

Jim Sinclair, Jim Durocher, and Ron Laliberte:

Métis Political Activist Interviews (April 17, 2004)

Tape 2

Start Clip: 7:48:15.25

(Video Tape: 7:48.15.25) RON LALIBERTE: Is, is that happening in, in the land claim, do you get a sense of that in Northwestern Saskatchewan, ahh Jimmy? Where, you know, people are saying, you know, I know there's research going on the, on the land claim in the Northwest there, the homeland, the Métis homeland and are people doing that there? Are they saying, you know, like this is, to move that agenda forward we have to know what are, what are subsistent lifestyle was and where our rights flow from there, and are, are you involved in any of that? Or...

(Video Tape: 7:48.44.30) JIM DUROCHER: Ah no not really. I am involved in the Primrose Lake Air weapons range situation, but as far as the land claim is concerned, you know, I don't, you know, my problem with that is always been that people at the community level are not involved enough in it. Like to be able to make intelligent decisions and to be involved in anything because I think any time you make a claim like that you're doing it, hopefully, on behalf of those folks that live in that area. And if you're doing it on their behalf, then you need to go and tell them what you're doing and you need to go and tell them what it's all about, where the different stages, where it's at, and, you know, that sort of thing. So I think that there's a, there's a, that there is some research happening. I am aware that the fact there is some research happening, I think by Professor Frank Tough I think is doing that.

RON LALIBERTE: Yes, yes. Clem's involved in that, University of Alberta.

JIM DUROCHER: Yeah in Edmonton and yeah and, and, and, you know, that, that, that is happening right now, but I don't know how much community involvement there is in there, not very much from what I am aware of, you know. I don't think there is any big meetings happening and giving people information about where things are at right now, and what it means, and what kind of a, you know, what kind of a case it is, you know.

RON LALIBERTE: So, people are really aren't aware of what's going on. Is that what you're saying?

JIM DUROCHER: Well yeah....

RON LALIBERTE: They are not having enough input.

JIM DUROCHER: What I am saying is that, you know, there should be a little bit more awareness, I think, than there is.

RON LALIBERTE: Workshops held in the communities to get more....

JIM DUROCHER: Ahhh I think there has been a number of workshops, but not, you know, in the kind of way they ought to be doing it, like, you know. I think, I think they should be a workshop in every community that's affected, you know, that whole northwest side. And I think there ought to be meetings called, you know, periodically to have, to have people input.

RON LALIBERTE: Is there a lot of support for it?

JIM SINCLAIR: Oh god for that yes.

(Video Tape: 7:50.33.20) JIM DUROCHER: Well for land yeah, you know, there, there's always support for land but people need to understand, you

know, what, what, what, you know, what this case is all about. And I really don't think that, that... **(inaudible)** ...

JIM SINCLAIR: See I will tell you one thing that we done years ago and I don't know if people even mention it, Durocher will remember. When the TLE agreements came out for the Indians...

RON LALIBERTE: Treaty Land Entitlement.

JIM SINCLAIR: Yes, we went out, we went out to our communities and we went to government and we fought like a bugger to make sure that the Indians could not claim any traditional Métis lands. Okay.

RON LALIBERTE: And that's why you're involved in with Primrose?

JIM SINCLAIR: Now I understand that, that still holds. So that's a sign that government, if they wouldn't give away our lands, then there must be some reason they're not giving away our lands. It still belongs to us. So, why aren't we following up on that process and saying "Okay these lands that were traditional Métis lands, and they have to belong to us and we should negotiate on that." Manitoba made a mistake and I fought with Yvon Dumont till, you know, he was blue in the face, and that's hard to beat Durocher. About the fact when they took the Winnipeg case to court, about the lands in Winnipeg belonging to the Métis people.

RON LALIBERTE: The Dumont case, is that one?

(Video Tape: 7:51.51.02) JIM SINCLAIR: Yes, they had a good class-action suit there against the government and to take those lands back. But then they, they got to the point where the government and the Métis got together in Winnipeg and there was an argument about who should get the land and it came down now to, the last I heard of it and I got out of it then, I

said I don't support that. Where they were starting to look at each family who owned land there and the history of each family, so they could start compensating only the families that lived there. And I said, that land, because of Manitoba Act, and because of the way it was done and the Métis were, you know, ... **(inaudible)** ...

RON LALIBERTE: Dispossessed yeah.

JIM SINCLAIR: You can also say that Riel was, was the father of the *Manitoba Act*, in a sense, you know. He should be remembered for that more than anything else. That these people have the right to lands and they don't have to go back and pin it on this individual, get rich, be like a, like a, like a, like a lotto, you know, like a lotto ticket. They should be able to fight for those lands to be, those lands to belong to the Métis and any money come from those lands should go back to the Métis. Because, I, I even hate the word compensation, because compensation is like the end of everything. You get paid off and you go home. I want to see us included forever in these negotiations, you know. I want us to be able to, and that's what self-governance is all about. It's not a... **(inaudible)** ...

RON LALIBERTE: You don't want to give up any rights.

JIM SINCLAIR: Don't give up nothing.

RON LALIBERTE: You share them yeah.

(Video Tape: 7:53.12.05) JIM SINCLAIR: So I think that there's, there's a possibility there and I still think today, I know, I don't know how Durocher feels, but I feel if I was to ever get back to the table with the, with the government, federal and provincial, that Constitutional Section 35 would drive me, and others like me and Durocher, to the point where we would get

what we want, we'd get we want. We know we could do it and how we could do it and we'd do it.

JIM DUROCHER: Because it's there already.

RON LALIBERTE: It's in the Constitution, the highest law in all the land.

JIM DUROCHER: All we got to do is...

RON LALIBERTE: Forget what happened prior to that, you're an Aboriginal group, you're entitled to these rights ... **(inaudible)** ...

JIM DUROCHER: That's right.

JIM SINCLAIR: I don't have to justify why I'm there. We were already there. We're there in the Constitution and that's as far as we need to go back and explain it. We're here. And this is what we feel should come from these rights and that's why I am saying the *Métis Act* in Saskatchewan is, is really nothing more than saying the Métis exist. Did anything in that *Act* say the province will take any responsibility... **(inaudible)** ...with the federal governments will do, nothing. Don't do nothing. You can't even collect under, under Primrose bombing range, you know, why? Because Mr. Goodale is saying to the Indians, well I don't want to use the word compensation, it opens the doors for other things. Why not? Christ almighty they have the right. Why not? What are you going to call it? You know, why give all that money to the Indians in that territory and all those Métis people who had their traditional hunting grounds for years, suddenly they're not recognized. They're a people in the Constitution that have recognition. You can't say today they're here and tomorrow well, we don't know who they are, you know. Get out and deal with it. It's just that simple.

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