











Today, a delegation from MNBC and Metis Nation Greater Victoria, joined the Province of BC in proclaiming November 16, 2022 Louis Riel Day.

Although most of us have heard of him, not everyone remembers why. He has been described as charismatic, a leader, a rebel, and even a traitor. On November 16, 1885, Louis Riel was hung for High Treason after being the leader of the Red River Resistance and the Battle of Batoche. The result of Louis Riel's execution was the mass labelling of Métis people across Canada as traitors, and for generations, many felt the need to hide their Métis culture and identity.

Louis Riel was a politician and a leader of the Métis people. He led two resistance movements against the Government of Canada and its first prime minister, John A. Macdonald. Riel defended Métis rights and identity as the west came progressively under the Canadian sphere of influence. Riel was also a defender of religious freedom, French language rights, and gender equality. He died a staunch advocate for the Métis, and for minority rights in general.

Métis have been documented in British Columbia as early as 1793, and now represent one third of all Indigenous people in British Columbia. Although we have made strides in recent years as it pertains to the acknowledgement of inherent rights of Métis people, a lot more work is still in order.

The legacy of Louis Riel teaches us the value of reconciliation, and the promise a new day can bring. Riel taught us not to look at what makes our people different, but rather what unites us. This Louis Riel day let's remember the sacrifices made, and the ancestral roots that unite us. Let's celebrate this Louis Riel Day united and working towards the vision Riel himself sought for his people. Building a proud, self-governing, sustainable nation.