

**IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL:
THE METIS NATION AGENDA**

A REPORT OF THE PEOPLE

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY
METIS NATION OF SASKATCHEWAN**

MARCH 31, 2000

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IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL: THE MÉTIS NATION AGENDA

A REPORT OF THE PEOPLE

MARCH 2000

The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan held a series of community consultations beginning in January 2000 and ending in March 2000. These consultations were arranged through the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan governance structure in that the Regional Representatives called community meetings in their respective region and provincially covered all twelve Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Regions. Typically, the consultations were held on weekends or during the evening when the citizenship was available. Meals were served by community organizations and discussions were lead by the Executive of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, headed by President Clem Chartier. Funds were made available to each of the Regions for this purpose. Materials were distributed for further reference. All consultations were recorded, although not all were transcribed. As well, minutes were taken at each sitting. From these minutes, this report was drafted.

The Métis Nation in the Twenty-First Century: Identity

The Métis emerged as the distinct Aboriginal peoples, descendants from a number of Indian Nations, but evolved into a specific nation, a Métis Nation, with a distinct history, culture, language and identity as a specific nation of Aboriginal people. The Métis are not Cree, Dene, Saulteaux or Ojibwa. We are Métis. As history shows, in the beginning, many different Nations of people occupied North America. "For reasons only the Creator knows, personal contact by Europeans was made with the original

inhabitants of the lands resulting in the birth of mixed bloods. As this genetic union flourished over many generations, in Western Canada, a core group of mixed bloods emerged. During this 150-year period, the mixed bloods became the largest majority in what was then Rupertsland. Curiously, the mixed bloods were culturally ostracized and rejected by both genetic ancestors” (Flamont, 1999). It was in this context of isolation that the intermarriage of mixed bloods brought forward the distinct cultural group, later politically to be known as the Métis. We developed our own distinct diet, music, dress, mythology and collective concerns and began the process of representing ourselves collectively.

When negotiations were entered into in the west, treaties were entered into with the Indian Nations and the Métis were dealt with by scrip. Non-status Indians are descendants of people that took treaty and who lost their rights under the *Indian Act*. So their fight is to get the *Indian Act* amended so that they can get their Indian Status and get their treaty rights recognized. This is not the fight of the Métis. Our fight is to have our rights recognized as Métis people and our biggest fight right now is not that we want to have scrip again or scrip lands. Our fight is to say that when scrip was given out to our people that it wasn't a valid way to extinguish our rights to the land and resources. We are saying that scrip did not extinguish our Aboriginal title to the land and the resources. Other than in Manitoba, there was no negotiation surrounding the extinguishment of our rights as Aboriginal people. The Métis of today are descendants of the historic Métis Nation, the identifiable specific group of people known as a Nation of people, the Métis.

The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, through the Métis Nation Legislative Assembly, has adopted a definition for the purpose of determining its citizens. There are three components to the definition: 1) Self-Declaration; 2) Is of Métis ancestry; and 3) Is

accepted by the Métis community. The Legislative Assembly has further adopted a *Citizenship Act* and Citizenship Application Form that regulates the process for registry as a citizen of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan. Within the next two years, the grandfathering period, all Métis in Saskatchewan will be required to register through this process. This process allows for the people to define their own citizenry, a process that is overseen by the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Senate, and administered through the Office of the Registrar. As the cases for Rights make their way through the courts, the recognition of Métis Rights in Saskatchewan, and elsewhere, will require that the definition question is fully answered.

We are descendants because we are culturally similar.
We are descendants because we share a common history.
We are descendants because we still maintain the same vision as our ancestors.
We are descendants because the Creator made us so.
Because we feel Métis.
Therefore, the primary element of definition is self-identity.
By Bruce Flamont, 1999

In this day and age, it cannot be assumed that every person who can declare Métis ancestry will do so. It is quite likely that there will be those who do not feel Métis. They are not the same as Métis who declare so. They may feel their future is best served as a non-Métis. As well, there are people who are not Métis declaring they are Métis, most likely for material gain. Therefore, as self-declaration is an element of definition, it cannot be the only determining factor.

The ancestry of the Métis Nation is another clear determinant of identity. The historic Métis Nation can be known through an analysis of family genealogies and community histories. Further, the Métis can be recognized in the history of the Government of Canada and its practices in carrying out the policies and decisions

that impacted on our Aboriginal rights. An example of the kind of government policy that provides an indication of ancestry is the issuing of scrip to Métis across the homeland. The Métis farms that are historic to Saskatchewan and the Alberta Métis settlements represent other practices of the government that indicate long-standing residency in certain communities in the southern parts of the province, as well. Ancestry is a significant other element of definition.

The Métis in Saskatchewan support the efforts of the Métis National Council Board of Governors in undertaking to draft a national definition for the Métis. This will allow for the Métis to receive their proper recognition, regardless of their residency in the provinces of Canada. It will also provide a definition for the legal system that will allow for confidence of the courts that the laws and judgments of laws will affect those for whom they are meant. The decision of the appeal judge, in the Powley Case (1999) in Ontario, attempts to answer the question of who is a Métis. His definition overturned the definition of an earlier trial judge on the same matter. The movement toward a national definition, as defined by the Métis through the collective voice of the Métis National Council, will support the efforts of the court to provide for the protection of a right for those who are entitled within the Nation. The definition by outsiders, such as the judges, can never contribute to the order that must come from within. The definition can and must only come from the Métis Nation itself.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ The people recommend that genealogical research be undertaken to determine for the people those Métis families that had received scrip under the various commissions.

- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan look into the recognition of Métis people in the Constitution, and to the situation of individuals who identified as Métis and have since been signed up, with or without their consent, to be registered as Indians through the Bill C-31 process. Many now wish to identify as they had all their lives and as part of their ancestry allows, as Métis, and amendments to the *Indian Act* are required to make this possible.

- ❖ The people recognize that the Métis National Council has drafted three options for a national definition of Métis and wish to acknowledge that "Option B" best represents the determination of the Métis in Saskatchewan.

Métis Rights Are Part of Canada's Long History

History provides the necessary introduction to any discussion of Métis Rights. Our history unfolds in the looking back upon the arrival of Europeans upon this soil, to the transfer of power from the British Crown to the Hudson Bay Company and the subsequent formation of Canada, to the formation of the provinces to the west of Ontario and the development of the *Manitoba Act*, to the incidents at Batoche in 1885 that claimed the life of one of our most prominent leaders. We look back to the post-war years, to the early sixties in Saskatchewan and the formation of the official government of the Métis Nation in Saskatchewan, to the successful struggle for Métis-specific recognition amongst Canada's Aboriginal Peoples in 1982. The year 1988 saw the referendum within the province to set the Métis-specific agenda for the Nation within the province of Saskatchewan, an agenda that is continually challenged by other levels of government within

this country, a form of disrespect of our collective voice. Somewhere in this timeline we see a shift from the bullets and guns of earlier centuries to the pens and pencils of the twentieth century. In all the changes that the Nation has seen over the years, it is the struggle against violence, against injustice, against racism, against poverty, against silence that has kept the movement alive. History records both our strength and our suffering as a people.

The Métis have always sought to be active participants in the making of the history of this country, have made fundamental contributions over time, and have found solutions to the issues facing our families and communities. Collectively, we have moved forward. Individually, we have empowered ourselves to participate and to lend our voice to the collective. This has been the challenge of the past upon which we build the ideas and dreams for the future for our Nation and our neighbours, as well. We have sought in the past, as we do in the present, to represent ourselves and to speak for ourselves on the experiences and wisdom that has been cultivated in our communities and in our citizens over the last few centuries. We are our mother's children, have learned the ways of our fathers, spoke traditionally the language of both. We wish for our children to be schooled in our ways and our history and our language, to learn the history of this fine country, a history of which we are a central thread, not a minority on the margin. We wish our children to become leaders and visionaries for our Nation and our province and our country.

To look back in history, to the contribution of Louis Riel in the forming of Canada through the negotiations of the *Manitoba Act*, we recognize the leader, the voice of the people, to speak to a vision for Canada. Sir John A. Macdonald may have had a vision for Canada, but so, too, did Louis Riel have a vision for Canada, a vision that included a voice for all of its citizens. The vision of Riel

was based on aspirations that are held by many citizens of Canada today, a Canada where the West was adequately and equally represented by the governments of the people, a Canada that included opportunities to hear from all of the interests represented in the West. If we move west, fifteen years later, to Batoche, an indifferent Prime Minister challenges this vision again, a vision supported by many, Indians, Métis and Europeans. This support is contained in the public record of city council meetings of the City of Prince Albert. Métis have always held a vision for this country that was fair and just and inclusive of diversity, a vision based on common needs and basic rights of independence and self-determination, a vision for a nation strong because of its diversity.

In the northern communities of Ile-a-la-Crosse, Buffalo Narrows, La Loche, Cumberland House, La Ronge, Saskatchewan, the Métis have long histories on these lands, governed these lands along with the Hudsons Bay Company, long before the Canadian State was even aware of its riches. In the southern parts of the province, the communities of Lebret, Willowbunch, Round Prairie, Batoche, MacDowall, St. Louis, and many others, also hold long histories as Métis communities, governed in the ways of the land and of the times. Métis people lived alongside their neighbours, governing the land and the use of the land in the traditions set out in those communities. Today, the Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan set out policies on these lands, along with municipal and civic governments, that disinherit the Métis from this collective long-standing tradition and right. Government sets policy for northern communities that do not differentiate between the newcomers and the long-time users. Like in the early settlement years in this country, Métis people are disenfranchised from their traditions and the lands on which they carried out these practices. Indian peoples have some protection of their rights by virtue of holding treaties, however, the way of life of the Métis has

been outlawed by the brief transactions of scrip in total disregard to our lifestyle. The Métis have a relationship with two governments that do not take responsibility for Métis Rights. It is said to be best described as a custody battle for the Métis, except in this case, no one wishes to take responsibility. In this scenario, the Fathers of Confederation, along with their predecessors, have been unlawful and irresponsible parents.

In the north, companies are required to develop northern resource development agreements that are subject to annual development reviews. In these agreements, there are definitions of who is a northerner and northern residents who have relocated to the south to gain an education or to find employment have lost their ability to be considered in these development activities in their home communities. Procurement strategies are also in place for companies extracting resources from the north, however, the company is required to have an office in the north, but may hire under contract anyone they choose, including people outside of the north. Procurement strategies are set in place to ensure access for Indian and Métis people from the north, not to create loopholes so that access is given in the name of Métis people but immediately transferred to non-Métis people from the south. This lesson has been learned through the scrip process. The governments continue these kinds of practices and yet they expect to be respected and trusted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ The people suggest that the Government of Canada review the contributions of other leaders of Canada, such as Sir John A. Macdonald, to acknowledge the role of this statesman in the wrongful death of Louis Riel.

- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan support the Métis National Council in gaining proper recognition of Louis Riel and the Métis Nation.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis in Canada be addressed through our democratically elected leadership, through the Métis National Council and through the provincial member of the Métis Nation, the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan.
- ❖ The people request that the role of the Métis Interlocutor be reviewed in the Canadian Government system and a determination of the relationship of this structure to the struggle of the Métis.
- ❖ The people request that the Métis Interlocutor speak out on behalf of the Métis in Canada against the Reform Party condemnation of Aboriginal peoples, that the Métis Interlocutor work towards building understanding between the Reform Party and the existing government on these matters.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan be brought to task on the question of Métis Rights and to begin negotiations with the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan on these important matters.
- ❖ The people recommend that the issue of Metis Veterans be addressed by the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan and that the issue be taken to the appropriate government department for immediate response.
- ❖ The people recommend the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan question the practice of the government in not assuring employment in the traditional regions of the Métis homeland

be guaranteed for Métis citizens. If a labour force is required for economic development, then the Métis should be trained to become part of the required labour force in that region, especially in the north.

The Métis Nation and the Rights of Generations Past and Future

Surely, at the heart of s.35(1), lies a recognition that aboriginal rights are a matter of fundamental justice protecting the survival of aboriginal people, as a people, on their lands. The Métis have aboriginal rights, as a people, based on their prior use and occupation as a people. It is a matter of fairness and fundamental justice that the aboriginal rights of the Métis which flow from this prior use and occupation, be recognized and affirmed by s.35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982.

Court of Appeal Judge –
Powley Case, 1999

Our children are born into the Nation with the birthrights inherent to the Nation by virtue of their Métis ancestry, of being not European, not Indian, not Inuit, but Métis. Our homeland is here, upon the soils of this continent only. Our rights exist on this homeland which stretches from shore to shore, from the barren north across the 49th parallel deep into the plains. The homeland is comprised of the prairies, north western Ontario, northeastern British Columbia, part of the North West Territories and part of the northern United States. We have lived in wooded parklands, on grassy prairies, on barren tundra, in richest cedar forests and in mixed woodland amongst the deepest of lakes. Our fathers and mothers have been and continue to be trappers and fishermen and hunters and conservationists on these lands. We governed

the waterways from the shores of Hudson Bay to the heart of the country through the Churchill River system, down the Missouri River, maintained transportation systems, guided our European relatives into the heart of Canada. We have been the guardians of the land and the buffalo, have fed the ancestors of most Canadians on the pemmican of the hunt, many times when starvation was imminent because of agricultural tragedies such as drought and locust infestations. We have lived alongside our Indian relatives for centuries, sharing in the knowledge of our mothers and of the land to which we lived so closely and heeded so desperately. Our rights have been companioned with heavy responsibility throughout our history. Our children need to know the rights and responsibilities into which they are born and perhaps destined by birthright.

If we look to the north west corner of Saskatchewan, we find that the children of the Metis who have settled there since the mid-seventeen hundreds, made their living from those lands, have been disinherited of their traditions and the livelihoods that were the way of life for their families. The water bodies of McCusker River, Primrose Lake, Arsenault Lake, and others, and the land around which the waters are embodied, were traditional hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering grounds for many Metis from this part of the province. An Elder talks about the life he spent as a child, where the family travelled as one unit, gathered at Christmas, in Spring and over the summer with other families, to talk and to share stories and companionship. The rest of the year, the family lived off of the land, constructed a home where it was required, moved along with the seasons and the resources of food and shelter and clothing. These times were good times, the Elder recalls, not like today where people have nothing to say to one another or the government owns all of the homes and charges rent to the families to live on the land that was once theirs. He recalls the establishment of the Primrose Lake Air Weapons

Range and the year that they were turned away from the land because it was not safe. It was just for one season, rumour had it, then the following season saw the same thing, then for ten seasons. It has been 47 years now. The life that gave him his language, his traditions, his cultural beliefs and knowledge, his sense of place, ended and he could not pass this on to his children. These families respected the decision of the government and yet compensation was issued, many received nothing. Some received \$900.00 (over three years) to compensate for these now third generation losses. For 47 years, the Metis have sought to be justly compensated for the losses and the losses of their children and grandchildren.

Each community has its history, if you walk alongside the old people, has the stories of the past upon which the future is built. What if the past holds stories of injustice and government disinterest in their quality of life? What can we make of the future then?

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan continue to hold education sessions for Métis citizens and communities, and indeed all citizens of Canada, on the rights of the Métis, with a focus on youth education.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan build their capacity to educate Métis citizens and communities, and indeed all citizens of Canada, on the rights of the Métis, including rights to land, resource use, self-determination, access to education and so on, including building access for communities to deliver these education sessions.

- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis in Saskatchewan support the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Minister of Lands and Resources in addressing the rights issues on these matters, through the development of supportive subcommittees throughout the homeland.

- ❖ The people recommend that the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan pursue a final resolution to the long-standing issues of compensation for the Metis who were displaced by the establishment of the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range.

The Métis Nation and the Right to Self-Determination

As a people, Métis have a right to self-determination, have a right to raise our children to know what it means to be Métis. We have a right to determine the future of our Nation and to speak as a Nation in the affairs of this country that we have always called home. We have a right to form this country into a place that respects our Elders and our youth, that respects women and families, that respects the natural world and the animals that reside amongst us and upon which many of our families are dependent for their daily meals. We have a right to perpetuate the world in the teachings of our ancestors toward a future that is of our imagining. We have a right to co-exist respectfully and peacefully with all other Nations who want to see their future generations grow up toward the sun strong in the roots of their history and culture. We are a unique Nation of people, a Nation born to respect all cultures, the Creator has determined our future to be so as a birthright and a commitment. It is an awesome challenge for a people. It is a fostering of the spirit based on an

equality of freedom and opportunity and a respect for diversity and a respect for life.

The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan has developed educational and training institutions, and subsequent programs, that are mandated to bring to fruition the dream of Métis determination. The Gabriel Dumont Institute, the Dumont Technical Institute and the Gabriel Dumont College have been challenged to address cultural and historical traditions in the programs and services provided within. The Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program, in specific, is training future educators to carry on those traditions and to pass the pride and spirit inherent in those traditions into the heart and mind of future generations. Métis educators educate all of Canada's children, educate Canadian citizens of tomorrow to know the respect and the commitment that is inherent in Métis heritage. In conjunction with universities, Métis institutions provide a collective voice from which other programs are enriched through access to the unique contributions and knowledge. This right, not just a right to access non-Métis education and training, but the right to access an educational institution that teaches the traditions of our own history and culture, is but one part of the complex process of self-determination.

There are several Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Affiliates and organizations, namely the Gabriel Dumont Institute, Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan; Métis Family and Community Justice; SaskNative Economic Development Corporation, Clarence Campeau Development Fund, Métis Employment & Training of Saskatchewan, Provincial Métis Housing Corporation, Métis Communications of Saskatchewan, Métis Sports Youth Culture and Recreation, and the Provincial Métis Youth Council of Saskatchewan, the Métis Elders Council of Saskatchewan, the Metis Veterans, Métis Urban Council of

Saskatchewan and the Métis Women of Saskatchewan. Each of these Affiliates and organizations are mandated with the task of carrying out the delivery of programs and services to the citizens or providing voice to specific groups on issues relating to the people. Funds for programs and services are negotiated on behalf of the Nation by the Executive and devolved down to the appropriate Affiliate. Some of the programs are as a result of tripartite and bilateral agreements between the Nation and the respective governments.

The Métis have within the right to self-determination, the right to land and the freedoms and responsibilities inherent in that right, to know our culture and our history. Métis have a right to language, to communicate in Michif, to teach our children to speak Michif, to educate our children in the Michif language and to know the teachings that are imbedded in any language. Métis have a right to determine socially, culturally, economically and politically. An analysis of history shows that the Canadian State has not honoured these rights. It is a myth that these rights were relinquished in the taking of land and money scrip. The courts have begun to uncover such truths, have acknowledged, not just through the Constitution, although there as well, that Métis rights existed, that a system was required to relinquish these rights and that the scrip process did not speak beyond issues of land, if even that. The Pope has made apology for the actions of the Roman Catholic Church: Can the State see the errors of the past? Can the State honour such mature truths? Must the Métis await the realization of the State as a precedent to self-determination? The collective voice of the people says that we must move toward a revitalization of these traditions, of questioning the future in light of the knowledge inherent in the language and the speakers of the language. The people wish to look to the future with hope and pride.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan continue to improve access to programs and services such as education and justice through increased funds and support to develop existing Métis institutions and organizations.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan address the issue of lack of housing for Métis in Saskatchewan.
- ❖ The people recommend the development of Métis-specific education to increase knowledge within existing and future generations of Métis youth on their inherent rights and the contributions of the Métis in the teaching of the history of Canada.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis consider access to services be limited to Métis citizens only.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan seek to build capacity within the Nation by the creation of employment opportunities for Métis to work and serve Métis citizens in professional capacities within the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Affiliates and organizations.
- ❖ The people recommend the development of an Affiliate to devolve and delivery health and wellness programs and services to Métis people in Saskatchewan. This Affiliate will have representation from each of the Regions in Saskatchewan, as set out in the Constitution, to ensure the decisions are made by the people who are affected by such decisions.

The Historic and Contemporary Homeland of the Métis

Our history can be traced through the stories of our families and the migrations and settlements that make up our geographic and demographic patterns of life. Our families lived in wide open spaces, across many miles in the year's cycle. The circles of life and the patterns of migration were very large, encompassed the movement of generations of family. The game was big and the challenge was grand. The communities that grew from these migrations, of the settlements of the hivernant groups, the mobile ones, are spread across the entire homeland. The buffalo hunt, the maintenance of small acreage farms, the entrepreneurial spirit, the transportation industry, both mechanically and in arm, the business of communications, interpreting from one language and culture to another, intermarriages, interdependencies, the quiet traditional lifestyles of living a quality of life directly tied to commitment and ability to learn. This is our collective history on this homeland. This is the history held in story, in the private history of one family at a time. Grandfathers and grandmothers, old stories from old people.

The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan has laid claim in the courts of Saskatchewan to a tract of land throughout the North West of the province. This land includes the settlements of Ile-a-la-Crosse, Buffalo Narrows, La Loche, Beauval, Green Lake, Sapawagamik, Jans Bay, Cole Bay, Sagamiak and numerous others. The majority of these communities are traditionally and historically Métis communities, traversed to only on Métis-controlled waterways or by Métis drawn boats. Ile-a-la-Crosse is the birthplace of the father of Louis Riel and boasts as one of the earliest settlements in Saskatchewan to home a Catholic mission.

Even today, the Métis practice traditional lifestyles all across Canada, and specifically in Saskatchewan. As recent as only two

generations ago, families lived off the land, constructed homes as was required, hunted, fished, trapped and gathered fruit and medicines. Communities determined land ownership, recognized family title to land by right of long usage, by right of ancestry, by right of lifestyle. Communities were named after families, after historic events and in the language of the times. As government encroachment began in the west and in the north, legislation and policy infringed on these lifestyles and these practices. The Métis honoured the laws of these governments, as they honoured the *Manitoba Act* in the early beginnings of this country. This legislation and policy has brought poverty and dysfunction to whole families and communities. The Métis seek to participate in the righting of these ignorances, to provide education, to provide programs and services to our own people and to all Canadians so the era may finally end.

On many of these tracts of land that were historically governed by the Métis, prior to the formation of the province of Saskatchewan and for many years following this formation, the Métis were the service providers, the entrepreneurs. Historically, Métis people offered the services that were available to anyone traversing across these lands or residing within them. Today, the Métis have been displaced by the owners of large companies and industrial firms that come into our homeland to extract the rich resources. How did this transfer take place? If we review the practices and policies of government in regards to economic development in Saskatchewan, we would determine how control shifted. Perhaps, we need to reapply this process with an intent to reverse the outcome. Métis people do not have access to the capital that is required to participate fully in any of the major economic development opportunities in their communities. Métis people have been reduced to consumers of the dwindling resources, resources to which they once protected and extracted as was

required to maintain healthy sustainable communities and environments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan work toward gaining ownership and control of land for the collective use of the Métis in the way of park lands, cultural gathering lands, historic lands and so on.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan undertake a review of the taxation practices on lands currently owned by the Métis people, including Métis people who are farmers. The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan would suggest a reform for taxation whereby the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan would collect taxes on these lands and/or support situations such as the situation of Métis farmers in the farming industry crisis.
- ❖ The people seek increased funds to finance Métis entrepreneurial opportunities across the Métis homeland and to make substantial gain in the involvement of Métis in economic development in this province.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan advance efforts to increase employment for Métis people in Saskatchewan.

The Government of the Métis Nation

The people as a collective determined the order of things, the laws came from the need to survive on the land, as a group of families,

from the need to respect others in your path, to buy and sell and trade. Communities of Métis set and honoured the laws of the hunt, of which there were only seven, brought an order to the questions of a mobile lifestyle. The responsibility was to the group, to the best interests of the collective. Conservation practices were common sense and need not be set out by law in those early years. Today, we seek justice from the courts of the country, seek to ensure that the laws of Canada respect the teachings and wisdom of the Métis as it honours and respects the beliefs of the Europeans who created this new system of laws. The imposition of European law, of British laws, has often been an imposition for the purpose of protecting the interests of the colonizer, not the interests of the people, not the interests of the land, of the animals, of nationhood, of diversity. The justice system as a whole has brought no order to the life of the Métis Nation, but rather has created additional hardships.

At the close of the day and the signing of the *Manitoba Act* in 1870, the Federal government unleashed the powers of the laws of Canada and the keepers of that law, the army and the NWMP, on the Métis who remained in the settlement of Red River. The intentions of the Métis, as the provisional government of the territory of Assiniboia, had to be broken and control reverted to the state. The future vision of Canada, held by John A. Macdonald and his railroad and banking supporters, was at stake. The actions of that time, recorded in the historic records, were to disempower the Métis from the position of governors of the land and the people. Fifteen years later, in Batoche, the story was to be told again, in the same way but this time with guns and graves to mark the tale. The development of Canada, and the laws that allowed for the interests of a distinct few to overrule the inherent rights of entire Nations of people, has never served to protect Métis Rights. November 16, 1885, marks the date that Canada, through its laws, executed the leader of the Métis Nation, Louis Riel, for a

crime he did not commit. This date marks not just the death of a leader, but the swift and powerful arm of the law showing its authority against another government, a war within the homeland designed to maim. Many of our people fought to their death for that which was truly at stake, the freedom of a people to control their destiny.

Our Nation fell silent after the gattling gun and the deaths of 1885, faced the shame and the hardship of a people oppressed within their homeland. The next few decades brought our Nation to its knees, and yet the spirit remained. Somewhere in the language, in the music and the dance, in the sash, in the flag, in the stories of the old people, was the key to the future. Today, the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, along with the other provincial Métis bodies, seek to revitalize the Métis Nation, to begin once again to cultivate the discussion and the collective voice of the people. The issues that bound us together collectively in the past, continue on today. The people could not articulate clearly in those days the ideas we felt so strongly about in our hearts. We were right then but we were afraid. We are still right today. We must not be afraid to speak of these ideas and feelings today. We must stand behind our leaders when they speak on our behalf.

The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan instituted its first independent Constitution in 1993, and has instituted a governance structure that is lead with democratically elected leadership from each of the twelve regions within the province. The elected leadership from each region, including the Local Presidents and Regional Representatives, make up the Regional Councils. The Regional Representatives along with the Executive of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan make up the Provincial Métis Council, along with representation by Métis Youth and Métis Women. These leaders form the Métis Nation Legislative Assembly, along with a specific number of seats for representation by Métis Youth and Métis

Women. Any Métis citizen sixteen years of age or older can hold seats in the governance structure. The Regional Councils are also responsible for appointments on Affiliate Boards and serve as a vehicle for the community input into the direction of the Affiliate and for sharing of information back to the region. Each Affiliate is governed by a Minister and Associate Minister that is appointed by the President of the Métis Nation.

The President of the Métis Nation Legislative Assembly appoints Members of Legislative Assembly to hold portfolios for the Nation in the various areas: Education, Employment & Training, Lands and Resources, Intergovernmental Affairs, and so on. There are sixteen portfolios at present, each with a Minister and an Associate Minister, along with internal committees as determined by the Provincial Métis Council or Legislative Assembly. Further, a significant part of the governance structure of the Nation is the contribution of the Senate of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan.

The President of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly has established an Internal Governance Committee to consider governance issues and make recommendations to the Members of the MNLA on possible destinies and strategies for the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan. At the December 1998 MNLA, the Members mandated the process of special sittings of the MNLA to deal with governance issues. The first Special Sitting was held in March 1999 with the second in November. The Internal Governance Committee presented four Legislative Acts in November 1999: *Elections Act*; *Citizenship Act*; *Métis Nation Legislative Assembly Act*; and the *Senate Act*. These Acts were ratified at that time and four new pieces of Legislation were identified for development at the next sitting: *Education Act*; *Family Services Act*; *Affiliates Act*; and the *Taxation Act*. The Senate plays an important role in the advancement of internal

governance through the establishment of Métis Law.

The Senate is a semi-judicial body, mandated by the Legislative Assembly and the people to oversee the activities under the Nation's Constitution. Further, the Senate is responsible for the cultural and spiritual development of the Nation, providing leadership in all ceremonies and gatherings. The Senate is given the power to resolve disputes occurring in the Regions or at the Local level, along with making judgments on matters that arise out of the Legislation. The Senate is also responsible for the overseeing of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan citizenship registry, employing a Registrar to carry out the Citizenship Act and the subsequent registration of all citizens. The Senate is appointed for lifetime and the decisions made at that level are final and binding on all citizens. At present the Senate is working without any fiscal resources, except those meager resources that can be made available through the Affiliates and the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan coffers. Certainly, this is an area that requires immediate and substantial attention by all.

The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, under the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs, has developed a Tripartite and a Bilateral Unit where relationships are developed and processes are designed between the Métis Nation and the federal and provincial governments. Wherever possible, control is devolved to Regional Councils through a devolution of both regional government authority as well as authority over programs and services in consultation with the Affiliates. Regional models of self-government are being developed, along with urban and rural governance models. The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan is currently negotiating a *Métis Act* with the Government of Saskatchewan for the province to legislate its relationship to the Nation.

The *Métis Act* will concern itself with governance issues such as hunting, fishing and land matters as well as the devolution of programs and services. The *Métis Act* will allow the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan to remove itself from under the provincial Incorporations Branch and allow the Nation to develop as it sees fit. Further, the Government of Saskatchewan has proposed a policy framework, entitled the *Framework for Cooperation*, for devolution of programs and services to the Métis. It is the wish of the people that the vehicle for implementation of this and future related policy be through the existing bilateral process developed through the Tripartite and Bilateral Unit, rather than creating new processes. These processes must be Métis-specific and not part of an undefined service to a population of Aboriginal people. The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan is mandated to serve Métis in Saskatchewan and through the bilateral process with the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan are responsible to do so. This process ensures accountability to Métis citizens.

As empowered by the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Constitution, structures have begun developing around the federal government Urban Aboriginal Strategy. The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, through the portfolio of Urban Affairs, has developed the Métis Urban Council of Saskatchewan, an organization made up of each of the Métis Local presidents from the urban centers of Regina, Saskatoon, North Battleford and Prince Albert. The agenda for the Council is to strengthen Métis self-government through the development of urban councils. This activity is part of the tripartite process and seeks to develop Métis-specific agreements regarding the devolution of programs and services, Métis-specific delivery systems and the development of partnership agreements that acknowledge the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan as the voice of the Métis in Saskatchewan. The Associate Minister of Urban Affairs has been successful in this regard in both Saskatoon and Regina. Further, the Saskatoon Urban Métis Council has signed a

partnership agreement with North Battleford to strengthen internal governance practices.

It is the hope of the people that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan continually builds capacity to meet the growing demands of a government with a rapidly increasing and youthful citizenry. The present Executive of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan are proposing a balanced approach to Nation-building: Programs and Services on one hand with the Métis Rights Agenda on the other. When our people are trained in the various skill areas, we need to employ them to advance the work of the Nation. We need to report internally within the Nation and report externally through the mechanisms identified in the funding agreements. At present, all Affiliate organizations are required by provincial law to report to the Government of Saskatchewan, however, no such mechanism exists internally. The provincial law inhibits growth as it presently stands.

There is a clear understanding among our people, that the relationship between the Métis Nation and the Canadian State has been historically and continues to be a negative relationship. Historical patterns must be reversed, in many cases. Our collective issues have never been truly addressed, although the gatling gun certainly brought the issues to a state of silence and degradation for a lengthy time. Strides have been made in the last few years. The quality of life for Métis people in Saskatchewan and Canada has improved while yet the Métis remain among the poorest, the most incarcerated and the greatest number of unemployed people in Canada, according to Stats Canada. What strides have been made have been made as a result of the collective voice. This remains our strength and our pride. The court system has become an essential vehicle in the struggle for Rights and the recognition of those Rights and the mechanisms for protecting those Rights into the future for our

children. Litigation will force the inevitable change in government legislation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ The people recommend that any new funds or programs or services that are made available for the betterment of Métis people in Saskatchewan through provincial programming, be devolved through the existing Métis Nation of Saskatchewan bilateral processes, including those identified in the *Framework for Cooperation* document.
- ❖ The people recommend that any new funds or programs or services that are made available for the betterment of Métis people in Saskatchewan through federal funding be devolved through the existing Métis Nation of Saskatchewan tripartite process, including those identified with the Urban Aboriginal Strategy.
- ❖ The people recommend the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan to continue to work with the federal and provincial governments on partnerships with the Métis on matters of common concern, especially on issues that will impact on the youth.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan seek recognition with the federal and provincial government to decide who is responsible for the Rights of the Métis, and which level of government has the necessary Constitutional jurisdiction to negotiate Rights agreements with the Métis Nation.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Federal Government be challenged to carry out the proper recognition that the Métis

are part of the Canadian Constitution. This recognition includes acting on the “implementation” of Métis Rights under that Constitution.

- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation seek multi-year funding from the federal government for existing programs and to strengthen the tripartite process and increase Métis control over governance of Métis issues through Métis-specific devolution processes.
- ❖ The people recommend that the federal and provincial governments fully fund the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Senate.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan seek recognition and funding from the federal and provincial governments to honour the registry of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, as determined through the *Citizenship Act*.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan build relationships with the municipalities in order to address issues of common concern.

The Métis and the Laws of Canada

The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan is a province-wide organization which represents the interests of approximately 60 - 80,000 Métis people in Saskatchewan. All elected leadership of the Métis Nation meet annually at the Métis Nation Legislative Assembly to address the matters of the Nation in this province. The President of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, along with

the Presidents of the other four governing members, holds a seat as Board of Governor of the Métis National Council. The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan has the mandate to pursue the rights of the Métis within Saskatchewan and to work towards development of the social, cultural, economic, civil, political and legal rights of our people.

Since patriation of the Canadian Constitution in 1982, we have endeavored to make progress in each of the areas listed above. While entrenchment of Métis Rights as one of the three Aboriginal peoples of Canada is important, the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan feels that the constitutional process cannot provide all of the solutions to our immediate needs. The cooperative efforts of both the Federal and Provincial Governments, through the tripartite process and the balance approach to devolution of programs and services and recognition of self-government, is required to bring constitutional principles to reality at the level of family and community. It is in the experience of exercising those inherent rights recognized by the Constitution that law becomes justice and justice freedom.

Several court cases have brought realism to the *Constitution Act, 1982* for Métis in Canada. The *Morin & Daigneault* case in Saskatchewan affects the Métis who took scrip in 1906 and 1907. The Supreme Court of Canada states that each case be considered site-specific. The provincial court held that the Métis who took scrip did not extinguish their right to hunt and fish. In order for a right to be taken away, it must be explicitly stated. In the case of *Morin & Daigneault*, the Queen's Bench agreed that the Crown's intention was not plain and clear. That was for the 1906 scrip commission. The Métis in Saskatchewan received scrip under different commissions. We have to establish our Aboriginal harvesting rights under these specific commissions.

We have to prove one commission at a time that whatever scrip did to land, it did not extinguish harvesting rights.

The *Powley* case in Ontario set another precedent. A Métis victory in their high court set a precedent to all lower courts in Ontario. The *Powley* case has been appealed by the Crown to the Ontario Court of Appeal. It could inevitably be heard in the Supreme Court of Canada, which would then set a precedent throughout the Métis Nation homeland.

The *Grumbo* case in southern Saskatchewan is another important case on Métis Rights. The Federal Government retained ownership and control of all Crown Lands in the prairie provinces until the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement of 1930, at which time Crown lands were transferred to the prairie provinces. The Natural Resources Transfer Agreement guaranteed Indian harvesting rights. It is the argument of the Métis that the term "Indian" included the Métis as well as First Nations, which was agreed to by the Queen's Bench. However, the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal held that the Métis will have to prove that our harvesting rights existed at the time of the Transfer Agreement, before deciding whether we fall within the meaning of the term "Indian" in the NRTA of 1930. A new trial was ordered, but the case was dropped by the Crown / province so no new trial was held.

There are other cases addressing Métis Aboriginal harvesting rights, Aboriginal title to lands and resources, self-government, Section 45 Charter of Rights and Freedoms violations by federal government discriminatory practices against the Métis and section 91(24) jurisdiction and Métis inclusion. Our people recognize the disadvantage faced by our people due to the lack of fiscal resources to adequately engage in these court actions, but at the same time realize we have no other choice.

The governments seek to limit and diminish our rights by saying that they know best who we are and what we need. The governments seek to weaken our governing voice by disregarding our leaders and their efforts to bring our issues to the table for discussion. Any limitation of our rights should be negotiated through the channels that the people identify, through the elected leadership of the Métis people, not unilaterally imposed at the will of the federal or provincial government leaders. The days of the gattling gun are gone, are they not?

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, made many recommendations to the Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan in terms of the honouring of Métis Rights. The Federal Government response, *Gathering Strength*, made little mention of the Métis, and few acknowledgements of Métis issues. However, Federal Minister Ralph Goodale, Métis Interlocutor, acknowledged that the Federal Government needed to meet with the Métis National Council, as the national voice for the Métis Nation, to discuss the aspirations of the Métis Nation. The Métis National Council tabled a response entitled the *Métis Nation Agenda*. This agenda would address issues such as land and resource rights, housing, economic development, education and so on, as identified by the people. Minister Goodale did not accept the response but instead agreed to finance a consultation process for the development of a national response. Consultations were held nationally and reported in a Final Report by the Métis National Council. The *Final Report*, July 1999, was supplemented by the *Moving Forward* document in July 1999 which proposed concrete steps for immediate action. The *Métis National Council Final Report* and the *Moving Forward* document constitutes the second round of consultations and this report is a summary of the follow up consultations with the Métis of Saskatchewan on the topic of the Métis Nation Agenda.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan approach the Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan to negotiate for clear and agreed upon terminology – definitions - that are in keeping with our history and tradition so that our rights are protected into future generations.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan move forward on the Rights agenda of the Métis in Saskatchewan.
- ❖ The people seek to establish a test case to be carried forward by the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan to determine Métis Rights to self-governance over land in a traditional Métis community in the south of Saskatchewan.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan take an active role in the defence of Métis citizens who are charged by the Government of Saskatchewan with wrongful resource use.
- ❖ The people recommend the application of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan *Métis Wildlife and Conservation Act*, as enacted by the Métis Nation Legislative Assembly.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan seek funding to be used for test case litigation to address the government's lack of interest in addressing Métis Rights in Saskatchewan and Canada.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan take the issues of the people, as stated in this

report, forward to the Governments of Canada and
Saskatchewan.

IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL: THE MÉTIS NATION AGENDA

A REPORT OF THE PEOPLE

MARCH 2000

SCHEDULE OF CONSULTATIONS

The Métis Nation Agenda consultations were arranged by Bruce Flamont, on behalf of the Executive of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, and took place in community halls and gyms. The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan has twelve Regions in its jurisdiction and the Regional Representatives hosted their region's consultations. Identified is the date of the consultation, the place of the consultation (as well as the names of the regions included in the consultation), along with participating groups and the approximate numbers of those in attendance.

Various information was distributed at the consultations including: *Moving Forward Document*; *Final Report of the Community Consultation Process for a Métis Nation Agenda*; *Moving Forward Newspaper*; *New Breed Magazine*; Teillet's Summary of Métis Case Law Document; Teillet's Brief on Powley Case; Government of Saskatchewan Draft *Framework for Cooperation* and the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Briefing Response; Chartier's Métis Hunting Rights: R v Grumbo Brief; *Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management Fish and Wildlife Policy Framework*; Flamont's Creation of the Métis Nation Brief; Métis Nation Legislative Assembly definition of who is a Métis; and the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan *Métis Wildlife and Conservation Act*.

- January 10, 2000** **Ile-a-la-Crosse (Ile-a-la-Crosse and Buffalo
Narrows Regions)
North West Municipalities Association
North West Saskatchewan Métis Council
Sixty (100) in attendance.**
- January 12, 2000** **North Battleford (Meadow Lake and North
Battleford Regions)
Seventy (70) in attendance.**
- January 16, 2000** **La Ronge Region
Thirty (30) in attendance.**
- January 18, 2000** **Commercial Fisherman's Meeting, La Ronge**
- January 22, 2000** **Prince Albert Region
Fifty (50) in attendance.**
- January 23, 2000** **Lebret (Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle Regions)
A Hundred (100) in attendance.**
- January 26, 2000** **Chief Executive Officers of the Métis Nation
Affiliates**
- January 30, 2000** **Regina Region
Fourty (40) in attendance.**
- February 19, 2000** **Assiniboia (Regina, Assiniboia and Willowbunch
Region)
Eighty (80) in attendance.**

February 20, 2000 **Lebret Farm (Fort Qu'Appelle Region)**
Fourty (40) in attendance.

February 24, 2000 **Tisdale (Archerwill Region)**
Fourty (40) in attendance.

February 26, 2000 **Regina Urban Region**
Thirty (30) in attendance.

February 27, 2000 **Saskatoon Region**
Sixty (60) in attendance.

March 4, 2000 **Northern Fur Conservation Areas Trappers**
Association Meeting, Prince Albert

March 18, 2000 **Pinehouse (Ile-a-la-Crosse Region)**
Thirty-five (35) in attendance.

March 29, 2000 **Provincial Métis Council Meeting, Saskatoon**

IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL: THE MÉTIS NATION AGENDA

A REPORT OF THE PEOPLE

MARCH 2000

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Métis Nation in the Twenty-First Century: Identity

- ❖ The people recommend that genealogical research be undertaken to determine for the people those Métis families that had received scrip under the various commissions.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan look into the recognition of Métis people in the Constitution, and to the situation of individuals who identified as Métis and have since been signed up, with or without their consent, to be registered as Indians through the Bill C-31 process. Many now wish to identify as they had all their lives and as part of their ancestry allows, as Métis, and amendments to the *Indian Act* are required to make this possible.
- ❖ The people recognize that the Métis National Council has drafted three options for a national definition of Métis and wish to acknowledge that "Option B" best represents the determination of the Métis in Saskatchewan.

Métis Rights Are Part of Canada's Long History

- ❖ The people suggest that the Government of Canada review the contributions of other leaders of Canada, such as Sir John A. Macdonald, to acknowledge the role of this statesman in the wrongful death of Louis Riel.

- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan support the Métis National Council in gaining proper recognition of Louis Riel and the Métis Nation.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis in Canada be addressed through our democratically elected leadership, through the Métis National Council and through the provincial member of the Métis Nation, the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan.
- ❖ The people request that the role of the Métis Interlocutor be reviewed in the Canadian Government system and a determination of the relationship of this structure to the struggle of the Métis.
- ❖ The people request that the Métis Interlocutor speak out on behalf of the Métis in Canada against the Reform Party condemnation of Aboriginal peoples, that the Métis Interlocutor work towards building understanding between the Reform Party and the existing government on these matters.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan be brought to task on the question of Métis Rights and to begin negotiations with the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan on these important matters.
- ❖ The people recommend that the issue of Metis Veterans be addressed by the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan and that the issue be taken to the appropriate government department for immediate response.
- ❖ The people recommend the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan question the practice of the government in not assuring employment in the traditional regions of the Métis homeland be guaranteed for Métis citizens. If a labour force is required for economic development, then the Métis should be trained to become part of the required labour force in that region, especially in the north.

The Métis Nation and the Rights of Generations Past and Future

- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan continue to hold education sessions for Métis citizens and communities, and indeed all citizens of Canada, on the rights of the Métis, with a focus on youth education.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan build their capacity to educate Métis citizens and communities, and indeed all citizens of Canada, on the rights of the Métis, including rights to land, resource use, self-determination, access to education and so on, including building access for communities to deliver these education sessions.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis in Saskatchewan support the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Minister of Lands and Resources in addressing the rights issues on these matters, through the development of supportive subcommittees throughout the homeland.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan pursue a final resolution to the long-standing issues of compensation for the Metis who were displaced by the establishment of the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range.

The Métis Nation and the Right to Self-Determination

- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan continue to improve access to programs and services such as education and justice through increased funds and support to develop existing Métis institutions and organizations.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan address the issue of lack of housing for Métis in Saskatchewan.

- ❖ The people recommend the development of Métis-specific education to increase knowledge within existing and future generations of Métis youth on their inherent rights and the contributions of the Métis in the teaching of the history of Canada.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis consider access to services be limited to Métis citizens only.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan seek to build capacity within the Nation by the creation of employment opportunities for Métis to work and serve Métis citizens in professional capacities within the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Affiliates and organizations.
- ❖ The people recommend the development of an Affiliate to devolve and delivery health and wellness programs and services to Métis people in Saskatchewan. This Affiliate will have representation from each of the Regions in Saskatchewan, as set out in the Constitution, to ensure the decisions are made by the people who are affected by such decisions.

The Historic and Contemporary Homeland of the Métis

- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan work toward gaining ownership and control of land for the collective use of the Métis in the way of park lands, cultural gathering lands, historic lands and so on.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan undertake a review of the taxation practices on lands currently owned by the Métis people, including Métis people who are farmers. The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan would suggest a reform for taxation whereby the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan would collect taxes on these lands and/or support situations such as the situation of Métis farmers in the farming industry crisis.

- ❖ The people seek increased funds to finance Métis entrepreneurial opportunities across the Métis homeland and to make substantial gain in the involvement of Métis in economic development in this province.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan advance efforts to increase employment for Métis people in Saskatchewan.

The Government of the Métis Nation

- ❖ The people recommend that any new funds or programs or services that are made available for the betterment of Métis people in Saskatchewan through provincial programming, be devolved through the existing Métis Nation of Saskatchewan bilateral processes, including those identified in the *Framework for Cooperation* document.
- ❖ The people recommend that any new funds or programs or services that are made available for the betterment of Métis people in Saskatchewan through federal funding be devolved through the existing Métis Nation of Saskatchewan tripartite process, including those identified with the Urban Aboriginal Strategy.
- ❖ The people recommend the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan to continue to work with the federal and provincial governments on partnerships with the Métis on matters of common concern, especially on issues that will impact on the youth.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan seek recognition with the federal and provincial government to decide who is responsible for the Rights of the Métis, and which level of government has the necessary Constitutional jurisdiction to negotiate Rights agreements with the Métis Nation.

- ❖ The people recommend that the Federal Government be challenged to carry out the proper recognition that the Métis are part of the Canadian Constitution. This recognition includes acting on the “implementation” of Métis Rights under that Constitution.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation seek multi-year funding from the federal government for existing programs and to strengthen the tripartite process and increase Métis control over governance of Métis issues through Métis-specific devolution processes.
- ❖ The people recommend that the federal and provincial governments fully fund the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Senate.
- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan seek recognition and funding from the federal and provincial governments to honour the registry of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, as determined through the *Citizenship Act*.
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The Métis and the Laws of Canada

- ❖ The people recommend that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan approach the Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan to negotiate for clear and agreed upon terminology – definitions - that are in keeping with our history and tradition so that our rights are protected into future generations.
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