

NEW BRUNSWICK ABORIGINAL PEOPLES COUNCIL

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Non-Status Indians & Métis now recognized as Indians under s 91(24), Great News for NBAPC.

(9 January 2013, Fredericton, New Brunswick)-After 12 years at trial a Federal Court decision was handed down on January 8, 2013 regarding the meaning of s 91(24).

The New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council was confident that the learned Court would declare that Métis and Non-Status fall within the meaning of s 91(24) of the Constitution Act of 1867.

Such a declaration will remove the political football and discriminatory postures held against Métis and Non-Status Indians on a matter of consultation, fiduciary duty and both tangible and intangible benefits necessary to repair the under development and eliminate the stifling obstacles thwarting the potential of our large communities of off-reserve Non-Status Indians and Métis.

We are elated with the learned Federal Court declaration that the meaning of s 91(24) of the Constitution Act of 1867, means Métis and Non-Status Indians.

Many of us at New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council, who are Non-Status, have waited almost four decades for such a declaration. Many maintain given the April 5, 1939 decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, Eskimo Case, similarly declaring Eskimo (Inuit) to be included in that section, that the Federal Court would declare Métis and Non-Status Indians to fall within s 91(24).

Almost 74 years have passed and countless decades of suffering and blatant exposure to discrimination and other social, economic and political disabling postures combined to make the Métis and Non-Status Indian community the most disadvantaged Canadian citizens.

We consider this declaration to be an opportunity for both levels of government to earnestly begin meeting with us to chart a new path with us for creating new opportunities and to put a new complexion on the face of off-reserve Non-Status Indians and Métis Aboriginal peoples within the Federation Peoples of Canada.

We have merit, capacity, worth and dignity and welcome a change of course for a better future for our children. That we may never again have to suffer or be collaterally damaged by insensitive, outdated colonial practices, policies and misinterpretations of the term "Indians and lands reserved for Indians."

To arrange an interview with Chief Kim Nash McKinley, please contact Sacha Boies Novak, Communications Officer, 506-458-8422 or malimic@nbapc.org.