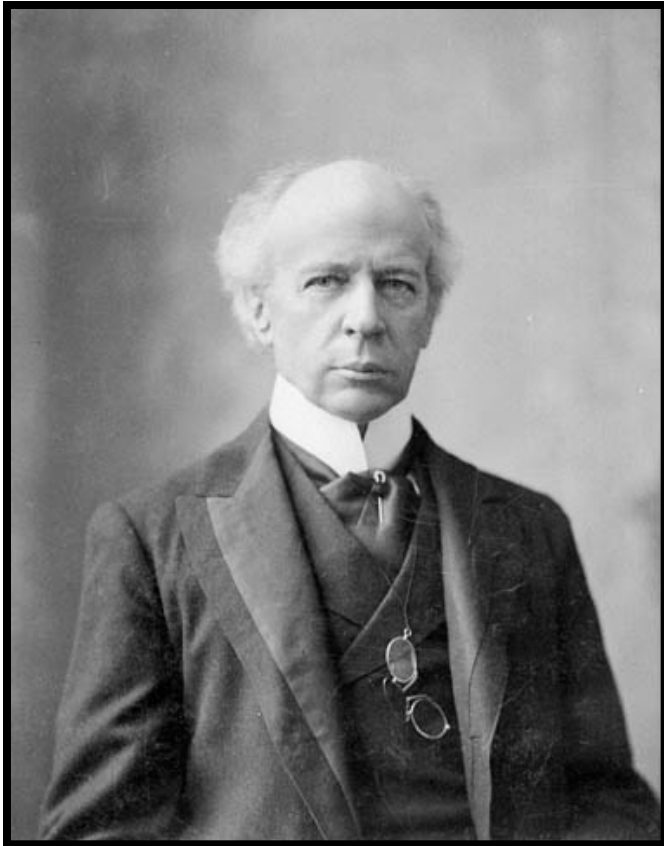


Into “Canada’s Century”: The Laurier Era, 1896-1911



“It has been observed on the floor of this House, as well as outside of this House, that as the nineteenth century had been the century of the United States, so the twentieth century would be the century of Canada.”

**PM Wilfrid Laurier in
the House of Commons,
21 February 1905.**

24 July 2018



A Métis house burns at Batoche, 9 May 1885.

Consequences

53 Canadians killed, 118 wounded

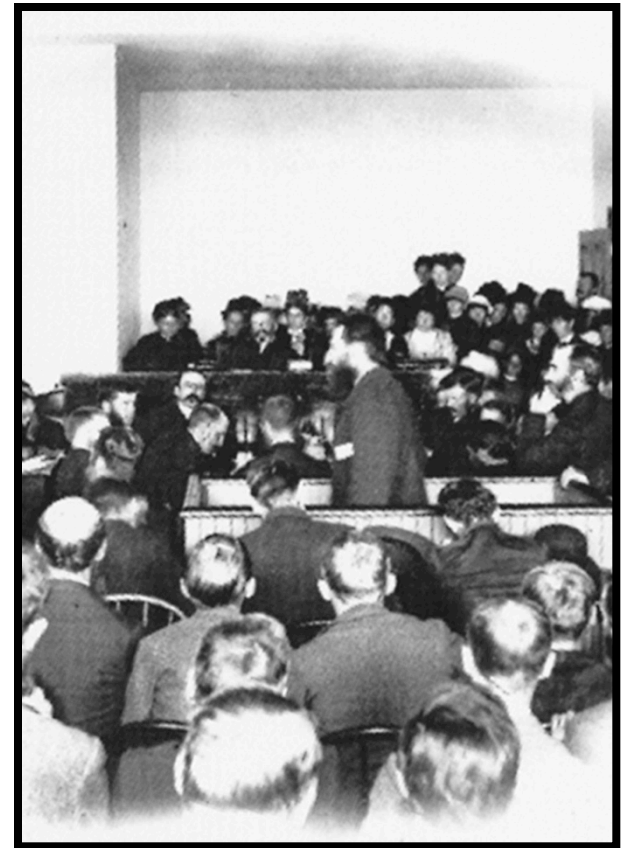
35 Métis and First Nations killed

129 imprisoned:

- 46 Métis, 19 convicted, 1 hanged (Riel), 7 cond. Discharge**
- 81 First Nations, 44 convicted, 8 hanged**

Big Bear, Poundmaker – 3-yr sentences

Gabriel Dumont escapes to the U.S. (until 1906)



Louis Riel's address to the jury during his trial at Regina, late July 1885.

A Legacy of Bitterness

Jury of 6, British-backgrounds

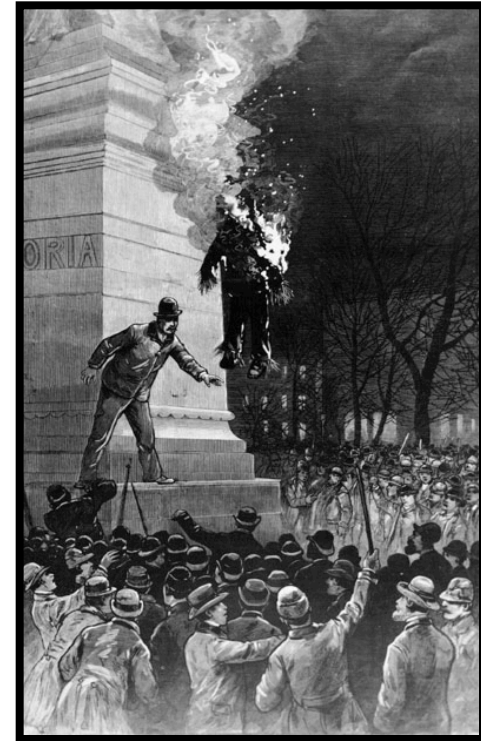
Riel: Not Guilty, Not Insane

- ON vs. QB Doctors**
- Macdonald postpones twice**

**“Riel must swing” – Ontario
Votes**

**Honoré Mercier: “Riel, our
brother is dead, victim of
fanaticism and treason...”**

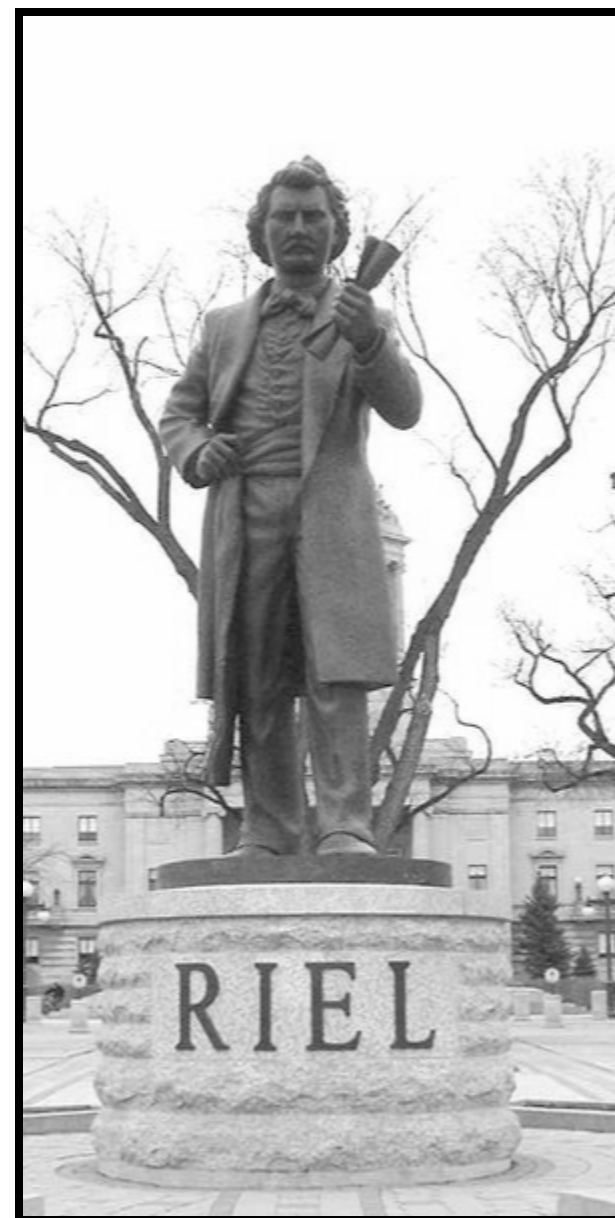
**Laurier: “If I had been on the
banks of the Saskatchewan”**



**Immediately after Riel’s execution
on November 16, 1885, French
Canadians in Montreal burned Sir
John Macdonald in effigy at the
base of the statue of Queen
Victoria in Victoria Square.**

No one can say the Northwest was not suffering last year...but what I have done, and risked, and to which I have exposed myself, rested certainly on the conviction [that I] was called upon to do something for my country... I know that through the grace of God I am the founder of Manitoba... Even if I was going to be sentenced by you, gentlemen of the jury, I have the satisfaction if I die – that if I die I will not be reputed by all men as insane, as a lunatic... Gentlemen of the jury, my reputation, my liberty, my life are at your discretion.

Louis Riel, Regina, 1885



The Last Spike, 7 Nov. 1885

**Craigellachie, B.C.: Donald
Smith (Lord Strathcona),
Van Horne, Fleming**

**Van Horne: “would have
made a Canadian out of
the German emperor.”**

**First through passenger train
to Port Moody: 4 July 1886**

Montreal → Vancouver

- 85 hours, \$123.35**
- Ave. salary: \$1-2/day**
- Public \$ = CPR Profit**



**The arrival of the first CPR
passenger train at Vancouver, at
the foot of Howe Street, May 23,
1887. The next day marked
Queen Victoria’s birthday.**



The driving of the last spike, November 7, 1885, 9:30 a.m., at Craigellachie, British Columbia. The important CPR financial backer Donald A. Smith (later Lord Strathcona) holds the heavy spike hammer. Behind Smith stands white-bearded Sandford Fleming, former engineer-in-chief, to the left is the burly figure of W.C. Van Horne, CPR general manager.

“If we are united, or rather absorbed, everything will centralize in Canada, and the whole country will be tributary to Canada. The number of Representatives sent to Ottawa from other places would overwhelm the number sent from British Columbia. Even in the matter of appropriations, where the scramble always is, this Colony would be overborne... The Tariff and Excise Laws of Canada will ruin the dominant interests of this Colony... If we are Confederated with Canada we become its tributary.”

**Dr. John Sebastian Helmcken, BC
Legislature *Debates* on Confederation
with Canada, 1870.**



After 1900 the growing demand for boilers and engines was met by producers in Ontario, the United States, and Britain while the British Columbia industry went into decline. An examination of both the costs of production and the social determinants of those costs reveals that the main causes of this displacement were the linking of the high-wage British Columbia economy to the lower wage east by the Canadian Pacific Railway; the railway's discriminatory rate structure; and a shift toward nonlocal ownership of the main components in the economy which was accompanied by new purchasing patterns that favoured nonlocal secondary manufacturers.

From: Lutz, John. "Losing Steam: The Boiler Engine Industry as an Index of British Columbia's Deindustrialization, 1880-1915." Canadian Historical Association, *Historical Papers* 24, no. 1 (1988): 182-202.

After the Rebellion

National Policy and the West

1885 - Very Bad Publicity

- Slow Settlement in NW

Free Land in the U.S.

- Better Climate

Cdn Net Migration Loss

- Immigration from non-traditional sources

- Icelanders, Mennonites, Mormons, Russian Jews

Net Migration, 1871-1901

1871-81:

Immigration 353,000

Emigration 438,000

1881-91:

Immigration 903,000

Emigration 1,108,000

1891-1901:

Immigration 326,000

Emigration 507,000

Asylum Seekers

1870s - 7,400 German-speaking Mennonites
- Russian pacifists
- Tree wind breaks

Gimli (“Paradise”) C.P.R. Immigrant Cars
- 2000 Icelanders
- Volcanoes, depression
- Smallpox, floods 1879

1880s - Russian Jews
- Russian pogroms
- No farming experience
- Winnipeg, socialists

Utah Mormons
- NW Territories, 1887
- Utah dry-land farming
- 7,000 in AB by 1912

1890s Russian Doukhobors
- Yorkton → Grand Forks

Net Loss: Canadians Moving South

1870-1900, 1 million

Canadians to U.S.

- 785,461 English-

**Canadians: “scarcely a
ripple”**

- 394,461 French-

**Canadian: “rarely does
one become
naturalized.”**

**25% of Canada’s
population!**



Conservative Doldrums, 1891-96

Death of Sir John A., 1891

**Severe economic downturn,
1891-96**

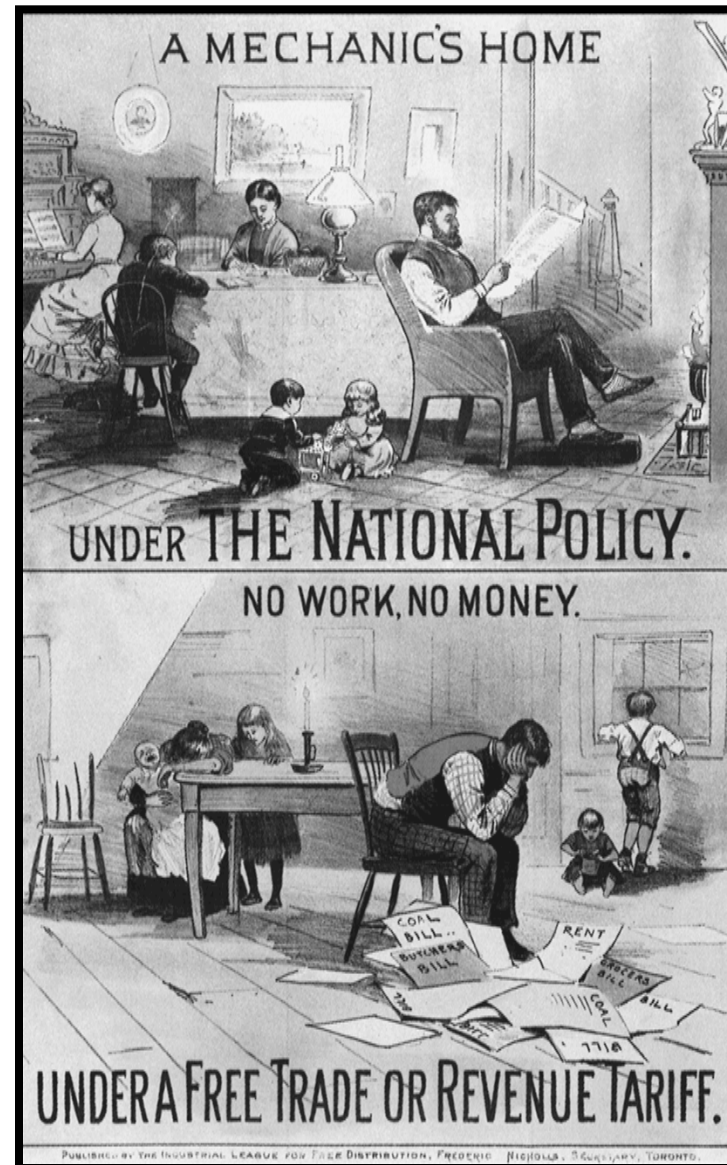
Turning the tide in 1896

**- Closing of the American
western frontier**

**- Canada is now the “Last
Best West”**

**European Pop. Boom and
Conscription**

Return of Prosperity



P.M. Wilfrid Laurier, 1896-1911

Liberal Victory, 1896

**MP Clifford Sifton - Minister of
the Interior, 1896-1905**

C.P.R. Immigrant Cars

- Quebec → N. Ont. → W'peg
- “Chicago of the North”

Mechanization of Farming

- Steam threshers, plows
- Summer fallowing
- Red Fife → Marquis wheat

**Wheat boom 56 → 224 million
bushels, 1901-1913**

“It has been observed on the floor of this House, as well as outside of this House, that as the nineteenth century had been the century of the United States, so the twentieth century would be the century of Canada.”

Wilfrid Laurier, House
of Commons, *Debates*, 21
February 1905

“Sheep-skin Coats”

Hapsburg Empire

**Oppressed Galicia and
Bukovina - Ukrainians**

***Vilni zemli* - “Free land”**

- 170,000 by 1914

- Domed Churches

- Thatched roofs

***Volksdeutsch* ethnic German**

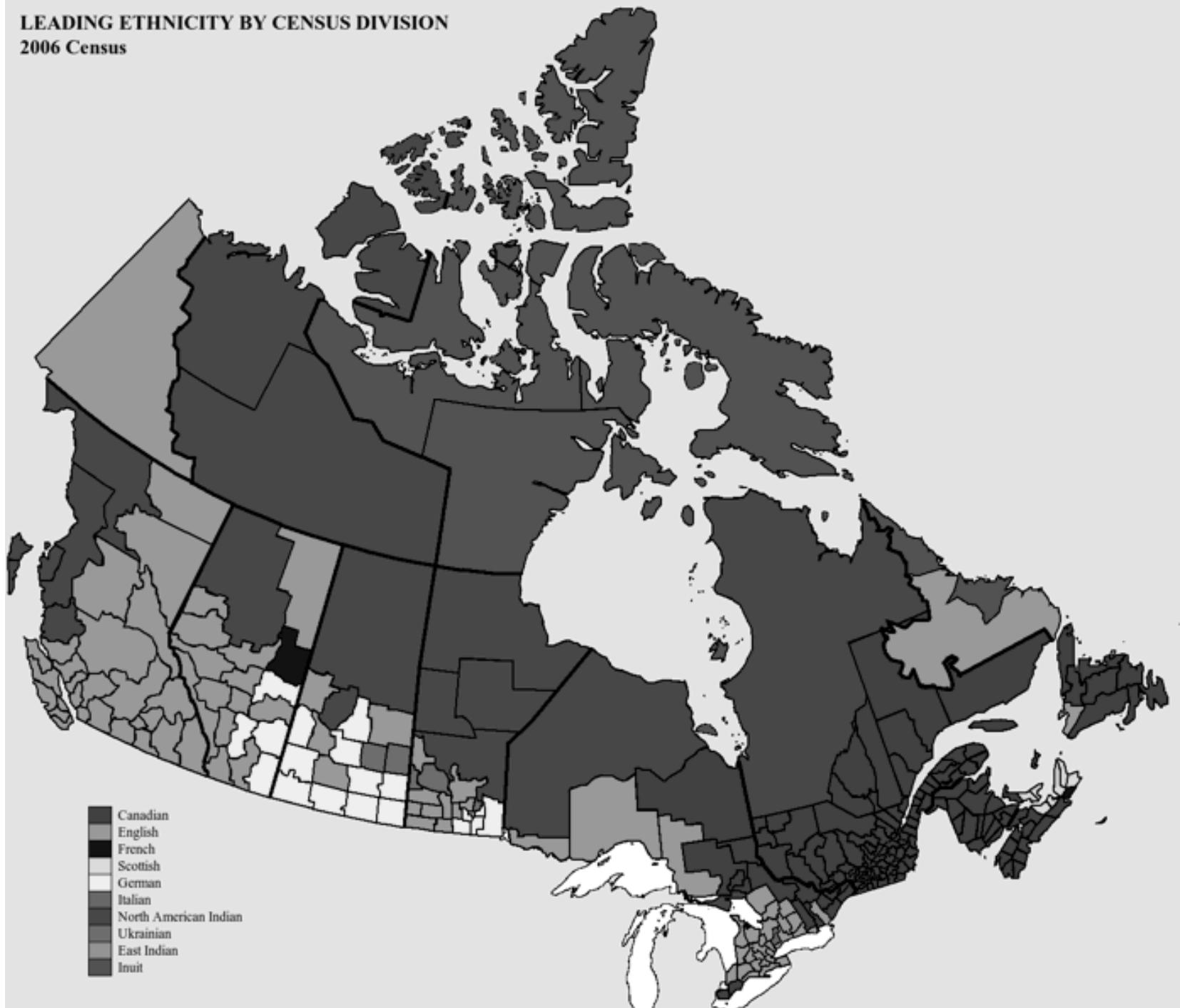
- 46,844-147,638, 1901-11

- Prelate, SK - RCs

**“I think a stalwart peasant
in a sheep-skin coat, born on
the soil, whose forefathers
have been farmers for ten
generations, with a stout
wife and a half-dozen
children is good quality.”**

**Clifford Sifton,
Minister of the Interior,
1896-1905**

LEADING ETHNICITY BY CENSUS DIVISION
2006 Census



Racism: “White Canada Forever”

Chinese - C.P.R. workers

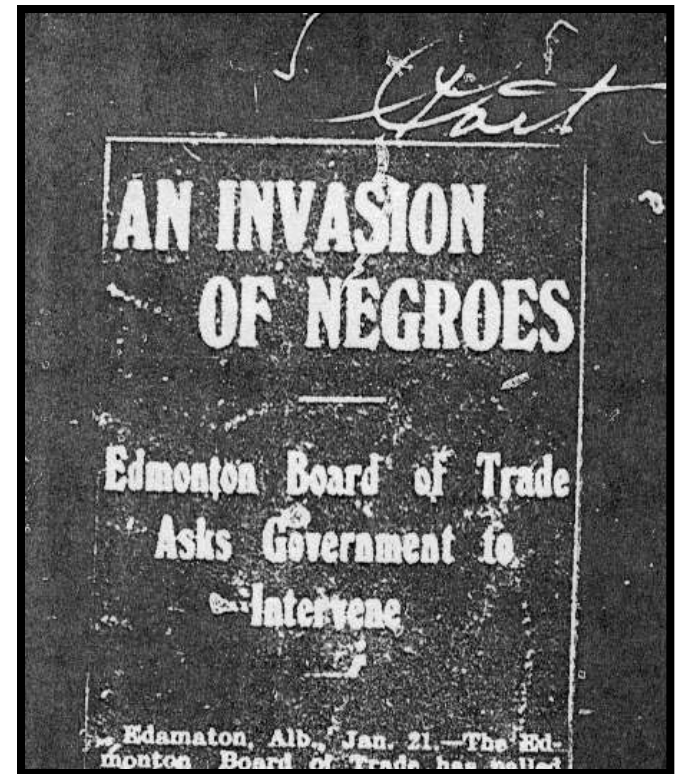
- Head Tax - \$50 1885, \$100 1901, \$500 1904**

Japanese - No Head Tax owing to 1902 Anglo-Japanese Treaty

- *Issei* sojourners**
- “Picture Brides”**
- “Gentlemen’s Agreement”**

1500 African Americans, 1901-11

- “mild and healthy NW”**
- 1910 Oklahoma “invasion” in reaction to US Jim Crow laws**
- Kansas dry-land farmers**



In 1911, the Edmonton Board of Trade and the Edmonton TLC warned that “an unlimited influx of negroes into the province would invariably lower the standard of living.”



Oklahoma State, 1907

Jim Crow Laws

**Education, Voting, Rail
Cars, Miscegenation**



From Nativism to Racism

**Chinese and Japanese denied
the franchise in BC**

- Barred from professions**

Asiatic Exclusion League

- 1907 Vancouver riots**

- Residents fight back mob**

India - British Empire

- Discrimination against
British subjects?**

- Sikh Temple, West Van.**

**1908 - Continuous Passage
Law enacted**



**In September 1907, a mob of
10,000, incited by the Asiatic
Exclusion League, invaded
Vancouver's Chinatown and the
Japanese quarter of the city.**

The Komagata Maru Incident

Continuous Passage Law, 1908

- Bars immigrants via US and from most of Asia**

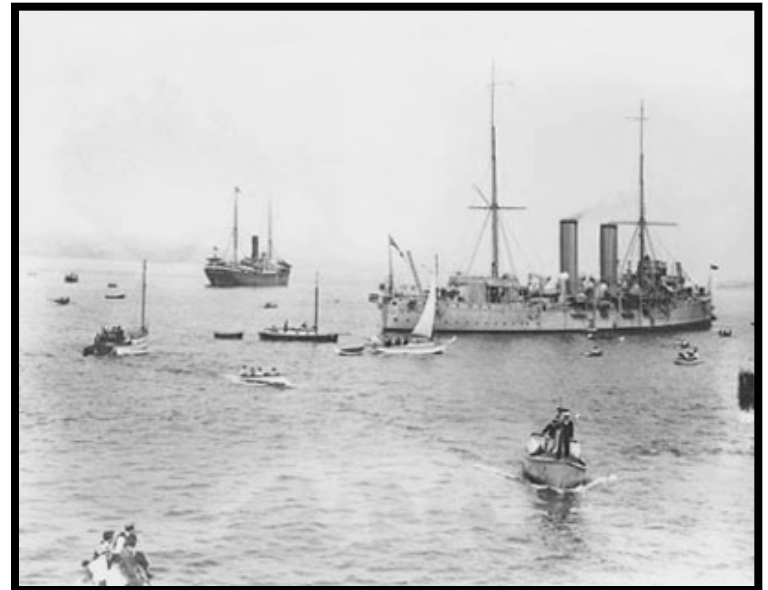
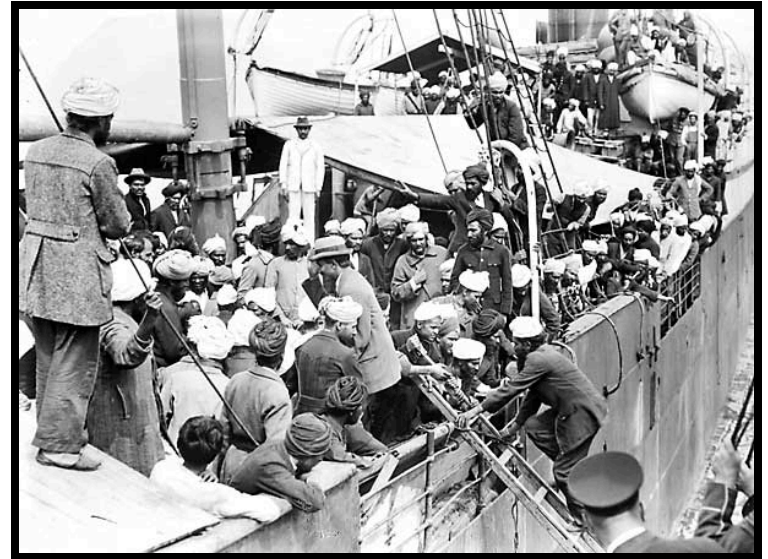
Gurdit Singh of Singapore

- Sikh independence mov't**
- Chartered a steamship**
- 376 Indians onboard**

Anchored at Van., 23 May-23 Jul.

1914 - Violated continuous passage by departing from Hong Kong - Passenger gunfire repels armed immigration officers & VPD

- HMCS *Rainbow*, 23 Jul. 1914**



Canada's Open Door

Canada, 1896-1914:
1,000,000 immigrant
farmers

Canada, 1901-1921:
3 million immigrants

Prairie Provinces, 1914:
54% Foreign-born

French-Canadians:
31% 1871 → 28% 1921

ON and QB: 75% 1891
→ 60% 1921



“Now Then, All Together.” A cartoon in the 1904 Liberal election pamphlet suggests that immigrants could live together in harmony in Western Canada. Note the “Frenchman” singing “The Maple Leaf Forever,” English-Canada’s unofficial anthem.