

Social Divide between Métis and non-Métis

Philip Beaudin, Métis Elder : I was born and raised in a little Métis town called Saint-Eustache. It was about 50% Métis and 50% non-Métis. What strikes me is that I had a very good friend on the French Canadian side, but yet we never visited. He's stuck in the corner; the French-Canadian farmers are on the west end. I was in more or less the town. Then there was an area called Fort Rouge. That was the poorest of the poor Métis. So the Métis and the non-Métis didn't meet socially, not at all. That really stayed in my mind. That friend came back later and he says "I'll meet you at the rinks", it was winter time, "we'll go for a skate". We went to skate and reminisce about the high school days and so on. Then when we were taking off our skates, he took off one of his skates and he just slammed it on the ground. He was so angry at his experience growing up, because there was this conflict between the two groups. So, it not only affected us, it affected the other side too.