



# Métis Nation



May 2019

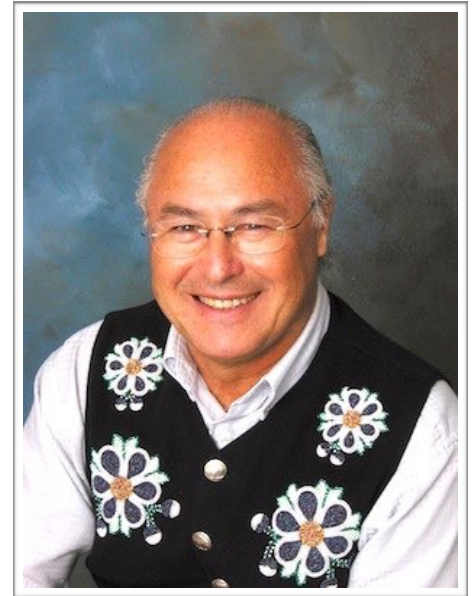
## Message from the President

I have recently viewed some of the video footage of a Métis National Council assembly held in Winnipeg, Manitoba in the fall of 1994. The portion of the footage that I watched dealt with the then Board of Directors of the Métis National Council Secretariat Incorporated discussing potential amendments to the corporate bylaws. This was in response to a report and draft Constitution presented to the Board of Directors by an MNC Senate Committee which was mandated at the MNC 1993 assembly to consult widely and provide a draft Constitution for consideration at the next assembly in 1994.

The Senate Committee had completed its work and provided the proposed Constitution to the President and Board of Directors. The response of the Board was to propose amendments to the existing corporate bylaws. These amendments included creating a new corporate structure to include a General Assembly, a Board of Governors and an Office of the President.

As the bylaws then provided, the Board of Directors made up of the provincial Presidents from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario were both the directors and members of the corporation. The Presidents from the Founding Members (MMF, MNS and MNA) carried 5 votes each and the Presidents from BC and Ontario carried one vote each for both Board and Members meetings. The role of provincial delegates at Assemblies was merely an advisory one with the final decisions resting with the Board. Further, up until the November 1994 amendments, the national President was also a sitting provincial President, beginning with elections in 1988.

With the 1994 changes, the National Presidency became a full time, three-year position, and was elected by the newly created General Assembly. The Board of Directors was renamed the Board of Governors and was composed of the five Governing Member Presidents, along with the National President. Each Governing Member President



on the Board of Governors now had an equal vote, with the National President only voting in the event of a tied vote.

The General Assembly was now constituted by 15 provincially elected leaders each from the Founding Members and 5 provincially elected leaders each from BC and Ontario. The General Assembly was mandated to meet every 12 to 18 months at a date and location to be determined by the Board of Governors. The issue of who should be the delegates to the General Assembly was debated,

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as the proposed bylaw amendment allowed for the Presidents to hand pick their delegates. In the end, it was agreed that it would only be the elected leaders from the boards and councils who were eligible to be delegates, with MNA the exception as they did not have a 15-member council.

Not only is this evident by the tapes of the 1994 Assembly, the Ontario Superior Court Justice, Todd Ducharme rendered a decision that it was only the elected provincial leaders who could be the delegates, with the exception of the MNA which could select one Local President to bring its delegation to 15.

While acknowledging that the Senate Committee had provided valuable input into a proposed new political Constitution for the Métis Nation, the Board had determined that as an interim measure, the corporate bylaws would be amended and that within the next two years a constitutional conference would be held where a Constitution governing the Métis Nation would be adopted to replace the corporate bylaws. As we know,

this proposed constitutional conference did not take place within the proposed timeframe, and the several attempts since then have resulted in failure. As a consequence, the Métis Nation does not have a political constitution and still relies on the corporate bylaws amended in 1994.

As a people and nation with the right of self-determination, including the inherent right of self-government, it is imperative that the nation's leadership begin a serious process which will lead to the adoption of a political constitution which will form the foundation for the declaration of the third government of the Métis Nation, the first two being 1869/70 and 1884/85.

The process to achieve this took a significant step forward with the 2002 General Assembly adopting the criteria for registration as a Métis Nation citizen and the adoption in November 2018 of the suspension of the Métis Nation of Ontario and the one-year probation period, along with the

adoption of the Métis Nation Homeland Map.

Once the MNO suspension resolution is fully implemented with only legitimate citizens of the Métis Nation in Ontario registered, we can finally move forward with the adoption of a political constitution and the declaration of our Métis Nation government. This will also pave the way to finally having a common acceptance process and a national registry to reinforce the Governing Member registries.

We are indeed at a crossroads, and now is the time to act in the best interests of the Métis Nation, its citizens and its future.





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## Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues holds its 18<sup>th</sup> Session



*l-r: Will Goodon (MMF), President Clément Chartier, Robert-Falcon Ouellette (MP), and Brad Boudreau (Métis Youth)*

From April 22 to May 3, 2019 the PFII held its 18<sup>th</sup> annual two-week session at the United Nations in New York, the overall theme of which was “Traditional Knowledge: Generation, Transmission and Protection”. The opening session on April 22<sup>nd</sup> was well

attended with hundreds of Indigenous peoples from around the world in attendance.

Along with the regular sessions which ran from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm and 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm each day, there were dozens

of side events from which to choose. Canada and the Assembly of First Nations sponsored a side event on April 22<sup>nd</sup> on Indigenous languages which was attended by President Chartier and Minister Bennett. President Chartier made an intervention

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expressing support for the co-developed Indigenous languages legislation currently before Parliament, and acknowledged that it was not perfect, but was a good foundation for moving forward on the protection, revitalization and preservation of Indigenous languages, including Michif.

As a companion event, the President of the General Assembly convened a parallel day long consultation on the issue of greater Indigenous participation in the UN system, including the General Assembly based on the outcome of the UN's General Assembly's 2014 resolution endorsing that initiative. President Chartier's intervention spoke to the longstanding desire of Indigenous peoples' to have a permanent space within the UN General Assembly and encouraged the consultations to continue, but hopefully coming to a positive conclusion soon. There is one more consultation scheduled to take place at next year's PFII session.

President Chartier also participated in the session



dealing with the North American Region making three interventions on the subject matters. In particular President Chartier supported the proposal that, as an interim measure, the President of the General Assembly (PGA) appoint a Representative in the office of the PGA to assist on Indigenous matters. President Chartier also spoke to the dispossession of the Métis from their lands and resources through federal government action, but that the Trudeau government is working in a positive manner on

reconciliation with the Métis Nation through various processes and expects to see positive results going forward.





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## VP Chartrand voices support for Bill C-69 to Senate Energy Committee



MNC Vice-President and MMF President David Chartrand appeared before the Senate Energy Committee looking into Bill C-69, An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, on April 12, 2019 in Winnipeg. The bill will overhaul the review process for major energy projects.

VP Chartrand informed the Committee that the Métis Nation is in favor of a balanced approach to major projects, supporting the projects and economic growth as long as the environment and Métis Nation rights and interests are protected. It believes the Trudeau government shares this balanced approach to major

projects and Bill C-69 is consistent with that vision.

He also said the legislation is consistent with the nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship the federal government is establishing with the Métis Nation and reflects the government's commitment to the UN Declaration on the

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Rights of Indigenous peoples. The bill requires the new agencies making decisions on major project approval to respect the government's commitments on the rights of Indigenous peoples. It establishes a distinctions-based approach to Indigenous representation on the key committees which means distinct representation of the Métis Nation.

Speaking from his experience as President of the Manitoba Metis Federation, Chartrand told the Committee that the Duty to Consult and accommodate must be a critical part of the decision making of the new regulators under Bill C-69. The Duty to Consult and accommodate is central to rights recognition and a driver of economic development.

He also elaborated on how the Duty to consult and accommodate can work and how it can break down. On the positive side, he cited MMF collaboration agreements with the Province and Manitoba Hydro, and Enbridge, which led to contracts with mainline contractors on Hydro's Bipole 3 transmission line and the Line 3 replacement project of Enbridge. These projects created hundreds of jobs for Métis workers and many contracts for Métis businesses.

But Chartrand also cited the decision of the Premier of Manitoba to overrule the board of Manitoba Hydro and cancel its collaboration agreement with the MMF.

"What is the logic of that?" he asked the Committee members. "An effective major projects approval process must shield us from the whims of governments that are not prepared to act in good faith."

The MNC VP stated his belief that the balanced approach to major projects exists with major projects like Transmountain pipeline and for that reason, he had joined with the Hon. Perrin Beatty, President of Canadian Chamber of Commerce, in a number of events and op-ed pieces in supporting Transmountain.

"We hope this project will proceed as soon as possible and we will be seeking the opportunity to participate in the project including taking an equity position."

## Bill C-69

An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/conservation/assessments/environmental-reviews/bill-c-69.html>





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## Expulsion of Former Ministers from Liberal caucus must not impede great progress on Canada-Métis Nation reconciliation, says Métis National Council President Clément Chartier

At the conclusion of an important symposium on Métis Nation rights reconciliation in Vancouver April 2-3, 2019, President Chartier is reiterating the strong support of the Métis Nation for the nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship it is building with the government of Canada.

“None of the issues in the dispute between Jody Wilson-Raybould and the Trudeau government has anything to do with the rights and interest of the Métis Nation,” says President Chartier. “The symposium just held in Vancouver showcased the tremendous progress being made at the Métis Nation’s rights reconciliation tables with Canada and through the Prime Minister’s Permanent Bilateral Mechanism (PBM) that is enabling us, through unprecedented federal budget



investments, to finally address the long neglected needs of Métis people. We should not and cannot allow this dispute to

distract from this critically important work.”

The Symposium looked at

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various instruments of reconciliation including:

Negotiations toward the settlement of the land claim of the Manitoba Métis community that was upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada in 2013;

Section 35 rights tables that Canada has established with the MNC's Governing Members enabling them to resolve claims and negotiate self-government agreements;

Federal legislation on Indigenous languages and

Indigenous child and family services including the Métis Nation; and

The PBM that is being implemented for the Métis Nation through the Canada-Métis Nation Accord and has resulted in significant investments in Métis Nation housing, early learning and child care, financial support for post-secondary students, skills development, and business development.

“We are now working with Canada on a new federal policy

to replace the old land claims and self-government polices that excluded the Métis,” says President Chartier. “This is reconciliation in action after 150 years of oppression and neglect. We look forward to our upcoming annual Summit with the Prime Minister where we can set priorities for the next year and continue our joint journey on the path to reconciliation.”







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## UPCOMING EVENTS

• MMF Fundraiser event (Anniversary of Manitoba Act)	May 12	Winnipeg, MB
• Trade Mission to Columbia & Peru	May 16-26	
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• Open Government Summit - Indigenous Gathering	May 28	Ottawa, ON
• Open Government Partnership (OGP) Global Summit	May 29-31	Ottawa, ON
• 75th Anniversary D-Day & Battle of Normandy	June 6	France
• UNFCCC Climate Change Session	June 17-27	Bonn, Germany
• National Indigenous Peoples Day	June 21	
• OAS 49th General Assembly	June 26-28	Medellin, Columbia
• Canada Day	July 1	
• Council of the Federation Meeting (COF)	July 9-11	Saskatoon, SK
• Energy and Mines Ministers Conference	July 15-17	Cranbrook, BC
• Back to Batoche Days	July 19-22	Batoche, SK





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