolution.

I have always felt that, essentially, when you consider the Metis rebellion, they were, in my opinion, actually an expression of what we would consider to be a nationalist liberation movement. Basically it didn't defer the least from the national movement against colonialism that we are familiar with in the last 20 or 30 years in Asia and Africa and in the Arab world. Basically it is the same thing.

Davis: Yes. It was something like the type of thing in western China in some ways.

Brady: I still feel that as far as the North American Indian is concerned, there will be no real advance for him until that national liberation movement is carried to its completion.

Davis: Well, that means that he becomes a separate nation?

Brady: No, I think it would be nonsensical for anyone to assume that he should be a separate nation, because the present day Metis lack... For one thing, they no longer possess an autonomous territory of their own with a culture which is strictly indigenous to that territory and free from outside influences. For that reason, you see, the Metis are no longer a nation. In the past they had aspirations to a nation and historically at one time, and how it points out it would have been possible to have created a native state in North America. But that period has receded definitely and there is no longer that possibility on account of they are no longer a homogeneous group of people with a culture that is unique in itself, having an autonomous territory of its own. Within the present political framework it would be impossible for them to exercise any solidarity of their own within, let's say, a system of Anglo-Saxon states as we find in North America. Consequently,

you can't hold out the perspective to the Metis or the Indians of a distinct nationhood.

Davis: So where does that future lie then?

Brady: Their future lies in the fact that they must... They are and have been the victims of colonialism as well as any

Asian or African, but they must be freed from all of the pernicious influences that this system of colonialism has forced upon them in British North America. They must be freed of the disabilities which colonialism has imposed upon them, or the vestiges of colonialism still impose upon them.

Consequently, what we would refer to vaguely as the national liberation of the Indian peoples and the Metis people in Canada, cannot be completed until Canada as a whole, and the western world as a whole, free themselves of that vicious system which has imposed these conditions on a conquered people.

You see, the problem was you were dealing simply with the problems of a conquered nation and a defeated people. You see, our struggle for national liberation or a future destiny of our own, that struggle was fought out on the banks of the Saskatchewan River more than two generations ago.

Davis: And that was lost.

Brady: And it was lost.

Davis: But the problem of the Indian really, first of all, is the white man's problem.

Brady: There is no Indian problem.

Davis: Well, it is one problem.

Brady: There is only a common problem in Canada and a problem that is cognate to the white man and Indian both.

Davis: This is not the way most white people see it, as you doubtless know.

Brady: You see, the trouble with the white man is he always thinks of the future and how to deal with future problems. But the Indian, he doesn't live in the future, he lets the future take care of itself. The Indian lives only for the present.

I mentioned to you once before how the Indian, for instance, when he comes to a farewell greeting, an Indian says like, I am going away and I will see you again. But he always adds, if I am still living. He doesn't worry about the future possibility of death. Death to him just means that he ceases living. Even in that aspect they differ from white people. With them it is the present. Why worry about the future because under the old Indian culture and the old Indian economy no one had to worry about the future. You had security within

the family and the tribe. You had a security which the white man destroyed and which he has not yet replaced. He has not given him any security.

Davis: But what can replace it?

Brady: Well, the white man can't give him any security because he can't even give himself that security.

Davis: Yes, and I think this is the essence.

Brady: And you certainly cannot give somebody something you haven't got. Then again, there is the inclination of whether you want to give it or not. Little Work, one of the leaders of the Cheyenne nation, said that as far back as 1879. He said, "The white man only gives you something when you've already had it firmly grasped in your hand."

Davis: Well, India found this out, didn't it, when they were dealing with the British in 1947? They got their independence when they already had won it.

Brady: Yes, when it was won the British were quite ready and willing to give it to them.

Davis: The same with China.

Brady: And it will also be the same with the North American Indian and the Metis. When they say there is no alternative and the problem faces them and they have to make that decision, well, then they will give it to you.

Davis: Well, do other people among the Indians see this the same way as you see it?

Brady: Well, of course, there is the difference too. You must remember that among Indians, Indians themselves also are subject to the same pressures that the white people put on as the white people are. You see, there are divisions among the Indians. They are subject to the same stresses and influences and divisions that you find among social classes among white people. For instance, there are Indians (an increasing number of them) who have acquired the acquisitive instincts of the white man and you will find even among Indians that there is a certain stratum weave of them who have, you might say, almost advanced into the bourgeoisie, to the point where they accept bourgeois ideas. Of course, once it comes out that they accept these acquisitive ideas and this identification with the bourgeoisie, or the desire to be bourgeois in their habits, they rapidly become assimilated and they lose any inclination

to be Indians. As a matter of fact, some of them will absolutely deny their Indian ancestry. They feel ashamed.

Davis: Well, it is the same in the States. The Indians there and the Negroes have the same classes within themselves.

Brady: Even among the natives at the time, you might say, when they had reached (it might be termed the Golden Age of the Metis) from the years 1818 up until the assumption by Canada of control over the West, there was definitely a bourgeois class even among the Red River Metis.

What is the time getting to be?

Davis: I will check on it. Your bus leaves for La Ronge at 6:00 o'clock, doesn't it?

(END OF INTERVIEW)

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