



"The great aim of our legislation has been to do away with the tribal system and assimilate the Indian people in all respects with the other inhabitants of the Dominion as speedily as they are fit to change."

- John A Macdonald, 1887

"The happiest future for the Indian race is absorption into the general population, and this is the object of the policy of our government. The great forces of intermarriage and education will finally overcome the lingering traces of native custom and tradition."

- Duncan Campbell Scott
Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs 1913-1932



"Our Indian legislation generally rests on the principle, that the aborigines are to be kept in a condition of tutelage and treated as wards or children of the State. ...the true interests of the aborigines and of the State alike require that every effort should be made to aid the Red man in lifting himself out of his condition of tutelage and dependence, and that is clearly our wisdom and our duty, through education and every other means, to prepare him for a higher civilization by encouraging him to assume the privileges and responsibilities of full citizenship."

- Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996

Indian Act, Section 140, 1927, Dances and Festivals (forbid such activities)

140.(1) Every Indian or other person who engages in, or assists in celebrating or encourages, either directly or indirectly, another to celebrate any Indian Festival, dance, or other ceremony of which the giving away or paying or giving back of money, goods or articles of any sort forms a part, or is a feature, whether such gift of money, goods or articles takes place before, at, or after the celebration of the same or who engages or assists in any celebration or dance of which the wounding or mutilation of the dead or living body of any human being or animal forms a part or is a feature, is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months and not less than two months.

(2) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the holding of any agricultural show or exhibition or the giving away of prizes for exhibits thereat.

(3) Any Indian in the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta or British Columbia or in the Territories who participates in any Indian Dance outside the bounds of his own reserve, or who participates in any show, exhibition, performance, stampede or pageant in aboriginal costume without the consent of the Superintendent General or his authorized agent, and any person who induces or employs any Indian to take part in such dance, show, exhibition, performance, stampede or pageant, or induces any Indian to leave his reserve or employs any Indian for such a purpose, whether the dance, show, exhibition, stampede or pageant has taken place or not, shall on summary conviction be liable to a penalty not exceeding twenty five dollars, or to imprisonment for one month, or to both penalty and imprisonment.

Indian Act, Section 140A, 1930, poolrooms (barred from poolroom usage)

Poolrooms

140. (a) Where it is made to appear in open court that any Indian, summoned before such court, by inordinate frequenting of a poolroom either on or off a reserve, mispends or wastes his time or means to the detriment of himself, his family or household, of which he is a member, the police magistrate, stipendiary magistrate, Indian agent, or two justices of the peace holding such court, shall by writing under his or their hand or hands forbid the owner or person in charge of a poolroom which such Indian is in the habit of frequenting to allow such Indian to enter such poolroom for the space of one year from the date of such notice.

Any owner or person in charge of a poolroom who allows an Indian to enter a poolroom in violation of such notice, and any Indian who enters a poolroom where his admission has been so forbidden, shall be liable on summary conviction to a penalty not exceeding twenty five dollars and costs or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding thirty days.

Indian Act, Section 120, 1930, Prevention of Trade (could not sell their goods without permission of the Indian agent)

Prevention of Trade

120. Every person who buys or otherwise acquires from any Indian, or band or irregular band of Indians, in the province of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, or Alberta, or the Territories, any cattle or other animals or any grain, root crops or other produce or sells to any such Indian any goods or supplies, cattle or other animals contrary to the provisions of this Act, shall on summary conviction, be liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred dollars, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months, or to both.