



MÉTIS NATION

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MNC and MMF Leaders Denounce MNBC Board Coup Removing Democratically Elected President

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The Métis National Council (MNC) and Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) Leadership are appalled and strongly denounce the shocking coup by the Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC) Board of Directors to remove its democratically elected President, Clara Morin Dal Col. The MNBC Board made a resolution suspending President Morin Dal Col to replace her with MNBC Vice President Lissa Smith.

The MNC Spokesperson and MMF President David Chartrand wrote to Ms. Smith making his government's position clear. Both MNC and MMF do not recognize Ms. Smith as the MNBC President. The resolution is unwarranted and without merit. The resolution was made without due process and without notice while ignoring the basic principles of law and justice.

"Ms. Smith and her accomplices ambushed President Clara Morin Dal Col," explained MNC President Clément Chartier. "This is a blackeye for democracy. As Métis Nation citizens – as would any democratic and free people – we are disgusted by this under-handed attempt to eliminate a rightfully elected leader."

"This behaviour does not reflect our democratic traditions, and values," added President Chartrand. "Since the early buffalo hunting expeditions our Captains of the Hunt were elected. Our Ancestors practiced democracy for nearly two centuries. Many sacrificed their lives to protect our families, our democracy, and our way of life."

"Our people choose our leaders by public vote and not through private conspiracies and backroom deals," said President Chartrand. "The MNBC's shameful resolution shows they cannot tell right from wrong. Any moral high ground they ever aspired to will be forever out of reach. What are they getting from this? What is their personal agenda? Why are they willing to sacrifice the future of our Nation?"

President Morin Dal Col was recently re-elected by a significant margin as MNBC President on a well-known platform of supporting the decision of the MNC General Assembly to defend the Métis Nation's identity and uphold the suspension of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) for admitting non-Métis into our Métis Nation.

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The MNBC Board of Directors has been frustrated at President Morin Dal Col's principled stand calling out MNO for opening the floodgates to non-Métis people and risking the future of Louis Riel's people. They cannot silence her in debate or by the ballot box. Her removal is a deliberate and calculated act to eliminate her strong voice.

"The behaviour of Ms. Smith and her gang is unacceptable," said President Chartier. "They refuse to accept the election results. Apparently, they believe they can reverse the election's outcome by removing the President who has a clear mandate from the citizens."

"The MNC does not recognize this unlawful removal of President Dal Col. She will continue to sit at the Board of Governors table," added President Chartier. "If Smith believed she could better represent the Métis, and wanted to reinstate MNO, she should have run for President herself – which she chose not to do. Instead she chose a thinly disguised grab for power."

"We will not stand by and watch this unfold without taking action," said President Chartrand. "We are exploring all our options to support President Morin Dal Col in her struggle for justice. The Manitoba Métis have drawn a line that cannot be crossed. We will take the necessary steps to protect our Ancestors' legacy, our Nation's identity and our People's democracy."

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The MNC represents the Métis Nation in Canada at the national and international levels. The Métis Nation's homeland includes the 3 Prairie Provinces and extends into the contiguous parts of British Columbia, Ontario, the Northwest Territories and the United States. There are approximately 400,000 Métis Nation citizens in Canada, roughly a quarter of all Aboriginal peoples in the country.