



Wings

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The Voice of the Northwest Territory Métis Nation

Métis elders attending main table negotiations

NWTMN president Vern Jones invited Elders Pete King, Fort Resolution; Alex Lafferty, Hay River; and Louise Fraser, Fort Smith; to main table negotiations in Hay River October 9–12, 2007. It was the first time Elders had been included as full participants at Métis negotiations.

Jones announced that he would be including Elders at all negotiations in the future. He's been true to his word.

"Our Elders should know, first hand, what is going on at the negotiations table," Jones said. "And as our advisors, we should have them with us full time so we can benefit from their wisdom and guidance," he added.

Lucien Villebrun, Fort Smith; Gladys Bloomstrand, Hay River and Pete King, Fort Resolution; joined the main table November 27–29, 2007, in Yellowknife.

Edmonton main table negotiations December 17–19, 2007, were attended by Fred King, Fort Resolution; Lucien Villebrun, Fort Smith and Gladys Bloomstrand, Hay River.

The January session in Vancouver was attended by Pete King, Louise Fraser and Frederick Beaulieu (Hay River). The same three Elders were also in attendance at the Ottawa main table February 19–21 and the Land Workshop in Yellowknife February 27 and 28.



The three main table parties, the NWTMN, the GNWT and Team Canada gathered in the rotunda of the Legislative Assembly in Yellowknife during a break in negotiations in November 2007. Left to right: Jim Green, Research and Communications, NWTMN; Ken Hudson, Fort Smith Métis Council president; Vern Jones, NWT Métis Nation president; Lucien Villebrun, Fort Smith Elder; Michael Grandlouis, Claims Analyst, Canada; Robert Burr, Senior Policy and Negotiations Specialist, Canada; Chris Gravel, Senior Claims Analyst, Canada; (kneeling) Andrew Unger, Legal Counsel, Canada; John Klassen, Chief Federal Negotiator; Shannon Cumming, Chief NWTMN Negotiator; Darwin Hanna, Legal Counsel, NWTMN; Janet Pound, Lands Negotiator, Canada; Arthur Beck, NWTMN vice president, Christie Morgan, Acting Senior Negotiator, Canada; Gerald Read, Chief GNWT Negotiator; Gladys Bloomstrand, Hay River Elder; Kara King, Fort Resolution Métis Council president; and Chaslynn Gillanders, Legal Counsel, Callison & Hanna, NWTMN.

NWT Métis Nation home on the world wide web

The NWTMN web site: www.nwtmetisnation.ca is up and running. A small beginning but a definite beginning. Much of the site is, as they say, still "under construction".

The home page is resplendent with a fiddle and sash photo and a picture of the elders gathered outside the Roaring Rapids Hall in Fort Smith the spring of 2004. There's also a short introduction and history of the NWT Métis Nation.

Although a lot of the site is still a work in progress, there is already some captivating material available. So far, the most interesting, and informative, area is the "Our Elders" section. There you'll find stories about Mé-

tis people and times all but gone: stories about Archie Larocque, Jonas Beaulieu, Eugene Mercredi, Alex Lafferty, Billy Loutit, John Evans, Laura Loutit, Cecil Lafferty and Louise Fraser.

You can also find the Métis Declaration of July 2000, a list of executive and staff with contact numbers and email addresses, and a chronological NWTMN history.

Other sections will include: the Constitution, AGA Resolutions, Land/Resources Negotiations, Maps, Métis Economic Corporation, Métis Cultural Institute, Archives and a Site Map.

It's only a beginning but it will grow. Check it out.



NWTMN Board of Directors and Elders gathered to welcome Alberta beneficiaries at the Open House in Edmonton December 13, 2007. Left to right: Frederick Beaulieu, Ken Hudson, Betty Villebrun, Arthur Beck, Kara King, Tammy Hunter, Troy Jewel, Elsie Bouvier, Gladys Bloomstrand, Pete King, Faye Johns, Louise Fraser and Lucien Villebrun.

Métis Nation developing new communication plan

A draft NWT Métis Nation Communication Plan will be ready for consideration by the Board of Directors prior to the Annual General Assembly (AGA) in June 2008.

The assembly at the November 2007 AGA determined that more information should be available to the membership on the work of the NWTMN. By resolution, the assembly called for the "NWTMN Board to discuss and address the need for effective communication and information sharing and to present a communication plan to the membership for discussion and consideration."

Tasked with the initial draft,

the NWTMN Research & Communications Officer is presently developing the plan for delivery to the Board of Directors. The plan will look at the present situation, the problems presented by not having a plan, the proposed goals and objectives of a plan, audience definition, messaging, communications strategies, tactics, tools, evaluation and other aspects of a sound communications plan.

The draft plan will be tabled with the Board of Directors prior to the AGA in June. The Board will then have the opportunity to fine tune the draft before presenting it to the June assembly. The assembly may to further modify the plan to their satisfaction.

Maggie awarded 2008 Wise Woman

The NWT Status of Women Council directors has selected Maggie Kurszewski for the South Slave Wise Woman Award for 2008.

Every year the Council selects a woman from each of the five regions of the NWT who has worked to improve the lives of women and serve as a role model for the younger generation. Nominated by community members, each woman has made a positive and caring contribution to society.

Maggie was recognized as a good role model as she has overcome many obstacles in her life in a positive way. She overcame the loneliness of residential school and forgave those from her past, maintaining a generous spirit and kind heart.

Others recognized this year were Mary Effie Snowshoe (Beaufort-Delta), Irene McLeod (Deh Cho), Alice Able (North Slave), and Christine Tatti (Sahtu).



EDITORIAL

Alberta's Greed is a Threat to Canada and the World CANADA'S ANSWER TO U.S. OIL SHORTAGES: THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE PROJECT ON EARTH

The Athabasca tar sands bomb crater site is not a toxic disaster waiting to happen; it's a lethal catastrophe already in progress – Armageddon.

Welcome to Alberta's tar sands, a lovely little money minting venture that:

- Wipes out thousands of square kilometers of boreal forest and wetlands
- Displaces two to four tons of earth for each barrel of oil produced
- Burns enough natural gas every day to heat a million homes
- Takes three barrels of water from the shrinking Athabasca River every day for each barrel of oil produced
- Generates two barrels of toxic slop for every barrel of oil, the second biggest man made lake in the world, leaching poisons into the groundwater
- Pollutes the air so bad it's causing acid rain downwind in Saskatchewan
- Has upgraders and refineries that are such health hazards they are called "sacrifice zones" in Alberta
- Leaves a wasteland behind where nothing is reclaimed
- Produces a fuel that releases three times the carbon dioxide into the air as conventional fuel

"The house that Ralph [Klein] built," said Andrew Nikiforuk in the April 2007 edition of *Alberta Venture*, "resembles a crack house for hydrocarbons with no regard for the consequences."

"Ottawa is letting the Tar Sands hold Canadians hostage on global warming," said Matt Price, Program Manager with Environmental Defence. "The federal government is not using laws already on the books to require companies to reduce emissions and clean up their toxic mess."

Environment Minister John Baird's Turning the Corner plan is touted to reduce Canada's overall annual emissions by 150 million tonnes below 2006 levels by 2020. But while the country's pollution levels are supposed to be going down, federal officials estimated that annual emissions from the tar sands sector would rise from 25 million to 75 million tonnes over the next 10 years.

"They can pollute as much as they want as long they pay a certain minimal amount of money into a fund," said Nashina Shariff, associate director of the Toxics Watch Society of Alberta. "So basically, it gives them a good ride until 2018."

Why has this been allowed to happen? Money, that's why. As the price of a barrel went up the tar sands became economically viable in 2003. Investors were jumping in (\$52 billion by the end of 2007, with much more expected), and imagine how many are hopping on the gravy train with the recent predictions of the doubling of gas prices in the next few years. The Canadian government stands to make \$51 billion in taxes by 2020, while the province of Alberta will rake in \$44 billion. Money does all the talking. Do you hear government calling for an impact assessment? Not so's you'd notice.

So what needs to be done? Stop it! Do something. Write your member of parliament. Join a concerned citizens group. Add your name to the voices of reason.

- Call for a moratorium on any further tar sands development until a cap has been placed on tar sands greenhouse gas emissions.
- Call for a moratorium on any more tar sands development projects until Alberta comes up with a sustainable plan that doesn't damage the rest of the country.
- Save the devastation of the Slave and Mackenzie valleys by protecting our water supply from those time bombs called tailings ponds.
- Make the oil companies pay for using our drinking water.
- Find another way of producing the oil without squandering natural gas.
- Get to the bottom of the human health hazards downstream at Fort Chipewyan.
- Determine what's killing the fish in the Athabasca River and Lake Athabasca and fix it before the fish start turning belly up in the Slave and Mackenzie rivers.
- Ask yourself why ATCO thinks this might be a peachy time to build a hydroelectric dam on the Slave River.

Demand a halt to the devastation. That'll do for starters.

WINGS

The Voice of the Northwest Territory Métis Nation

Box 720, Fort Smith, NT, X0E 0P0
Phone: (867) 872-2770 – Fax: (867) 872-2772
Toll Free Phone: 1-866-872-6866

Northwest Territory Métis Nation

Executive

President

Vern Jones: 867-874-4471 • 867-874-4443 • president.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Vice President

Arthur Beck: 867-394-4151 • 867-394-3322 • frmc53@yahoo.ca

Secretary-Treasurer

Betty Villebrun: 867-872-2770 • 867-872-2772 • fortsmithmetisCouncil@northwestel.net

Metis Community Councils

Hay River President

Vern Jones: 867-874-4442 • 867-874-4472 • hrcmpresident@northwestel.net

Fort Resolution President

Kara King: 867-394-4151 • 867-394-3322 • frmc53@yahoo.ca

Fort Smith President

Ken Hudson: 867-872-2643 • 867-872-5225 • fortsmithmetisCouncil@northwestel.net

NWTMN Staff

Executive Director

Earl Jacobson: 867-872-2770 • 867-872-2772 • execassist.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Human Resources

Pearl Bird: 867-872-2770 • 867-872-2772 • training.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Cree Language Manager

Vance Sanderson: 867-872-2770 • 867-872-2772 • cree.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Environment Manager

Chris Heron: 867-872-2770 • 867-872-2772 • rcc.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Environment Assistant/Clerk

Ursula Vogt: 867-872-2770 • 867-872-2772 • imaclerk.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Mapping

Vita Hoyles: 867-872-4044 • 867-872-2402 • mapping.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Finance Manager

Paula Cadwell-Lepine: 867-872-2770 • 867-872-3560 • finance.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Finance Clerk II

Helen Daniels: 867-872-2770 • 867-872-3560 • financeassistant.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Finance Clerk

Bev Pischinger: 867-872-2770 • 867-872-3560 • financeclerk.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Receptionist

Lois Courtoreille: 867-872-2770 • 867-872-2772 • reception.nwtmn@northwestel.net

NWTMN Negotiations Team

Hay River

Vern Jones: 867-874-4471 • 867-874-4473 • president.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Fort Resolution

Kara King: 867-394-4151 • 867-394-3322 • frmc53@yahoo.ca

Fort Smith

Ken Hudson: 867-872-2643 • 867-872-5225 • fortsmithmetisCouncil@northwestel.net

Chief Negotiator

Shannon Cumming: 867-872-4044 • 867-872-2404 • legal.nwtmn@northwestel.net

NWTMN Negotiations Staff

Receptionist/Legal Secretary

Arlene Mandeville: 867-872-4044 • 867-872-2404 • legalassist.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Research & Communications

Jim Green: 867-872-4044 • 867-872-2404 • research.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Community Liaison Workers

Hay River

Paul Harrington: 867-874-4442 • 867-874-4472 • hrcm@northwestel.net

Fort Resolution

Vi Mandeville: 867-394-4151 • 867-873-3322 • frmc53@yahoo.ca

Fort Smith

Tim Heron: 867-872-4044 • 867-872-2404 • fscn.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Community Field Workers

Manager (Hay River)

George Lafferty: 867-874-4442 • 867-874-4472 • hrcm@northwestel.net

Fort Resolution

Trudy King: 867-394-4151 • 867-394-3322 • frmc53@yahoo.ca

Fort Smith

Melissa Fraser: 867-872-4044 • 867-872-2404 • fscfw.nwtmn@northwestel.net

Alberta backs off from Métis hunter

Provincial borders don't restrict Métis traditional harvesting rights

Fort McMurray, March 13, 2008 - The Alberta government dropped charges laid against a Saskatchewan Métis man for hunting moose during a closed season in Alberta, a move that local Métis are hailing as a major step towards establishing the group's land use rights in Northeastern Alberta.

Officials from Fort McMurray Métis Local 1935 said establishing such rights is crucial for them, since the group isn't being properly consulted or compensated for the oilsands-related developments sprouting up in the region.

Moose killed in Alberta

The case involved Alfred Janvier, 68, a Métis man living in La Loche, Sask., who shot a moose in 2005 just across the border in the municipality of Wood Buffalo.

That's when a patrolling Alberta Resource officer charged him, Janvier said.

"I told him, 'I'm Métis, and I have nine kids,'" said Janvier, a trapper by trade who lives off the land. "I said, 'I don't want to go on welfare.'" He claimed the Métis right to hunt for food in his family's traditional hunting area in Alberta, even though he lives in Saskatchewan.

Case law established Métis harvesting rights

Under a precedent setting Supreme Court of Canada Powley case of 2003, Métis peoples have a constitutionally-protected harvesting right, provided they prove their ancestral roots in the region where the hunt takes place.

Clement Chartier, Janvier's lawyer, said the provincial government dropped the charges because it realized it could not convict Janvier, and wanted to avoid creating a precedent for Métis land use rights in Alberta courts, where the case was being tried.

Provincial boundaries don't trump traditional territory

"If my client did not have that right, they would not have withdrawn," Chartier said, adding that local Métis could have used the legal precedent to negotiate with the province and oilsands companies. "This decision not to proceed confirms our long-stated assertions that the artificially created provincial boundaries do not cut off or contain our harvesting rights over our traditional harvesting territories, which do in fact cross provincial boundaries," Chartier said.

Darcy Whiteside, a spokesman with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, declined to comment specifically on the reason for dropping the charges. "Our government lawyer said there isn't a reasonable likelihood of a conviction," Whiteside said. "That's all I can comment on."

He added that the provincial government will continue to judge Métis land use rights on a case-by-case basis while a comprehensive agreement is being created.

Métis need to be consulted

That answer, however, did not satisfy Bill Loutitt, president of Fort McMurray Métis Local 1935. Loutitt said a significant number of his people still live off the land, and many have gradually lost the ability to support themselves as the provincial government develop roads, oilsands mines and other infrastructure on former hunting and fishing grounds.

He added that his group will use the dropping of the charge against Janvier to spur the province and oilsands companies to formally recognize Métis rights and consult with Métis according to the law.

With files from *Fort McMurray Today*, *The Calgary Sun*, and *The StarPhoenix*.



Fort Resolution Boys Scouts – Who are they all? What year was this? Who were those leaders down in front? We need your help. Cecil Lafferty has been identified. And Tommy Unka at the back on the right. Other names suggested have included Donald Fabien, Raymond Simon, Johnny Larocque, Tim Lafferty, Steve Lafferty, Ainsley Hill, and Gary Fry. Can anyone identify everybody in the photo?

Now Here's a Stupid Question:

Do Métis citizens have to be one-quarter Indian blood?

The Northwest Territory Métis Nation (NWTMN) is ticked off that federal fisheries officers in the NWT appear to be laboring under an out of date, distasteful and outright prejudicial *Fisheries Act*. "It's a pretty darn strange situation when a federal act takes it upon itself to define the citizens of a Nation in a backhanded way," said NWTMN president Vern Jones, "strange and unacceptable".

The situation came to light recently when a 13 year old Hay River Métis accompanied by his father was accosted by four federal fisheries officers and a GNWT Renewable Resources Officer while fishing at Buffalo Lake. The young lad was informed that he would have to prove one quarter Indian blood (there was no mention of how this was to be done) to qualify for Métis status in the NWT or be charged with over-fishing. The officers confiscated the fish. A couple of weeks later a Fisheries officer phoned the family,

informing them that the charges had been dropped and the fish were returned.

It turns out that the Northwest Territories Fishery Regulations (see section 2, Interpretation) of the federal *Fisheries Act* refers to Indian and Inuk as: (1.) "Indian" means an Indian as defined in the *Indian Act*; (*Indien*) and (2.) "Inuk" means a person who is a direct descendant of a person of the race of aborigines commonly known as Inuit; (*Inuk*). Fair enough: both terms are accurate and reflect the intent of the *Constitution Act 1982*.

When it comes to defining Métis, however, the *Fisheries Act* falls just short of the using the 18th century term "Half-Breed"; referring to Métis instead, as a "persons of mixed blood," and then presumes to define what that means:

A "person of mixed blood" means a person of:

(a) mixed Indian and non-Indian blood who is at least one-quarter Indian, or

(b) mixed Inuk and non-Inuk blood who is at least one-quarter Inuk;

(*personne de sang mêlé*)

"This is about Métis harvesting rights and the right of Métis to define themselves," said president Jones. "Several things need to happen here."

"First, somebody has to bring the Minister of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) up to snuff on Métis harvesting case law in this country and second, point out the erroneous and offensive "blood quantum" wording in the regulations so the minister can take steps to have them fixed," stated Jones.

"Then, if the minister really wants to remedy the gaffe in the NWT regulations," added Jones, "the NWT Métis Nation would be only too happy to supply him with its own definition of Métis."

"Which Métis," Jones concluded, "happen to have harvesting rights in their traditional territory."

Métis nation to update constitution: address other governance matters

Hay River – A Special Assembly of the Northwest Territory Métis Nation (NWTMN) in Hay River April 8 voted to strike a Constitution and Bylaw committee.

"We didn't get consensus on everything," said NWTMN president Vern Jones, "but we did agree to keep working together on outstanding governance issues until we get them right."

The Hay River workshop April 7 and Special Assembly culminated a series of community workshops; two in Fort Resolution, two in Hay River and one in Fort Smith, which considered Elder voting, the distribution of voting delegates at assemblies and how the Métis Nation should govern itself in the short and long term.

Elders representation and voting rights arose by resolution at the Annual General Assembly in November 2007.

Recent community workshop participants were in agreement that the role of Elders was critical but did not reach consensus on how it could best be accomplished. It was suggested that an equal number of Elders from each of the three communities be allowed to vote at assemblies. The idea of an Elders Senate was raised, as well as the possibility that perhaps Elders should be elected if they are going to be voting on Métis governance issues.

Community workshops also considered the present Métis Nation Constitution and Bylaws, the make-up of the Board of Directors, the Executive and how decision were made at assemblies as well as the consideration of an extraordinary resolution that proposed to change the numbers of voting delegates at assemblies.

The April 7 workshop, facilitated by Jake Heron with technical assistance from Legal Counsel Darwin Hanna, reviewed the is-

ssues raised at the community workshops and additional governance matters, including:

- The updating of the NWTMN Constitution and Bylaws
- The fairness in representation
- Participation and distribution of powers
- Governance models and other options to be considered
- Whether or not the current ways of conducting business was meeting the needs and aspirations of the Métis Nation

The delegates to the April 8 Special Assembly considered an extraordinary resolution proposing to change the number of delegates per community and adding Elders to the delegations. The resolution was not approved, at which point Vice President Arthur Beck called for the creation of a Bylaw committee to look for governance options and solutions and report back to the assembly.

NWTMN to grant elders the vote

NWT Métis nation poised to join the great Canadian (British, Australian, and United States) never ending senate debate

A resolution at the November, 2007, NWTMN Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Hay River called for Elders at the assemblies to be granted the right to vote. The resolution specified ten Elders from each of the three communities.

Historically, ten Elders were chosen by each of the three Community Councils to attend the assemblies. The Elders were not elected and could not vote.

Delegate representation at the assemblies is governed by the NWTMN Constitution and Bylaws which specifies Fort Smith, nine seats; Hay River, eight seats; and Fort Resolution, seven seats. It is not based on "representation by population". Although each community delegation would likely include the elected executive and elected Board of Directors of the three Métis Community Councils, additional voting delegates to the assembly were permitted to vote even though they were not elected.

HOW WOULD AN ELDERS SENATE WORK?

Although Elders being granted the vote at assemblies was brought up at the 2006 AGA, the possible establishment of some form of "Elders Senate" has been discussed for a few years. But how would an Elders Senate work?

The Canadian Senate, a pretty strange duck itself, is, not surprisingly, based of the British model. Senators are appointed by the Governor General as directed by the Prime Minister, who usually stuffs it with members of his own party.

The Canadian Senate came into existence in 1867, when the Parliament of the United Kingdom passed the *British North America Act*, uniting the Province of Canada (which was separated into Quebec and Ontario) with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick into a single federation, a Dominion called Canada. The Canadian Parliament was based on the Westminster model (that is, the model of the Parliament of the United Kingdom).

CANADIAN SENATE BASED ON BRITISH HOUSE OF LORDS

The Canadian Senate was intended to mirror the British House of Lords, in that it was meant to represent the social and economic elite. Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. MacDonald, described it as a body of "sober second thought" that would curb the "democratic excesses" of the elected House of Commons and provide regional representation.

Under the Constitution, each province or territory is entitled to a specific number of senate seats. A senator must reside in the province or territory for which he or she is appointed.

The Constitution divides Canada into four "divisions", each with an equal number of senators: 24 for Ontario and Quebec each; 24 for the Maritime provinces (10 each for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and four for Prince Edward Island); and 24 for the Western provinces (6 each for Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia).

NOVA SCOTIA - TEN BRITISH COLUMBIA - SIX

Newfoundland and Labrador, which became a province in 1949, is not assigned to any division, and is represented by 6 senators. The three territories (the Nunavut, Northwest Territories and the Yukon) are allocated one senator each. Quebec senators are the only ones to be assigned to specific districts within their province. Historically, this was adopted to ensure that both French and English-speaking senators from Quebec were represented appropriately in the Senate.

As a result of this arrangement, Ontario, British Columbia, and Alberta — Canada's fastest growing provinces in terms of population — are severely under-represented, while the Maritimes are greatly over-represented. For example, British Columbia, with a population of about four million, is entitled to six senators, while Nova Scotia, with a population of fewer than one million, is entitled to ten. Only Quebec has a share of senators approximately proportional to its share of the total population. (Interestingly, most Senates worldwide do not use population as a basis for membership.)

PRIME MINISTER PROMISED SENATE REFORM

Debate on the creation of an elected Senate in Canada began prior to Confederation and continues to this day. While it has widespread popular appeal, a parliamentary form of government with two elected chambers each with similar jurisdictions could prove chaotic should each be controlled by a different party (as happened in the United States recently). Until this is resolved, Canada will continue to be served by its "chamber of sober second thought".

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has promised to advise the Governor General to appoint persons selected by a province's population through popular vote; unlike most proposed Senate reforms, Harper suggests he could fulfill this promise without a constitutional amendment. Elected Senate representation, by population? We'll see.

SENATOR CALLS FOR REFERENDUM

Conservative Senator Hugh Segal, noting that Canadians have never voted for an appointed Senate, but had the model foisted on it by the British government, says he wants a debate and a referendum on the Senate's future.

"We've had 17 efforts at reforming the Senate since 1900," he said. "All of them have failed. Let the voters speak. Let them tell us what they want."

Alberta has been crying for provincially appointed Senators for years. In recent months, the premiers of British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario have called for abolition of the Senate. Perhaps it's time for all Canadians to consider its future.



The Senate Chambers of Parliament Hill's Centre Block. After seventeen shots at reforming the Senate have failed; Canadians are still trying to get it right.

BRITAIN TO REFORM HOUSE OF LORDS

On March 7, 2007, British Members of Parliament voted 337-224 to have a fully elected House of Lords. The vote was non-binding, but the government has begun to draw up legislation that must be passed by the House of Commons.

British Commons leader Jack Straw said that the Labour government "means business" on House of Lords reform even though cabinet's favored option had been 50 per cent elected and 50 per cent appointed.

The historic vote in favor of a wholly elected House of Lords in Britain in March was viewed by some as a boost to Prime Minister Stephen Harper's "popular" plans to gradually overhaul the Canadian Senate, a leading Tory senator says.

Government Senate leader Marjory LeBreton said she hopes the symbolic vote by British MPs in favor of elected, rather than appointed, lords would inspire Liberal senators in Canada to end their delaying tactics on Mr. Harper's proposed changes.

"I was delighted this morning when I saw the story on the front page of my newspaper," Ms. LeBreton said. "If the mother of all Senates can take this step forward, surely we can get on with our reforms."

CITIZENS ASSEMBLY ON SENATE REFORM

Perhaps, as suggested by Robert Roach writing in the *Spruce Grove Examiner*, the model for approaching Senate reform "already exists and has been field tested" in British Columbia. He was referring to the B.C. Citizen's Assembly for Electoral Reform. He sees a national "Citizen's Assembly of Senate Reform" taking on the task of Senate reform on behalf of all Canadians.

It won't be an easy task, he warns. A reformed Senate would mean less power in the hands of the Prime Minister. Provincial Premiers would have to compete for national influence with Senators from their province. A new and improved Senate would result in a less "efficient" Parliament, Roach warns, with "more debate, more squabbles, more posturing, in short, more politics."

But Roach says it will be worth it, with "better representation of the diversity that defines Canada, a check on the power of the prime minister, and a new outlet for Canada's liberal democratic spirit." He makes it sound pretty good.

THE METIS NATION WILL CHOOSE

Meanwhile, the Métis Nation is considering ways to meaningfully involve their respected Elders in a liberal Métis democracy. There are many models to consider, some proven, some already failed, but the Nation will choose the model that suits them best, a model chosen by Métis for Métis.

Another resolution at the NWTMN assembly called for the Executive to "present models on self-government to the membership for their discussion and consideration." Perhaps existing northern, national and international models, along with ongoing worldwide reform debates and proposed solutions will help guide the Métis Nation's deliberations as it blazes its own trail.

With files from the Ottawa Citizen, The Canadian Press, Stony Plain Reporter, Spruce Grove Examiner, Wikipedia, news.bbc.co.uk parliament.uk, Citizen News Services, and www.parl.gc.ca

A LOOK AT SENATE CHAMBERS AROUND THE WORLD

How does Canada's Senate compare with other countries?

The United States of America Senate

The Legislative Branch in the US government consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The Senate's main features are as follows:

- Representation based on constituent units;
- Equal representation (each state has two Senators);
- Selection based on popular election (originally, US Senators were appointed);
- Fixed terms lasting six years, with one-third of the Senate elected every two years; and
- Virtually equal powers to the House of Representatives.

The switch from appointment by state legislature to direct election is a primary reason the US Senate remains powerful. Another interesting feature is that, in the United States, the Vice-President is also President of the Senate. The Senate President's most important role is casting the deciding vote in the event of a tie.

The Australian Senate

In 1901, the Australian Commonwealth merged six former British colonies to form a federation. Australia took Canada's experience into account when considering how to merge Parliamentary institutions with a federal system of government. The Australian Senate's main features are as follows:

- Equal representation, whereby each state has 12 Senators, and the two mainland territories have two Senators each;
- Selection based on election by proportional representation;
- Fixed terms of six years, with one-half of the Senators re-elected every three years; and
- Powers nearly equal to the lower House of Representatives. The Senate can review, amend, or reject government legislation, including money bills. The Senate can also introduce legislation other than a money bill, but most bills are introduced in the Lower House.

On paper, the Canadian Senate's powers are virtually equal to those found in the Australian model. The main differences, however, lie in the form of representation, the method of selecting Senators, and their length of tenure. These key differences give Australian Senators legitimacy in the eyes of the public.

The Australian Senate's strong role relative to the House of Representatives is illustrated by a constitutional provision for breaking deadlock between the two chambers, a provision that involves the dissolution of Parliament and, subsequently, the conduct of a joint sitting involving both chambers. In contrast, in Canada the only mechanism for breaking deadlock between the House of Commons and the Senate is a rarely used constitutional provision allowing the Prime Minister to appoint extra Senators.

The United Kingdom: House of Lords

Like Canada, Britain has two legislative bodies, a Lower Chamber (the House of Commons) and an Upper Chamber (the House of Lords), with the majority of power residing in the House of Commons.

Among the main features of the House of Lords:

- Representation based primarily on a combination of hereditary ties ("Hereditary Peers") and government appointments (government appointees are known as "Life Peers").
- It functions in both a legislative and judiciary capacity. The House of Lords consider legislation passed by the House of Commons, in addition to serving as final arbiters for certain civil and criminal cases.
- Legislative powers are limited to a 12-month 'suspensive' veto. After this time the House of Commons can resubmit the bill for Royal Assent. The suspensive veto does not extend to money bills.

Other roles, including making inquiries into public issues.