Before all words are said, we extend greetings to all of creation.
Where do we go from here?

Indigenous Policy in an Era of Reconciliation
David Newhouse, Chair and Professor, Indigenous Studies
Trent University
22 August 2016
The Production of Indian Policy

- 1857 to 1971
  - State determined upon advice of military and church
  - Limited academic involvement
  - Some public input

- 1971 +
  - Aboriginal influenced through consultation
  - Increased academic input
  - Periodic public pressure to do something, mostly as a result of crises
Indians as Problem

- "I want to get rid of the Indian problem. Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department."

- Duncan Campbell Scott, 1920
The Long Assault

- June 10, 1857

- An Act to encourage the gradual Civilization of the Indian Tribes in this Province, and to amend the Laws respecting Indians

- 1971

- Withdrawal of Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy
This Government believes in equality. It believes that all men and women have equal rights. It is determined that all shall be treated fairly and that no one shall be shut out of Canadian life, and especially that no one shall be shut out because of his race.

The policies proposed recognize the simple reality that the separate legal status of Indians and the policies which have flowed from it have kept the Indian people apart from and behind other Canadians.

The Indian people have not been full citizens of the communities and provinces in which they live and have not enjoyed the equality and benefits that such participation offers.
Indian Response

- Citizen’s Plus
- Indian Association of Alberta
- Indians are charter members of Canada.

Whabung: Our Tomorrows

- Chiefs of Manitoba
- Comprehensive Indian directed plan for development of individuals and communities
- Recognition of treaty rights
Indian Control of Indian Education

- December 21, 1972

- We want education to give our children a strong sense of identity with confidence in their personal worth and ability

- We believe in education...

- As a preparation for total living

- As a means of freedom of choice of where to live and work
Dene Declaration

- 1975

- Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories

- What we seek then is independence and self-determination within the country of Canada. This is what we mean when we call for a just land settlement for the Dene nation.

- We the Dene of the Northwest Territories insist on the right to be regarded by ourselves and the world as a nation. Our struggle is for the recognition of the Dene Nation by the Government and peoples of Canada and the peoples and governments of the world
Indian Self Government

- 1977
- Indian Government

- No one can change the Indian Belief.
- We are Nations;
- We have governments.
- Sovereignty is inherent and absolute
Canada Constitution

- 1982

- Section 35

- The Aboriginal Peoples of Canada include Indians, Inuit and Metis

- The existing rights of Aboriginal Peoples are hereby acknowledged and affirmed
Penner Report on Indian Self Government

- 1983

- Indians have right to govern themselves within the Canadian federation
Inherent Rights Policy

- 1995
- Aboriginal peoples have an inherent right to self-government
- In matters internal to their communities
- Integral to their unique cultures, traditions, languages and institutions
- And with respect to their special relationship to their land and their resources
Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

- 1996
- Aboriginal Nations
- Aboriginal Governments
- 3rd order of government
The Government of Canada formally expresses...our profound regret for past actions of the federal government which have contributed to these difficult pages in the history of our relationship together.
Statement of Apology
2008

- On behalf of the government of Canada and all Canadians, I stand before you, in this chamber...to apologize to Aboriginal peoples for Canada’s role in the Indian Residential schools system.
Statement of Apology
2008

- The Government of Canada sincerely apologizes and asks the forgiveness of the Aboriginal Peoples of this country for failing them so profoundly.

- We are sorry.
The Canada Problem

- how to transform the country into a territory that permits Aboriginal people to live as Aboriginal peoples in distinct communities, empowered to make decisions over the important aspects of their lives.

The Canada Problem is at the centre of Aboriginal national politics.
The Canada Problem
Solution is multi-faceted, working on many fronts, engaging multiple strategies and alliances

- **Political Recognition**
  - Aboriginal Rights
  - Constitutional Amendment
  - Land Claims and Aboriginal Title
  - Self Government
  - Treaties

- **Quality of Life**
  - Education
  - Employment
  - Health
  - Housing
  - Culture and Language
  - Community and Economic Development
New World since 1971

- Post-colonial awareness
- Post-reconciliation
- Post-apologies
- Aboriginal nationalism
- Fierce determination to
- Forge a new relationship
New Indigenous Leaders
post colonial consciousness

- confident, aggressive, assertive, insistent
- desirous of creating a new world out of Aboriginal and western ideas
- aware of the legacy of colonialism
- have skills and knowledge to do act to overcome legacy
- want to renovate the master’s house
Growing Aboriginal Population

- 1900: 130,000
- 2011: 1.4 million
- majority in urban areas (56%)
- majority still in poverty
- legacy of colonialism
- RCAP proposed large decade long effort to address colonial legacy
Acceptance of idea of Citizen’s Plus

- Indian Act
- Canada Constitution Act, 1982
- Sec 35.1
- Legal jurisprudence
- Treaties
- charter members of Canadian society
Aboriginal Institutional Development

- Individuals
- Communities
- Nations
- Organizations
Transformation of Canada

- constitutional recognition of Aboriginal peoples
- recognition of inherent right to self government
- start of discussion about Aboriginal political ideas
Canada’s Reconciling Challenges

- 1st challenge
- overcoming the legacy of colonialism
- reducing poverty, improving health
- improving education
- improving incomes

Table 2.3 Poverty rate among Aboriginal identity population by sex, Alberta and mid-sized cities, 1996 (1995 income)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Both sexes (%)</th>
<th>Males (%)</th>
<th>Females (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>46.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-sized cities</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lethbridge</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>61.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Deer</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine Hat</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>37.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grande Prairie</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Buffalo</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Prepared by the Canadian Council on Social Development using data from Statistics Canada's 1996 Census, custom tabulations.
Canada’s Post Colonial Challenges

- 2nd challenge
- accommodating aboriginal governance into the governing structures and institutions of Canada
- Developing good relationships with those who
- See the relationship with rather than in.
Central Desire

Want to use Indigenous Knowledge as foundation for individual and collective action

Increased involvement of Elders and traditional people.

Alliance with academia: SSHRC, CIHR
Urban Bimaadiziwin

- UAPS (2011): What is the good life?
- A good education
- A good job
- A good home and family
- An ability to live as an Aboriginal person with dignity and respect
- To practice one’s culture
- To have a respectful relationship with others in Canadian society
- To have an equitable set of life choices and chances
Nishiyuu Walkers, 2013

- We have been very isolated; we have been very shy. But we are speaking out now, and we are Idle No More.
Journey of Nishiyuu
The Original Seven

David Kawapid Jr., a 17-year-old Cree from the isolated community Whapmagoostui on Hudson Bay in northern Quebec, decided it would be a good idea to walk 1,600 kilometres to Ottawa in support of the Idle No More movement. Some of his friends joined him on January 16 and when they arrive on Parliament Hill in Ottawa March 25 they will be 200 strong!!

Earth Tribe - Activist News
Photo courtesy Cavelle Mac
Nishiyuu Walkers
1300 KM
Whapmagoostui, Quebec
To
Ottawa

The Cree nation used to go on journeys that lasted years to reunite the people. That’s what I want. That’s what we need.
David Kawapit
Omushkegowuk Walkers 2013

1700 Km

Attawapiskat to Ottawa
Raise awareness of treaty rights

“The elders are the ones who have delegated us, directed us to send a strong message to Canada and all provinces that we need to have a dialogue, we need to engage all First Nations communities.”

Danny Metatawabin
John Ralston Saul

3 Pillars of Canada

English

French

Aboriginal
The Comeback

The central point is that we are witnessing a remarkable comeback. A century ago, we were convinced that aboriginal peoples would disappear. Today, those same aboriginal peoples are central players in Canada’s future.

The simple truth is that we are all witnesses to the remarkable comeback of the aboriginal peoples. This will mean fundamental shifts in power, in financing and in how we all live together.

The reality is that the reinvention of the relationship between aboriginals and non-aboriginals resembles the 1960s and ’70s reinvention of the relationship between francophones and anglophones.

And it is just as important for Canada’s continued existence.

This reinvention begins with all of us, including our governments, assuming full and active responsibility for the wrongs of the past and the continuing destructive or ineffective policies.

But it is of equal importance that we embrace the central role of indigenous peoples in our history, present and future.
Reconciliation

1857 The Long Assault 1971

Legacy of Loss and Dispossession

Reconciliation

Equity  Harmony  Restoration  Critical Conversation about Canada
Reconciliation

- Reconciliation is an ongoing process. In renewing our partnership, we must ensure that the mistakes which marked our past relationship are not repeated.

- We must instead continue to find ways in which Aboriginal people can participate fully in the economic, political, cultural and social life of Canada in a manner which preserves and enhances the collective identities of Aboriginal communities, and allows them to evolve and flourish in the future.

- The Honourable Jane Stewart, 1996
The Canada Problem
Solution is multi-faceted, working on many fronts, engaging multiple strategies and alliances

- **Political Recognition**
  - Aboriginal Rights
  - Constitutional Amendment
  - Land Claims and Aboriginal Title
  - Self Government
  - Treaties
  - Restoration
  - Harmony
  - Critical Conversation

- **Quality of Life**
  - Education
  - Employment
  - Health
  - Housing
  - Culture and Language
  - Community and Economic Development
  - Equity: Closing the Gap
The Way Forward: Co-Production of Policy

- Create a made-with-indigenous people approach to policy development
- Policy and budgetary framework
- Involve Aboriginal leaders
- Requires new structures and processes

- Blane Favel, Ken Coates
- Globe and Mail, Aug 12 2016
Federal Provincial Territorial Indigenous Forum

**2016**
- Ministers responsible for Aboriginal Affairs
- National Aboriginal Organizations Leaders

**Discussion items**
- Truth and Reconciliation Report and Calls to Action
- UNDRIP
- The socio economic gap
- MMIWG
- Child and Family Services
Core ethical principle

- Nothing about us without us
Now we’ve told you the story
You can never say you haven’t heard it
What you do with it is up to you

_The Truth about Stories, 2003_