



Le Métis



President's Message

It was with great pride and strong emotions that I presented our State of the Nation Address to this year's MMF Annual General Assembly on September 22. As a leader, it is incredibly rewarding and moving to see how our Métis Government has grown over the years and to reflect on the life-changing improvements we are making for Métis Citizens across Manitoba. For a very long time, we have worked and prayed for this day to arrive. Our struggles and hopes are at last bearing fruit for current and future generations to harvest, creating a brighter future for the Métis Nation.

I want to thank our Elders, Norman Fleury and George Fleury, for their prayers at our Assembly. Their powerful words guided our work at this important gathering, reminding us to help and encourage one another along the way in all we do. I want to express my gratitude to all of our Elders, who have sustained our Métis Nation with their knowledge and strength, in the hope of finding ourselves in a better position one day. I also thank our MMF Cabinet for their hard work in support of your Métis Government and our Locals that connect Métis Citizens across Manitoba. The Annual General Assembly would not have been possible without the dedication and effort of our MMF staff, who make sure your Government is running smoothly. I also want to thank each one of you who came to Assiniboia Downs or participated by watching the live stream. Our future as a Nation depends not only on the

work and commitment of your Government's leadership, but also on the engagement and effort of every Citizen.

I also thank Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Ministers Carolyn Bennett and Jane Philpott for their efforts in support of our Métis Nation and the Manitoba Métis Community. At the Annual General Assembly, I spoke of the great strides we are taking toward self-determination and economic development, as partners in a distinctions-based and renewed nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship with Canada. Under the terms of the *Canada-Métis Nation Accord*, I have been the Métis Nation's lead negotiator for agreements that are making unprecedented investments in the future of the Métis Nation across our Homeland, including a *Métis Nation Skills and Employment Training Accord* that provides \$625,369,476 over 10 years for employment services, skills development, and job training; a *Métis Nation Housing Accord* that invests \$500 million over 10 years for the design, delivery and administration of housing services; and an *Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework* that will provide up to \$450 million to improve early learning and child care access for the Métis Nation. These funds will be administered by the MMF and other Governing Members of the Métis National Council for made-by-Métis solutions to our employment, housing and families' needs. At the Assembly, I pledged to our Manitoba Métis Community that the MMF will carefully watch and manage every penny of these funds to ensure that they create new jobs, homes and opportunities for our hardworking Citizens.

At the Annual General Assembly, it was also announced that the MMF will receive \$154.3 million from the Government of Canada to invest in the Manitoba Métis Community and to support the MMF's transition to legal status and jurisdiction as a self-governing Métis Government. Together, we are taking the next steps necessary to advance

reconciliation between the Manitoba Métis Community and Canada. No longer will there be any question of your Métis Government's legal or jurisdictional status as a partner in Confederation. We are not a "special interest group." From now on, our right to govern ourselves will be recognized in the way that we fought for back in 1869 and 1885. After 150 years of struggle, Manitoba Métis Citizens will possess the resources and recognition to keep our rightful place at the negotiating table and secure justice for our people.

Each of these new victories and accomplishments also mean our work is just beginning. We've still got a long way to go, especially in this province, under its current government. Premier Pallister has chosen to act in ways which have forced us, again and again, to head to the courts for the most basic recognition and protection of our Métis rights. This can be seen as an opportunity to consolidate our wins and grow stronger than ever before.

At our Assembly, Citizens voted unanimously in favour of two resolutions which mandate the MMF to pursue any legal remedies necessary for ensuring that our rights - including the right to consultation, the right to accommodation, the right to negotiate, and the right to harvest on our traditional lands - are protected and upheld. Mark my words, I will honour your resolutions and pursue justice for the Métis Nation's Manitoba Métis Community.

In closing, I send my thoughts and prayers to those who are in poor health or shut in. May you find recovery, hope and community. As seasons change and days grow shorter, take time to remember the struggles of those before you and to remember our Leader and Martyr Louis Riel on his birthday this October 22. As our Elders Norman Fleury and George Fleury guided us in their prayers, may we always support one another and give thanks to one another, whenever and wherever we meet.

Meeqwetch,

∞ President David Chartrand, LL.D. (hon), O.M.

Métis artists unveil new sculptures in Winnipeg

Two Métis artists unveiled brand-new sculptures in downtown Winnipeg on September 28. The sculptures were created for *THIS PLACE on Treaty 1 & the Homeland of the Métis Nation*, an art installation commissioned by the Winnipeg Arts Council.

Julie Nagam's sculpture, *Electrical Currents*, represents the impact of hydroelectricity developments in Indigenous communities, including flooding and loss of land use, as well as violence and racism from hydro workers. The sculpture is made of metal, laser cut with Métis floral and Indigenous chevron designs. Nagam's art acknowledges that water is sacred and encourages people to be mindful of those impacted by hydroelectric power development and consumption.

Kenneth Lavallee created his sculpture, *Square Dancing*, to embody the culture and spirit of the Métis. It is made up of six steel panels in the abstract shape of square dancers, transitioning from lighter to darker blues. His art recognizes that the Métis Nation is a complete culture with its own language, culture, and customs, and symbolizes the resilience and optimism of the Métis during the dark times of our history.

The sculptures are now on display at Air Canada Park, located in Winnipeg between the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network and Portage Place.



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Sharon Varga - 204-984-9480 - sharon.varga@mmf.mb.ca



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Reconciliation with the Métis: The time is here

This article originally appeared online on Canadian Lawyer's website at canadianlawyermag.com

October 1, 2018

Jason Madden

Five years ago, I wrote an article for *Canadian Lawyer*, Reconciliation with the Métis: The Time Has Come. On Sept. 22, the joint announcement made by Canada and the Manitoba Metis Federation, may finally signal that the time is now.

This announcement included a commitment from Canada to transfer \$154.3 million to the MMF to begin to address its outstanding constitutional grievance against the federal Crown that was recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada in 2013 and initiate formal self-government negotiations with the MMF to recognize it as an Indigenous government in Canada.

While the word "historic" is bandied around in most government announcements dealing with Indigenous peoples nowadays, this one is notable because the formal recognition of the MMF — as a Métis government — will very likely set a precedent for other Métis groups in discussions with Canada in Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Significantly, this announcement represents the first federal Cabinet mandate to negotiate with a Métis government south of the 60th parallel in 148 years. The last time such a federal mandate was secured was in 1869/70, when Louis Riel's people formed a provisional government and forced negotiations with Canada through the Red River Resistance.

Instead of armed conflict this time, Canada's negotiation mandate with the MMF is in response to repeated Supreme Court of Canada decisions affirming Métis rights, claims and the need for negotiations over the last 15 years.

In 2003, Métis rights — as existing Aboriginal rights protected within the meaning of s. 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 — were confirmed in a case called *R. v. Powley*.

In 2013, in *Manitoba Metis Federation v. Canada*, the highest court in the land confirmed that Canada had breached the honour of the Crown by failing to provide the 1.4 million acres of land promised to the children of the Manitoba Métis as a part of the 1869/70 deal made with Riel's people.

In 2016, in a case advanced by well-known Métis leader Harry Daniels, *Daniels v. Canada*, the Supreme Court of Canada further confirmed that Métis are included with the term "Indians" in s. 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867, which grants "exclusive Legislative Authority" to Parliament for "Indians, and Lands reserved for the Indians."

This means that Canada has always had constitutional jurisdiction to establish nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationships with the Métis in the same way as it has with First Nations and Inuit.

This trifecta of Métis law, combined with the drive and determination of the MMF's current elected leadership and the Trudeau government's Indigenous agenda, led to this "historic" moment for the Manitoba Métis.

Lost in the focus of the \$154.3 million to be provided to the MMF, however, is the significance of the commitment to finally recognize the MMF as the government of Manitoba Métis.

Why this is so significant is that, unlike most First Nations who had Canada's colonial Indian Act imposed on their traditional government structures, the very idea of Métis Nation self-government has historically been denied, dismissed or ignored. In response, over the generations, the Métis Nation has built its own democratic, self-government structures from Ontario westward to represent Métis citizens and communities.

While these Métis Nation governments such as the MMF have been tacitly recognized by some governments and have successfully built effective program and service delivery structures for their members and communities, their inherent jurisdictions — as Métis governments — are still for the most part denied.

Canada's colonial legacy still looms large. Often, these Métis Nation governments are still denied, dismissed or ignored when it is politically convenient to do so. The most recent example of this can be seen with the premier of Manitoba, Brian Pallister (yes, that's right, the premier of Manitoba) referring to the MMF as nothing more than a "special interest group" less than six months ago.

In addition, dubious "Métis" pop-up groups in Quebec and the East Coast have been able to proliferate because governments have delayed in dealing with the only recognized Métis people — the Métis Nation.

Meaningful reconciliation with the Métis Nation requires that the well-established governments of the Métis Nation finally be recognized by Canada on a nation-to-nation, government-to-government basis. Far from being "put under the thumb" of federal legislation, these self-government negotiations seek to have Métis jurisdiction and the governments Métis have painstakingly built for themselves recognized as such.



Métis Lawyer Jason Madden pictured at the MMF 2018 Annual General Assembly held in September.

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This is why last week's announcement is such a turning point for the Métis Nation. This formal recognition will require Canada, provincial governments and industry to come to grips with Métis governments in the same way that they deal with First Nations.

While this will represent welcomed clarity for those who have always respected and dealt with these Métis governments, for those that have continued to deny, dismiss or ignore the reality of Métis rights and self-government, it will likely represent a shock to the system.

Irrespective of where or when these Métis Nation governments become formally recognized, this announcement breaks the reconciliation "glass ceiling" that has been in place for the Métis Nation for generations. There is no turning back now.

Jason Madden is a Métis lawyer and partner in the law firm Pape Salter Teillet LLP.

Manitoba Metis Federation celebrates 50th Annual General Assembly

Thousands of Métis Citizens and guests gathered in Winnipeg for the Manitoba Metis Federation's Annual General Assembly on September 21-23. Thank you to everyone who attended for helping to make the MMF 2018 AGA a huge success.

Opening Ceremonies featured welcoming remarks from many notable dignitaries, including The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Canada's Minister of Crown Indigenous Relations; The Honourable Eileen Clarke, Manitoba's Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations; Wab Kinew, Leader of Manitoba's New Democratic Party; Dougald Lamont, Leader of Manitoba's Liberal Party; His Worship Brian Bowman, Mayor of Winnipeg; Scott Kolod, RCMP Assistant Commissioner; Melanie Omeniho, Le Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak/Women of the Métis Nation President; Anita Campbell, Infinity Women Secretariat Spokeswoman; Glen McCallum, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan President; and Clara Morin-Dal Col, Métis Nation British Columbia President. Video greetings were delivered by Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Canada's Minister of Health.

Infinity Women Secretariat broke attendance records at their 5th Annual General Assembly on Friday, September 21, hosting over 300 Métis women. Speakers included University of Winnipeg President and Vice-Chancellor Annette Trimbee, as well as Joy Smith, founder of the Joy Smith Foundation to combat human trafficking and fight for the rights of women in Canada and around the Globe.

The annual Youth Conference also broke attendance records, with more than 150 Métis Youth participating. This year's event was held at the Hilton Hotel and Suites with the theme "Celebrating our Strengths - Securing our Future."

The Saturday night MMF 2018 AGA banquet featured Métis entertainment by the Norman Chief Memorial Dancers, Duck Bay Métis Square Dancers, and many other talented performers including Quillasinga guests from Colombia who showcased their culture and dance at events throughout the weekend.

During the last day of the assembly, delegates voted unanimously in favour of a resolution to defend Métis harvesting rights in Manitoba. After waiting more than two years for a response from the Pallister Government to a joint working group's recommendation to expand the harvesting zone, Manitoba Métis Harvesters will wait no more. This new resolution calls upon the MMF to consider all possible actions, including legal remedies, to expand the current Recognized Métis Harvesting Area. As well, the resolution outlines that the

MMF will defend any Métis Harvester charged by the Province with a harvesting-related offence in the Game Hunting Areas recommended in 2016 for inclusion in the Recognized Métis Harvesting Area.

"Our rights will no longer be disrespected," said MMF President David Chartrand. "We will protect our Métis Laws, our Métis Authorities, and our

Métis Harvesters' rights in all our traditional territories."

The AGA is a time for sharing knowledge, building kinship, and planning for the future. We will be working hard over the next year to continue advancing the Métis Nation forward, and we look forward to sharing those efforts with you at next year's Annual General Assembly.

