

President's Message

October 22, 2015

I am very pleased and proud to say the MMF and our Métis Community were very successful in getting out the Métis Vote. In this election we showed the federal parties, their leaders, and candidates that the Métis vote matters. Our people have a voice, and our ballots have spoken loudly. We cannot, and must not, be ignored.

As I have said earlier at our Annual General Assembly and elsewhere, this election was the perfect storm for the parties and their candidates. Our push to get our citizens out to the advance polls or to vote on Election Day showed results and we made a clear difference. We proved our Métis votes matter. We are confident that our Métis Citizens made an informed choice.

To answer how we did bring out the vote, we first begin with the MMF's nine Métis-specific questions that were sent to each of the federal political parties. We asked each party what they would do if they formed the government or held the balance of power in the case of a minority government. We put those answers in front of our people and gave them the information they needed to make their choice about who to vote for.

Our first question was about our Land Claim. The Liberal, NDP, and Green Party leaders each committed their party would take all the necessary actions to ensure the government would enter negotiations with the MMF and take the steps to reach a land claims agreement. The Conservative party did not respond to any of our questions. However, as we have reported here and elsewhere they did appoint a Special Ministerial Representative to develop and provide recommendations on a way forward.

Other questions included our ASETS and bursaries and scholarship funding, economic development, consultation, procurement, truth and reconciliation and Métis Citizenship. We put all the answers on our website and provided them at our recent Annual General Assembly. The MMF had a great many visits to our election page. We sent out information packages. We also spread our message in the local and national newspapers, and on the television news and newsmagazines. We finished our strong campaign to get out the Métis vote by calling our Citizens to encourage and assist them to the voting booths.

I am pleased our Métis citizens, both young and old, came out in unprecedented numbers to put their "x" on the ballot. I thank our staff and volunteers who contacted friends, family, neighbours and other Citizens to successfully bring out our vote in this election. I also want to thank the leaders and candidates who committed themselves to transparency and the public debate in the campaign. It is a hard road to run in any election and I congratulate them on their efforts.

We cannot be ignored. Our next steps will now be to engage the government and work to implement their commitments made to us. Now that our citizens have spoken, we will introduce our issues to the new government's ministers - some of whom will already be well acquainted with the MMF and the Métis Nation's Manitoba Métis Community. We will continue our work with Canada to ensure our Métis priorities are addressed and their promises are kept. The responses we received will be our yardstick.

The Métis are hardworking taxpayers. We contribute to building our provincial and our national infrastructure, programs and services. Governments are not giving us anything for free. We have worked hard and paid for these government expenditures. It is time to get our fair share of taxes back for our Métis priorities. We will work with this government to make these are also their priorities.

Soon we will be going into a provincial election. This is just around the corner - taking place six months from now in April 2016. As we have done in previous years, we will be taking similar steps to ensure our Métis Citizens have the information they need to make an informed choice.

I offer my prayers for our friends, family members, and veterans who have passed on and my condolences to those who have lost a loved one. My hopes are with those who are sick or shut in and I offer my best wishes to all.

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