



Analysis of Federal Party Platforms on Métis Issues

On November 30th, 2005, Clément Chartier, President of the Métis National Council (MNC) wrote to all federal parties requesting their policy positions on Métis issues. Copies of these letters are available at www.metisnation.ca. As of January 4th, 2005, only the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party (NDP) formally responded to the MNC's letters. Copies of these response letters are also available at www.metisnation.ca. This chart has been developed based on those letters as well as some parts of the parties' Aboriginal policies that have been released to date. This chart is designed to assist Métis voters in making informed choices on where the parties stand on Métis issues in this federal election.

Issue	Liberal Party	Conservative Party	New Democratic Party	Bloc Quebecois	Green Party
Recognition of Métis Nation	<p>On April 19th, 2004, at the Canada-Aboriginal Peoples Roundtable, Prime Minister Martin opened the day by stating that “[t]here is also no question that we need to strengthen our relationship with the Métis community in Canada. It is time to recognize the contributions the Métis nation has made, and continues to make, to this country.”</p> <p>Building upon this, on May 31, 2005, the federal government, under the leadership of Paul Martin, signed the Canada-Métis Nation Framework Agreement with the MNC. “This agreement recognizes the Métis Nation and its contributions in building Canada while establishing a new partnership based on mutual respect towards improving the lives of Métis people.”</p> <p>The Liberal Party continues to recognize the Métis Nation and its contributions to Canada.</p>	No response	<p>The NDP recognizes that the Métis people are acknowledged as an “aboriginal people in the Constitution of Canada.”</p> <p>On November 18, 2004, Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-216, an act respecting Louis Riel. The bill seeks to reverse the conviction of Louis Riel for high treason and to recognize and commemorate his role in the advancement of Canadian Confederation and the rights and the interests of the Métis people and the people of Western Canada. The bill would also recognize him as a Father of Confederation.</p>	No response	No response



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Commitment to First Minister Meeting's Action Plan	<p>A Liberal Government collaboratively developed the FMM Action Plan with Aboriginal peoples, provinces and territories and committed \$5 billion over five years to implement the Action Plan which will close the gap between the quality of life of Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians in education, health, housing and economic opportunities.</p> <p>The Liberal Party is fully committed to the FMM Action plan and “intends to live up to these commitments” in full.</p>	<p>The Conservative Party supports the FMM initiative, however, they would examine the spending commitments figures tabled by the Prime Minister in an overall budgetary context.</p>	<p>The NDP supports the FMM commitments and pledges to implement the Action Plan reached as an essential next step forward. They worked to ensure that the FMM took place and Jack Layton was present at the meeting. Any promises made by the government must be fulfilled in a timely way.</p>	<p>The Bloc Quebecois supports the commitments made at the FMM.</p>	<p>No response</p>
Position on a Distinctions Based Approach	<p>The Liberal Party “recognizes that conditions in the far north are different from those on reserve, and that conditions on reserve are different from those in our cities. It also recognizes the very different issues facing First Nations, Inuit and the Métis Nation and that the needs of Aboriginal women must not be forgotten. The Liberal Party is committed to working with all aboriginal peoples in order to address their unique challenges and needs.”</p> <p>The Liberal Party supports the FMM Action Plan which provides for First Nation, Inuit and Métis specific commitments as well as distinct implementation strategies.</p>	<p>No response</p>	<p>The NDP acknowledge that “each of the three peoples mentioned in the Constitution have different histories, goals, cultures, and need to be recognized as such.”</p>	<p>No response</p>	<p>No response</p>



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Commitment to Implementing the Canada-Métis Nation Framework Agreement	<p>A Liberal Government signed the Canada-Métis Nation Framework Agreement with the MNC on May 31, 2005. A Liberal Government recognized that this agreement is significant and it guided the work between the Government of Canada and the Métis Nation over the last half year.</p> <p>The Liberal Party stands firmly behind the Canada-Métis Nation Framework Agreement and “commits to its implementation with the MNC and its regional affiliates on a government-to-government basis.”</p>	No response	The NDP agrees to support and implement the Canada-Métis Nation Framework Agreement.	No response	No response
Implementation of Métis Self-Government	<p>The Liberal Party “recognizes the importance of self-government for Aboriginal peoples as a means towards achieving political, social and economic sufficiency and an improved quality of life overall” and is “committed to continuing to engage with the Métis Nation in self-government discussions”</p> <p>As a part of the government-to-government implementation of the Canada-Métis Nation Framework Agreement, the “Liberal Party is committed to establishing negotiation processes in order to address and accommodate existing Métis rights protected under the Constitution.”</p>	No response	The NDP support the right of the Métis people to manage their own affairs, and work out the best arrangements for themselves with federal and provincial governments. The NDP is committed to these discussions.	Following the direction of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the Bloc would work with Aboriginals to help them establish their own governments.	No response



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Recognition of Métis Rights	<p>The Liberal Party “recognizes that in the <i>Powley</i> decision, the Supreme Court of Canada affirmed that Métis communities have existing Aboriginal rights that are recognized and protected by section 35 of the <i>Constitution Act</i>.” The Liberal Party will continue to work with the Métis on the implementation of the <i>Powley</i> decision.</p> <p>A Liberal Government committed federal resources to assist Métis organizations and communities to implement the <i>Powley</i> case in collaboration with the federal government and relevant provinces and territories.</p>	<p>No specific reference to recognizing Métis rights. The Conservative policy states that, “[a]ll Aboriginal rights recognized under section 35 of the Constitution must be conferred within the four square corners of the <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i> and the Charter, with full protection for equality rights for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.”</p>	<p>The existing Aboriginal and Treaty rights of the Métis are recognized and affirmed by the Constitution of Canada, and this must be recognized by the government, regardless of party.</p>	<p>No response</p>	<p>The Green Party would legislate primary or “first use” hunting, fishing, trapping and logging rights for Métis peoples in traditional lands under Federal Jurisdiction, subject to mutually agreeable definitions of sustainable harvests.</p>
Commitment to <i>Powley</i> Implementation Resources	<p>Following the release of the <i>Powley</i> decision, a Liberal Government committed \$20.5 in the 2004 Budget to assist Métis groups and organizations to work with different levels of government in response to the <i>Powley</i> case. In the most recent Budget, a Liberal Government committed a further \$30 million over two years to assist in this ongoing work.</p> <p>The Liberal Party is “committed to sustaining and building upon these efforts consistent with the commitments signed in the Canada-Métis Nation Framework Agreement last spring.”</p>	<p>No response</p>	<p>An NDP government would consider proposals for this objective. Other governments obviously must be involved.</p>	<p>No response</p>	<p>No response</p>



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Métis Education	<p>As a part of the FMM Action Plan, a Liberal Government committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the development of a Métis Nation Centre of Excellence in Education and Innovation; • developing and supporting initiatives to improve Métis educational outcomes within public education systems through innovation supports (<i>e.g.</i>, stay in school programs, literacy initiatives, etc.) that are developed and/or delivered in collaboration with Métis, the federal government and relevant provincial and territorial governments; • enhancing transitions delivered by existing Métis educational institutions such as the Gabriel Dumont Institute (Saskatchewan) and the Louis Riel Institute (Manitoba) and exploring options for the development of new Métis educational institutions. <p>A Liberal Government also committed to providing resources for Métis scholarships and bursaries.</p> <p>The Liberal Party is committed to implementing the FMM Action Plan.</p>	<p>No response</p>	<p>The NDP “provided results by rewriting the Liberal budget. They cancelled their corporate tax cuts and instead invested \$1.5 billion for education and training, with dedicated funds for Aboriginal people.”</p> <p>The NDP support the commitments made to Métis education in the FMM Action Plan.</p>	<p>No response</p>	<p>Making Aboriginal cultures a part of the Canadian education system is another step toward achieving equality within our federation. These social services will allow Aboriginal peoples to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make their culture and history a mandatory component of Canadian history. • support the development of education curricula that are language and culture specific. • deliver education in a way that incorporates traditional practices, recognizing the role of extended families and elders.



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Métis Health	<p>The Liberal Party is committed to working with the Métis Nation and relevant provincial/territorial governments, in implementing a Métis specific health framework, as part of the Aboriginal Health Blueprint. Components of this framework will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources for Métis capacity development in the health sector; Métis-specific investments in health professional training; Métis-specific transition initiatives; Support for Métis health and wellness initiatives, including, diabetes, AIDS/HIV, community care, etc. 	<p>No specific reference with respect to Métis health, but the Conservative policy states, “Aboriginal Canadians are entitled to the full benefits of Canadian citizenship and the full protection of the Charter, including the delivery of health services. Canada must develop in a manner that ensures constitutional equality and workability.”</p>	<p>The NDP supports Aboriginal initiatives to improve health, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> respecting traditional healing, working together with western medicine to provide quality care; encourage traditional nutrition, fitness, and breastfeeding; working with Aboriginal people to develop comprehensive and holistic mental health and wellness strategies with special focus on healing, addictions and suicide prevention. 	<p>No response</p>	<p>Deliver health care in a way that incorporates traditional practices, recognizing the role of extended families and elders.</p>
Métis Early Learning and Child Care	<p>At the FMM, a Liberal Government committed to providing resources for Métis-specific Early Learning and Child Care initiatives. The Liberal Party is committed to implementing the commitments made at the FMM.</p>	<p>No response</p>	<p>No response</p>	<p>No response</p>	<p>No response</p>
Métis Social Housing	<p>As a part of the FMM Action Plan, a Liberal Government committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> making immediate investments in new Métis housing and in the ongoing maintenance of existing Métis-delivered housing with a view to improving Métis 	<p>No response</p>	<p>The NDP “produced results by rewriting the Liberal budget. They cancelled corporate tax cuts and instead invested \$1.6 billion for affordable housing, including dedicated funds for Aboriginal housing.”</p>	<p>No response</p>	<p>No response</p>



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	<p>delivery and control over housing;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing a regionally-focused Métis Nation Housing Institute. The Institute will work towards supporting new Métis social housing; capacity development for existing or new Métis housing providers; policy development; research and data collection; and developing investment models to support Métis housing. <p>The Liberal Party is committed to implementing the FMM Action Plan.</p>		<p>The NDP support programs which will assist Aboriginal peoples to govern themselves for the benefit of their communities and country by respect their decisions. In this respect additional funding to meet the needs for new housing have been and are being pursued by the NDP. In most instances, there will be a need for specific tailoring of programs according to the conditions and resources available in the communities concerned.</p>		
Métis Veterans	<p>Last year, a Liberal Government, in partnership with the MNC and the National Métis Veterans Association, committed funding to explore the history and contributions of Métis veterans during conflicts, including the review of the treatment Métis were subjected to entering and returning from war.</p> <p>The Liberal Party is committed to reviewing the findings and recommendations of the study, in collaboration with Métis leadership in order to develop an approach to address the issues facing Métis veterans.</p>	No response	<p>The NDP has been active in ensuring all veterans receive the benefits to which they are entitled, especially in light of the unfair treatment of aboriginal veterans.</p> <p>The NDP is committed to investigating any claims where this right to fair treatment has been denied to Métis veterans.</p>	No response	No response