

Jim Sinclair, Jim Durocher, and Ron Laliberte:

Métis Political Activist Interviews (April 17, 2004)

Tape 2

Start Clip: 6:55:44.22

(Video Tape: 6:55.44.22) RON LALIBERTE: And from the communities too, did you get support from the older group after that?

(Video Tape: 6:55.48.20) JIM SINCLAIR: Oh yeah, oh yeah, we did. We got, we were already getting support from them because we had a number of meetings over the years with the Pope too, not all at once hey. And I think they were going as the Constitutional meetings going on. In fact, the Pope, there was a press release where the Pope scolded Mulroney for his treatment of Aboriginal people when Mulroney went to visit him one year. And so that was very well done in the press, so, you know, Mulroney didn't like it but at the same time, because this is one of the reasons we had to go outside of Canada too and Durocher will tell you because, we had Canadian ministers going to these United Nations meetings and these meetings over the world, bragging on how great they treated us.

JIM DUROCHER: Exactly.

JIM SINCLAIR: So...

JIM DUROCHER: We had to, we had to tell the truth.

JIM SINCLAIR: I said, I said "We have to get over there." So my first trip, again, to the United Nations and, you know, I still don't know how I ever got there to speak to the United Nations and there was a, a huge crowd in that

meeting and outside there was even movie stars out there demonstrating along for the rights of our people at that time. And we met some of them. In fact, I was part of the demonstration. I was, I went up there and I was, walked up there with the guy they called Max, and what's the name of that police show they used to have? They still show reruns of it now and, what the heck was the name of that police show, I can't remember, there was a, they called him Max in there anyway. I forgot his real name, no it was, his name is Max...

JIM DUROCHER: I think his name was **(inaudible)**.

JIM SINCLAIR: But we met with some of them and, and went to the United Nations and we spoke there and I was invited to the European Parliament I think three times, in Strasburg, France and in Munich, Germany once and in Vienna.

JIM DUROCHER: Vienna.

JIM SINCLAIR: Vienna, Austria to speak to them and I was able to get our points across. Again, we spoke to the Europea-, to the British Parliament during the constitutional discussions.

JIM DUROCHER: House of Lords wasn't it?

JIM SINCLAIR: Yes.

JIM DUROCHER: House of Lords yeah.

(Video Tape: 6:57.48.13) JIM SINCLAIR: And I was invited to, but that was after the Constitution talks to speak in Australia at a United Nations conference, so I was able to get around a lot of those places to speak to people on behalf of the Métis. Which again, you know, gave us an

opportunity to make sure the Métis were recognized across the world. So, it, it gave us, gave us some good chances and I think again that, I think, you know, that I always go back and say that these things would never have taken place without the so many people that you, nameless people, that were out there helping us and working with us and our people who really supported us and worked hard. And like I said, Durocher spent the money for the, I don't know if we ever did get the money back?

JIM DUROCHER: No we didn't.

RON LALIBERTE: Fifty thousand dollars.

JIM SINCLAIR: But, you know, that is the best fifty thousand, that is the best fifty thousand we ever invested to get that opportunity, you know, and I don't know how we ever accounted for it.

JIM DUROCHER: And fifty thousand was a lot of money in those days.

RON LALIBERTE: Oh yeah. Sure it was. Still a lot of money.

JIM SINCLAIR: And nobody else would put a cent in for us, nobody else.

JIM DUROCHER: Yep, yep.

JIM SINCLAIR: They were all scared because they didn't think anything would ever happen, nothing would happen. They thought we'll get sent home because the, the Treaty Indians...

JIM DUROCHER: Well they thought we'd, we'd go to jail, that's what they thought.

JIM SINCLAIR: Treaty Indians tried to take the Prime Minister to court later on along the same issues. No they wouldn't have, the courts would have nothing to do with it. But we were able to do it, so, you know, it's, it's, it's again, I think, I think it went...

JIM DUROCHER: We gambled. It was a gamble.

JIM SINCLAIR: Back to our organization, our organizational work, you know, it all led up to all these things happening at the top. Without that groundwork, nothing would happen at the top. That's why I say that every Métis person in Saskatchewan in those years had something to do with the Métis getting into the, Canada's Constitution. So each child descended from those people can be proud of their families for the work that's been done.

JIM DUROCHER: Exactly.

JIM SINCLAIR: You know.

JIM DUROCHER: It was a community effort, that's what it was.

(Video Tape: 6:59.55.21) JIM SINCLAIR: So how can some of these young people ever go back and say well I wasn't involved, you know. Their parents and grandparents, uncles and aunts were involved. Every family had somebody involved in terms of that progress.

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