

UPDATE:  
**NATIONAL ISSUES**

October 2019 ∞ MEMORANDUM

On September 22, 2019 the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) passed a resolution at their annual general meeting related to their potential withdrawal from the Métis National Council (MNC). The resolution also makes a series of allegations regarding the MNO Citizenship processes, and disparages the governments of Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S) and the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) for support provided to the MNO.

The MMF resolution reiterates many of the claims, and misinformation, that appeared in a report made to the MNC general assembly in November 2018. That report led to a narrowly passed resolution to put the MNO on “probation”.

**The Facts:**

The MNO has been working alongside every other Métis Nation government over the last 26 years to advance respect and recognition of the Métis Nation and Métis Section 35 Rights.

Like every other Métis Nation government, the MNO adopted the national definition of Métis in 2004, and has since put in place rigorous guidelines and policies to guide how that definition is applied in Ontario.

Until last November’s MNC Assembly, where a draft map was adopted, there were no hard boundaries drawn around the historic homeland of the Métis Nation. Prior to the adoption of the draft map there was an understanding that the historic northwest covered a larger portion of Ontario communities and widespread acknowledgement and recognition of the historic Sault Ste Marie community.

When MNO advanced the Powley case in 1993 Métis governments from across the homeland came together to support and fight this legal battle with us. When that landmark decision came down from the Supreme Court of Canada we all celebrated together. MMF President Chartrand was there to offer congratulations to Steve and Roddy and the whole Powley family.



MMF President David Chartrand presents Steve and Roddy Powley with a rifle as a gift to celebrate victory at the Supreme Court of Canada.

In a 2013 MMF document entitled “Know Your Rights” President Chartrand proclaimed: “This year will become a much-celebrated date in the history of our Métis Nation. The Supreme Court of Canada’s *R. v. Powley* Decision will take its place among our many historic nation-building milestones such as the Battle of Seven Oaks, the Sayer Trail, the Red River Resistance, and our making of Manitoba.”

This summer the MNO was back in Sault Ste. Marie, the home of the Powley family, to hold its 26th Annual General Assembly. We were joined, as we have been joined many times before by representatives of Métis governments from across the homeland that extended their kind greetings and support for our work.

In 2017 the MNO launched the Métis Self-Government Readiness Process (MSRP) in order to do the arduous work of digging into every single Citizen file to determine that the file is in compliance with MNO’s Citizenship criteria. The results of the MSRP clearly demonstrate that the MNO represents Section 35 Métis rights-holders in Ontario. The suggestion that anyone with mixed blood can apply for and receive MNO citizenship is completely false.

And, on June 27 of this year, the MNO and the Government of Canada signed the *Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement*. MNO signed this historic agreement alongside Métis governments from Saskatchewan and Alberta. In the Self-Government Agreement, Canada recognizes that Métis Communities represented by the MNO have an inherent right to self-government and recognizes that the MNO has been mandated by these communities to represent them.

The MNO continues to assert that Métis Nation governments are stronger when standing together. MNO supports the right of Nations to determine their historical boundaries and engage in informed and principled conversations about their contemporary political relationships. We are all stronger when we seek solutions in the spirit of reconciliation.

As reported at our recent MNO AGA, the leadership of MNO, MNA and MN-S have made numerous requests to MNC President Clem Chartier to call a meeting of the Board of Governors in order to discuss the pressing issue of MNO’s probation as well as other critical governance issues. To date these requests have been repeatedly denied.

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MMF President David Chartrand, MNA President Audrey Poitras, former MNO President Gary Lipinski and MNC President Clem Chartier at the MNO’s 2014 AGA in Thunder Bay, ON.



MNC President Clem Chartier, Jean Teillet and Jason Madden preparing to appear before the Supreme Court of Canada to argue the Powley case in 2003.