

PETROLEUM INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: Larry Frantz

INTERVIEWER: Nadine Mackenzie

DATE: April 1984

NM: This is Nadine Mackenzie talking. Today is Tuesday the 3rd of April, 1984. I'm interviewing Mr. Larry Frantz. Mr. Frantz for having accepted to participate in our project. Can you tell me, when and where were you born?

LF: I was born on October 12th, 1924 in North Battleford, Saskatchewan and then moved to Saskatoon at the age of about 2 years.

NM: What did your parents do?

LF: My father was the Superintendent of the National Grain Elevator Company and was based at North Battleford and then his company moved him to Saskatoon. He worked in the grain business all his working life until retirement age of, I believe he retired at either 65 or 66. His name was William Joseph Frantz, he was a big man, very well known in Saskatchewan among the farmers and grain buyers. Traveled of course, by car and by sleigh sometimes in the winter. My mother was born in Poland, I'm sorry, my father was born in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota and moved into Canada, I believe somewhere in the early 1900's.

NM: Were his parents American?

LF: His parents were from the Alsace-Lorraine. My mother was born in Poland and they came over to Canada when my mother was just a young girl, although she did remember coming over on the boat. She told me many years ago, the story was that they were going to South America but they missed and hit North America. I don't know whether that's just a little yarn or not. Her parents homesteaded in Saskatchewan near the town of Radisson, which is between Saskatoon and North Battleford.

#031 NM: That makes you a true Canadian. Where were you educated?

LF: In Saskatoon. I took all my education in Saskatoon. I took one year of university prior to going into the RCAF and I trained as a pilot and got my wings at Vulcan, south of Calgary here. When I got my wings, about a month later they shut things down and I was discharged and I went back to university but only went for two years after that.

NM: What did you study at university?

LF: I had planned on becoming a dentist so I was taking pre-dentistry at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon and I came to Calgary in the spring of '47, right after my final exams in April to be best man at my sister's wedding, she was being married in Calgary. Following that I looked around to get a job and I found one working for Carl Nickle.

NM: So you never went back to dentistry?

LF: No I didn't. No, I did not. When it rolled around to the time that I was to go back to

Saskatoon I sat down with Carl and I told him that I would be heading to university now because I wanted to become a dentist and we discussed things for awhile and before I knew it I was working permanently for Carl. I did not go back.

NM: How did you meet him?

LF: I met him when I knocked on his door at #306 in the Lancaster Building and went in for an interview for a position that had been advertised.

#057 NM: What was he doing at the time?

LF: He was publishing the Daily Oil bulletin and The Oil Bulletin, which was a weekly publication at that time and he needed an assistant to contact the oil companies, actually a reporter I guess you could say at that time. When I started working for Carl, Imperial Leduc #1 had been drilled and Imperial Leduc #2 well was drilling, that was in 1947. I started with Carl May 1st, 1947.

NM: did you have any knowledge of the oil business?

LF: No I did not. I didn't have any knowledge of the oil business at all at that time.

NM: So how did you get involved with that?

LF: The only way I got involved was because Carl was looking for somebody to work with him and I applied and he hired me. I could type a little bit which was a necessity for somebody reporting. I sort of did a lot of reading, I took a geology course at the university so that I would be a little familiar with geology.

NM: Here in Calgary.

LF: Here in Calgary, a night class. There were only Carl and I in the office at that time so we had to all do a little bit of everything and that was the way I was involved.

NM: It must have been interesting.

LF: It was very interesting and of course, that's why I decided not to go back to university. Things were really happening, there was a lot of action, people were coming into Calgary by droves. American companies were moving in and as soon as they would come to Calgary, about the first place they would hit would be C. O. Nickle's Publications Office, to find out what was happening, where there was office space, where they could get people. We acted almost like an employment office at that time too.

#085 NM: How old were you at the time?

LF: Well, that was in 1947 and I was born in '24 so I would be 23 years of age.

NM: So what was your first work with him?

LF: The first thing that I did with Carl was I would phone the oil companies and get drilling reports on the wells. If there was anything exciting at that time, they wanted to speak to Carl, they didn't know who Larry was so they would ask to speak to Carl about it. In addition to that I typed, we cut stencils and ran our publications off on a mimeograph machine. I ran that, I was the one that ran the mimeograph machine, or was it a Gestetner, same thing, until such time as business progressed and then we hired somebody to do that.

NM: So you had very good training with him.

LF: Yes, right from the bottom. I had to learn how to read a financial statement because we

were not only oil writers, we were financial reporters, we reported on the financial aspects of the companies. So as a result I had to get in from the ground up and learn it that way, self-educate myself along with what Carl would have time to tell me about.

NM: And the name of the publication was the . . . ?

LF: The Daily Oil Bulletin and The Oil Bulletin. In about 1950 roughly, Carl sold The Oil Bulletin, which was the weekly publication to Stoval Publications in Winnipeg, to the Stoval Advocate Press. They published it in a slick magazine form that was later merged into what is now Oil Week.

#113 NM: What was the reason for Carl Nickle selling it?

LF: I don't know, I think you would have to ask Carl. I wasn't in favour of the sale of the publication.

NM: In this bulletin there were some financial statements, discoveries and . . .

LF: The publication is still in existence. Carl recently. . . not recently but in later years sold the Daily Oil Bulletin as you are probably aware to Southam. He had sold a piece of it and then he sold the whole thing to them eventually to Southam. I guess when you look at it, one of the reasons is he didn't have children that wanted to continue in that business and how do you get your money out if you don't sell it.

NM: So at the beginning this sheet was published every day and were you then selling it?

LF: Yes, it was sold to the oil companies, to financial people, brokers right across Canada and into the United States and into England and into Europe.

NM: So it was international?

LF: Oh yes, an international publication certainly. It was sold as factual news, which is was and I'm sure still is. It was a factual publication, there was very little, if any, editorializing in it. There was the odd time that Carl would write an editorial but primarily it was factual, statistical reporting. If we were not certain of our facts on a particular story we would either not publish it or where the source. . . well, close to where the source, not always where the source of our information was but we would see that it was reported. Or it may have been reported by some individual and if that individual permitted us to quote him, we would quote him and that was the way it was done. Anything that was in there we felt was the facts, the truth.

#146 NM: How did you get your information, were you phoning oil companies to have contact in each of the companies.

LF: Our information came primarily from the oil companies, however sometimes we would acquire initial information from brokerage houses, which would, believe it or not, sometimes get it before the oil company that was operating a well, had the information. We would then generally, check it with the oil company and if the oil company confirmed it or denied it we could report it as such. We did a lot of trading of information. We were on fairly good terms with most of the oil scouts. Specifically in the early days, how they are right no I don't know because I haven't been involved for many years. But a lot of the oil scouts would get their information from us because we had more contacts than they did and then we would trade information. We would trade information with them and

work it that way and they were very cooperative with us in most cases. We tried not to do damage to any company that was drilling a tight hole for reasons that they had. We would certainly not try to do them damage but if we had the information and we were assured that the information was correct we felt that it was our duty to report it. So this was about the way we went.

NM: So you had to be very careful.

LF: We had to be careful but we felt that it was our duty to report the information that we knew was reliable and to not report information that we knew was erroneous. And sometimes it was quite a difficult sidewalk to walk on, you've got on one side or the other. I would say that Nickle Publications had great respect of the industry and I think that we were very ethical in our operations.

#183 NM: What was the price of the Daily Oil Bulletin and then The Oil Bulletin at the beginning?

LF: Well I wasn't there at the beginning. The Daily Oil Bulletin started in I think, 1937. . . '36 or '37 in the Turner Valley days. I believe it was October 1st, 1936 or '37 but Carl will know that if you are going to interview him. I shouldn't really be telling all this historical thing because he knows it so much more than I do. So that was 10 years before I was involved in the Bulletin. Carl started it, I believe he was working for CFCN as a reporter for CFCN radio station. It was in the dirty 30's and he saw an opportunity to do a little reporting on oil and so he started a little daily sheet. He used to run around and give it out to the oil companies and brokers and . . .

NM: Was it the first paper of this type in Alberta for oil?

LF: I think it was the first daily one. There was a weekly called the Western Oil Examiner which was a weekly publication put out on newsprint and printed by a printer, the Oil Examiner Press, which . . . there's another story there. If you ever talk to Jimmy Gray, they author, he could probably give you. . . were you going to interview Jimmy Gray, the author. Jimmy Gray and I believe it's James H. Gray, he's an author, Red Light on the Prairies, historian, he's written a number of books, a very fine gentleman, he did work for the Western Oil Examiner. At one time he was editor of it but that was in the later years. One of the early editors was Everett Marshall, who is dead now. I used to see Everett on many occasions when there was a news conference at Imperial Oil or something and I'd be asking some questions of one of the fellows would be there and Everett Marshall would be there. He'd say, Larry, you take down all the notes because when your Daily Oil Bulletin comes out, I'll just take that and I'll use your story in my weekly. He made no bones about it, he would do that but we didn't mind. Really the weekly publication was no competition to our daily so it was. . .

#225 NM: A lot of journalists do that.

LF: Yes. So it was not. . . What were we talking about?

NM: We were talking about the price?

LF: Oh the price. I can remember at one time, I believe it was \$60 a year but it's probably 10 or 20 times that cost now. I don't really know what the cost. . . I wasn't really involved in

the accounting of the publication except in the early years. I would send out invoices and so on. Later on we got accounting staff and so on.

NM: How was the distribution done?

LF: Very uniquely and I think they still do it that way. When I was working for Carl in the initial stages, as soon as the publication was out I would distribute it through the Lancaster Building, that's where our office was. But we would get school boys who would come in at noon, deliver it around the downtown area and then go back to school. They had an hour or an hour and a half at noon so they would . .

NM: Paper boys then?

LF: Yes. Young boys from high school would come in and do it and then go back to school so that was the way and I think they still use school boys to deliver it around town at noon. They did a few years back, I don't really know what their method is now. But it was an economical way of doing it, it was a fast way because you could get a number of them to do it and they made a few bucks pocket money.

#254 NM: That's right, it was giving them work. And what about cross Canada?

LF: Across Canada it was by mail. And Europe, United States, wherever, it would go out by mail. It would go out airmail, which was the big thing in those days. Of course, everything goes airmail now but that was . . there was an extra charge for airmail as against regular mail as far as our subscription price was concerned but just about everybody took it out airmail. The oil companies, like say, Imperial would maybe get 10 copies at that time, now they probably get 25 or 50 copies to distribute around. Most of the companies, even when Xerography came into being were very good about not photocopying our publication, it was copyrighted.

NM: Because that's very tempting.

LF: Very tempting. I'm sure some of them do but I would say none of the major companies would photocopy it. They may photocopy an article or something like that but they wouldn't say, as soon as the Bulletin comes there, photocopy 10 copies and then distribute them around. Because I think the cost for additional subscriptions was not that great and I say, even when the photocopying became the thing, most companies would not . . they were pretty good about it. Some of them would, we knew, some of them did, they photocopied it as soon as it got there, we were told by staff.

NM: How long did it take you to get a good working knowledge of the oil industry, because you are right in the centre of that?

LF: I guess that's hard to say and I think it sort of came by use, by osmosis, whatever you want to call it, by being exposed to it. Initially as I say I was just getting the drilling depths, and reports, drill stem tests and so on, on the wells, shooting them over to Carl who was in the adjoining office and he would write the stories. Then eventually Carl would say, Larry you better write that one because I've got this big story to write, so I'd write the smaller ones and more and more you'd get involved in it. Also Carl had a daily oil news broadcast over CFAC that he would give five days a week at . . I think it went on at 1:00 or three minutes to one and being an old newsman and a radio reporter he found it very easy to do that. One day he said to me, Larry, my mother-in-law had a fire out at

Didsbury at the farm and I've got to go out there so will you do the broadcast today. I said me, he said, yeah, you do it, I said, well I guess I could, he said, read this, see how you are. So I read it, he said, Oh you'll do all right, that's okay and I'll tune you in, I'll be listening to you. As soon as he said that, that kind of threw me. And then after that whenever he wasn't available I would do the broadcast.

#313 NM: So you were becoming a broadcaster too?

LF: Yes, so then I became a broadcaster. And of course, without any training other than that one little piece I read to Carl. It was interesting, I didn't mind it after awhile.

NM: What was it, a summary of the news. . . ?

LF: It was a summary of the news of the day and we had . . . was it 3 minutes, I forget the number of minutes but it wasn't very long so usually what I would do, is I would take the Daily Oil Bulletin and just cross out a few things, mark a few things that I wanted to say on the broadcast and then I would take that and I would have my watch here so that I would know how much time I had and I would read these articles in brief, skipping what I wanted to say, the most important things first and then follow through and as my time was up that was it, I'd cut it off. Sometimes I wouldn't get the whole of what I wanted to say in, in that period of time. The program was sponsored by James, Richardson and Sons, which is now Richardon Greenshield, and immediately following our broadcast they would come on with the stock quotations.

NM: Oh I see. So it was very serious.

LF: Yes, it was. And then on Saturday mornings we would give a round up of the weeks news. We had a telephone line came right into our office so we didn't have to leave our office to go to the radio station. It was direct from our office to the radio station.

#344 NM: And that was on Sunday?

LF: That was Saturday, that one.

NM: Saturday, so you were working in fact, six days a week. Can you tell me about the type of offices, what type of offices did you have? It was in the Lancaster Building?

LF: Yes, initially when I was working for Carl, we were in 306 Lancaster Building and our office set up was probably about the size that Olga and I have right here. Carl had this office and then we had a general office, maybe just a little bit bigger than where Olga is there was our general office. Then we had a little room where we had our mimeograph in, which was about half or a third the size of this room. That was where we operated out of and we had 2 or 3 desks in the general office and eventually that got a little bit too small so we had to move.

NM: And then did you hire some secretaries?

LF: Yes, we hired a secretary that would do all the typing, or most of the typing, we would do our own writing and then hand that over to the gal and she would type it on to the stencil which was initially what we had used. Prior to that we would type direct on to the stencil, we would write our story right on to the stencil, we wouldn't . . .

NM: What did you do if there was a mistake?

LF: Well, we tried not to make mistakes you see. We did all the wrong things as far as

journalism is concerned. We would write the headline for the story first you see, because you would have to, eh. In journalism you write the story then you write the headline. So we did everything wrong in that basis. We would write the head first and then we'd write the story. But we had to because we were going right on to the stencil. If we made a mistake we didn't want to make it near the end of the stencil, we wanted to make it near the top of the stencil, then we could throw that stencil away and start over. But if we made it near the bottom then we had to use this correction fluid and work it that way. We were both, I would say, we were both very good typists.

#390 NM: So that must have helped a lot.

LF: Yes. But we were only for survival. We had to be because we couldn't afford to make too many mistakes.

NM: So you had to concentrate.

LF: Yes. Carl was mostly a 2-3 finger typist but faster than most girls who ever worked for us and I used 2 or 3 on each hand and I would say faster than most girls that ever worked for us.

NM: Because most journalists don't know how to type.

LF: That's right. They don't know how to type the proper way.

NM: That's right. They taught themselves. Mr. Frantz, you have been a witness to a lot of historical events in the oil patch in Alberta, can we talk about that?

LF: Yes you can if you desire, what do you want to talk about?

NM: You started working for Carl Nickle in 1947, what was the first major event you witnessed?

LF: I suppose you could almost say, one of the first major events was the drilling of Imperial Leduc #2, which after #1, you don't really know. You've got an oil well, it looks like it's a big thing but is it going to be a one well proposition. I suppose when #2 well came in that was a pretty major event. Then there was the indication that there is a real major discovery and independents, small independent companies were moving in, acquiring lease rights and start drilling. I would think that was the big thing right there, that now we've got something going and Leduc is a big, big oil field.

NM: This is the end of the tape.

Tape 1 Side 2

NM: Did you go to Leduc yourself to report?

LF: Not really. I've been there and I've been to a number of the oil fields but primarily the reporting was done right at the desk on the phone, maybe at Liggitt's Coffee Shop, Liggitt's Drug Store, which had a coffee shop downstairs in the Lancaster Building. That's where we would meet people and would find out a little bit of information. We would find out from lease brokers that used to pop into our office, where some of the action was going to be, where the oil companies were picking up acreage. So around the street we would find these things. When I say around the street, not really just walking down the street but in certain areas, in the Petroleum Club, in Liggitt's Drug Store, underneath the Lancaster Building was a sort of a place to meet some of the people from Imperial Oil or some of the Royalite people, some of the lease brokers.

NM: Was it easy to get information?

LF: I don't know that it was easy. You certainly had to acquire a good working relationship. They had to come to the point where they would trust you. If I went to somebody and said that I had heard that they had made a discovery at a certain place or they've got some oil showings or gas, they would say, what do you know, I would say I really don't know, I just know that. Sometimes they would say, look Larry, yes, we've got something but I want you to keep quiet about it right now. I'll tell you and you will be the first one to know about it but keep it until tomorrow morning because we're just signing up a deal with another oil company or something and it could louse it up. So that would happen sometimes that if I didn't have any details, I just had a smattering and they would say, look you're off base on what you know but I'll give you the true story tomorrow. And you will get it, I'm not going to give it to any other news service, it's going to come to you. Once they got to be able to trust you then . . .

#032 NM: You could have your scoop.

LF: You could have your scoop and that of course, it what we wanted, to have it so that we could continue to maintain that we had the news first. That's why the oil companies would buy our publication because we had it. So sometimes we would have to, not really hold the news because we didn't have it, we just knew there was something there. We had to wait for it to gel. We knew there was something there, we didn't know what it was and you can't report that. You start reporting rumours you get yourself into real trouble because then everybody's going to come to you and say, look there's a rumour that something's going on here.

NM: And they're not going to trust you anymore.

LF: No, and that could affect the stock market and if it's going to affect the stock market we want to affect it with the truth not with a rumour. Sometimes rumours affect it more than the truth. I've seen it happen when rumours are flying around, a particular stock will go shoot away up, when the story comes out it goes down, even though the story is good. We didn't really want to be a part of a rumour factory.

NM: Did anybody try to play tricks on you, as journalists do amongst themselves some times, giving you false information as a joke?

LF: I don't think that anybody did to us. We. . . as a matter of fact, I, did to a publication that I won't mention and it's not the Western Oil Examiner. A publication that used to use our news and report it almost verbatim. So I decided that I would set up a file that if we ever wanted to sue them, because we were copyrighted that we would be able to have evidence. On a few stories I would change the footage, if the depth of the well was 3,852', I would report it as 3,851' you see, little things that really didn't matter in the essence of the story. Then I would see what his publication would come out with, he would come up with the erroneous figures you see.

#063 NM: So it was very ??? .

LF: Yes it was. So I did that on a number of occasions just to document, if we felt that we ever wanted to use we could have a good case because we had the report from the oil company, maybe even a written report sometimes we would get, with the right depth, we changed it, so that was. . . it wasn't done in jest or anything, it was done just as a result. . . we decided that we would not sue because we didn't really think that this publication was doing us that much damage, even though they were stealing, we felt, our material.

NM: So let us go back to the historical events. You went to Leduc but you were doing mostly reporting from here.

LF: Yes, from the office in Calgary. There were occasions that Carl would go out to well sites but mostly it was he not me, I was the junior. There were occasions that I went out too. Really what can you do there. One thing you could do, when there was the big Atlantic fire, you heard about that at Leduc, I think Carl went and flew over it with some of the oil company officials. That was a general source of news every day. We always knew that we had a story while that was going, that well was flowing and then when it caught fire and so on, we always had a story, what's the status of Atlantic, Leduc #2, was it, was it #2. So there always was a source of, what are we going to use for the lead story today, okay we'll use Atlantic again. That was certainly a very spectacular thing. A lot of oil got away and it was a bit of an environmental problem at the time. Another major event was the discovery of Redwater, the discovery of Golden Spike. I've got to think, this was 30 some years ago and I haven't been as active in the oil industry. I think you probably got a lot of this material in any event from other sources, like Aubrey Kerr and so on.

#097 NM: What was the story you found the most interesting?

LF: I suppose one of the discoveries I wrote up but I don't know which one it would have been. It would have been one while Carl was not in town because if he was here he would have written the discovery story. I wrote a few of them because he was out of town but if there was a major story he would usually write it. I'm not just sure now, Nadine what would have been the most exciting one in those days. I wrote for a number of other journals while I was working for Carl.

NM: Were you freelancing then too?

LF: Yes. I was freelancing for the Oil and Gas Journal at Tulsa, World Oil Magazine in

Houston, the Rocky Mountain Oil Reporter in Denver, Colorado, the Oil and Mining Journal in Great Falls, Montana and . . . I would write for anybody that would ask. Usually Carl would put that off onto me because that would be a few extra bucks in my pocket which was always appreciated. So I would do a lot of the free lance writing. However Carl did become oil editor of the Calgary Herald on occasion and then when he went into politics I became oil editor of the Calgary Herald, working out of our office.

NM: Oh I see, so you did not move?

LF: Did not move over there at all, no. I would write the Bulletin and then change the stories slightly for the Herald and ship them over there. Then the Calgary Herald would louse up our story by writing a terrible head on it. Not always.

NM: Which year was it that you were working for the Calgary Herald?

LF: It would have been in the 50's, sometime in the early 50's, when Carl was a Member of Parliament for Calgary West. I guess it would be in '54, around that time, '53-'54. Also Carl was a very good and I suppose still is, a very good businessman. He not only lined up the Calgary Herald, we also sent news to the Edmonton Journal, another Southam paper, to the Vancouver Province, the Victoria Colonist, the Toronto Telegram. And we freelanced for the Financial Post.

#142 NM: How many hours a day were you working?

LF: That's a good question. Sometimes too many but I was young, remember I was young. Sometimes. . . usually not less than 10, sometimes 12, sometimes 14 but it varied.

NM: So was it that same story you would take and then change it a bit for everybody else?

LF: Yes. Actually what would go into the Herald, usually we would do a summary to put out on the night news wire to Toronto, Vancouver, Victoria. I guess Vancouver, Victoria we would send on the day wire and to the east we would send on the night wire for the next day publication. But it was a shortened version of what we had used. For the rocky Mountain Oil Reporter in Denver, that was bi-weekly, so it was then a condensation of that period of news and so on. It was not necessarily a difficult thing to do, it was just to update stories. . .

NM: So time consuming?

LF: It was time consuming and after we did get secretarial help it was a little bit easier because I could mark up and I would say, okay put this together and slip this paragraph in here and you know, I'd cut things up and maybe I'd write a new lead for it or something and that would do, I'd say okay, ship that one out to the Canadian Oil and Gas Journal or to World Oil or something. World Oil was once a month, we would send there, Oil and Gas Journal was once a week and those were the things that we would do.

NM: What about photos, did you ever include photos?

LF: Not in our publication, no. We did include maps. Now the maps, either we would draw them ourselves, I was a great drawer of maps, we would draw our own maps or we would get Nickle Map Service, which was run and owned by Carl's brother, Sam Jr. They would maybe do the map or we would use their base. Then if there was something important happening in a particular area we would take a portion of the map and then we would highlight the well or the acreage holding, whatever it was. But a lot of those maps

we drew ourselves or we updated from the Nickle Map Service maps.

#182 NM: And when you worked for the Calgary Herald were they including photos or were they not?

LF: No, if they wanted photos they got their own photos.

NM: What about Sam Jr. was he working also with the Oil bulletin for awhile?

LF: No, Sam Jr. didn't work for the Oil Bulletin, no, he had his own business, Nickle Map Service. He was, I suppose, probably in the early days the only oil field mapping service in Canada. There are competitive map services now but at the time that was the only one.

NM: How was it working for Carl Nickle?

LF: I found Carl, a very good understanding type of an individual. I respected him highly and I still do. I got along well with Carl except for one occasion, which I'll mention maybe a little later. He was a very demanding type of a boss which didn't bother me particularly. I would say he was good to me. We always say that anybody can be better but he was good, I have no qualms about how he treated me.

NM: He must have liked you just to hire you?

LF: Maybe that was it, I don't know. However there were a number of people that had worked for Carl before I did and apparently they didn't get along. After I had been there a short period of time somebody said, well Larry, you won't be here very long. I said, why is that, oh he said, you won't be able to get along with Carl, I said we'll see about that. But I did because I think. . . I don't know. . . I sort of felt that he was almost like a big brother type of a thing to me and that's the way I sort of. . . I didn't really feel that he was so much my boss as a fellow worker. He always anticipated that he. . . I should say I always anticipated things that he wanted. He was a great man for statistics, so I would preparer statistics before he asked me for them and he would say, Larry, I need such and such a thing and I would say fine. Because when he wanted it he wanted it now, he didn't want it half an hour from now, he wanted it right now. So I would go into my file and I would say, okay fine, I've got it and I would wait a couple of minutes and then I would take it into him. This was I think, maybe one of the reasons that I got along well with Carl too, is that I anticipated a number of his needs and had them prepared ahead of time as much as I could for him. If they weren't prepared ahead of time I could update them pretty fast because I knew he would want this material. He did a lot of talking to industry, to government, to brokerage houses in Canada and the United States, he was sort of a good will ambassador for the oil industry. So he would maybe be writing a speech that he was going to give in New York or Toronto or California and that's particularly when he would say, Larry I need this information and he was typing it out right there, so that's when I would have that material ready for him and zip, slip it in. I knew he would want it sometime, I didn't know when but it was there. So I guess that's maybe one reason that I got along well with him is that I was prepared for him. If you understand your boss I think you get along with him. If you don't understand him and think that . . . everybody has good and bad in them and if you forget about some of the things that you don't like and concentrate on the things that you like about an individual then you can get along with them. There was just one occasion, as I was saying that we had a slight misunderstanding

and we, I guess we both probably started yelling at each other and then I said, look Carl, that's it, come on, no more of that, I'm sorry that I blew off and Carl said, Larry I shouldn't have either, I said, let's forget about it and he said okay and that was it, we never brought it up again. I can't even remember what it was about, it was probably some trivial little thing that was of no importance and that was it. Certainly I know some of the staff didn't get along too well with Carl, sometimes I had to mediate this but most of it was because they were thinking the wrong way. If you think the other way, as I say. . if my wife wants to pick apart all the bad things about me, she's not going to have a tough time finding all the bad ones but if she concentrates on those few good little things about me then we can get along and we have for 35 years, so I guess. . .

#270 NM: That's quite good. Working both very hard, did you ever burn out, because a lot of journalists, after a time . . . ?

LF: I don't think I ever burned out. Certainly sometimes I used to feel that I had to get away from it. Remember I was pretty young too when I was working there and youth can put up with a lot. Of course, sometimes I think why a number of journalists burn out is they drink too heavy. I believe that.

NM: That's true eh. At the end of the day.

LF: Yes. So I've been friends with a lot of newspaper, particularly newspaper people who can get to be pretty heavy drinkers. Sometimes it doesn't cost them too much because people will buy them the drinks you see. So it's an occupational hazard in that industry. I'm not saying that I never drank, I certainly did, I drank my share but I've tried to control it. I think a lot of people burn out because of that.

NM: So how long did you stay with Carl Nickle?

LF: It was between 8 and 10 years. It was probably about 8 or 9 years, 1955-56 that I left Carl. Very reluctantly in effect. It was a very difficult decision for me to make to leave Carl.

NM: What happened?

LF: An opportunity. What I thought was an opportunity to get into business came along and I decide to accept it. However at the time Carl was a Member of Parliament for Calgary West riding, when there was a Calgary West riding, a Conservative member and he was in Ottawa when I had pretty well made my decision. I thought this is kind of a bad deal, I'm not going to phone Carl and tell him. Because I was running his publications, I was running his business for him and he was relying on me. So I thought I'll wait until he comes home some weekend. So this weekend he came home and at that time we were not working Saturdays, we had finally convinced Carl that we shouldn't put out a bulletin on Saturday. So we were not publishing on Saturday and Carl phoned me from Ottawa and he said he was coming home this weekend and I said, I think I'll pop into the office Saturday and could I see you when you're there, there's a few things I want to talk over with you, he said, fine, I'll see you there Saturday morning. So Saturday morning I went in and Carl was busy, I don't know what he was doing but he was busy doing something and I said, Carl, I'd like to talk to you. Yeah, Larry, I'm. . . . I said, look, this is very, very important I want to talk to you about, he said, what is it Larry, I said, Carl I've decided to go into business and to quit the Daily Oil, he said, what? I said, yes, he said, look, let's

talk this thing over, I said, okay when, well, he said, I can't today because I've got too many things to do, how about coming over to my house tomorrow morning. I said, fine, what time, he said, whenever, I said, okay, I'll go to 9:00 mass and then I'll come over after mass about around 10:00 and we'll talk about it. So okay, I went over and Carl was not . . . you know, not too many smiles on his face at that time because. . .

#351 NM: Was he very upset?

LF: Yes, he was quite upset about it. He said, Larry this is like cutting my right arm off, I said, Carl everybody is replaceable, that's the number one thing you've got to think about and as a matter of fact, you may even get somebody better than me, even at less money, you don't even know. After discussing this the full of the day to about 4 or 5 o'clock in the afternoon and one bottle of rum we parted and Carl said, I'll talk to you Monday morning, I'd like to think this a little bit, don't. . . well, I said, I've pretty well made up my mind. Well he said, fine, I'll see you Monday morning. So Monday morning I came into the office and he presented me with a contract and I said, Carl, no, first of all, I have never worked with a contract with you before, if I stayed I still don't think we need a written contract, that's number one. Number two, I've made up my mind that I really wanted to try this thing out, I'm still young and . . . I think I was 30 as I recall. . . I'm 30 years of age so I'm still young enough to go into business, if it doesn't work I can still get into . . . some oil company will probably hire me as a scout or something so I'm not too worried about it. He said, what can I do to keep you, well I said. . .

NM: So he really did not want to let you go?

LF: Well, I said, what I would say would keep me, you would laugh at so I'd rather not mention it. But I did mention it to him, I won't tell you what it was, I don't think he laughed but he didn't agree to it and I don't blame him for not but that was what would have kept me at that stage. So I did go into the printing business at that time and I also at the same time went in. . . or close to the same time, as President of a little independent oil company and also either at the same time or shortly thereafter started a little PR company by the name of Alberta Editorial Services, which I still have. I had a very good partner in the printing business who was a silent partner, who helped finance the business and it was successful and everybody was happy about it. And as I think I mentioned to you before, in 1980 I sold Foothill Printers to the British American Bank Note of Ottawa.

#416 NM: What were you printing?

LF: We were what you could call, initially general commercial printers but I then went into the specialization of printing oil company annual reports, financial statements and designing and colour printing. This is one of the reasons that the British American Bank Note wanted to buy our company was because of our expertise in annual report, financial printing and we were also the first to be able to communicate between word processors and type setter. In other words, we were the first ones in Calgary to do that, so that was also of importance to the BA Bank Note Company.

NM: What was the name of your company?

LF: Foothill Printers Ltd.

NM: This is the end of the tape.

Tape 2 Side 1

NM: This is Nadine Mackenzie speaking, this is the second interview with Mr. Larry Frantz. Mr. Frantz, we finished the first interview with you talking about the printing business, can we go on about that?

LF: Yes, I don't recall exactly what I had said about it but I believe I indicated that I had a partner in the printing business who was a silent partner who assisted me in the financing and also on the Board and I could test some of his good judgements and he could test some of mine that we got together on. So he was a very good partner. We did not necessarily publicize the name of the individual so I don't really think it matters. A lot of people knew who my partner was but we didn't publicize it. We had quite a small operation when we started, when I entered into the arrangement, I think we had about 8 employees. We did all general types of printing and then we concentrated, because of my knowledge of the oil industry and because of the people that I knew in the oil industry, I felt that it would be important to really delve into that end of it and go into financial reports, annual reports, interim reports, some of them which I would assist the clients in writing. We then organized an art staff and we would do the design and of course, the whole gamut of annual reports and interim reports. Press releases, I used to write the press releases for a number of the companies. Sometimes I would run that just through Foothill Printers and sometimes through Alberta Editorial Service, which was my PR company.

#027 NM: Where were your offices?

LF: Our first office was located in east Calgary on 9th Avenue, just by the zoo turnoff. We had a very small set-up there, probably 1,500 square feet or so. However I moved shortly after going into the business, I moved to 822 - 11th Avenue S.W., which was a building owned by H. L. Parry Company at that time. It's now owned by the Devonian Foundation, I believe, that building. We were on the 3rd floor and I had about 4,000 square feet. I stayed there for about 5 years and then I acquired a piece of property from the City of Calgary in Manchester and put up a building that was, I guess just under 10,000 square feet.

NM: That's very nice.

LF: Yes, that's a little picture of it there. I built that one in 1960. We stayed there. . that's primarily where our expansion started and where we really got into what I call the printing business and our growth was there. We had multi-colour equipment, before we left there we had photo type setting, interface equipment, whereby we could interface with wordprocessors, anywhere in the world if we wanted to but primarily it was done in Calgary and also in eastern Canada. If you understand what I'm talking about, in other words, if a company had a brochure or a prospectus on a word processor, via telephone

modem it could be transferred through a little computer that we had which would change the language from word processing language to type setting language and then. . .

#058 NM: So everything would appear and the preparation would be done, that would save a lot of time.

LF: Oh yes. We were the first in Calgary to have that. I had, along with my wife, I used to take my wife along with me, we would investigate at these various methods of interfacing with word processors and typesetters.

NM: So were you using that from an oil company to your offices, for example?

LF: Yes, we could do that from an oil company to our office or we could do it from lawyers, primarily lawyers. We did, as a matter of fact, I don't know who they're doing it with but we were interfacing with Husky Oil from their word processors to ours, I had done tests with the University of Calgary and the University of Lethbridge and so on. We had a few clients, not as many as we would want to have but then we were in the initial stages of it at that time. It was very interesting.

NM: So you were keeping up also, all your ties with the oil companies?

LF: Yes, I kept my ties with the oil companies as much as I could. I would say about 99% of them greeted me well, they didn't all give me their business because they had ties with other printers. But if they had a problem with another printer then I would get a phone call from them. Oh yes, they were very good to me, Nadine, they were just. . . I think that it was really more than I had anticipated that they would treat me as well as they did. Because after all I was a printer, not a new writer. It was a complete change of complexion. I was writing news about their company and now I wanted to get business from them, so it was a complete change. So they didn't really have to but I could phone up the Presidents of different companies and they would talk to me and they would say, fine Larry if you pop in, I'll interest you to so and so and then you're on your own, and that was great. It was very good.

#087 NM: And you're now doing also their news release?

LF: Yes, I would write new releases for the companies if they required me to do that and also would do the distribution for them.

NM: Were you having a big staff at the time you were expanding?

LF: When I sold the company we had a staff of about 35. When I went into the company we had a staff of about 8.

NM: What about the unions?

LF: What about the unions. Well, I guess the first year I was in business. . .the unions were negotiated in the printing business by a group of employers. We did it through our association in a way but it was not completely done that way, we chose our negotiating committee from the members of our association. Fortunately or unfortunately the first year I was in business I got on the negotiating committee and really never left it until I left the business. And actually I found out that I really didn't want to get off the negotiating committee, I was chairman for a number of years, because I felt that I had a pretty big stake and I wasn't going to leave it to somebody else to negotiate my contract for me. I

wanted to be in on it. So that it was a pretty important part of business. We went through one strike while I was in business, it was quite a traumatic experience because the unions struck at . . . not all the plants that were union but about 4 of them, I think it was, that they struck in the City of Calgary. But I maintain that the printing unions in Calgary are not very strong.

#115 NM: This might be a good thing?

LF: Yes. And I didn't really think that they would strike but the pressmen did strike this one year. So we decided that we better call our association together and see what we're going to do with the plants that are on strike, so that they can survive. In Calgary, mostly the printing plants are non-union. The larger ones are union, the smaller and medium sized ones primarily are non-union. So when we had our meeting we felt that we needed the support of the non-union shops to assist us in our business and also that if we gave in to the unions it would also increase the costs of the non-union plants. And the non-union plants bought this almost 100%, so they decided in full force that they would help all the plants that were on strike. So the first thing that we had to determine was whether we would be able to get our other people to cross the picket lines. In other words, with the pressman on strike, well you can't run a plant without printing presses, so if our typesetters would cross the picket line and our book binders would cross the picket line then we could stay in business by farming out our press work to non-union shops. So they did decide to cross the picket line because fortunately you see, there's three different unions and they didn't get along too well. So they decided that they would cross the picket lines and they did, okay, so we were in business. We farmed out. . . I had about 16 printers doing my press work for me in the city of Calgary. . .

NM: All over Calgary?

LF: All over Calgary. We were sending jobs out here and there. It was very tough and very tough on our plant superintendent to coordinate things because a company would phone up and they would say, Larry, where's my interim report for Cricket Hole Petroleums and I'd say, George I'll call you back. And then I'd phone in to my plant superintendent and I would say, where's that interim report for Cricket Hole Petroleums and he'd say, just a minute I have to see who we farmed that press work out to and find out when it will be ready. So we were always dealing with a third party. It was tough but we managed. In addition to that I had strike insurance with a Bermuda company and so it ended up that it was a very tough period of time, I think it was 6 weeks, I believe it was, but I ended up making money during those 6 weeks.

#155 NM: So it wasn't so bad after all.

LF: So it wasn't so bad. I had my strike insurance, the printer's were very good to us, they gave us wholesale prices so that we could make a few dollars on it. It ended up a very tough period of time but also it was a good thing for the industry that we didn't give up and relent to the pressmen because had we done that we would have been in trouble with our typographical union, who we had already settled with at a lower figure than what the pressman wanted, we would have been in real turmoil and so would the whole industry.

So it ended up they got what we had offered them before the strike and that was it.

NM: And everybody went back to work.

LF: Everybody went back to work with kind of hard feelings for awhile but after awhile it wore off. So that's the unions. I don't think any of my family will ever be in unions. I don't know but they're not very. . . .

NM: Was your family very supportive while you were having the strike?

LF: Oh yes. All my. . . pretty well all my children but one have worked in the plant on occasion. As a matter of fact, during the strike my youngest son would come in and do some work in the evenings on the press because he could run a number of the presses there. So I did bring him in sometimes to run a quick little job off for us.

NM: It was nearly a family business then?

LF: Well, it was. They just worked in the summertime. My youngest daughter, she had worked in the bindery and the paste-up and receptionist and typist and so on, which is good for them to do that. So they were very supportive of me during the strike, as was my wife.

NM: How long did you keep this printing business for?

LF: 25 years.

NM: 25 years. And then what happened, did you sell it?

LF: I sold it. I sold it to the British American Bank Note Company of Ottawa. The people who. . . they are very high security printers, financial printers. They do a lot of share certificate printing, they print bank notes, they're our money printers, one of the two companies that print money for Canada.

#189 NM: Sounds like a very good company?

LF: Yes. They print the postage stamps for Canada, not all of them but they're one of the companies that print those. They print a lot of lottery tickets. They're credit card printers, cheque printers.

NM: So just everything.

LF: Yes. They're very high security type of printers and financial printers. The company has been in existence close to 120 years.

NM: What were your reasons for selling the printing business?

LF: There were several reasons. One of them was none of my family really particularly wanted to get into the printing business and I discussed it with them but I didn't sort of push them very heavily into it because it's a very demanding and very stressful type of business. And that was one of the other reasons that I felt I would like to, if I could sell, get out of it, it's a very high stress, a very demanding, a very personal type of business. So I felt that it would . . . at least my business was very personal and I found it also very difficult negotiating contracts after doing it for 25 years. That I always felt was a personal thing, when I was negotiating, I had to think of the people that I was negotiating against, not too often were they my people, sometimes they were, but they were a committee that the union had put up and it was very stressful. So I thought, while I still can, I would like to, if I can get the right type of people to buy it, people that I could work with maybe for a few years and that would be it. So that was it, I found the right match and the people that

wanted to pay the price that I was asking and we made a deal.

NM: Which year was this?

LF: It was in 1980.

NM: So it was quite recent.

LF: Yes, quite recent. I was going to say, that prior to selling, the building that I showed you the picture of there was bought by the City of Calgary because the light rail transit was running right through my property. It's on the other side of the Cemetery hill, if you're familiar with . . . the LRT goes through the Cemetery Hill and comes out right by my old building.

#228 NM: So that was good timing?

LF: It was good timing yes. I didn't plan the LRT.

NM: You were also the President of an oil company. Was it at the same time you were having this printing business?

LF: Yes.

NM: Which company was this?

LF: It was Western Naco??? Petroleums Ltd.

NM: And what type of company was this?

LF: It was a little company, it had some production in the Drumheller area. It was later taken over by a company that you've heard of, Dome Petroleum.

NM: Where were your offices then, in Calgary too?

LF: The offices of Western Naco were in Calgary yes. But I officed in my printing plant. And then the staff was. . . eventually. . . the company was managed by Dome and then was taken over by them.

NM: Did you start the company?

LF: No.

NM: So how did you become President?

LF: I was asked to, I was asked to go on the Board and to be President. They had a President previously I guess, who was in Toronto and they wanted to have somebody in Calgary. I suppose you could say it was more of a Board member than an actual operating President, because we had an operating contract with Dome Petroleum.

NM: I see. What about the staff?

LF: The staff was. . . there was not a staff of Western Naco as such, because we had a management contract with Dome. So that our day by day operations were run by Dome, they Board of Directors then just made the Board decisions.

NM: And how long did you stay President of this company?

LF: I suppose it was a couple of years, I can't recall.

NM: Was it interesting?

LF: Oh yes, it was interesting and it was enlightening and so on.

NM: Were there any major discoveries?

LF: No, no major discoveries.

#266 NM: Then you went into public relations?

LF: Yes, I was in public relations at the same time I was in the printing business. My company was Alberta Editorial Services Ltd. I didn't really promote the company too much, I just thought I would like to use it for the PR that I did on, sort of behalf of Foothill Printers. In a lot of cases, if the job was a fair size I would farm it out. And sometimes I would farm it out to one of my newspaper friends, who did this as a sideline, if it was a writing project. I would get he or she to do the writing, I would maybe edit it afterwards to see that it was the way that I felt the client wanted it. And we would rewrite annual reports for our clients. Most of that I would do. Then I ran into a situation in Toronto, one day when I was in Toronto, I dropped in to see a friend of a Calgary friend of mine. He had a company by the name of Editorial Associates Ltd. Fairly close to the company name of mine. This fellow, name of Leonard Nott???, I don't know if you know him, I may even have one of his books here, I'm not sure. But Leonard said, by the way, Larry, I would like to have you affiliate with the company that we have and it's known as Inside Canada Public Relations Ltd. I said, oh that sounds interesting. To make a long story short I did affiliate with them and there was another company in Toronto and St. Catherine's by the name of Ontario Editorial Bureau, again. . .

NM: Your name was very popular.

LF: Yes, it was Editorial, and they were members of Inside Canada Public Relations. What Inside Canada was, in those days, was a group of independent PR people across Canada and into the United States and we had one affiliate in London, England as I recall. So we were then capable of taking on national contracts. One of the contracts that I looked after on behalf of Inside Canada was Stelco, in Edmonton, the Steel Company of Canada. Their Alberta operations, I was their Alberta public relations consultant, which worked out very well for me because of the closeness between Edmonton and Calgary. So I handled their new plant opening, I assisted them in writing a brochure and then of course, printed the brochure and so it tied in well that way. So there were little projects that I used to do on behalf of Inside Canada. Most of them originated in Toronto or in Montreal and then they needed an affiliate to handle that particular part of the operation in this area and I was it.

#329 NM: So also you kept in contact with all the other companies across Canada?

LF: Yes, we used to have meetings, we would meet in Vancouver, we would meet in Calgary, we would meet in Toronto or Montreal. I think once we met in Washington. So it was fun. The only thing is it was getting to be a little too much for me to handle.

NM: Were you traveling a lot?

LF: Yes. I was traveling a lot. So I decided that it might be an idea if I dropped that off. My printing business was increasing, it was necessary to spend more time with that so I relinquished my membership in Inside Canada Public Relations. I forget what year it was, I would have to look that up but it was say, maybe 7 or 8 years ago. It was then, John Francis. . .do you know. . .

NM: Oh yes.

LF: John Francis became the Alberta member of Inside Canada Public Relations after I gave it up.

NM: And now you are working on the same type of thing but on a smaller scale?

LF: Yes, on a small scale because I don't want to get too heavily involved. I'm what I call semi-retired.

NM: Are you planning to retire completely one day?

LF: I don't plan to Nadine. I kind of like to have an office. I've been coming for so many years to an office that it's pretty hard to break away from.

#360 NM: It seems to be that everybody in the oil patch is doing the same. Mr. Frantz, can we talk about your professional affiliations? You were a past President of the Calgary Graphic Arts Association?

LF: Yes, that's right.

NM: And also the treasurer of Graphic Arts Industrial Association.

LF: I was President of the Calgary Association in 1965-66. That association was the Association of Calgary Printers. It was an association formed for several reasons, I guess one of the big reasons is lobbying with the government and it was sort of the Calgary arm of the Graphic Arts Industries Association, which is the Canadian Association of Printers. That Canadian Association, I at one time, was a Director and Treasurer of and I guess for a period of 3 or 4 years I held that position and decided not to go any higher. As you know in an association if you want you can always go right up to the top, all you have to do is push yourself a little bit.

NM: That's right and then you have to do all the work.

LF: Then you have to do all the work and it costs you money. So I decided it had cost me, that I had contributed enough of my time and money to the Canadian Association that I felt that I would not want to go any further in it and didn't. But I had, during that period of time, I had made a lot of good friends in the graphic arts industry right across Canada and some in the United States. It had helped me a lot, I had learned an awful lot by associating with successful people. And I think that's where you learn it.

NM: And you were also a member of the Canadian Petroleum Association?

LF: Yes, I was a member of the Canadian Petroleum Association for. . .well, while I worked for Carl Nickle, our company was a member and then when I went into the printing business I immediately took out a membership in the Canadian Petroleum Association so that I could keep versed in the industry, what was happening and also so that I would be able to make further contacts with people that I did business with.

NM: And you were also a member of the Association of Petroleum Writers, what is it?

LF: Yes. That was the original group of petroleum writers in North America, of which, at that time, when I was a member, there were two Canadian members, Carl Nickle and myself. We were, I think, the only petroleum writers that there were in Canada. It was a great advantage to us and as I think I mentioned to you once, that Carl and I both did a lot of free lance writing and it ended up that I did most of it afterwards because Carl was involved in a lot of other things, oil companies and politics. However they did, after I had left the oil writing field, they did form, I think, a Canadian Petroleum Writers Association, maybe you are a member of it, or a Calgary one. There is a Canadian one now but there wasn't at that time, it was strictly an American one.

NM: What were the advantages of belonging to it?

LF: The advantages of belonging to it were several, one was. . . .

NM: Sorry, this is the end of the tape.

Tape 2 Side 2

LF: The advantages of belonging to the Association of Petroleum Writers, the APW, was I guess, if somebody wanted to do some freelancing for them, the first thing you do, you tell them, I'm a member of the Association of Petroleum Writers, sort of accredited as a petroleum writer. It also, although I didn't go on any of them, it gave you the advantage of having a tax free trip to their annual meeting, wherever it would be. I guess you could say that. And also you were then talking to people who were in the same business as you and that is always a good advantage, especially when you are out of town because they will talk more freely to you.

NM: And you can exchange information.

LF: That's right.

NM: And also you are still a member of the Calgary Press Club.

LF: I'm still a member of the Calgary Press Club, I was of the original members of the Calgary Press Club. I guess I'll always be a member of the Calgary Press Club, I think I will. I have a sort of a strong feeling.

NM: Once a journalist, always a journalist.

LF: I guess maybe that's it Nadine.

NM: The Royal Canadian Air Force Association.

LF: Yes. There again, I'm a member of that, only I guess, because I feel it in my heart, that's all. Not an active member, I just pay my dues. I used to say every time I go to the RCAF Association to have a drink, that drink probably cost me about \$237.50 because I've paid my dues and haven't really gone there very often. And then I'm a member of the royal Canadian Legion, but just as a social member. There again, too, because I'm a veteran I just feel that that's sort of something I should belong to.

NM: And the Austrian-Canadian Club.

LF: The Austrian-Canadian Club, which is up in the northeast part of the city. There again too, I'm not an active member. I don't think I'm an Austrian, I think that my ancestors come from the Alsace-Lorraine, but who knows, they may have come from Austria originally. The countries there are so close together.

#034 NM: And what about. . . you are the Director in several independent Canadian oil companies, who are these companies?

LF: Well, I was a Director, as I mentioned on the Western Naco Petroleum, I was on the Board of Odax??? Gas & Oil, I resigned from that Board about 3 months ago I guess. I was not in agreement with some of the things that the Board was doing and I didn't feel that I could go along with some of the things that the majority of the Board was doing. So I resigned my position.

NM: And now you are also the wise ??? governor for the Province of Alberta.

LF: Yes. That's a new appointment and I don't know 100% what my duties will be. A friend of mine, who I've known for over 30 years, does work with youth in the ??? industry and they do conduct a number of ??? projects for the youth. They like to have a Board of Governors, well they have a Board of Governors. It's a group of old guys like me who will advise them on different things. One of the things that we're going to do at a meeting that I'll be going to later this month is review all the methods by which they choose the youngsters that get into the ??? projects that they go into. How they categorize the age limits.

NM: That sounds very interesting.

LF: Yes, I think it will be. I was just appointed and I'll be going to their annual meeting and I'll find out at that time Nadine.

#060 NM: Can we talk about the training of the oil people in your time?

LF: Well, I think a lot of the people were trained on the job. A lot of the geologists that came into the petroleum industry in the earlier stages were what we call hard rock geologists, they maybe came out of eastern Canada or B.C. And they had a very, very good geological training at that time, now what it's like now, I don't know, but they made very good geologists. They certainly knew their geology. A lot of them had come up the hard way, they maybe roughnecked at Turner Valley, they knew the practical. They you go into say, the land people. Now there are land courses, petroleum landmen courses at Mount Royal College, maybe at the university I don't know. But most of the land people were practical people, they may have come out of real estate and gone into the land business. So they were practical people but they didn't know the legal until they ran into it and then they had their ups and their downs. Probably the landmen in this day and age are better trained, they're fitted out better before they got on the job compared to what. . . I know I had an offer when I was working for Carl Nickle from an oil company, they wanted to train me as a landman, well, what did I know about land, not very much. The same thing with scouts. Now I don't know whether there is a training program for scouts, but oil scouts in those days were anybody off the street would get the job as an oil scout. Now probably anybody who goes in as an oil scout has a degree in computer sciences or is a commerce grad or is a marketing man or something. So undoubtedly the people are trained higher than they were in the earlier days. Whether they make better employees or not, I don't know, it's hard to say.

#093 NM: You have been a witness to the ups and down of the oil patch here in Calgary and Alberta. Can we talk about that?

LF: Yes, if you like, what would you like to talk about?

NM: What do you think of it, the ups and downs?

LF: Well, I've seen a number of ups and downs in the oil industry in Alberta. They have all recovered faster than this one has or probably than this one will. There have been ups and downs with exploration whereby there's been a glut of geologists on the market and then maybe within six months they can't find enough geologists. In other words, most of the

ups and down have been for a short period of time, up until this recent one. And it wasn't . . . I can remember too, when we had one of our first downgrades in the oil industry and I thought, I'm going to hire another salesman. . . and this was prior to that down. . . I'm going to hire another salesman in case there is a down in the industry and I'm going to put this guy only on accounts that are not oil related. Which is pretty difficult because almost every business is oil related. Certainly not any that are directly oil, I didn't want him to call on any oil companies, unless he happened to have a friend there. So we built up a business dealing with people like Canada Safeway, with the Co-ops, with retail outlets, they Hudson Bay, Eatons, so that they were. . . definitely some of these companies would be affected if there was a downturn in the oil industry but not immediately in any event. So I had this fellow working on that type of accounts. And I think it was in the 50's when we had a downturn and as a result our business was fairly stable because we didn't have that everything into the oil business. The current situation, if I didn't live in Calgary maybe I could be an expert and could tell you what's going to happen but I live in Calgary so I'm no expert by a long shot, there are a lot more people living in Calgary that could give you an opinion about when this recovery is going to happen. Personally I would say that I wouldn't expect much for another 12 months. But I'm no expert in the field, believe me Nadine.

#133 NM: What about the recruiting in your time, was it mostly done through contacts in the oil company?

LF: Yes, a lot of it was done that way Nadine. As a matter of fact, when I was working for Carl Nickle, if an American company would come into Calgary, our office was one of the first places that they would come and they would often say to us, Larry or Carl, do you know where I can pick up a good landman or do you know where I can find a geologist that knows the western Canadian sedimentary basin and so on. We may have also had somebody come in and say, look Larry, I'd like to change jobs, I've been working for BA Oil for so long that I'd like to make a move. So sometimes we acted almost as an employment agency which was not bad because if we helped somebody, they were going to help us. We didn't necessarily do that because of that but it sort of cemented a little better relationship and if we knew a geologist that was working for Scurry-Rainbow or for some other company, that was a help, or an engineer or a landman, it was somebody we could phone. Or they would maybe phone us about something, so the more friends that we had, the more relationships that we had, close relationships the better off we were to get our news. So we did act on many occasions as almost an employment agency because we knew the people and we knew the ones that were looking. .don't tell my boss but I'm looking for a move, type of thing.

NM: And also in your time the oil patch was much smaller.

LF: Oh yes. We knew everybody.

NM: But nowadays. . .

LF: Oh yes. You'd know everybody in the oil business. And there used to be several parties that were put on by different companies at Christmas time and everybody was there, everybody in the industry. General Petroleums, which was one of the big drilling

companies, an independent drilling company, there party was just out of this world, but everybody was there, even the secretaries, it was the big party of the year General Petroleums. Carl Nickle used to put on a party now and again too but it got out of hand, there was too many people to invite.

#170 NM: So you have seen things changing?

LF: Yes. There again, it was personal. I could phone you up and you would tell me what was happening in your company and that was it.

NM: And nowadays it is impossible to do that?

LF: Impossible to do that. It's too big. It's not the fun that it was.

NM: What do you think of the National Energy Program?

LF: Not too much Nadine. There again too, there are a lot of people that could give you a more educated opinion of it than I can because of their being more close to it over this period of time. However I think that it's something that the feds really robbed western Canada to put it mildly I guess, we could say that. I guess they just got too greedy. They made it so difficult for the oi companies to make a profit and the companies have to make a profit or they're going to go elsewhere. As we saw, a lot of them did shift part of their operations to the U.S. They our drilling contractors moved out there and . . . whether it was good or bad to Canadianize the oil industry is doubtful. What we have to have is competition in any industry. And the competition should really determine how your industry is going to operate, whether it's the retail industry, whether it's selling cars, whether it's drilling for oil. When we start bringing in artificial means of controlling something we can definitely get into trouble.

#201 NM: Can I ask you, what do you think of Petro Canada?

LF: You can ask me. I don't think that it would be possible to disband that company now. I was not in agreement with it, even though the first Chairman of the Board was a personal friend of mine, Maurice Strong and when he came to Calgary to set things up I had quite a discussion with him but it was the Liberal policy to set this one up. I guess we were one of the few countries in the world that did not have a government oil company and was I guess, because of the importance of the industry in Canada that the Feds felt that they weren't getting their fair share of it and they were greedy and wanted more. I'm not in agreement with it but it won't go away.

NM: What about all the small oil companies which disappeared, which could not survive. That was a big problem.

LF: That's right. I haven't looked at it but it would be interesting to take the Financial Post survey of oils and see the number of oil companies that have disappeared, what has happened to them. Also to see the number of little oil companies that have been started too, over the last few years, and some of them are going to survive and some aren't.

NM: That would be interesting statistics?

LF: Yes, it would be very interesting statistics. If I was a writer now maybe I would look into that.

NM: Mr. Frantz, we were talking about Petro Can, can you talk about Maurice Strong.

LF: Well, I guess we could talk about Maurice if you want. Maurice has been a good friend of mine over many years. I first met Maurice probably in the late 40's or early 50's, when he was working for James Richardson and Sons in Calgary. I think he was a statistician. He also used to give the stock quotations over CFAC, immediately following my oil news broadcast and their office was right across the back alley from where we were officed. At that time we were officed in the Petroleum Building, which I think is either torn down or just about torn down, right across from Gulf Square. Maurice and I would many times go out for lunch after the broadcasts were over and we became quite good friends. Personally, his wife and my wife and Maurice and I. I know a lot of people have said some unkind and I think, some unjust things about Maurice. I've always considered Maurice as an opportunist, a type of individual who can see an opportunity. He also had, I suppose you could say, enough will to go ahead and take advantage of these opportunities. However I have not seen Maurice that much over the last years but I've always regarded him as an ethical type of business man. I think he has done a lot of good for our country. He has done a lot of great volunteer work I know for the YMCA and for other Canadian organizations. I think he had with his first wife Pauline, a family of 4 or 5 and one adopted girl who was a Catholic girl. Maurice was not a Catholic but he brought this girl up in the Catholic faith even though he was not a Catholic himself, which I think is something to be admired. I don't know, what do you want me to say about Maurice. I would find it difficult to say anything against him because I've seen so much good that he has done. If he has done something, as some people have said that has not been the right thing, naturally that is what people will notice. The good dies but the bad always lives long.

#279 NM: Do you think he did a good job starting Petro Can?

LF: I'm not going to say whether it was good but he started it. I think he put his all into it in getting it organized and in choosing, probably a man that does not have very friends in the industry, Bill Hopper. Certainly Hopper has done quite a job with Petro Can even though he is not that highly regarded by his compares in the industry.

NM: Mr. Frantz, who were the most influential persons in your career?

LF: Well, Nadine that's a very difficult question. I think that many times, when I probably would have so called, given up the ship that I had my dear wife Josephine behind me saying, Larry you can do it, go ahead, don't worry about it, we can manage. This was maybe when I was concerned whether I should get into a particular heavy debt or whether I should say, to heck with the printing business, I'm going to go back, I know Carl Nickle will hire me, if he doesn't I can go and work for an oil company. So I'd say that she was certainly. . .

NM: She was there for moral support.

LF: Oh yes, definitely. Not only just moral support but also good business advice. My wife has a pretty good business head on her shoulders. She comes from Polish stock. Her father came over from Poland with nothing and he ended up building bridges and roads, in Saskatchewan and in Alberta. The Eisenhower Junction overpass, that was one of his construction projects. He built one of the bridges on the way to Banff, I just can't think of

the name of the bridge there, there's two bridges going about 25 miles out of town here. He was not an educated man, he had probably about grade two but my wife has, as I say, a lot of his attributes. Maybe a number two man that I would say influenced me an awful lot was Carl Nickle. Carl was a very. . . was, he is a very good business man, he was and I would say still is a very good friend of mine and I think that I adopted some of his attributes. His speed of work, I can say I'm a fast worker, I know I am, Carl Nickle is a fast worker and I think I . . . Carl had a messy desk, mine's pretty good now but I'm sort of semi-retired, but I sort of inherited that from him that I have a problem keeping a desk tidy. You can ask Olga Webber over here, she would know that. Another man who I think was a great influence on me is my good friend Jack Gallagher. Jack, I admire him. I felt very bad when things developed with Dome the way they did. I also felt very bad the way some of the journalists treated Jack, unfairly in my estimation. But that's water under the bridge and I guess that's the way it goes. Sometimes journalists like to take a poke at people who have been highly successful, who are highly intelligent, and who have done a good job. If they can find some little thing they're going to jump on it.

#354 NM: They like to find a scapegoat.

LF: Yes, that's right. And as I say, I feel pretty bad about that for Jack but that's it, okay.

NM: What do you consider your achievements?

LF: I think Nadine, probably the biggest achievement that I would say in my life, in the life of my wife and myself, is that we have had 35 years of happy married life. I don't say we haven't had any disagreements, we had a few of them but they have never been major, we have never, ever let them go to bed. We have always settled everything. I would say that now that we are in the age that we are, we are enjoying each other even more I would say, than we did 35 years ago. We enjoy companionship, we enjoy our lives together. Our family, part of our family is grown, and part of it is at home or semi at home so we're enjoying life together and I hope that we can for many years.

NM: You had a key position in the oil patch. Did anybody approach you with bribery?

LF: Yes, on quite a few occasions this happened, when I was a writer Nadine, and I think that probably most journalists would run into that. Needless to say, I never accepted any bribery. I would not feel that it would be part of me if I did. I wouldn't be able to live with myself. I'm sure most people have had that happen to them.

NM: Looking back at your career, is there anything that you would do differently nowadays.

LF: Is there anything that I would have done differently, I don't know. Or is there anything that I think that I would have done differently. That's difficult to say. Again, because you always look and you say. . . you know, when I was in the printing business, I thought, this is a heck of a business to be in. It's one of the most competitive things that there is, I could be doing something else with less hassle and I thought of that many times. But then I also thought, gosh I enjoy this, I really do. I guess I enjoy the hassle. . . like, when you're a writer, a journalist, it's a tough league, you're meeting deadlines all the time and printing was associated with the writing that I did before really. It's part of the industry, PR is. . . it's all sort of one situation, printing, publishing, writing, public relations. So I don't know, had I not come to Calgary for my sister's wedding, I probably would have

been a dentist and maybe I would have been bored. Instead of boring somebody else I would have been bored.

#423 NM: And this is the last question, on the whole what do you think of the oil patch?

LF: What do I think. . of course, I never did call it the oil patch, I always call it the oil industry. What do I think of it, I think it's a wonderful thing. It's been good to me. Since I quit writing in the Daily Oil Bulletin, I have invested heavily over the years in different oil companies, some were good and some were not so good. I have made a few dollars over the years in my investments. I have lost a few but fortunately I've made more than I lost and I will probably continue that way. I think it's a great industry, the oil industry. I think it's a very romantic business. It's got lots of glamour, it doesn't have the glamour it used to have when you knew everybody in the industry.

NM: Your family was very supportive, always behind you.

LF: Yes, very supportive. My wife Josephine was born in Prince Alberta and we were married in that city on January. . .

NM: This is the end of the tape.

Tape 3 Side 1

LF: Yes, my wife Josephine was born in Prince Alberta and Josephine, her maiden name was Mamczasz, of Polish descent. She was born in Prince Albert, we were married in Prince Albert on January 16th, 1949. We have four children, our eldest John, who is married to a Swedish girl Lulamore Mattiasen??? and they have two children, Jonathan, who is about 10 and Christopher who is 8 and they live in London, Ontario. John is manager of the London Hunt Golf and Country Club, at London. He's a grad of Guelph University, Commerce major in Hotel Management. Our second child Patricia, is a developmentally handicapped girl, a beautiful girl, a lovely personality and is living in Red Deer. Our next son is Joe, Joseph. Joe is going to University in Calgary, taking Commerce and has one more year after this year to graduation.

NM: What is he planning to do?

LF: He doesn't know. He's very politically oriented, he's economic oriented, he's computer oriented. . .

NM: So he's talented.

LF: Yes, he's a talented individual. He's also mechanically inclined. He also was out roughnecking for about a year so he's late into university. Our youngest is Marion, who is going to university in Edmonton. She is taking Industrial Design, she's a very talented, artistic girl. She's always been a maker of things all her life, so I think she's in the right field. She's in her third year of Industrial Design, one more year after that and then she thinks she may want to major or something, so I don't know, if she's inclined that way, certainly she should go. So that's our family.

#034 NM: And none of your children though of going to work for the oil business?

LF: None of them, no. As I say John, who is really the only one that is working in the

industry, is in golf club management and he's in one of the top clubs in Canada, the London Hunt Club, so he's enjoying it very much.

NM: Mr. Frantz I have really enjoyed interviewing you. Thank you very much.

LF: Thank you Nadine.