

Jim Sinclair, Jim Durocher, and Ron Laliberte:

Métis Political Activist Interviews (April 17, 2004)

Tape 2

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**JIM SINCLAIR:** And I started out forty-five years ago feeding people. I'm forty-five years leader, later feeding people again. So I've made full circle. And I don't want to feed my people, you know, I think the old saying goes well yet today as it did in that time, you feed people a, you know, a fish everyday, then you're going to feed them forever. You teach them how to fish and they can feed themselves. And I think that's the same way that applies to us. We'll teach our people to do things and we have the people that will do it, as long as we can get in the door, get our foot in the door. So we have a job ahead of us and I think it's going to take not just one leader, it's going to take many leaders. But then again the big question is, I think Jimmy is, who's going to lead the way? You know, who's going to lead the way? Is it BC? Is it Alberta? Is it Saskatchewan? Is it Ontario? Who's going to be, who's going to be the leaders that come up with some of these solutions that everybody will catch onto and start moving again? And until you do that, you're, you're going to be left with service programs and letters of, no I won't do this but I will give you this, you know. So I want to see that in the future for our people. And I'll help till my dying day as long as people are working towards the rights of our people. The rights of our people are so important to me, that's all I want to work for and some people still think I'm a radical and I go up and say, "Let's exercise our treaty rights, let's exercise these rights." "Oh geez that's too radical. We can't do that." Well goddamn it, you know, Canadians live by a Constitution. Why can't we live by a Constitution we developed, that clearly recognizes our rights? And we're doing the right thing, you know. We have our people. Our argument in those days Jimmy is, we have our people in jail for being drunk. We have our

people in jail for drunk driving. We have our people in for several things. Why not go to jail for political reasons, for demonstrations and occupations? And I'll tell you, once we start doing that, very damn few people ever went to jail. They didn't want to make martyrs out of any of us. They were careful about that. And that's what really kept our movement going and governments listened, start to listen because we were organized. And organize, organize, organize, you know, you go out and you talk to people, you can't, you can't go wrong, you can't go wrong. That's still my argument. And your institute that you have right now, by doing a history of, of the past and bringing that history to life, you can help, you can help. Because you can educate people, the young people of today for tomorrow. And you can do that without political interference because no one's going to stop you from doing that kind of thing. And even your own Dumont Institute can have open forums, political forums where you bring your students together and people together, and bring in old people like myself and others. And people with different views to talk about things and you build and you'll find your children will learn a lot before they get into the real world again. Let's teach them what's really out there and how they can go about exercising our rights and then again, never to get the, never forget the history. Now I keep saying this over and over again as long as I live, is that no one person in our day, in the twenty some years I was with the Métis people, has, has, has been responsible for leading the movement. We all were there. We all were there. And my role was only to be a spokesperson. That role would have never happened without the support of the people. People didn't get out and work, never, never would have happened. Like, Durocher didn't go to work and help me, you know, and politicize people and others didn't go up there, nothing would have happened. So, you know, you can't say Sinclair done this, Sinclair done that. The guys in the background should get more credit than I because they did the work and they did the work without ever getting any real honours for it. That's important.

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