



Monday, July 16th, 2012

Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister
Government of Canada

Honourable Christy Clark
Premier
Province of British Columbia

Re: MNBC Illegal Acts Continue – Election Manipulation

VIA EMAIL

Dear Premier Clark and Prime Minister Harper,

The BC Métis Federation writes today to bring continued attention to increasing mismanagement and improper governance within the Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC), an organization that your governments have continued to recognize as representative of Métis people in British Columbia.

This latest issue is very serious in terms of MNBC governance. Central to any legitimate representative governance is proper democratic elections for the people. The Métis people across Canada have witnessed many electoral challenges to ensure proper representation and actions by MNBC representatives last week add to the growing calls for immediate action for governments to immediately sever any relationship with the MNBC.

On Thursday, July 12th at the end of the day the MNBC Executive Director Mr. Dale Drown sent an internal memo to the Métis Nation Governing Assembly (MNGA) members requesting approval of two resolutions by the end of today (July 16th). The resolutions requested MNGA members to approve the MNBC 2012 General Election Chief Executive Officer and that the upcoming election scheduled for September is by mail in ballot only. I have attached copies of the MNBC correspondences.

According to the MNBC constitution and legislation this MNBC action is absolutely illegal and speaks to support the view by many that MNBC has become completely dysfunction. I draw to your attention the attached MNBC constitution and have highlighted Article 32 that requires a thirty day notice for the MNGA. I have also attached the MNGA Act that defines how MNGA members vote on resolutions set out in Article 4. Finally I have attached the MNBC Electoral Act and draw attention to Article 26 that described how mail in ballots is only to be used for Advance polls. There are several other relevant sections but we present these few facts to ensure governments have been acutely aware of the increasing dysfunction.

In this situation we question why MNBC political leaders are not signing off these correspondences? More importantly MNBC must provide 30 days notice and should have provided adequate time for the chartered communities to review, discuss, and consult with their members. The MNGA would only be able to be properly held on or after August 11. The proposed resolutions require substantive changes to existing MNBC governance and as such must adhere with their stated processes. Anything less is illegal.

BC Métis Federation continues to question why neither government has taken any real tangible steps to ensure the interests of Métis people are protected, such as responsible governance? MNBC is clearly breaching their own laws and is now attempting to rewrite electoral processes without any consultation

with their own members. How can either government continue to support such undemocratic measures by any organization? MNBC has proven itself of incapable of managing money, failed at the debt recovery plan, and much more. Now Métis people who remain members of MNBC will be disenfranchised and government support must be strongly questioned in light of this new development.

MNBC actions now jeopardize any legitimacy for their MNBC General Election in September. The “kangaroo governance” is clearly getting worse and is not in the best interests of Métis people. MNBC governance was to ensure their Electoral Act was followed as their law, it is not supposed to arbitrarily be redefined by some staff or the MNBC board. MNBC are illegal according to MNBC laws so how can MNBC remain a legitimate representative voice for Métis people? When will governments finally take action? If such electoral issues were infolding anywhere else in Canada or the world, immediate sanctions would be taken. So why are Métis people being allowed to be subjected to such deplorable acts?

In closing I draw attention to a report recently released by the Federal Government, “*The Aboriginal Economic Benchmarking Report*” produced by the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board in June 2012. One of the underlying indicators for economic success for Aboriginal groups is governance. This is not surprising. However what is surprising and most disappointing is that when serious issues of governance are identified, such as what has been unfolding at the MNBC for years, no action is taken to protect the larger interests for all Métis people. In this case it appears the federal and provincial government’s political will to stand by MNBC no matter how undemocratic, mismanaged, and functionally bankrupt they are is more important. Where is the consideration for the fiduciary duty for Métis people in BC? Where is the honour of the crown when the fundamental rights for Métis people to vote are being manipulated?

Thank you,



Keith Henry, President
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cc Peter Cunningham, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
Honourable Mary Polak, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
Honourable John Duncan, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
Honourable Scott Fraser, Critic for Aboriginal Relations
Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Federal Liberal Aboriginal Affairs Critic
Honourable Jean Crowder, NDP Aboriginal Affairs Critic
BC Métis Federation Board Members
BC Métis Federation Members