

## **BC First Nations 12- Chapter 6: The Indian Act & Indian Reserves (pp. 92-94)**

The first Indian Act was passed in 1876.

What was the aim of this policy (the Indian Act)?

*To assimilate and civilize; also to destroy Native culture.*

The Indian Act combined earlier colonial and federal laws into one act, and included clauses about land, Indian status, and Local government.

What does it mean to be a "Status Indian"?

*It means that you are a ward of the government*

Some negative consequences of being a "status" Indian were:

- *Couldn't vote*
- *Forbidden to own/consume alcohol*
- *Couldn't own land individually*
- *Not defined as "people" (denied certain rights)*
- *The government was in control of their lives*

Could "Status Indians" give up their status? If they could, what would this mean?

*Yes they could. It would mean that they were cut off from their reserve communities, families, culture, etc.*

### **Land:**

The Indian Act provided for Reserve land to be set aside for the use of Status Indians.

Reserve Lands are property of The Government

They were meant to be Temporary, lasting only until First Nations people were assimilated into mainstream society and could buy property like other Canadians.

The first Indian Reserve Commissioner, G.M. Sproat, was sympathetic to First Nations, and as generous as he could be in allotting reserves.

He was replaced by Peter O'Reilly, who immediately reduced the size of many reserves.

### **Local Government:**

Little control remained in the hands of local communities. Government officials exercised power over people living on reserves. An example is Education: determined when and where children would go to school

Local government was changed , and was now formed by a \_\_\_\_ **band council** \_\_\_\_\_ led by a chief councillor. Imposing this electoral system over traditional forms of government created a major disruption in First Nations society.

What does DIA stand for? *Department of Indian Affairs*

Although the act gives some benefits to Aboriginal people, these have been outweighed by the \_\_\_\_\_ **discrimination** \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ **oppression** \_\_\_\_\_ embedded in it.

**Vocabulary:**

Assimilation: *To cause a person/group to become part of a different society; to adopt the ways of another culture or to fully become part of a different society.*

Colonialism: *Control by one country over another area and its people.*

Ward: *A person (especially a child) who is legally put under the care/protection of a person/government.*

Voluntary enfranchisement: *Giving up Indian status to be able to vote, own property, or have the rights of other Canadian citizens.*