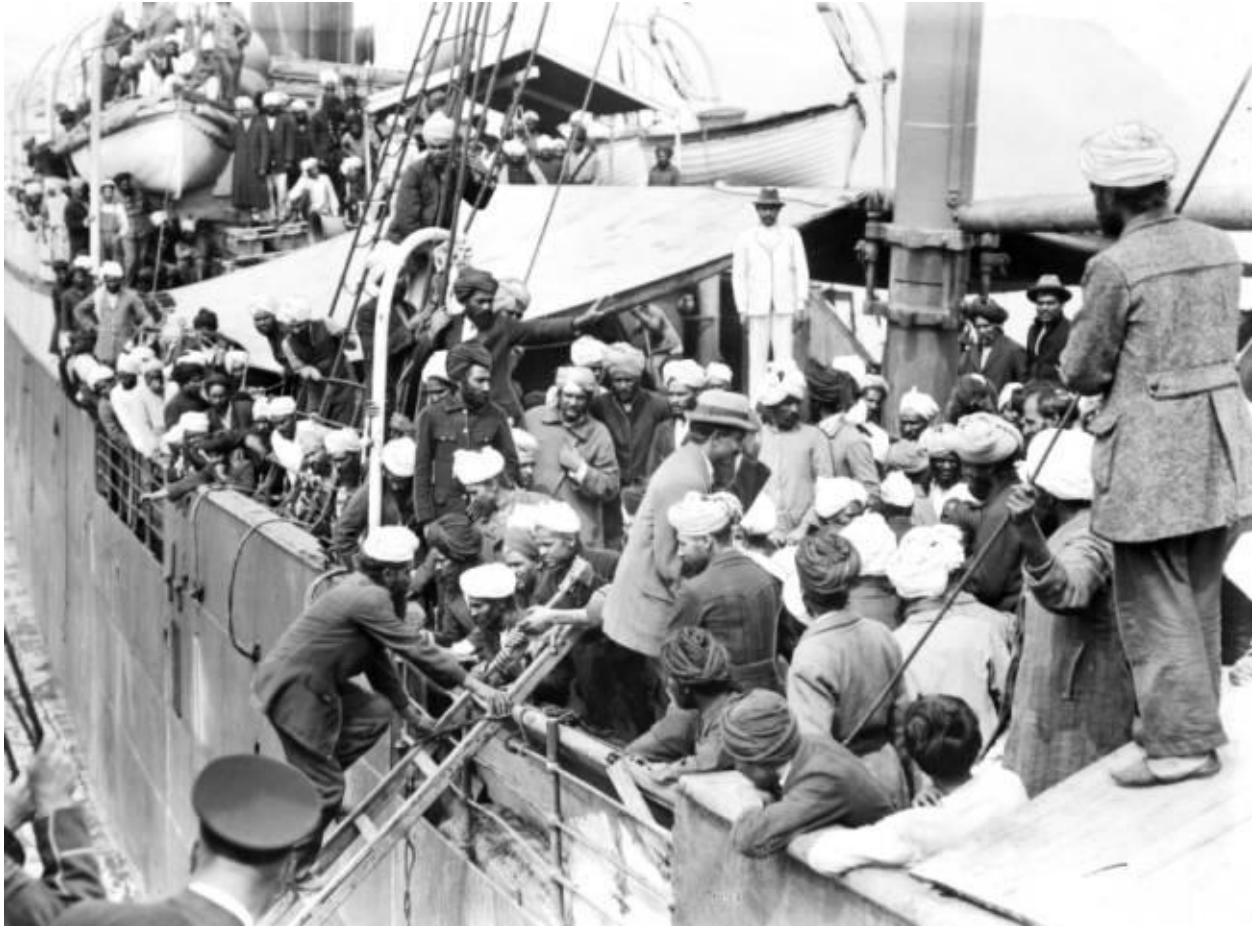


### Current Events Lesson: Komagata Maru Apology

- Discuss controversy surrounding immigration policy & challenges faced by new Canadians (link to Syrian refugees)
  - Brainstorm: what are some of the possible concerns that might be voiced by new arrivals to Canada?
- Display image below: 1 min- generate as many questions about the image as you can (individual/partner) then share with class



- Read excerpt below: explaining the Komagata Maru incident

#### **The "Incident"**

Komagata Maru was a steamship from India. It arrived in Vancouver's harbour on May 23, 1914, and was denied access to Canada.

More than just an isolated "incident", The Komagata Maru story reflects a deliberate, exclusionary policy of the Canadian government to keep out ethnicities with whom it deemed unfit to enter. These justifications were couched in racist and ethnocentric views of "progress", "civilization", and "suitability" which all buttressed the view that Canada should remain a "White Man's Country".

On May 23, 1914, a crowded ship from Hong Kong carrying 376 passengers, most being immigrants from Punjab, British India, arrived in Vancouver's Burrard Inlet on the west coast of the Dominion of Canada. The passengers, all British subjects, were challenging the Continuous Passage regulation, which stated that immigrants must "come from the country of their birth, or citizenship, by a continuous journey and on through tickets purchased before leaving the country of their birth, or citizenship." The regulation had been brought into force in 1908 in an effort to curb Indian immigration to Canada. As a result, the Komagata Maru was denied docking by the authorities and only twenty returning residents, and the ship's doctor and his family were eventually granted admission to Canada. Following a two month stalemate, the ship was escorted out of the harbour by the Canadian military on July 23, 1914 and forced to sail back to Budge-Budge, India where nineteen of the passengers were killed by gunfire upon disembarking and many others imprisoned.

- **Primary Source Examination**

- Why did this happen? What motivated individuals and groups to make the decisions they did?
- We can examine primary documents to help reveal the attitudes that governed the behaviour and decisions of people.
- Read (together) the text *Declares Hindus are the Filthiest*
  - Students record their initial response
  - Walk through the process of observations-inferences together. Students (small groups) record any words that they think summarize the author's attitude, based on the observations and inferences we came up with. Group shares. Draw a spectrum on the board (strongly supportive-strongly opposed) and get students to place their words along the spectrum.
- Give pairs a primary source: complete the Reading within a Document sheet and come up with words: place on the spectrum
- Split pairs to form larger groups of students who have looked at different sources- share what they came up with and range of attitudes.
- Have students add others' words to their spectrum
- Discuss

**Videos:**

Good Overview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WVWAMFA6-BA>

News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhr1Ucr7qlc>

Trudeau's Apology: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOdrqhju4Y>