File No. CI 22-01-35091 (1)

THE QUEEN'S BENCH
Winnipeg Centre

Apr 19 2022 16:14
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CHARGE/FEE PAID: 250.00

BETWEEN:

Manitoba Métis Federation, and
Manitoba Metis Federation Inc., and
David Chartrand,

Plaintiffs,

-and-

Métis Nation British Columbia, and Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia,
and Métis Nation British Columbia Trustee Corporation,
and Louis De Jaeger

Defendants

FILED
QUEEN'S BENCH
APR 19 2022
LAW COURTS
WINNIPEG

STATEMENT OF CLAIM

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Of the British Columbia bar appearing temporarily in Manitoba – LSBC #5749
Counsel for the Plaintiffs

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Attention: **Genevieve Y. Benoit**
Co-Counsel for the Plaintiffs

APPVD
S.C.

File No. CI_____

THE QUEEN'S BENCH

Winnipeg Centre

BETWEEN:

Manitoba Métis Federation, and
Manitoba Metis Federation Inc., and
David Chartrand

Plaintiffs

And

Métis Nation British Columbia, and Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia,
and Métis Nation British Columbia Trustee Corporation,
and Louis De Jaeger

Defendants

STATEMENT OF CLAIM

TO THE DEFENDANTS:

A LEGAL PROCEEDING HAS BEEN COMMENCED AGAINST YOU by the plaintiffs. The claim made against you is set out in the following pages.

IF YOU WISH TO DEFEND THIS PROCEEDING, you or a Manitoba lawyer acting for you must prepare a statement of defence in Form 18A prescribed by the *Queen's Bench Rules*, serve it on the plaintiff's lawyer or where the plaintiff does not have a lawyer, serve it on the plaintiff, and file it in this court office, WITHIN TWENTY DAYS after this statement of claim is served on you, if you are served in Manitoba.

If you are served in another province or territory of Canada or in the United States of America, the period for serving and filing your statement of defence is forty days. If you are served outside Canada and the United States of America, the period is sixty days.

IF YOU FAIL TO DEFEND THIS PROCEEDING, JUDGEMENT MAY BE GIVEN AGAINST YOU IN YOUR ABSENCE AND WITHOUT FURTHER NOTICE TO YOU.

April 19, 2022
Date

Issued S. Castro
Deputy Registrar

COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH
LAW COURT BUILDING
100 - 408 YORK AVENUE
WINNIPEG, MB
R3C 0P9

TO: Métis Nation British Columbia
380 – 13401 – 108 Avenue
Surrey, B.C. V3T 5T3

AND TO: Métis Nation British Columbia Trustee Corporation
9259 Main Street
Chilliwack, B.C. V2P 4M8

AND TO: Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia
380 – 13401 – 108 Avenue
Surrey, B.C. V3T 5T3

AND TO: Louis De Jaeger
138 – 5373 Peach Road
Chilliwack, B.C. V2R 4P7

CLAIM

I. RELIEF CLAIMED

1. The Plaintiffs claim against the Defendants jointly and severally for:

    a. A declaration that the Plaintiffs have not established or funded any branch, chapter, faction, franchise, or group to represent or advocate for Métis in British Columbia, under the name of "Red River Métis in British Columbia" or otherwise or in association with Clara Morin Dal Col or Dale Drown or otherwise;

    b. A declaration that the Defendants defamed the Plaintiffs by publication of the Words (defined below);

    c. General damages for defamation of the Manitoba Métis Federation and the Manitoba Metis Federation Inc. and general damages for defamation of MMF President David Chartrand in an amount to be determined at trial;

    d. Special damages for defamation of each of the Plaintiffs;

    e. Aggravated damages for defamation of each of the Plaintiffs;

    f. Punitive damages for defamation of each of the Plaintiffs;

    g. An order that the Defendants remove and/or destroy any copy of or reference to the Words (defined below) from any source, medium, or place accessible to third parties;

    h. An interim, interlocutory, and permanent injunction to restrain the Defendants from continuing the defamation or publishing the same or any similar defamatory publication in the future;

    i. Pre-judgment and post-judgment interest;

    j. Costs on a solicitor and own client basis, or alternatively on such other basis as this court deems appropriate; and

    k. Such further and other relief as this court deems just and appropriate in the circumstances.

II. FACTS

A. The Parties

2. The Plaintiff, Manitoba Métis Federation Inc., is a non-share company incorporated pursuant to the laws of Manitoba with its registered office in Winnipeg.

3. The Plaintiff, Manitoba Métis Federation, which currently includes the Manitoba Métis Federation Inc., (collectively "MMF"), is the democratic self-government of the Manitoba Métis, also known as the Red River Métis. The democratically elected leadership of the MMF includes a President and Cabinet. The MMF Cabinet consists of 21 individuals elected from the seven MMF Regions, the Spokeswoman of Infinity Women Secretariat Inc., and the President who is elected by all Red River Métis Citizens. The MMF Cabinet Members include professionals who work in private sectors and government, and individuals who are well known within the Manitoba Métis Community and elsewhere.

4. The Plaintiff, David Chartrand, is the duly elected leader and President of the Manitoba Métis Federation. He is also President and Chief Executive Officer of Manitoba Métis Federation Inc., and has held those positions since 1997 up to and including the date of the filing of this pleading. He is well known within the Métis Nation, and the general Canadian community, and his contribution to them have been recognized and honoured. Before becoming President, David Chartrand worked for the Department of Justice for approximately ten years. He is a recipient of the Order of Manitoba, the Order of the Métis Nation, and Her Majesty the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, and has an honourary Juris Doctor from the University of Winnipeg. David Chartrand has a long and distinguished record of service to the Red River Métis and the protection of the collective rights of the Red River Métis.

5. The Defendant, Métis Nation British Columbia, is a voluntary association that has a membership of individuals who claim to be Métis, and operates a corporation, the Defendant, Métis Nation British Columbia Trustee Corporation (collectively "MNBC"), and maintains a website and an office at 380 – 13401 – 108 Avenue, Surrey, B.C. V3T 5T3.

6. The Defendant, Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia ("MPCBC"), is a society incorporated under the B.C. *Societies Act*, SBC 2015 c. 18.

7. The MNBC refers to MPCBC as its "secretariat" and conducts some or all of its administration and legal matters through MPCBC.

8. The MNBC has an elected Board of Directors consisting of eleven individuals.

9. The same eleven individuals are the Board of Directors of the MPCBC.

10. The Defendant, Louis De Jaeger ("De Jaeger"), is a businessman and restauranteur and at material times was an elected director and the Acting Vice-President of MNBC and an elected director of MPCBC in which role his office is at 380 – 13401 – 108 Avenue, Surrey, B.C.

B. The Publication

11. On or about December 7th, 2021 the Defendants posted on the MNBC Website under the title "Special Statement from Acting Vice-President" a message in two forms, firstly, a YouTube video of the Defendant, De Jaeger, stating the statement verbatim and secondly a verbatim transcript in text (the "Special Statement").

12. The video reading of the Special Statement was posted at:

    https://www.mnbc.ca/news/2021/special-statement-from-acting-vice-president/

    and a copy of the transcript of the Special Statement was posted below the video link and the transcript is attached to this Statement of Claim as **Schedule "A"**.

13. The Special Statement included (and at the time of pleading included) the following false and defamatory passages:

    a. "MNBC is deeply concerned to learn that an illegitimate branch of the Manitoba Métis Federation – an MMF-BC chapter – has been established for the singular purpose of disrupting our government and supporting the political aspirations of Manitoba Métis Federation politicians. This new BC branch of the Manitoba Métis Federation threatens our ability to self-govern".

    b. "We have just learned of an aggressive and costly proposal designed in the backrooms by deposed former MNBC President Clara Morin Dal Col that would see $650,000 funneled from the Manitoba Métis Federation to this disruptive B.C. MMF faction. This faction includes several disgruntled former MNBC elected officials and former staff members".

    c. "In fact, according to documents we have obtained from the provincial government, the Manitoba Métis Federation BC franchise is located in Golden, B.C. at the home of Dale Drown, former CEO of Métis Nation BC".

    d. "If this rogue group is successful in getting the Manitoba Métis Federation to funnel $650,000 to them …sadly, that means funds earmarked for programs that support our Métis brothers and sisters in Manitoba will be redirected out of that province to prop up and support a deposed past President of Métis Nation British Columbia. One who's case against the very Nation that she swore an oath to protect was thrown out by the BC Supreme Court. Her credibility and misuse of funds to directly attack the Regional governments of the Métis Nation is not fair to Métis in Manitoba, to the staff of the Manitoba Métis Federation, or to the dedicated work of our elected government to its citizens in British Columbia".

e. "This is an overt attempt to line their own pockets at the expense of Métis people. Make no mistake. This hostile action done under the guise of doing good for Métis people – is intended to hurt your government in British Columbia – which ultimately hurts you as a Métis citizen living in BC. At a time when support for our people is needed more now than ever, this action is a disgrace to the Métis Nation broadly. We will not stand for it. That's why yesterday at an emergency meeting of our Cabinet, a unanimous motion was passed authorizing me to speak out on this troubling issue".

f. "Let's put the pieces together. … the MMF is encroaching into British Columbia through this hostile action … B.C. may be the first Province where they attempt this type of coup … but it won't be the last. The MMF won't stop until they are controlling all Métis governments in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario".

g. "It gets more interesting. Mr. Chartrand is in cahoots with our deposed past president – Clara Morin Dal Col – who was legally removed from office due to a breach of fiduciary duty".

h. "That's right; she was independently investigated. Recommendations to remove her from office came from esteemed former B.C. Attorney General Wally Oppal. And now she's demanding a salary with funds that should be used to support Métis in another province, Manitoba. To the amount of $90,000. With a senior advisor that demands a salary of $60,000. That is Dale Drown".

i. "You could say that Clara is Chartrand's "right hand man". Some would argue this role has been played by her for years. And guess what? Ms. Morin Dal Col is now leading Manitoba Métis Federation's new B.C. chapter".

j. "Yet they have no mandate to support Métis in B.C. I'll say that again: They have no mandate to support any Métis in BC".

k. "It's embarrassingly clear that Mr. Chartrand is considering doing more special favours for his friends and insiders".

l. "The more you dig, the worse this all smells".

m. "These antics undermine our Nation's collective ability to improve the lives of all Métis citizens. It's a distraction. And it's intended to do harm".

n. "This aggressive action is a blatant attempt to usurp our government, and will set back ongoing efforts to secure rights for Métis living in every region of our province. Sadly, this encroachment will have the unintended consequence of hurting our 21,000 registered citizens who directly rely on us for a wide range of economic, health, educational and cultural supports".

o. "... we are calling on our citizens to denounce this hostile action by the Manitoba Métis Federation group. Whatever name this B.C. faction wants to call itself, it will be nothing more than a splinter group intended to do political harm, and to prop up David Chartrand's attempt to overtake our duly elected government in British Columbia".

(hereinafter the "**Words**")

14. In their plain and ordinary meaning or, in their intended or inferential meaning, the Words were intended to convey to the viewing public and the Words meant and were understood to mean that:

a. The MMF has created a B.C. Chapter for the sole and illegitimate purpose of disrupting MNBC to support the self-aggrandizing aspirations of MMF politicians and David Chartrand in particular;

b. The MMF and David Chartrand have created a franchise in B.C. by recruiting a former CEO and a former president of MNBC;

c. There is a consistent pattern that the MMF and David Chartrand are conspiring with allies to breach fiduciary duty, and do special favours for friends and insiders in the course of encroaching on the Métis governments in three other provinces;

d. It is embarrassingly clear that David Chartrand is intent on financial corruption by means of more and continued special favours for his friends and insiders;

e. The MMF and David Chartrand are hostile to, and intend harm to, the welfare of Métis and their duly elected government;

f. The MMF and David Chartrand are secretly and unfairly conspiring to funnel funds earmarked for support of Manitoba Métis to desirable salaries for co-conspirators in B.C.;

g. The MMF and David Chartrand are secretly betraying the Métis in Manitoba;

h. That the Plaintiffs are:

i. Illegitimate;
ii. Engaged in the singular purpose of disrupting government;
iii. Threatening self-government;
iv. Responsible for an MMF faction located in Golden, B.C.;
v. Unfairly diverting funds from Manitoba Métis;
vi. Lining pockets at expense of Métis people;
vii. Operating under false guise of doing good;

viii. Intending to hurt the Métis in B.C.;
ix. A disgrace to the Métis Nation broadly; and
x. Warranting denunciation.

i. Actions by the Plaintiffs have caused an emergency warranting that worthy representatives of the MNBC speak out unanimously;

j. The Plaintiffs are guilty of unending hostile dispute over control and of conspiring with others beyond the mandate of the Plaintiffs or any of their co-conspirators;

k. That the Plaintiffs are guilty of harmful, odious antics to the detriment of all Métis;

l. Such that all Métis citizens should denounce the Plaintiffs for doing political harm and causing suffering.

(hereinafter the "**Defamatory Meanings**")

15. The Defamatory Meanings are false.

16. The Words were posted by the Defendants both as a video of the Defendant, De Jaeger, speaking the Words but also as a text, both of which publications were viewed widely in Manitoba and throughout Canada by members of the public.

17. In addition, on or about December 7th, 2021, the Defendants circulated links to the Words on the MNBC website by means of MNBC's Facebook page, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram accounts.

18. As a result of the wide-spread circulation of the Words and the Defamatory Meanings, counsel for MMF wrote to the Defendants by email and mail on December 9th, 2021 and advised as follows:

a. The incorporation of the Red River Metis - British Columbia ASSN was not done by the MMF.

b. The Red River Metis - British Columbia ASSN is not part of the MMF, nor is it a Manitoba Métis Institution, MMF associate, or affiliate, and it is not an MMF "branch", "chapter", "faction", "franchise", or "group".

c. The unsolicited funding proposal dated September 30, 2021 has not been approved by the MMF and there is no intention of the MMF to do so. No funds have been offered or provided.

19. In addition, counsel for the MMF said as follows:

    a. This letter constitutes a formal demand that you **immediately remove** these false and defamatory statements from the MNBC website and all social media, and issue a full retraction and apology to the MMF, the Manitoba Métis, and President Chartrand on your website and all MNBC social media platforms.

    b. Our clients will not tolerate false and defamatory statements being made by MNBC leadership for political gain, and will hold both MNBC and Mr. De Jaeger personally responsible for this politically motivated attack.

    (the "**Demand for Take Down**")

20. Rather than comply with any part of the Demand for Take Down, the Defendants placed a full page advertisement in the Winnipeg Free Press on December 10th, 2021, a daily newspaper circulating in hard copy throughout Manitoba and available on a website. It is also available to viewers throughout Manitoba and Canada. The advertisement provided a link to "MMFexposed.com", another website controlled by the Defendants which website has been viewed by persons in Manitoba and the rest of Canada.

21. Despite the Demand for Take Down, the Words remain posted on the Defendants' website and links to the Words remain available on social media, and the link provided in the advertisement in the Winnipeg Free Press to MMFexposed.com remains available to browsers, as at the time of the filing of this pleading.

22. The website, MMFexposed.com, remains available to browsers connected to the internet as at the date of the filing of this pleading and has been viewed by persons in Manitoba and the rest of Canada. The website has two photographs, one of the Plaintiff, David Chartrand, and another of him together with past President, Clara Morin Dal Col, which was "cropped" from a larger group photo. At all material times, at that MMFexposed.com website, are four links to documents provided for apparent purpose of corroborating the Words and the Defamatory Meanings.

23. In their plain and ordinary meaning, the material, links, and the title of the website itself at MMFexposed.com meant and were understood to mean that:

    a. The Words and the Defamatory Meanings were substantiated and true; and

    b. The truth of the Defamatory Meanings was concealed by the Plaintiffs but is now exposed.

C. The Damages

24. The Words and the Defamatory Meanings have caused irreparable harm to the Plaintiffs whose business, governance, and effectiveness as advocates depend upon their valuable and significant pre-existing reputations for integrity.

25. The Plaintiffs are not aware of the full extent of the damage that the Words continue to cause, in terms of damage to their acceptance by the Manitoba Métis as leaders and as spokespersons in dealings with governments and the Canadian community at large, and, consequently, the Plaintiffs seek leave of this Court to plead and particularize damage and damages as the details become known.

D. Malice

26. The Defendants authored and publicized the Words deliberately with malice. In particular, the Defendants published the Words, *inter alia*:

    a. Knowing they, or a portion of them, were false;

    b. With reckless indifference as to whether they, or a portion thereof, were true or false;

    c. For the dominant purpose of injuring the Plaintiffs because of spite and/or animosity; and/or

    d. For some other dominant purpose which is ulterior and improper.

27. Further, the Defendants and each of them acted improperly after publishing the Words, including but not limited to:

    a. By sending them to others, the details of which are unknown to the Plaintiffs at the present time; and

    b. Failing and refusing to remove the Words from various contexts after that was demanded.

28. Further, the Defendants continued to make and/or distribute or direct third parties to the Words and similar defamatory statements after receiving the Demand for Take Down.

E. Summary

29. The Defendants published and/or caused to be published the Words which were defamatory of the Plaintiffs, and which have caused their reputations to be harmed and diminished in the view of the Métis community public, members of the business community more broadly, government

officials, and other members of the public who read the words published.

30. The intent of the Words was to damage the reputation of the Plaintiffs, who are highly accomplished, prominent, and well-known leaders with the intent, and in the hope of, eroding public confidence in the Plaintiffs and obtaining political, tactical, and business advantage and influence.

31. As a result of the Words, the Plaintiffs have suffered and will continue to suffer loss and damage, including but not limited to economic loss.

F. Remedies

General Damages

32. The Plaintiffs claim for:

    a. Compensation for insult offered and pain given;

    b. Vindication of their reputations;

    c. Compensation for injury to pride and self-confidence; and

    d. Social damage and possible economic damage that is likely to have arisen, but which cannot be expressly proven.

33. The Plaintiffs say that each of the following factors contribute to the general damages sustained and will continue to contribute to them:

    a. Position and standing of the Plaintiffs prior to publication of the Words;

    b. The nature and seriousness of the Defamatory Meanings;

    c. The mode and extent of publication;

    d. The continuing absence or refusal of any retraction or apology;

    e. The whole conduct and motive of the Defendants from publication through to judgment; and

    f. Any evidence of aggravating circumstances.

34. The Plaintiffs have suffered and will continue to suffer considerable loss of reputation among the public through the publication of the Words. The Plaintiffs have suffered, and will continue to suffer, significant injury to their respective and collective relationships with governments,

Métis Citizens, the community, business partners, and other industry relations, including but not limited to, the loss of significantly valuable contracts with current and prospective partners and loss of opportunity.

Special Damages

35. The Plaintiffs claim special damages for costs incurred and to be incurred to counter-act the effect of the Defamatory Meanings, particulars of which will be provided before trial.

36. The Plaintiffs claim for loss of contracts, loss of income, and loss of opportunity to earn income caused by the publication of the Words and the effect of the Defamatory Meanings, particulars of which will be provided before trial.

Aggravated Damages

37. The Plaintiffs say that the Defendants have published the Words with the knowledge they were defamatory, and the Defendants did not know whether or not any Plaintiff had paid any money to any group as alleged or at all, but the Defendants made an intentional, self-serving decision to denounce the Plaintiffs and any such payment as if made, as a calculated intentional decision.

38. Upon being informed that no payment had been made and none was being contemplated, the Defendants published the advertisement in the Winnipeg Free Press, continued to host the Words on the MNBC website, and they continued to publish the website "MMFexposed.com" to purport to corroborate the Words and the Defamatory Meanings.

39. The Defendants did not investigate the accuracy of their imputations despite having received written notice in the form of MMF counsel's letter of December 9th, 2021.

40. The Defendants have continued to maintain links to the Words on their social media, including the Facebook page, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram accounts, up to and including the time of this pleading.

41. The Defendants have defamed the Plaintiffs on the false assumption of fact, despite knowledge of the Plaintiffs' denial and the Defendants have done so in the full knowledge of the defamatory character of their publications, and full knowledge that they (the Defendants) did not at any material time have any basis to believe their imputations, in the context of clear contradiction as a calculated, self-interested choice.

Punitive Damages and Special Costs

42. The Defendants' defamatory actions were malicious and oppressive, and in the circumstances, the Plaintiffs seek an award of punitive damages and special costs.

43. The Plaintiffs plead the blameworthiness of the Defendants' conduct, including:

a. that the misconduct was planned and deliberate;

b. the Defendants' intent and motive, and intransigence in the context of denial and take-down demand;

c. that the Defendants persisted in the outrageous conduct over time to the present and beyond;

d. that the Defendants concealed or attempted to cover their misconduct, by artful use of the conditional and subjunctive, but defaming nonetheless;

e. the Defendants' awareness that what they were doing was wrong;

f. that the Defendants seek to profit and gain status and influence from their misconduct;

g. that the misconduct violated something integral to the Plaintiffs, such as professional reputation;

h. the high degree of vulnerability of the Plaintiffs, given the claims to authority made;

i. the harm or potential harm specifically directed at the Plaintiffs;

j. the need for deterrence for the future, both specific and general;

k. taking into account the complete absence of other penalties, civil or criminal, which are, in fact, not likely to be inflicted on any Defendant for the same misconduct; and

l. the advantage wrongfully sought, whether or not gained, by the Defendants from the misconduct.

Injunction

44. The Plaintiffs allege that the Defendants are making calculated decisions and remain intransigent and therefore the Words or similar words will continue to be shared and published by the Defendants, such that the Plaintiffs will continue to suffer harm, including irreparable harm if the Defendants and each of them are not enjoined from continuing to publish the Words or any similar defamation.

45. This Statement of Claim may be served outside of Manitoba without an order granting leave pursuant to Queen's Bench Rule 17.02 (h) in that it is a claim in respect of loss or damage sustained, *inter alia*, in Manitoba.

The Plaintiffs respectfully submit that they are entitled to the relief sought herein.

April 19, 2022

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Vancouver, B.C. V5T 2W7
Phone: 604-737-8711
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Attention: **David F. Sutherland, Q.C.**
Of the British Columbia bar appearing temporarily in Manitoba – LSBC #5749
Counsel for the Plaintiffs

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Email: gbenoitlaw@shaw.ca

Attention: **Genevieve Y. Benoit**
Co-Counsel for the Plaintiffs

This is Schedule "A" to this Statement of Claim

SCROLL DOWN

SHARE

Tsunai, Bonjour and hello! Thank you for tuning in

My name is Louis De Jaeger, Acting Vice President of Malis Nation British Columbia.

I am speaking with you today from our government's head office in Surrey, British Columbia, which is located on the traditional territories of the Semiahmoo, Kwikwetlem, Kwantlen, Qayqayt and Tsawwassen First Nations.

SHARE

[redacted] TOUNDUE

Teams, Bonjour and hybrid Thank you for tuning in

My name is Louis De Jaeger, Acting Vice President of Métis Nation British Columbia.

I am speaking with you today from our government's head office in Surrey, British Columbia, which is located on the traditional territories of the Semiahmoo, Kastrie, Kwikwetlem, Kwantlen, Qayqayt and Tsawwassen First Nations.

At a time when we should be celebrating with friends and family during the Christmas Holiday season, the Cabinet of MNBC feels compelled to bring you important information about an organization and group of individuals that pretend to undermine the good work that our government is doing to support the more than 25,000 registered Métis Citizens in BC and the 90,000 self-identified Métis people in our province.

MNBC is deeply concerned to learn that an illegitimate branch of the Manitoba Métis Federation – an MMF BC chapter – has been established for the singular purpose of disrupting our government and supporting the political aspirations of Manitoba Métis Federation politicians. This new BC branch of the Manitoba Métis Federation threatens our ability to self-govern.

We have just learned of an aggressive and costly proposal designed in the backrooms by deposed former MNBC President Clara Moon-Dal Cot that would see $650,000 funneled from the Manitoba Métis Federation to this disruptive B.C. MMF faction. This faction includes several disgruntled former MNBC elected officials and former staff members.

In fact, according to documents we have obtained from the provincial government, the Manitoba Métis Federation BC branch is located in Golden, BC at the home of Dale Drown, former CEO of Métis Nation BC. We will be sharing all of these incorporation documents with you so you can read them for yourselves.

If this rogue group is successful in getting the Manitoba Métis Federation

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This rogue group is successfully getting the Manitoba Métis Federation to burnet $650,000 to them, sadly, that means funds earmarked for programs that support our Métis brothers and sisters in Manitoba will be redirected old of that province to prop up and support a deposed past President of Métis Nation British Columbia. One who's case against the very Nation that she swore an oath to protect was thrown out by the BC Supreme Court. Not credibility and misuse of funds to directly attack the Regional government of the Métis Nation is not fair to Métis in Manitoba, to the staff of the Manitoba Métis Federation, or to the dedicated work of our elected government to its citizens in British Columbia.

Section 73 of their own bylaws not only permit them to be paid as a director, but also to pay themselves for working for the organization in another capacity. This is an overt attempt to line their own pockets at the expense of Métis people. Make no mistake. This hostile action – done under the guise of doing good for Métis people – is intended to hurt your government in British Columbia – which ultimately hurts you as a Métis citizen living in BC. At a time when support for our people is needed more now than ever, this action is a disgrace to the Métis Nation broadly. We will not stand for it. That's why yesterday at an emergency meeting of our Cabinet, a unanimous motion was passed authorizing me to speak out on this troubling issue.

Some context would be helpful to explain why this bizarre encroachment is happening. The Manitoba Métis Federation recently left our national organization – the Métis National Council – just hours before they were to attend a court-ordered general assembly.

If you recall, Manitoba Métis Federation President David Chartrand and his partner allies were running the Métis National Council without any input from the other four governing members for almost three years, and our court case forced their hand to make sure the MNC remained accountable to you – our citizens.

But they didn't go quietly. In the dying days of their control of the MNC, they left behind an organizational and a financial mess. A mess that our new national President Cassidy Caron and the four governing members have been left to clean up. It's now quite to publicly report we that next

SHARE

But they didn't go quietly. In the dying days of their control at the MNC, they left behind an organizational and a financial mess. A mess that our new national President Cassidy Caron and the first governing members have been left to clean up. I'll have more to publicly report on that next week.

Let's put the pieces together. Having left the MNC, the MMF is, [illegible] into British Columbia through this hostile action, after falling out with our national organization. B.C. may be the first Province where they attempt this type of coup... but it won't be the last. MMF won't stop until they are controlling all Métis governments in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario.

It gets more interesting. Mr. Chartrand is in cahoots with our deposed past president – Clara Marie Dal Cul – who was legally removed from office due to a breach of fiduciary duty. That's right, she was independently investigated. Recommendations to remove her from office came from esteemed former B.C. Attorney General Wally Oppal. And now she's demanding a salary with funds that should be used to support Métis in another province, Manitoba. To the amount of $90,000. With a senior advisor that demands a salary of $60,000. That's Dale Brown.

You could say that Clara is Chartrand's "right hand man". Some would argue this role has been played by her for years. And guess what? Mr. Marie Dal Cul is now leading Manitoba Métis Federation's new B.C. chapter. Yet they have no mandate to support Métis in B.C. I'll say that again. They have no mandate to support any Métis in BC.

It's embarrassingly clear that Mr. Chartrand is considering doing more special favours for his friends and insiders.

The more you dig, the worse this all smells. There's an ice undermine our Holiday's collective ability to improve the lives of all Métis citizens. It's a distraction. And it's intended to do harm. After Clara's removal from office, our government made a pledge to be more transparent. To be more accountable. That's why our cabinet is speaking out today. We believe our people should be informed and enlightened and left in the dark.

[illegible]

SHARE

occupation. That's why our cabinet is speaking out today. We believe our people should be informed and enlightened, not left in the dark.

This aggressive action is a brutal attempt to usurp our government, and will set back ongoing efforts to secure rights for Métis living in every region of our province. Sadly, this encroachment will have the unintended consequence of hurting our 21,000 registered citizens who directly rely on us for a wide range of economic, health, educational and cultural supports.

To Ms. Marie Dal Cul I feel compelled to remind you that the MNBC Board of Directors voted to suspend your duties as President of our organization earlier this year due to contravenations of MNBC's Oath of Office, and for the breach of clearly-defined policies and procedures. Your actions were a disgrace not only to our organization, but to the Métis Nation broadly. Your latest actions lay your character bare.

As a member in good standing of the Métis National Council, signatory to the Canada Métis Nation Accord, and signatory to a bilateral relationship accord with the Government of British Columbia, we are calling on our citizens to denounce this hostile action by the Manitoba Métis Federation group. Whatever name this B.C. faction wants to call itself, it will be nothing more than a splinter group intended to do political harm, and to prop up David Chartrand's attempt to overtake our duly elected government in British Columbia. But it's the Métis people who will suffer. I think we have all suffered enough. Back off Mr. Chartrand. We are a governing member of the Métis National Council, the very organization that you chose not to be part of. We remain committed to working with our Métis governing partners for the good of Métis people across Canada.

Métis Nation British Columbia, under the leadership of our hard-working, democratically-elected Cabinet, is doing more to support our citizens than ever before. By working in partnership with both the provincial and federal governments, MNBC is improving our citizens' quality of life through culturally-distinct programs in housing, health and education – to name just a few of our ministries.

We are Citizens as always, a proud, self-governing People.

We are O'Chiem Mi si wak, a proud, self-governing People.

And we are stronger than ever before. Through this newfound strength, we are determined to continue fighting for self-determination. And through this strength, we will succeed. The more than 60,000 Metis people in our province deserve to enjoy the same quality of life as other British Columbians. We will not rest until that vision becomes a reality for us all.

We remain resilient in British Columbia. We will tell our story. We will protect our inherent rights as Indigenous peoples, and we will continue our path to self-governance.

Chief Sepwatch

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