

Aboriginal timeline 1960-1970 essay sample

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The era that we chose was the 1960-1970. The significant events that took place and that will be discussed are the “ 60’s scoop”, the Native Brotherhood, A study of Aboriginal Youth Gangs and the Red and White Papers. These events in particular gave Aboriginals a strong voice, provided leadership and allowed the rest of Canada to try and understand the reasoning why First Nations people intend on keeping their culture alive, building solidarity and forcing the government to keep their promises. Although the time frame was early and not all Aboriginal archives were kept; the interviews and legislation were enough for keep the policies from being swept under the carpet from taped media coverage. The start of the decade marked the loss of aboriginal children and a whole generation of culture.

1960: Lost Children

The beginning of the 1960’s in American Culture was one of the defining times in its nation. It appeared the citizens had found their voice and where not afraid to use it. Protests, marches and organized groups were formed and they propelled their causes into the public spotlight. In Canada we had yet to find our voice. 1960 began with the phenomenon know known as the “ 60’s Scoop”. This was the removal of aboriginal children from their homes and communities through Child Services. The children were placed in non-native homes out of province and even out of country. They were either adopted out or lost in the system of crown wards. It is an estimated that 20,000 aboriginal children were taken from their families and fostered or adopted out to primary white middle-class families. To many of those communities of lost children, this was seen as a form of cultural genocide (Pan, 2009). The lost children had no one to learn their culture from and

were typically forced or choose out of lack of options to adopt the new families' religious rites and customs.

This form of genocide spanned from 1960- mid 1980's. The term " 60's scoop was coined by Patrick Johnson; it is a term now deeply rooted in the Canadian definitions. The 60's scoop affected both Native communities and non Native communities. (Government, 1999) The native community not only lost a child but they lost an important part of their future. Children are seen as having great connection to the spiritual world but without the proper guidance that connection can be lost. The children where effected on a personal level, cultural dislocation, identity confusion, emotional emptiness, attachment disorders, abuse, substance addictions, racism from foster families, and self-hatred The effect to the non native community was the overflow of children into the system (Reder, 2007). More children were apprehended then homes available for them, as stated previously, these children ended up out of country.

The current outcome of the Sixties Scoop is still unresolved; it was only in 2010 that a class action suit was brought to the courts in Ontario and 2011 from survivors in British Columbia. Restitution for this is far from over. According to John Beaucage the former Grand Chief of the Union of Ontario Indians, we have now entered a new stage in the assimilation of aboriginals called the " Millennium Scoop". In his report commissioned by the Ministry Children and Youth Services he states " Although Aboriginal people make up about 2 per cent of the province's population (2006 Census); we make up a far greater percentage of the children in care (estimates are from 10 to 20

per cent)” (Beaucage, 2011). While this information is based on one report it does produce viable solutions and a basis for additional research.

1960-1962: Political Growth

In 1960 Canadians also saw the ability for Aboriginals to vote without losing status rights. In 1958, Prime Minister John Diefenbaker named James Gladstone, a member of Alberta’s Blood tribe, as the first Native Senator. Then, in 1960, he gave non-enfranchised Aboriginals the right to vote in federal elections. This began the Aboriginal rights movement but despite this move, the federal government was still opposed to the idea of Aboriginal self-government it did however begin the formation of Tribal Councils throughout the provinces. Early in 1961, the Joint Committee recommended that a creation of an Indian Claims Commission in Canada be enacted. The joint committee also recommended that an Indian Claims Commission investigate British Columbia and Oka land grievances. This was a revisit from the 1947 Senate/House of Commons joint committee idea to create and examine the Indian Act and recommend the establishment of a “ Claims Commission” to “ inquire into the terms of all Indian treaties”.

Later in the year the legislation created a draft of what was to be the Indian Claims Commission but it was never enacted (SCTA, 2011). The following year in 1962 with the urging of the North American Indian Brotherhood, Bill C-19, an Act that respects the Canada Court of Indians receives its first reading. This affected both Aboriginals and Non- Aboriginals in that Aboriginals now had a voice that was not only being heard but received. Non-Aboriginals were identifying with Aboriginals and look for restitution for

the issues. The outcome was The Specific Claims Tribunal, established on October 16, 2008. First Nations can now choose to file a claim with the Tribunal – an independent adjudicative body comprised of up to 6 full time Federal judges appointed from Provincial Superior Courts across the country (SCTA, 2011). 1962-1964: Poverty on the Rise

Canada had long suffered from unacceptable regional economic disproportion reflected in higher than normal unemployment rates and extreme poverty in rural areas in the country. In 1962, the federal government renewed efforts to deal with these problems by passing the Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Act. The agency that administered this legislation became a source of early reports on the nature of contemporary poverty in Canada. Poverty in remote areas was matched by a growing problem of urban poverty. 1962 also saw religious groups such as the Catholic Church and the Salvation Army became the first organizations to provide hostel accommodations for parolees. In 1962, Reverend Neil Libby established a halfway house in Windsor, called St. Leonard's House after the patron saint of prisoners. The St. Leonard's Society went on to set up halfway houses across Canada. By 1971, there were 10 homes nationwide. 1964: Growth and Development

In September of 1964 an agreement called the Columbia River Treaty is enacted. It is an international agreement between Canada and the United States for the cooperative development and operation of water resources in the Columbia River basin. This Treaty, jointly developed and implemented by the USA and Canada, outlines the development and operation of the upper

Columbia River basin in BC and Washington state for hydro-electric projects and water levels. (Pan, 2009) 1965: Recognition for our Nation

In 1965 Queen Elizabeth II claimed the red & white flag as the official national symbol of Canada on February 5, 1965, and was remembered as a milestone in Canada's nation. After numerous discussions on styles, designs which was brought before parliament on what would be used to represent our nation. Prior to 1965, Canada did not have an official flag. Dr. George Stanley, who later became the Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick, was an avid supporter of the flag idea based on a coalition of Canadian history. Stanley had discovered that the Aboriginal people had gathered maple sap as part of their traditions hence the "maple leaf's" early connections came about as early as the 1700's (Heritage, 2000). The proportions of the 11 pointed flag are 2 by length and one by width, with a white square in the centre the width of the flag. Queen Elizabeth proclaimed the new flag on January 28, and it was inaugurated on the 15th of February; that being National Flag of Canada Day. (Peel, 2011) 1966 – 1967: Centennial and Capital Punishment

Jon Diefenbaker was the 17th Prime Minister of Canada from 1957-1963. Diefenbaker did not believe in capital punishment. The prime minister was very opposed to this type of justice and made a promise that he would see this come to an end for he did not want to see an innocent person sentenced to death more so Steven Truscott. Truscott was 14 years of age at the time who was accused of raping and killing a 12 year old Lynn Harper. Diefenbaker announced on the radio that he would hold a judicial inquiry into

this case. During Trudeau's reign, Diefenbaker got his way and capital punishment was abolished. The Truscott case went before cabinet and eventually the death penalty was abolished, but not until July 14, 1976. (CBC Radio, 1966) In 1967 Montreal was chosen to host the largest fair in the world in conjunction with Canada's 100th Centennial Anniversary celebration.

Montreal Mayor Jean Drapeau was anticipating 40-50 million visitors with an estimated expenditure of 1 billion dollars. The land itself was to embrace at least 500 acres hence building 2 islands in the middle of the St. Lawrence River along with the destruction of a bird sanctuary. Toronto was opposed to this venture and strongly stated that it was a tax invasion for Canadians. (Alan Yeates CBC Radio Montreal, 1962) In addition, an Aboriginal pavillion booth was set up at the Expo, with the aid of the Department of Indian Affairs which provided First Nations people an opportunity to speak their minds. (David T. McNab & Utke Lischke, editors, 2005) Forty years later a study was conducted on what people remember from that national event, of that 50 people who we chosen there was 1 aboriginal , 1 black and 3 new caucasians to Canada; the rest were caucasians. Interestingly, people remembered the haulocost, the devastation of the residential school system of aboriginal communities and the visits to the communist pavillions and realizing the technical process as a means to a better future. (Anderson, 2006-2007) 1968: Aboriginals and Gangs

The Federal Government conducted a one of kind study on Aboriginal Gangs in 1968 because of the overrepresentation of offenders in jail. The purpose of

the study was to find out what attracts youth to gangs and what can they do to prevent this epidemic. What the study had found was that the youth were enticed for the material gain and that they had nothing to live for. The investigation found that youth came from families that were dysfunctional, no father figure, lack of educational and work opportunities, negative peer associations compounded by systemic discrimination and labelling. Aboriginal gangs are a growing phenomenon in the west and they are recruited young and the cycle continues in the prison system. This connection means that inmates can have the support and protection in order to survive in a new environment.

Youth are the people who feel the effect based on situations fostered from which can include the Residential school, racism and poor economics. The federal government tries to eliminate this epidemic by trying to focus on youth-at-risk conditions, ex-gang member presentations and intervention programming (Jana Grekul, 2006). In Sudbury, Aboriginal Community Police Officer Grant Dokis, uses the “ Mukwa program” to encourage Aboriginal youth to join the police. The outcome is to create Aboriginal presence and role-modeling, so persons who come into contact with the law won't feel that racism is a factor. 1969-1970: The White and Red Paper

In 1969 scholars realized that education was a must in order for Aboriginals to reinforce their identity. First Nations people were being taught of other cultures; why not stress their culture too. When the infamous White Paper came out, First Nations felt the need to be heard. (Barman, 1987) Prime Minister Trudeau, who was Minister of Indian Affairs, felt that the government

should not assist Aboriginal peoples in their treaties and he felt that they should only deal with the sovereign nations. Trudeau proposed the abolition of the Indian Act, the assimilation of First Nations and the rejection to any land claims. In addition the Trudeau government proclaimed Canada to be a just society and prepared a document referred to as the White Paper. Some of the highlights in the White Paper included: elimination for separate legal status for Aboriginals; The Indian Act should be removed; no special agencies for Aboriginals they can go through regular channels; only the poorest will be helped; economic development will only be on an interim measure; eliminate Indian Affairs and go through regular federal departments. The undertones were to keep Aboriginal people behind other Canadians and to not share opportunities.

Aboriginal people are the major stockholders being affected as well as the elected officials. The separation stems back from the French and British Colonial policy. In turn the government formed an assimilation which created a wider barrier for First Nations people and treating them as a different race. The government added that the process may take some time because they had over 500 communities to consult. As a result Aboriginal people came back with a Red Paper. (Government of Canada, 1969)

In 1970 Trudeau used the War Measures Act, which only reinforced unnecessary powers of arrest whereas numerous people were arrested for no just cause. The use of this power was confronted by the article co-written by Harold Cardinal. Harold Cardinal was an Aboriginal leader from Sucker Creek First Nation who just received his law doctorate. In 1969 the

government released a statement on how they would deal with Indian Policy. The underlying statement was to basically eliminate the Aboriginals by assimilation. Cardinal helped draft the article in the *Citizens Plus* (1970) a. k. a. the Red Paper. (Getty, 1970) Cardinal and other Canadians met with the government and successfully helped change its stance.

First Nations people were once again the stakeholders. The effect of the White paper was felt and The Red Paper was reverse to what the government had proposed, issues that were noted: Indian Status and rights should be kept under the government until Aboriginals can prepare and negotiate them; we have to maintain our own culture in order for it to be maintained, Aboriginals to have the same access to services and treaties as stated in the BNA Act; only Aboriginals can be trusted on issues of treaties; Aboriginals should be allowed to control their own rights historically and legally; update the Indian Act; a newer federal agency that will meet the need of First Nations needs and have a Royal Commission that is independent, unbiased and unprejudiced. As a result, the Aboriginal people would continue to fight for their rights and insist that they know what needs are to be met instead of the elected officials. Conclusion

The decade ended bipolar to how it began. The Aboriginal community had found a way to be heard, they learned that through combining their efforts they could turn one voice into many. Although the decade did not produce many positive events for Aboriginals, the events that did occur had a deep and long lasting impression on Canadian history. The “the 60’s Scoop”, formation of the “Native Brotherhood”, understanding the study of “Youth

Gangs “ and the affects of the Red and White Paper are all still relevant events that continue to pose a threat to aboriginals and non aboriginals alike. As the decade ended and a new one began, history showed that Aboriginal people received sometimes harsh treatment which had an overall affect on their well- being and stability. The problems would continue to increase because of the Trudeau Regime and its own cut-throat agenda. Like those years before him, he sought to “ get out of the Indian business”.

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