

Despite the many efforts to destroy them, Indigenous cultures have survived. Individuals and communities are healing themselves. They are learning their languages and reviving their cultural traditions. They continue to fight for the right to govern themselves and control their lands and resources.

Why is it important for all Canadians to learn about the history and cultures of First Peoples?

Voices into Action

Harold Cardinal

Harold Cardinal was a Cree writer, leader, teacher, and lawyer. In 1969, when he was 24, the Canadian government proposed a new plan. It would close the residential schools and get rid of the Indian Act. In exchange, it would take away the First Nations' reserves and all treaty rights. The government would no longer honour its responsibility to protect the rights of First Peoples. In response, Cardinal wrote a bestselling book, *The Unjust Society*. In the book he states that this was a "thinly disguised programme of extermination through assimilation." Cardinal's book inspired First Nations to oppose the government's plan. The government backed off.



Why is the Indian Act still in place today?



▲ A large teepee stands in front of Parliament Hill in Ottawa, in 2017. What message does this image hold?

Check Your Learning

1. How did the Canadian government's policies create inequality for First Nations?
2. What effects did residential schools have on First Peoples' families and communities?

Make Connections

3. Why is reconciliation important for all Canadians? How can you contribute to reconciliation?

Investigate Why Did Canada Discourage Chinese Immigration and Settlement?

With the forced relocation of First Nations of the prairies onto reserves, Canada was ready to begin building the transcontinental Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). To do this, it needed many more workers than the settler population could provide.

Thousands of Chinese men had come to California and BC during the gold rushes. When the gold rushes ended, they stayed rather than return to China. They worked in sawmills, coal mines, and canneries. They sent the money they made home to China to help their families. Now, Canada looked to these workers to help build the railway. But many more workers were needed. Over 15 000 more Chinese workers were brought to BC from California and China.

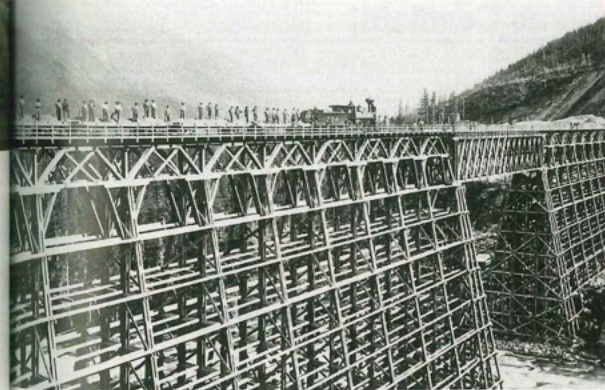


- Why did Chinese workers accept these conditions?
- Who benefited most from the building of the railway?

DANGEROUS WORK!

The hardest part of building the CPR was getting through the Rocky Mountains. Chinese workers did the most dangerous work for less than half of the other workers' low pay. At least two Chinese workers died for every kilometre of track laid through the mountains.

◀ The railway bridge over Mountain Creek, BC, 1880s



POOR LIVING CONDITIONS!

Chinese workers were kept on separate crews from the other railroad workers. Unlike the other workers, they had to pay for their own food, clothing, and medical care from their low wages. They camped in tents, even in the winter. The men who financed the building of the railway lived in huge mansions in far-off cities.

◀ Chinese workers' camp, 1880s



What Happened Next for Workers in BC?

Work on the railway ended in 1885. With the railway finished, many workers had difficulty finding new jobs. Some of the Chinese railway workers left Canada. Many others stayed, and many more Chinese workers arrived.

Work in BC's resource industries was hard and often very dangerous. The pay was low. Workers joined together in unions to get better working conditions. Often, there were bitter strikes. Owners hired Chinese workers at much lower wages and used them during the strikes. This strategy turned other workers in BC against Asian workers.

Why might Chinese workers want to stay in Canada?

THINKING LIKE... an Economist

The law of supply and demand says that when there is a low supply of something and a high demand for it, the price will rise. When there is a large supply and low demand, the price will drop. How would the arrival of large numbers of labourers from Asia affect the wages offered to all workers?

Analyze the table below to see this effect.

Daily Wages (in cents) in the Vancouver Island Coalfield, 1875–1897

Year	"Whites"	Chinese	First Nations	Boys	Japanese
1875	200–500	121–125	100–150	—	—
1876	200–400	100–125	100–150	—	—
1877	200–400	100–125	100–150	—	—
1878	200–375	100–125	100–150	—	—
1879	200–375	100–125	100–150	—	—
1881	200–400	100–125	100–150	—	—
1882	200–400	100–150	125–250	—	—
1883	200–400	100–150	125–250	—	—
1886	200–400	100–150	200	—	—
1887	200–375	100–125	200	—	—
1888	200–500	100–175	200	—	—
1889	200–500	100–137	—	100–175	—
1890	250–600	100–200	100–250	100–200	—
1892	240–350	100–150	—	100–200	100–125
1893	200–350	100–150	—	100–200	100–125
1894	200–350	100–150	—	100–200	100–125
1895	225–350	100–150	—	100–200	100–125
1897	225–350	100–150	—	100–200	100–125

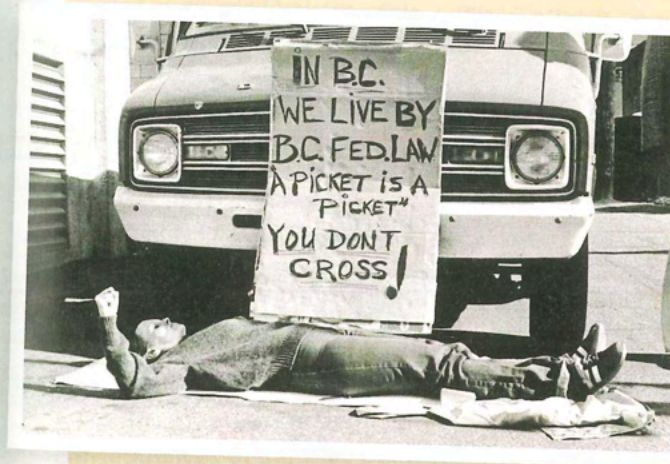
Source: John Douglas Belshaw, "The Standard of Living of British Miners on Vancouver Island, 1848–1900," *BC Studies*, no. 84, Winter 1989–90, page 44; British Columbia Sessional Papers, Minister of Mines Reports, 1877–1900

Workers Strike for Better Conditions



Many miners were injured or killed in mine accidents. Workers who tried for fair conditions were discriminated against, beaten, and jailed. Sometimes the army was called in to break up strikes. What questions would you ask the men in this scene?

◀ British and Chinese miners share a meal in a BC miners' cabin.



A picket line is a boundary set by workers on strike, often at the entrance to the place of work. Many BC workers lost their lives to gain Canadians the right to refuse unsafe work and to be treated fairly and without discrimination. Why might workers not want people to cross a picket line?

◀ A picket line in Vancouver in 1980



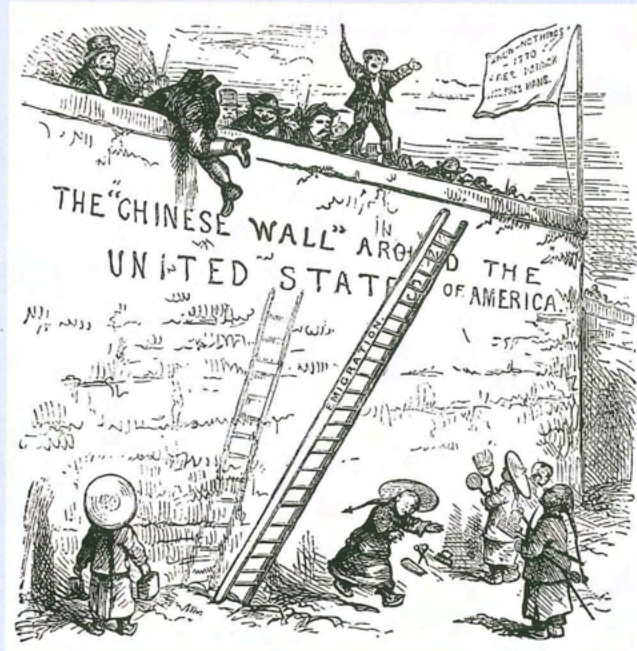
▲ Label of the Emblem brand of canned salmon

The first big strike in BC outside the mining industry was in the salmon-canning industry in 1900. The cannery owners hired Chinese workers to break the strike. British settlers, Chinese, Japanese, and First Nations people, many of them women, all worked in the canneries. Each group was housed separately and assigned separate tasks. How might this hurt their ability to work together for fair wages?

What Was the Head Tax and How Was It Used?

Hostility to Chinese immigrants grew. BC labour unions and politicians pressed the federal government to restrict Chinese immigration. In 1885, Canada passed the Chinese Immigration Act, forcing each Chinese person who wanted to enter Canada to pay a \$50 head tax. This is equal to about \$2000 today.

Most Canadians strongly supported banning all Chinese immigrants. Why?



▲ These newspaper cartoons are from the United States (left) and Canada, 1870. What can they tell you about the views in both countries at that time?

THINKING LIKE... a Historian

Historians look at possible reasons for decisions that political leaders made in the past.

Political leaders have to balance the wants and needs of different groups in society and try to find solutions to problems that everyone can accept. Prime Minister Macdonald faced a political dilemma in BC.

- Company owners wanted Chinese workers. They said cheap labour was needed to develop BC's economy.

- Other workers said the Chinese were taking their jobs. They wanted all Chinese excluded from Canada.
- Many Canadians believed the Chinese would not be able to assimilate.
- BC and federal politicians wanted to be re-elected.

Would the head tax satisfy each group? Who would it benefit most?

What Were the Consequences of the Head Tax?

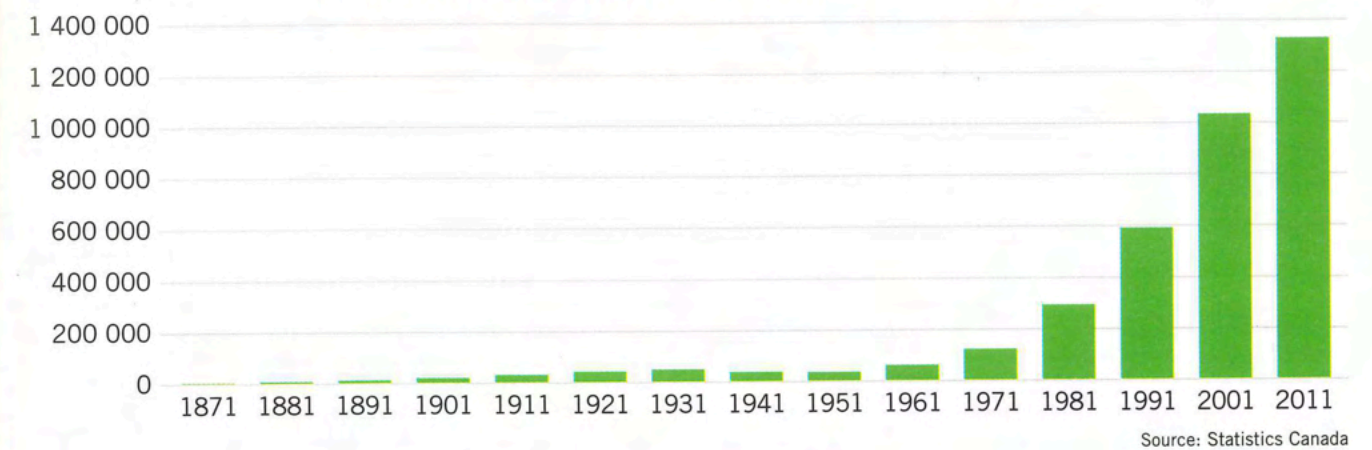
The head tax did little to stem Chinese immigration. In 1900, the tax was raised to \$100. In 1903, it rose to \$500. Despite the tax, the Chinese population in BC increased from 4000 to almost 40 000 between 1881 and 1921.

On July 1, 1923, Canada passed a new Chinese Immigration Act that removed the head tax but banned almost all Chinese immigrants until 1947.



▲ A \$500 Chinese immigration certificate. A quarter of the money raised by the head tax went to BC. After 1903, BC received half. Who would this money benefit?

Chinese Population in Canada, 1871–2011



▲ Use the graph to compare the consequences of the 1923 Chinese Immigration Act and its repeal in 1947.

On June 22, 2006, Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized to the Chinese Canadian community for the head tax and the exclusion of Chinese immigrants from 1923 until 1947. Why was it important for the government to apologize?

Check Your Learning

1. What were the conditions that led to the head tax?
2. What were the intended and unintended consequences of the head tax?

Make Connections

3. When immigration was banned, many Chinese men were not able to bring their wives and children to Canada. What are the impacts of separating family members for long periods? How is this similar to what happened to First Nations families? How is it different?

Examine

What Were the Causes of the 1907 Vancouver Riot?

Was racism the most significant cause of the riot?



After the Chinese head tax was imposed, employers looked to Japan and India for new sources of cheap labour. From 1904 to 1906, more than 4000 Japanese came to BC. By September 1907, another 8000 Japanese had arrived, and there were 2000 immigrants from India.

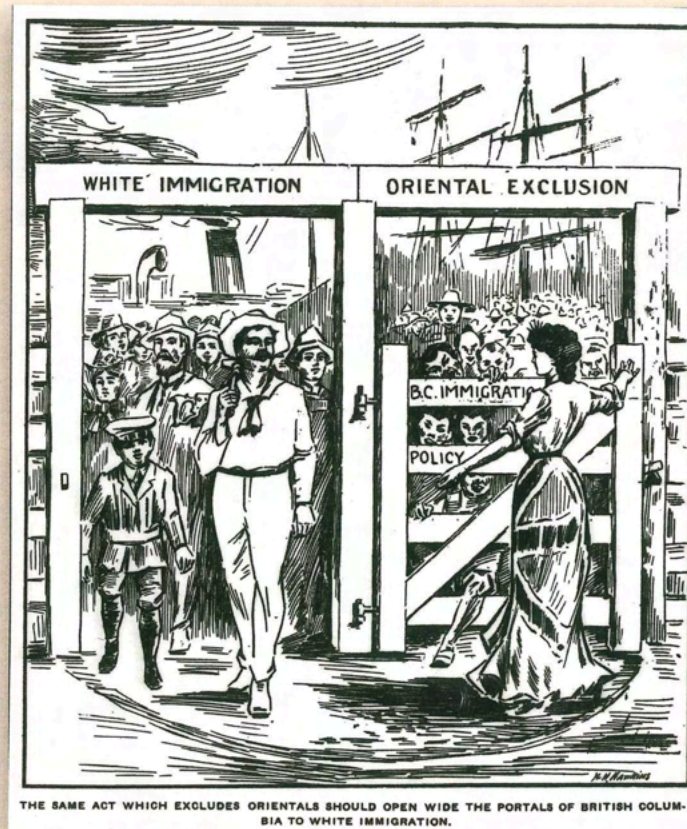
There was a shortage of jobs in Vancouver. The BC government demanded that the federal government stop all Asian immigration. However, the federal government did not want to do this because

- the owners of the resource industries insisted they needed more cheap labour
- Japan was an important military ally and trading partner of Britain
- people from India were British subjects

Analyzing CAUSE and CONSEQUENCE

- Causes can be short term or long term.
- Causes may be social, political, or economic.
- Consequences can be intended or unintended.
- There can be different perspectives on an event.

► Cartoon in the *BC Saturday Sunset*, August 24, 1907. What is the message of this cartoon? What does the cartoon tell about the views at the time?



How Did Events in the United States Affect Canada?

In 1905, the Asiatic Exclusion League was formed in San Francisco. Its goal was to drive all Asians from North America. In 1907, a branch of this group was formed in Vancouver. It planned a parade for September 7 and advertised it around the city.

On September 4, in Bellingham, Washington, a mob of about 500 men, most of them members of the Asiatic Exclusion League, raided the mills where Sikhs and Hindus worked. They invaded their lodging houses, dragged them from their beds, and hauled them to the edge of town. Many of the Sikhs headed for Canada.

What Were the Events of September 7 to 10?

In Vancouver, the Asiatic Exclusion League parade attracted more than 5000 marchers. They marched to City Hall wearing ribbons that said "Stand for a White Canada" and listened to a speech given by an American from the United States Asiatic Exclusion League.

City Hall was next to Chinatown. A boy threw a rock through the window of a Chinese store. The crowd quickly turned into a mob. Every window in Chinatown was broken. The mob then turned toward Japantown. The Japanese were ready for them and they fought back.

The attacks continued off and on for two more days. All Japanese and Chinese workers went on strike for three days and patrolled their neighbourhoods.

Politicians and the media condemned the violence but not the ideas that had caused it. Some said the Asiatic Exclusion League and the events in Bellingham had caused the riot. Do you agree? Were economic conditions a more important cause? Give reasons.



▲ How might being close to the Canada–United States border have influenced the events in Vancouver in September 1907?

▼ Smashed windows in Vancouver's Japantown after the riot



How Can We End Racism?



Could a riot like the one in Vancouver in 1907 happen again? How can we make sure the past is not repeated? Is there still racism in Canada today?

◀ On August 19, 2017, more than 4000 people met at Vancouver's City Hall. They held an anti-racism counter-protest. They were responding to an anti-Muslim and anti-immigration rally.

When you find yourself making an assumption about a group of people, ask yourself, Is this true, or is it just something I've been taught to believe?

Racism is caused by ignorance. We all need to get to know one another better.

We need to speak out against racism. Every. Single. Time.

Racism is used to divide people. We need to all say no to racism and join together to create change.

We can never eliminate racism. People are just going to believe whatever they hear or read.

REFLECT

- What does the 2017 rally shown above tell you about how Canada has changed since the Vancouver riot of 1907?
- What are the challenges in ending racism?
- What can you do to help end racism?

What Were the Consequences of the Riot?

Are these intended or unintended consequences of the riot?

Chinese merchants received \$26 000 for damages, and Japanese merchants received \$9000. Chinese and Japanese workers organized their own unions and began to strike for shorter work hours and better pay.

Prime Minister Laurier immediately apologized to Japan. He did not want to upset Japan by banning Japanese immigrants. Japan and Canada agreed on a compromise. Japan would limit the number of Japanese citizens it allowed to emigrate to Canada each year.

How might this agreement help to keep BC happy?



◀ On September 12, 1907, only days after the riot, a large group from Asia arrived in BC on the SS Monteagle: 901 workers from India, 65 from Japan, and 60 from China. What impact might this have on anti-Asian feeling in BC at the time?

In 1908, Canada changed the Immigration Act. Under a new "continuous journey" rule, immigrants now had to enter Canada directly from their country of origin. No ships came straight from India to Canada, so immigrants from India were now shut out.

Why would Canada choose this approach?

Check Your Learning

1. What were the causes of the 1907 riot? What was the most significant cause?
2. What were the consequences of the riot? Who was affected by these changes?

Make Connections

3. What does it mean to compromise? When are compromises necessary? When should compromise be avoided?