

**METIS NATION OF SASKATCHEWAN
SENATE REPORT
Presented to the
Metis Nation Legislative Assembly**

INTRODUCTION

As a result of several factors, this Senate Report to yourselves, is probably not the kind of report that is customary. Nevertheless, it is critical that each of you who are members of the MNLA reviews this report. The decisions that you are required to make in respect to this document will determine if indeed the Metis people of today can forge ahead in their Nation building efforts.

In the year 1993 the Metis people of Saskatchewan, through their own efforts formed the Metis Government of today. In doing so it became necessary to divorce ourselves from the confines of the Non-Profit Corporations Act. It also became necessary to adopt Rules & Regulations to govern ourselves so that we may be able to complete the political aspirations of our forefathers. This very brief history is the foundation of the present Metis Nation of Saskatchewan Constitution. Therefore, it is only since 1993 that we have been learning how to govern ourselves and how difficult this really is.

As always it is not the intention or role of the Senate to involve themselves in the political arena. However, you have entrusted in us, the responsibility of ensuring that the rules and laws that you make are adhered to. It is in this context that this Senate report is presented to yourselves, who are the ultimate decision-makers of the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan.

In any democratic society the "Rule of Law" applies automatically: This term simply means (in our case) that **the rules and laws of the Metis Nation of**

Saskatchewan Constitution applies to all equally. Therefore, as we look back since 1993 it can be said that we have made modest advances in respect to Metis Governance. Generally, members of the MNS act within the laws and rules of the MNS and although there has been some controversies at the local level, there have been ways to resolve these issues satisfactorily. The same can be said about Regional Metis Governance. This is possible because the rules and laws of the Constitution are enforced.

However, and for several reasons it is felt that there needs to be more clarity in respect to the governance of the elected Provincial Executive. It is assumed by all members that the Executive is bound by the laws of the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan Constitution. However, what is the process that can be utilized to ensure the Executive of the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan operate within the laws of the MNS? What can and should be done when the Executive or a member of the Executive act outside of the laws of the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan Constitution? Is the "Oath" that elected leaders take 'forcible'?

These questions are raised as a result of recent decisions and/or actions taken by Executive or members of the Executive that are unconstitutional. An example of this is the provision in the Constitution that requires Metis Nation Legislative Assembly ratification for all members of Cabinet. It is felt by many members that this is not being done. Another and perhaps more serious aberration of the Constitution is the issue of 'Regional Authority'. On a couple of occasions, and for just cause in their view, regions have attempted to remove their Director. In those the Executive either refuses to acknowledge the authority of Regional Government or believe that because they are the Executive that they can over-rule these decisions. There is an immediate need to resolve this issue as it caused great political instability in the regions affected. For the benefit of all it is hoped that this element of self-government, 'Executive Political Accountability',

be addressed at your MNLA.

THE PERFECT CONSTITUTION IS NOT POSSIBLE

It is necessary to elect people with **Integrity**, committed to **Nation Building** that the Metis can trust. As well, and as part of this report we feel it necessary that you understand the Senate has no office, no staff, or phone, etc. that we are able to 'function' only when the Executive feels we should because they have the only resources available.

We do not feel that this is right and therefore request you to once again instruct the Executive to secure permanent and independent funds for the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan Senate.

In closing we wish you all a safe trip to the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

M.N.S. Senate