

Jim Sinclair, Jim Durocher, and Ron Laliberte:

Métis Political Activist Interviews (April 17, 2004)

Tape 1

Start Clip: 4:38:45.06

(Video Tape: 4:38.45.05) JIM SINCLAIR: That's a good question too I think you raise because I think really in my days there was, there was more of a tie to Dumont than anybody I think hey. Even though Riel was, kind of a, he was more just a higher figure sort of thing hey. We could identify with Dumont. We couldn't identify with Riel, you know, there is a funny reason about that. I don't know why that was amongst us. It was quite common in those days.

(Video Tape: 4:39.09.15) RON LALIBERTE: Well I'm sure that you never had the vision of what Gabriel Dumont Institute would become. And when you look at it today, I mean, you must think, you must sit back now and say wow, you know like to think what we started back then and look what happened now, I mean you never envisioned that at all I'm sure.

JIM DUROCHER: No, absolutely not.

(Video Tape: 4:39.23.23) JIM SINCLAIR: The thing that I might be a little bit sorry about today I was watching the opening of the Indian University, I was thinking we could be at that stage right now if we had maybe kept our elected boards and kept our, our vision. I think it can still grow. I think that it can still be, it can still happen because I think we still need to educate our people. And we still need that sense of history we talk about, and to do the things they're doing today should have been done a number of years ago. But I think when you go back again and the break-up of the AMNSIS organization, I was disappointed when it first broke up

because I remember the Métis leader saying to us, Durocher, they didn't want to even ever mention AMNSIS again in any of their history or any of their future because AMNSIS to them was something that should be forgot about in the past. And I didn't like that because, again, it was kind of an insult to all of those people who are dedicated to this movement. And the best part of it is those people who are dedicated to this movement were the Métis themselves that were in AMNSIS. Those were the organizers of the, the demonstrations and I think there's been a change over the last few years. I noticed it now they recognize myself in Edmonton a few weeks ago with a plaque and the Métis Nation Order, Order of the Métis Nation, which I thought was a great tribute to me. And other communities have recognized me for my work and, you know, that's a change that is going back again to remembering the leaders. And, and I told them in Edmonton, I said, "I don't know if anyone in this movement in the history of Canada that was well organized as better than the old AMNSIS people and the days of AMNSIS." And there never was and there never will be ever again, I don't think in my lifetime. But I think again that, that, you know, if you, if you go back, the half-breeds have to take all the credit for that, all that, it's all done by half-breeds and as now we say the Métis. You know, those were, you know, and there was a lot of, there was never an argument really much, some guys would argue about the fact that, oh you are non-status or this and that, but it never really was a factor. I wouldn't be the leader if it was a real factor. You know, I would have never won those elections I did over those years to win twenty years in a row.

(Video Tape: 4:41.49.29) RON LALIBERTE: It's kind of interesting when you look back and you think that, you know, when you created Gabriel Dumont Institute you kind of sowed the seeds for, for the future in terms of talking to people like you and setting the historical record straight. Because now they're coming back and, and we're, you know, Gabriel Dumont Institute is talking to people like you and that's great in my view because, like I said, there's that gap in the literature and it's people like you that, you know, I

mean you say nobody wanted to talk about AMNSIS, you know, forget about it that, that's not correct. We need to record that history and make sure that it's there for future generations to take a look back on. And, you know, people like you had talked about that part of history is so important because you were the people that lived it and, you know, that, that carries a lot of weight. And, you know, because things get distorted and we want to, we want to make sure that, you know, future generations have this to look back onto and, you know, see what things were like from the people that lived that...

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