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Don: I'd like you to know that everything you say will be taken down and used against you and; therefore, there's, you know, there's no need to feel uncomfortable with this thing on, it's just recording everything you say.

Liz: That's right.

Don: In he hopes that I can get something on you that I may eventually be able to use against you.

Liz: You won't be the first one that's tried so let's go on, my dear.

Don: Alright.

Liz: What do you need to know?

Don: Alright now, Liz, we have been looking at the structure of SUNTEP.

Liz: Structure?

Don: Structure of SUNTEP, and we've been using SUNTEP as a model of an educational attempt that has worked with Native people. WE've discussed already the fact that there is a good deal of Native input, control in this structure...

Don: That's certainly the key,. And I think that even to do it even more than we do it would be key in the sense that I really would like to have and I am going to try this year to finally get going. What Walter Currie calls it an advisory group, an advisory board and I think that would, something that should be planned for right from the beginning because it takes time to do and execute when you don't have time you don't do it. But I would like to have a group of people for this SUNTEP Centre and Rita, I know, talked about the same sort of thing up North, which would just sort of people from the community.

Don: You mean the advisory board?

Liz: Yeah, right.

Don: Would consist of some people from the community?

Liz: Yeah, right, it would just be a volunteer group who might only meet with us three or four times a year but they would be people that I could call, you know, when I needed to talk something out and with whom I could keep in touch to keep, really keep, from making some kind of glaring errors against what the community, the people really want and I would like it to be old people who would not just exclusively that...

Don: Are you talking about the Native community?

Liz: Yeah, the Native community. I don't have any problems keeping in touch the other...

Don: Well, would this, would this come into conflict with the Management Board?

Liz: No, because it wouldn't be a legally constituted body. It wouldn't be anything. It would just be an advisory group to...

Don: ...toss ideas?

Liz: ...toss ideas around with, and to help us keep this, it would be a group to communicate with the community, another group community to communicate with the community. Just ordinary people to talk with other people. Like today, for example, I had a student coming in who was saying, "oh, SUNTEP isn't, I hear out there that's it is not really, you really don't get a university degree, and it's not the same as the when everybody else gets it, you don't get the same teaching certificate." All of this is not true. But the people in the community don't know it all and these rumors go around because

there have been many Native programs which in fact all of those things were true. And we need...

Don: Sort of their conventional wisdom based on past experience.

Liz: Sure, but it's not true about SUNTEP...

Don: ...certificate?

Liz: ...And if we had groups of people from the community that we met with, they would perform support for us but they would also provide a communications function on a very basic level that I think we need and that is not provided through the AMNSIS structure. Not because AMNSIS doesn't try, but because the people who are tend to be on the management committee and on the Dumont Board are such extremely busy people.

Don: So who should set this advisory board up? The students? Faculty? Or who? Dumont?

Liz: Probably the Inst...it should be set up I think by the faculty and students involved with, of course, the approval of Dumont and of the Dumont Board.

Don: Yeah. Okay, so that's what you're saying here is that this is an additional appendage to SUNTEP that you could be really see fulfilling a good...

Liz: A very informal one.

Don: Yeah.

Liz: Very informal.

Don: And for liaison with the community in terms of community needs or...

Liz: Like if I'm concerned about something; say we think maybe we should make such and such a change in the program, like I'm not, you know, like I'm not sure. It seems to be a good idea to me and it seems like a good idea to the staff. But I wonder if it woul feel like a good idea to the people out there who aren't involved in education and don't have the prejudices, you know, assumptions and narrowmindedness that you can have in a profession.

Don: Hmm, Hmm.

Liz: I used to talk to old people like Mrs. Fayant that way. What do you think Mrs. Fayant? Does this make sense? And just listen for a while.

Don: One other question that comes to my mind is would this preempt or would it appear to reempt the role of the management board, would there be some sort of struggle there...

Liz: It might and I guess you'd have to work that out politically. But I don't think that because you might have political problems with it there's not any good reason not to try to do it.

Don: Sure. Okay. Liz, I want to ask you a couple questions now about the types of students that the program does reach. Who is it? I know we have a type of screening system for getting people into the program and justifiably so. Who is it that's getting in?

Liz: People who can hear about it. One of the biggest problems is communication with the community again in the sense that people are getting into the program who have good access to information that the program exists. They are people who work for AMNSIS, they are relatives of the people who work for AMNSIS, and increasingly now they are people who are friends and relatives of people who are existing students. But there's a whole massive community that we are not reaching because they are not connected in that way.

Don: And so you need some form of structured communication with people at large and again that seems to point back to the to this little advisory board.

Liz: And also a more formal public relation communication...I almost, I almost want to use the word "advertising budget".

Don: Yeah. One would almost have to use the term advertising budget.

Liz: You need a budget and you need...

Don: Because otherwise it looks like, you know, that the network of people that you get in are friends and relatives of the people who are already here...

Liz: That's exactly, yeah.

Don: ...so it's, yeah, okay. So you're suggesting, are you in fact suggesting some sort of advertising budget?

Liz: Yeah, I am suggesting a good strong public relations and liaison budget. Not just for that reason but also because whatever formal community organizations you have to work with, be it schools boards or be it universities or be it whatever institutions, businesses, other institutions of various kinds, unless you keep good communication open with these people, unless you take them regularly to lunch kind of thing you know, put that in quote marks, but you know what I mean. You talk. Unless you have opportunity to talk with them in both offices and outside of offices which means unless you can set up workshops for example and I don't know what the parallel would be in the term of setting up, but if you're going to work with school teachers in our case, we need to have workshops where the teachers come to us and see us on our own ground where

they--because that is very necessary to remove the stereotype that Native people are ineffectual and they need to come down here, they need to be, workshop here, that takes money. It takes a public relations budget to take, to have people come. Social functions are essential because they are one of the best communications of the public relations kinds of things. And that takes budget. One of the mistakes in setting up the SUNTEP Program was that there was not an adequate liaison budget, public relations budget or advertising budget. Put all those three words together and you kind of got a sense of what is inadequate.

Don: What about the Riel Local? I know they have advisors, counsellors there that will discuss with people coming in their employment needs and their educational needs...

Liz: The Riel Local, they're...

Don: ...are they utilized?

Liz: ...yeah, they're a great help and we use them a lot. And also the Northeast Area people...

Don: But they're still not reaching all the people?

Liz: ...are fantastic. We're still not reaching, we're still only reaching people who hear about it and have the 'hootspa' to come in to the local or who are related or friends of people who are in the local. Which is still a small, small group.

Don: You're still getting that interpersonal network?

Liz: Hmm, Hmm.

Don: And so you're still not reaching a larger audience?

Liz: I'm criticizing the support we get out of all we get out of the Native Employment Centre, we get out of all kinds of people. But somehow we should and I think it's related to budgeting and to staff time. We do not have enough staff to do the basic functions of the program, let alone to do these other things which people tend to see as frills which are not frills.

Don: What about "New Breed" an other fairly well circulated magazines?

Liz: Once again, we get good support from "New Breed" any time we want to put an article in "New Breed", they'd say "fine," but again it still reaches a limited audience.

Don: So you have to have what you say an on going...

Liz: Right.

Don: ...Program.

Liz: A well planned...

Don: Perhaps even a full time person involved.

Liz: ...publicity. Certainly somebody who has a large percentage of their...

Don: What about the field liaison staff?

Liz: That's been tried and it simply hasn't worked and once again I don't think it's the fault of the liaison staff. They had no training in public relations in their budget for them.

Don: Yeah, I think that's being changed now. I think they are been getting things--university classes.

Liz: But they still need budget. It all comes down...

Don: Okay, so...

Liz: ...to budget.

Don: It comes down to budget. So you've described, liked, in one way who the people are that are getting into the classes and how they're finding their way here. What are their qualifications? I know that SUNTEP Program has the same academic qualification as university entrance and the same qualification as regards adult education. What percentage of people are coming in here through the adult entrance criteria?

Liz: Ninety percent.

Don: Is that right? It's that high?

Liz: Now, SUNTEP Saskatoon I understand has a somewhat higher percentage of people with their grade twelve. But I would say SUNTEP P.A. and us, it's 90%.

Don: Liz, what is your experience as a teacher in dealing with this group of people in university, are they normally better students, worst students, do they normally have a higher dropout rate than the children that go right through grade twelve to the regular school system and pop into university which was their...

Liz: Well, you're asking a question that has a lot of pieces to it, and also it calls for a lot of personal judgements but I'll answer it. First of all, factually, statistically our dropout rate is much lower than that of the university. That's a fact.

Don: Now when you say it's much lower than the university, you're referring there to faculty of education?

Liz: Yes, although I think that probably that would go to

the university as a whole. For example, when I was on faculty or grad student at the university, the attrition rate from the first year through to the third year was, I remember somebody saying 60%. Now, I don't know if that's an accurate figure. But I remember hearing that word. Now ours we have, up until this present day, we have a complement of 30, and we have been minus six; two of which we've asked to leave and the rest of which left for various personal reasons...

Don: Hmm, Hmm.

Liz: ...for personal reasons. Now that's a much higher...

Don: That's over two years?

Liz: ...that's over a two year period. Now...

Don: That's 3/30, that's...what's that?

Liz: Ten percent.

Don: Ten percent. You only have a 10% dropout rate per year?

Liz: So far. Now, I am not guaranteeing that that will continue...

Don: No.

Liz: ...because...

Don: Well, that's pretty remarkable considering that it was a new program.

Liz: ...the other side of that coin is that you mustn't let your concern with dropout rate cause you to lower standards and the other side of the standards coin, is you mustn't confuse standards with learning style. You can have the same standard but change the learning style and the teaching style of your program to suit that of the people you're working with. That's only good pedagogy. But your standards remain the same.

Don: Now, these high standards, I can see them really doing quite a productive task with the consciousness of the students coming here because we all know that in the past, a lot of so-called educational programs were sort of covered up to make work programs for the winter.

Liz: Bullshit training.

Don: Bullshit training. But these high standards would very quickly tend to end the consciousness of paternalism...

Liz: I hope so. Well, you...

Don: It doesn't seem to work that way? It was a leading question.

Liz: Yeah, it's working. Don, it is a leading question but it's working that way. For example, one of the students just going into second year program, Calvin Racette has received the university of general proficiency scholarship. Somebody just said to me...

Don: Calvin?

Liz: Yeah, Calvin...

Don: Received the university genral proficiency...

Liz: Scholarship.

Don: ...scholarship?

Liz: And...

Don: What's Calvin's last name?

Liz: Racette.

Don: Can I use it, in my...

Liz: Sure; well, don't know. You'd better check with Calvin, but...

Don: He wouldn't mind, would he?

Liz: I doubt it.

Don: After all, it's an honour.

Liz: I doubt it.

Don: The university general proficiency scholarship...

Liz: General proficiency scholarship at the end of his first year in he program and somebody said to me, you know it wasn't Calvin that won that scholarship, it's the whole Metis community of Indian Head where he comes from. Like that's really important. The exact kind of perception is going to, I think...

Don: By that thing, meant that we've all gained prestige.

Liz: Yeah. I'm feeling good, feeling good. That's feeling good. Another thing I guess I would want you to take into consideration of this kind of program...

Don: You don't know who said that, do you?

Liz: Yeah, I do.

Don: Was it one of Calvin's...I may not be able to put the person's name...

Liz: It wasn't another student.

Don: No.

Liz: It was just a person.

Don: A Metis person?

Liz: A Metis person.

Don: In the community?

Liz: Yeah. The other thing though that it's important for you to realize is that if you're planning a program, you must consider feelings and emotions, and plan for personal development as well as professional development. It's not enough just to plan, it's not enough to plan for having a series of classes. That's a good way to fail. You'll fail for sure if all you're thinking of is giving them these classes. You've got to think in terms of an integrated developmental program which considers the professional development, the academic development, and this personal development, and I can give you research to come out of your ears to prove that.

Don: The whole person?

Liz: Yeah, that's a phrase, cliché phrase. But you're right. But think of it in terms of professional training, academic training, personal training, all into an integrated program, a whole, which will in fact make life changes in people. And then you better watch out that those life changes do not assimilate instead of help people to integrate and deal with. Then you need the strong Native base and a strong concern with uniqueness and was not being assimilative. It's tremendously complex. And if you don't think of it as a tremendously complex developmental process, it's fail all over the map.

Don: Now, is that developmental process, do you find it happening...

Liz: Yes.

Don: ...as you go along?

Liz: Yes. Absolutely.

Don: At an even more or less spontaneously...

Liz: Not spontaneous at all. It has to be very carefully structured and planned. There's no spontaneity...

Don: Yeah, but what I'm saying, Liz, is that...

Liz: ...involved.

Don: ...here's a new situation. Here are new people coming in off the street, to use a negative term for a second, and suddenly I think people like yourselves maybe faced with new problems, problems you haven't faced. So, when I say spontaneous, I mean that here comes a problem that you haven't had to address before. Now, what you have to do it to plan around that.

Don: But if you've got, if you've planned that developmental process which is integrative, not assimilative which thinks about the three areas that I talked about. You can only be flexible within a well planned structure. You cannot be flexible if you do not have any well planned structure because you are so dammed scared all the time that everything is going to go wrong. So, the program needs to be carefully planned for and like spontaneity will kill you. Spontaneity day to day in the sense of flexibility with individual learning and growth course...

Don: Yeah.

Liz: But you build and plan for that too. That doesn't happen. No. Jesus Murphy am I ever turning out a sermon here.

Don: Okay, listen. So this program then from what you've said is reaching Native people from all classes and it's reaching a lot of people from the lower class--I'm not using a negative term--but people whose socio-economic status was not the highest.

Liz: I think that's taken as read; yeah, I guess.

Don: And is it reaching people that at the mement who somehow or other, I know they're getting in here by word of mouth, getting in here because somebody told them about this program and they know it's a credible program, who were the people that we're missing and what I presume they again are a cross-section of all the social economic strata?

Liz: Don, I don't know who we're missing. And it, like, I know we're missing poeple. I know it because I hear comments.

Don: I mean the classes are being filled up.

Liz: Yeah.

Don: Just?

Liz: But no more than just.

Don: Yeah.

Liz: And I know we're missing the North, okay. Almost totally.

Don: Why is that?

Liz: Because SUNTEP is in the south. And Because the original planning, and the original name of SUNTEP was the southern urban native teacher education program.

Don: Well, yeah. The thing is that there's NORTEP.

Liz: BUt NORTEP can only fill only a small tiny percentage of the need, and NORTEP will tellyou that if you talk to them.

Don: Okay, so what we're saying here is that in terms of techer training then, there's a lot of people in the north tht aren't going to receive teacher training because there is no program in place.

Liz: Yeah, I think we're missing people in large areas of Metis settlements more to the north of Saskatchewan than any of our programs, maybe Meadow Lake, maybe whatever, I don't know. Maybe Yorkton. I don't know.

Don: But what about in the south here? You know we're getting fifteen from Regina to a maximum of forty-five. We're geting the same in Saskatoon. WE look at the Native population of those cities, there's 30,000 here and perhaps half that in Saskatoon, perhpas more than half that. So, there's obviously a lot of people we aren't getting at.

Liz: I don't think you need it under SUNTEP...

Don: These people don't have grade twelve, I presume in the main.

Liz: And many, we're missing a lot of people who feel that because they don't have grade twelve there's no use applying.

Don: Yeah. And...

Liz: That's the kind of word we have to get out.

Don: Yeah.

Liz: Also we're missing people who are not interested in being teachers. People who wnat to be other things. We need--SUNTEP we need, lawyer training, nurses training, doctor training, engineering training, administrator training, we need SUNTEP's that aren't SUNTEP's, but other kinds of things for all kinds of professional programs.

Don: What about the trades?

Liz: Sure. I was--because you've asked if the SUNTEP model whether it's professional development model...

Don: It's a professional model.

Liz: ...and it's very important that it's professional. We work on a professional basis here but all you--there's no--there's very little adaptation to do to turn it into a

journeyman training model.

Don: You think that the model...

Liz: Sure.

Don: ...itself as far as pedagogical and tutorial structures go...

Liz: Well, it's integrative developmental training model which works. It's got to be practically related but based in good theory. Never get away from that. Let's not fly around loose and play any pre-school stuff. But let's not be inflexible and non-individualistic.

Don: WHat about the native input again we're looking at this as a model for trades training.

Liz: Sure, it would be as important.

Don: Just as important.

Liz: It's a given, you're not going to get anywhere unless you got it. Unless people have control over their own training, their own directions, unless--and that's true too--for the staff should be, and I know ths is against the Human Rights Code, but the staff should be native as much as possible and there should be a strong element of the training of the staff so that they--training shouldn't be just the students--but also the staff, it should be developmental in all of its aspects because he job is so big. And the staff should be--have a great deal of control over what goes on, make sure they have co-operative decision-making, it's essential to a good training program. Respect for each and every person's professional expertise, personal expertise, and for the growth of both of those, whether they be staff or students is essential. Absolutely. And then if you really want to know what the SUNTEP model is, I told another one the guys upstairs what I though it was. It was do these things and work your ass off. And I wouldn't mind if you quote that with oblique. It's hard work with incredible dedication by the staffs and the students. And a felling that they are all together in creating...

Don: Do you have his feeling of comradery?

Liz: Oh, absolutely.

Don: Does that feeling of comradery go beyond simply the native students themselves and enter into the relationship between native students and one teacher even where there are white teachers in the system?

Liz: Well, the students are often proud of the fact that if you give them a white professor from the university within a month they can co-op him into the program.

Don: Yeah.

Liz: And he becomes...

Don: Emotionally...

Liz: Yeah. And they know they're doing this and they like, they, you have to have respect. These people come in with tremendous amount of knowledge and ability and background. They've got so much that you must have respect for that and use that to develop.

Don: So, the professors then that come in from the university to teach regular subjects are themselves being exposed to something new, you're saying and are themselves finding themselves getting caught up in this.

Liz: And they're growing and changing. Somewhere I've got a paper that I wrote called Mutual Change.

Don: So that in itself is a bit innovative, is it not?

Liz: A bit?

Don: Yeah.

Liz: It's dammed revolutionary. Because what's happening here is that and the university accepts this, Dr. Richart and I wrote a paper together on this that one of the major things that the university is doing or that the program is doing as far as its liaison with the university is mutual change. And mutual growth. And they must have respect for what they can learn from the SUNTEP students and they do. The administration has great respect, I don't know, I can't tell you about the University of Saskatchewan, I don't know nothing about that. But the University in Faculty of Education, Administration here has great respect for what they are learning and they're beginning to be aware of the painfulness of change and growth for them.

Don: Hmm, this program has acted as a catalyst in bringing that about. Okay. I think Liz that's all wanted to talk to you about.

Liz: Oh God, you've got enough B.S. on...

AUGUST 11, 1982

(END OF INTERVIEW)