

Timeline of Social and Cultural Injustices in Canada

9.1.4
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<p>1876 The Indian Act is established and controls many aspects of First Nations persons' lives, from birth to death. Indian Bands are created and many decisions are made by the federal government about the relocation of First Nations. (Since then, the Indian Act has undergone many amendments. Until 1951, laws defined a person as "an individual other than an Indian." Indians could obtain the right to vote by renouncing their Indian status, and were not considered to have the same rights as citizens until 1960.)</p>
<p>1884 Aboriginal potlatch celebrations are made illegal under the Indian Act.</p>
<p>1880s-1996 The Indian Act is amended to give responsibility for the education of children to mostly church-run residential schools. The law required compulsory attendance for those status Indians under the age of 16 until they reached 18 years of age in Indian schools. There were 130 residential schools in Canada. Most residential schools ceased to operate by the mid-1970s; the last federally run residential school in Canada closed in 1996.</p>
<p>1885 As Chinese labourers are no longer needed to work on building the railways, the Chinese Immigration Act sets a head tax of \$50 on every Chinese person entering Canada.</p>
<p>1890, March 18 The Manitoba legislature passes the Official Language Act to abolish the official status of the French language that is used in the Legislature, laws, records, journals and courts. This was in violation of the Manitoba Act of 1870 which declared English and French as official languages in Manitoba*. The Act also removed the right to French education in Manitoba schools; however, a compromise was reached in the 1896 Manitoba Schools Question to allow some French instruction. (*This violation was declared unconstitutional in 1979 in the <i>Georges Forest</i> case.)</p>
<p>1893 Duncan Campbell Scott becomes Deputy Superintendent General of the Department of Indian Affairs. His stated objective was the assimilation of all Indians into British culture. He ruled the department until 1932.</p>
<p>1903 The Head Tax on Chinese immigrants is increased to \$500 per person</p>
<p>1907 The right to vote in provincial elections is denied to Hindus in British Columbia.</p>
<p>1907 A crowd at an anti-Asian rally turned into a mob and marched through Vancouver's Chinatown and Japanese town, breaking store windows along the way. The government reacted by reducing the number of Japanese immigrants allowed into Canada from a total of 400 in 1908, to only 150 immigrants in 1923.</p>
<p>1908 All Asian immigrants must be in possession of \$200 in order to enter Canada. No Chinese, Japanese, or other Asian or Indian person is entitled to vote in any municipal election in British Columbia.</p>

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<p>1910 The Immigration Act requires that all immigrants come by "a continuous journey from a ticket purchased in that country or prepared in Canada" —in effect preventing immigrants from India as there is no direct route between these two countries.</p>
<p>1911 Songhees reserve, Victoria, are relocated.</p>
<p>1914–1918 World War I aroused intense and hostile feelings towards specific minorities within the Canadian community, in particular eastern European immigrants. Germans, Ukrainians, Austrians, Poles, Czechs, and Slovaks who had not yet become British subjects were given the label "enemy aliens" even though some of these populations had been reluctant members of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Each enemy alien was required to register with a local magistrate, report monthly, and give up any firearms. Those labelled as dangerous enemy aliens—about 8000 in all—were placed in internment camps where they were compelled to work on a variety of public works projects under difficult conditions.</p>
<p>1914 The Supreme Court of Canada upholds a Saskatchewan law that prohibits Chinese businesses from hiring white women. Ontario passes a law forbidding "Oriental" persons from employing white females.</p>
<p>1916 The Manitoba Government abolishes bilingual (English/French) instruction. Not until 1963 was French language instruction officially authorized in all grades in Manitoba.</p>
<p>1917 The Wartimes Elections Act excludes some minorities from voting, including Ukrainians and Germans.</p>
<p>1921 A Québec court upholds the right of a theatre owner to refuse to allow black persons to sit in the orchestra seats.</p>
<p>1923 The Chinese Immigration Act excludes Chinese from entry into Canada, except for students or Chinese children who were born in Canada and are returning to Canada.</p>
<p>1924 Courts uphold a restaurant's right to refuse to serve "coloured" people.</p>
<p>1927 The Indian Act is amended to make it illegal for First Nations to raise money or retain a lawyer to advance land claims, thereby blocking effective political court action.</p>
<p>1930's, 40's, 50's Inuit relocation to high Arctic locations from Baffin Island and northern Québec.</p>
<p>1935 Métis of Ste. Madeleine, Manitoba, were relocated under the authority of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act.</p>
<p>1936 Elderly "Oriental" persons are denied access to British Columbia provincial homes for the aged.</p>
<p>1938 The Dominion Elections Act retains race as a grounds for exclusion from the federal vote.</p>

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<p>1939 Courts uphold the right to refuse to serve black customers on the basis of freedom of commerce.</p>
<p>1939 Chinese, Japanese, Hindu, or Indian persons are denied the right to vote in provincial elections in B.C.</p>
<p>1939–1945 (World War II) During this time, Canada restricts immigration of Jewish refugees, despite the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany. Canada accepted fewer than 5000 Jews from 1933–1945. In 1939, a ship carrying 1000 Jewish refugees was refused entry and forced to return to Germany. Under the War Measures Act, over 600 Italians as well as over 800 Germans and Austrians were sent to work camps as enemy aliens in 23 camps across the country.</p>
<p>1940's Mi'k Maq, Nova Scotia, are relocated.</p>
<p>1942 The Alberta Land Sales Prohibition Act makes it illegal for members of religious groups like Hutterites, Doukobhors, and other "enemy aliens" to buy land.</p>
<p>1942 23,000 Japanese Canadians in British Columbia, mostly Canadians by birth or naturalized citizens, are denied the right to vote, taken from their homes, and placed in internment camps during the duration of the war.</p>
<p>1950's Yukon First Nations, are relocated.</p>
<p>1950's Cheslatta Carrier Nation, northwestern British Columbia, are relocated.</p>
<p>1956 Sayisi Dene in northern Manitoba, are relocated.</p>
<p>1959 Inuit of Hebron, Labrador, are relocated.</p>
<p>1960s-1980s Adoption "scoop" or "60s scoop" of First Nations and Métis children occurs, where thousands of children are taken and adopted out from their communities without the knowledge or consent of their families. 70% go to non-Aboriginal homes. Besides the loss and trauma to communities and families, results include cultural and identity confusion for the adoptees.</p>
<p>1964 Gwa' Sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw, British Columbia, are relocated.</p>
<p>1964 Chemawawin Cree, Manitoba, are relocated.</p>
<p>1967 The Manitoba provincial government recognizes the right to French-language instruction in the province's schools; however, it was limited to only half the school day.</p>
<p>1967 Mushuau Innu of Labrador, moved to Davis Inlet on Iluikoyak Island.</p>
<p>1988 Aboriginal peoples protest the 1988 "The Spirit Sings" exhibition, sponsored by Shell Canada Ltd. The Lubicon Cree were in conflict with the oil company over drilling and other issues on Lubicon land, but the exhibition gave the impression that the company supported native rights.</p>

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Ongoing The appropriation of cultural artifacts, including human remains, continues. Several prominent Canadian and international museums have in their collections cultural artifacts, such as medicine bundles, totem poles, funerary objects, and wampum, which are considered sacred by the Aboriginal communities from which they were taken, sometimes by dubious means like expropriation. Museums also house Aboriginal human remains.

<www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/sg38_e.html>

"Dispersing the Baffin Island Inuit," INAC

<<http://ethics.sandiego.edu/resources/cases/Detail.asp?ID=56>>

"Inuit Relocation," U of San Diego

<www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/sg34_e.html>

RCAP report: "Relocation of Aboriginal Communities," INAC

<http://www.aboriginalsocialwork.ca/special_topics/60s_scoop/>

<www.cbc.ca/news/background/aboriginals/aboriginal_artifacts.html>

"Aboriginal Artifacts: Repatriating the Past," CBC News online

<www.ibsgwatch.imagedjinn.com/learn/2002sept12haida.htm>

"Haida First Nations repatriate human remains from USA"

Indian Burial and Sacred Grounds Watch

<www.museums.ca/media/Pdf/Muse_Feature/muse_11-12_E_Feature.pdf>

"Canada's New Aboriginal Museology," Muse

<www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/si56_e.html>

RCAP report: "Sacred and Historical Sites," INAC

