



Friday, December 7, 2018

**Immediate Release**

**Sent by Email and BCMF Website**

### **What is the future for Métis in BC?**

**(Vancouver, BC)** The BC Métis Federation has been watching the ongoing Métis public outrage within British Columbia as a result of the actions by the Métis National Council (MNC) at their recent General Assembly in Ottawa in November. The MNC General Assembly approved the homeland map which suggests Métis people only come from a historic west central track of land within Canada and northern US as well as other decisions such as probation of one of their Governing Members, Métis Nation of Ontario. Adding to the Métis public frustration is the efforts by the MNC to trademark the Métis flag, suggesting under the guise of “Métis Nationalism” that the MNC as a non for profit organization somehow can assume ownership of a flag which was believed to first be used as early as 1814.

For BC Métis Federation the question we ask ourselves is how did the MNC and their Government Members get to this place? BC Métis Federation is proud to stand independently but there is no question the current Federal Government seems to guide Métis policies exclusively through the MNC and these decision and statements affect us and our members.

BC Métis Federation President Keith Henry stated, “It is hard to ignore these actions by Métis organizations that are misleading the general public and many levels of Government and their departments. The fact is this so-called Métis Nationalism is for an exclusive small group whose only interest is to ensure their financial well being and limit Métis research or education and identity throughout Canada.”

BC Métis Federation President Henry added, “These actions are all top down by a handful of Métis individuals. That somehow grassroots Métis community organizations and their own Governing Members are somehow accountable to a small group of 55 people through the MNC General Assembly. I do not believe such an undemocratic style of Indigenous governance reflects Métis values or respects the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. I have been involved and watching Métis politics since the 1990s and I do not believe this current MNC situation was ever the idea behind Métis governance or self determination. It is reassuring to know we are not alone in our opinions as we are now witnessing new academic reporting and legal experts discussing the flaws publicly.”

BC Métis Federation President Henry concluded, “I felt the need to make a statement as BC Métis Federation does not support or endorse these MNC General Assembly decisions. We do not believe the MNC Homeland Map is complete and is missing significant research from British Columbia and we do not support any idea that MNC owns the Métis flag. We are not part of that organization and while their members decide the fate of their policies, we are being affected. I assure our members that we continue to advance real issues and policies driven by you and your decisions, not top down. The closing question I have is what more will it take for the Federal and Provincial Governments to stop believing the MNC and their Governing Members are exclusive representing the Métis? They are not.”

For more information about the BC Métis Federation go to [www.bcmétis.com](http://www.bcmétis.com).

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