



### Métis Youth Voice Heard on Parliament Hill



Senator Don Meredith with Métis Nation of Ontario Youth Council Member Mitchell Case

The voice of Métis youth was heard in Parliament on November 23rd in a meeting of the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples. For the first time, the Senators sat amongst youth representatives from the three national Aboriginal organizations – the Métis National Council, Assembly of First Nations and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. The meeting was a chance for the Senators to hear what the priorities and challenges are for youth today and every word spoken was heard.

The Senate Committee meeting was attended by Métis Nation of Ontario Youth Council Member Mitch Case and Métis National Council Communications Officer Adrian Mrdeza. An

overview of the overall activities and youth involvement was provided to the Committee outlining the key priority of access to post-secondary funding and the need for the current primary funding source for Aboriginal youth to be examined and revised so the funds are more easily available for its intended purposes – to serve the youth and promote cultural engagement.

Senate Committee members questioned youth panelists on economic development issues, education and training initiatives, and what the reality of being a youth is like today. The Métis Nation stressed the importance of the ability to pursue post-secondary education and that the key barrier to higher learning is the lack of adequate funding. Currently the Métis National Council's Governing Members have Endowment Funds set up but can only utilize the interest income on these funds to aid Métis students. The recommendation to have these endowment funds 'topped-up' was made so that more Métis will have the chance to achieve their educational goals.

Following the official meeting, the youth were invited to take a tour of the Senate Chamber and have one-on-one time with a handful of Senators to ask questions, share ideas and receive advice. It was an opportunity few have had and the Métis were there alongside the First Nations and Inuit youth representatives providing insight on the realities that youth face. It was a discussion that has opened the door to a broader dialogue to be had on Parliament Hill.

Métis National Council President Clément Chartier also presented to the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples the priorities of the Métis Nation for their study during the current session. Foremost of these priorities was the need to include Métis land claims in the federal government's land claims resolution processes.

President Chartier provided background to the epic court battle of the Manitoba Métis Federation over the unfulfilled promise of a 1,400,000 acre

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### **Support the expansion of Métis Nation Heritage Sites, Cultural and Educational Institutions & the Preservation of our Language**

*President Chartier makes presentation to House of Commons Standing Committee*

The Métis Nation has played a significant role in the development of Canada and during President Chartier's presentation to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage meeting on November 22, he made three key recommendations: to encourage the department to support our national cultural institutions; to support the development and expansion of Métis Nation heritage sites, cultural and education institutions (such as the Gabriel Dumont Institution, Louis Riel Institute and Rupertsland Institute); and to put forward a recommendation that the federal government provide fiscal resources so the Métis language, Michif, can be saved.

The committee is doing a study on Canada's 150th anniversary which will take place in 2017. The Métis Nation was invited to the committee meeting to present on the topic of the upcoming 150th anniversary which gives the opportunity for

the invited speakers to reflect on how they wish to relate to Confederation.

President Chartier opened with an overview of the Métis Nation and highlighted that Confederation has particular significance to the Métis as we were the founders of Canada's first post-Confederation province—Manitoba. "Our ancestors, for the most part, were not directly affected by the events in 1867 because they did not reside in the four confederating provinces," said Chartier, "they lived in Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory, both of which were controlled by the Hudson's Bay Company . . . We played an instrumental role in the fur trade economy as freighters, boatmen, provisioners, merchants and interpreters." He also reminded the committee of the December 13th Supreme Court appeal that will change the way Canada views the rights of the Métis.

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... land grants for the children of the Métis heads of families in the original "postage stamp" province of Manitoba. That struggle for justice, launched in the courts 30 years ago, will reach the Supreme Court of Canada on December 13.

President Chartier also asked the Committee to study and support the search for justice of the thousands of Métis Residential, Boarding and Day School survivors who were not

included in the Indian Residential School Settlement by the Government of Canada. The issue proved to be of considerable interest to the Senate Committee members who sought additional information on why the Métis have been denied compensation.

Finally, President Chartier briefed the Committee on the progress the MNC is making with the federal government under the Métis Nation Protocol in order to negotiate new accords on

governance and economic development. He explained how the greater authorities and firmer fiscal arrangements in the proposed accords could be recognized in a new Métis Nation constitution that is being developed by the Métis Nation. He proposed that the Committee include in its study the potential of federal legislation that would recognize this constitution as the source of self-government for the Métis Nation.



## Message from the President

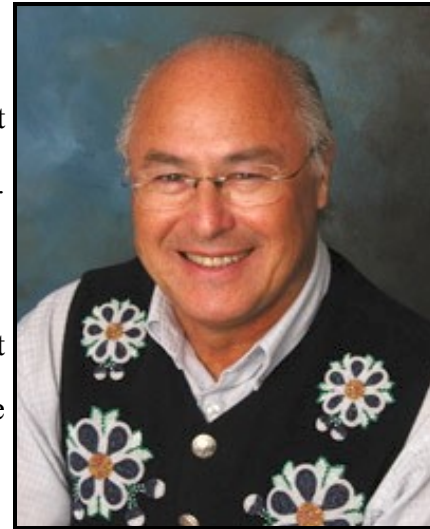
As I sat listening to the youth presentations to the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples on November 23<sup>rd</sup> the continuing disparity between the educational funding opportunities provided to Métis post-secondary students and First Nations and Inuit students was starkly put into context by Métis Nation of Ontario Youth Council Executive Member Mitch Case.

Mitch, an active participant in Métis youth affairs and an active citizen in the Sault Ste. Marie Métis community, informed the Committee that he is pursuing his post-secondary education and was very pleased with the \$300 grant/scholarship he was able to acquire through the Métis Nation of Ontario's endowment fund at the university he is attending. While the funding received may be small he stated, it helped supplement the income he was able to earn working part-time while pursuing full time education.

This is a great example of the challenges facing our youth, and the determination exhibited by many, who persevere and pursue their educational goals.

Mitch also actively participated in the Métis Nation's youth leadership workshop held in Saskatoon and Batoche this past July. Not only did the youth have a chance to discuss issues, they also were very instrumental in assisting the Métis Nation in honouring WWII and other veterans at Batoche, as part of the Decade of the Métis Nation. The youth were there for the veterans and assisted them as required.

While the Métis Nation faces funding challenges at the national level to continue active youth engagement, this is something that we must continue working to resolve. Building on the July workshop, the youth participants will be taking part in the upcoming National Métis Residential Schools Conference to be held next spring. This is an important voice within the Métis Nation, which must be encouraged.



### Upcoming National Events

- ◆ **Métis Nation Constitution Workshop  
- For Governing Members' Boards & Councils**      **December 11 & 12    Ottawa**
- ◆ **MMF Land Claim Appeal—Supreme Court**      **December 13      Ottawa**



**The Métis National Council's office has moved to:**

**#4-340 MacLaren St., Ottawa ON., K2P 0M6**

**Our Phone/Fax #'s & Emails are all the same!**



### November 16, Louis Riel Day—Photographs from St. Boniface



(Left) Métis National Council President Chartier speaks during the memorial ceremony at the St. Boniface site of Louis Riel's grave in Winnipeg, Manitoba. (Right) Premier Selinger, MNC President Chartier & MMF President David Chartrand.

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## Métis Nation Reminds Canadians that Thousands of Métis Residential School Survivors remain Unacknowledged

The Métis Nation acknowledges the announcement made by the Government of Canada on October 27th to commemorate the legacy of the Indian residential school systems at Parliament Hill as a next step as laid out in the 2007 Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.

“This symbolic gesture in tribute of the legacy of those who have been affected by the residential schools system is a positive step to rebuilding a relationship with the Aboriginal peoples of Canada,” said President Chartier. “Many appreciated efforts have been made since the 2008 official apology from the Government of Canada

but in follow up, I must remind Canadians that there are thousands of Métis Nation citizens that attended Métis residential schools, who experienced the same policies that Canada apologized for, that have been excluded from the Settlement Agreement and mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.”

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Minister John Duncan announced that a permanent stained-glass window, to be designed by an Indigenous artist, will be permanently installed in the entry to the House of Commons in the Canadian Parliament.

President Chartier says there is still a lot of healing that has to happen. “We will continue to work together to uplift our people, support our community members and in time we will emerge from this dark time in our cultural history with pride. Although we are moving in the right direction there is still a lot of road to travel leading to closure on this issue for the Métis Nation.”



### Métis Nation Flag Flies in Peru



(Top Left) Parade in Tinto, Peru, (Bottom Left) L-R: President Tacuri, President Chartier, Dennis Carrasquel (Venezuela) & Mayor of Tinta Daniel Mamani. (Right) Raising of the Métis Nation flag.

On November 3 - 4, 2011 President Chartier attended the inaugural meeting and celebration of the Quechua (Inka) Nation in Tinta, Peru. On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, several hundred leaders congregated in Tinta to begin discussions towards uniting the Quechua Indians from Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile and Argentina. The vast majority of the people of that Nation live within the countries of Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia.

In lead up to the meeting the flags of the countries of Peru and Venezuela were hoisted, as were the flags of the Métis Nation and of Community of Indigenous Nationalities of Peru (CONAIP). This was to signify the meeting of the leaders from Peru, Bolivia, Venezuela and Canada who were in attendance.

The idea for calling such a gathering germinated in the mind of CONAIP President Hugo Tacuri and his advisor/interpreter, Pedro

Huamani who were guests of the Métis National Council at the Batoche Days in July. When they arrived home they decided to take similar action in order to unite their people and selected Tinta and November 4<sup>th</sup> as that was the date in 1780 when Leader Tupac Amaru II in Tinta called for the liberation of his people from the Spanish. In May 1781 Tupac Amaru and his family were captured and executed in the public square in nearby Cuzco.

November 4<sup>th</sup> was a celebration in honour of Tupac Amaru and his family, with thousands of Indians participating in a 2 ½ hour parade, which was very colourful.

A declaration was made by the leaders in attendance that this event will be held every year, and that over time they expect hundreds or thousands of Indians from Bolivia, Ecuador, Chile and Argentina to join their Peruvian counterparts.



### Ground Breaking Ceremony: Fallen Métis Veterans to be Honoured on Digital 'Wall of Remembrance'



The city of Kingston, Ontario has been selected as the permanent home for the National Wall of Remembrance; and, in early October 2011 it was announced that it will be permanently located at the Military Communications and Electronics Museum on the grounds of the Canadian Forces Base. On November 10, 2011, the Métis National Council attended the Ground Breaking Ceremony of the project, which was also attended by advisory board members, community members and Corporate Sponsors.

The National Wall of Remembrance is a project that was proposed by the WOR Association in September 2010. The project is to build a virtual wall of remembrance that will be a single place of remembrance for all of Canada's fallen heroes that served in all conflicts of record. The 'Wall' will be 'virtual' in design, essentially a computer database that will have the names of fallen Canadian soldiers since 1812. The WOR Association is

collecting more than just the names of the fallen – they encourage images / media, service time, birth dates, family history to be sent in if available to build up the interactive component of the database.

The Métis National Council became involved in this project as a corporate sponsor when the Métis Nation dedicated 2011 to "Paying Tribute to our Veterans". This "Wall" will include the names of our fallen Métis soldiers and any other digital media such as photographs of the individual. The Métis National Council will be working with it's Governing Members, and more closely with the National Métis Veterans Association, to start compiling a list of Métis to be included in this national database of remembrance.

If you know a fallen Métis Veteran that you would like to have included in this project, please contact MNC Communications Officer Adrian Mrdeza at 613-232-3216 or by email at [adrianm@metisnation.ca](mailto:adrianm@metisnation.ca)



### President Chartier Speaks at McGill University



On November 10<sup>th</sup>, President Chartier participated on a panel of speakers addressing the Indian residential schools settlement agreement, the Prime Minister's apology and the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to an audience of 50 students and professors.

The exclusion of the vast majority of the Métis from the settlement agreement and hence the apology and mandate of the TRC was the main message provided by President Chartier in his 30 minute address and during the question and answer period.

President Chartier and the other two panel members also participated in a graduate students seminar for two hours on the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup>, going into further details about the experience of the Métis in connection with the residential schools



and the federal government's lack of taking responsibility for what happened to Métis Nation citizens.

#### Find more information:

[www.metisnation.ca](http://www.metisnation.ca)  
[www.metisportals.ca](http://www.metisportals.ca)

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