

Jim Sinclair, Jim Durocher, and Ron Laliberte:

Métis Political Activist Interviews (April 17, 2004)

Tape 2

Start Clip: 7:04:30.20

(Video Tape: 7:04:30.20) RON LALIBERTE: What was the role of Romanow, was he a...

JIM SINCLAIR: Romanow was a...

RON LALIBERTE: In that, just before you spoke to Devine...

JIM SINCLAIR: Yes he was a, he was a, Dumont hired him for consulting. Remember? And Romanow was sitting with us up there...

RON LALIBERTE: Yeah I saw that.

JIM DUROCHER: In the background there, you know.

RON LALIBERTE: Yeah.

JIM SINCLAIR: And his advice to me was not to rock the boat.

RON LALIBERTE: Oh is that right?

JIM SINCLAIR: Don't lose your money, don't lose your funding, don't get, keep a cool head. And go down there and, sort of, there will be another time. And I, and I, on the way down there, you know, I had a lot of people coming to me and saying, you know, the old word, don't sell-out.

JIM DUROCHER: Don't sell-out, stay on the course that's, that's, you know, and get at her.

JIM SINCLAIR: That again, you know, I thought it over very carefully and I thought, I'll never get this opportunity again.

JIM DUROCHER: Never, never, never, it was a once in a lifetime thing.

JIM SINCLAIR: Never get that forum again. I better tell it like it is. I'll take my chances on the money. I felt at that time the money people forget about, but they'll never forget about what I say at the conference.

RON LALIBERTE: That's right. Took a lot of courage.

(Video Tape: 7:05.27.28) JIM DUROCHER: We had four chances, four chances in five years. Can't blow it. You got a, you got a...

(Video Tape: 7:05.34.04) JIM SINCLAIR: But if you think about it now, you know, I believe and I always did believe that we had enough in the Constitution by recognizing the rights of our people than by putting three pages in there. Because I always have and had a feeling that a Constitutional document, or document that recognizes rights should be very simple. It should not be a broad document because...

JIM DUROCHER: ... **(inaudible)** ...

JIM SINCLAIR: The broader a document is, the more it restricts your rights rather than enhances them.

RON LALIBERTE: Yeah, than you can interpret it all... **(inaudible)** ...

(Video Tape: 7:06.07.40) JIM SINCLAIR: Because it leaves you the opportunity from square one to say you have these rights, it's a matter of applying them and implementing them. And that's the job that the next generation has to do and that's where I think maybe we went astray a bit. We dis-, we abandoned ourselves too early and we got into the business of delivering programs and taking that away from the community and not keeping a political core that actually did these things. And I think the other mistake that was made, and again it's only my version, you'll get other people that will come here and tell you a different version, that if we set up that parliament at legislative assembly in Batoche, and held it twice a year, and made laws even that we only abide by, eventually those laws by convention would be recognized. You know, and I use the word convention because during the Constitutional talks, convention was used and convention's not a written law. Convention is just something that, that happens over years and becomes recognized. And I felt that, that would bring us into, more where people would recognize our laws more and more and more. You know, and I think that's the basis of, of what I had the feeling of doing and I, and I felt again I know that governments cost a lot of money but I said look let's share our money with an opposition so when we go into parliament we can have an opposition, we can have our opposition and we'll provide them, we'll share our funding. Because it'd be unfair if we had a group and Durocher and I because we're part of an executive, part of the same team which turn then, bring everybody else in that didn't have any money. So we'd have to share our money and talk about the issues and discuss the issues and have an open forum.

RON LALIBERTE: A debate.

JIM SINCLAIR: A debate.

JIM DUROCHER: Yes, exactly.

JIM SINCLAIR: And then make some laws from those debates and go back and try to keep them. Now we don't have a police force to enforce them or a justice system to really apply them because the way people think today, they're saying, well we can't have a self-governance. We can't have a justice system unless we have these judges, all this elaborate system. That's not the way you set it, you should start it up by making simple laws and getting people to obey it...

JIM DUROCHER: And get the communities to...

JIM SINCLAIR: Get the communities to obey them.

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