

- During the Laurier era organized efforts to fight for equality began.
- The wealthy elite who controlled much of the industry resented workers attempts to improve their wages & working conditions.

### Rights for Women

- Most Canadian women had very hard lives with housework & child rearing taking most of their time. They couldn't vote and had limited education options.
- The campaign for women's suffrage (the right to vote), began in the Laurier era. Suffragists wanted laws that would improve the lives of women & children.
- Most suffragists blamed alcoholism on social ills & wanted the prohibition of alcohol.
- **Nellie McClung** – an important Canadian teacher, author & suffragist leader.

### Rights for Aboriginal People

- Treaty agreements were often ignored and FN people lost land to new settlers.
- Residential schools were established as a policy of cultural genocide. The Canadian government formally apologizes & establishes the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
- The potlatch was banned by the government from 1884-1951.

### Closing the Door on Immigration

- Many Canadians disliked Clifford Sifton's open-door immigration policy.
- 1905: **Frank Oliver** replaces Sifton and implements a more restrictive immigration policy aimed at Asians.
- Opponents of Asian immigrants in BC formed the **Asiatic Exclusion League**.
- 1907: a protest turns into a riot which leaves a trail of destruction through Chinatown & the Japanese section of town.
- This riot embarrasses Canada & Laurier apologizes to the Japanese government.

### By Continuous Passage Only

- Indians were part of the British Empire and it was difficult to restrict their access to Canada.
- The federal government decided to pass the Continuous Passage Act – a law which required all immigrants to come to Canada on a non-stop route.
- A direct route from India was impossible, so the government thought the “problem” was solved.
- 1914: Sikh businessman Gurdit Singh, chartered the steamer **Komagata Maru** to transport 354 Sikh immigrants from Hong Kong to Vancouver.
- The Komagata Maru was quarantined and the passengers were not allowed to land until the ship was finally forced to leave.
- May 23, 2008: BC legislature apologizes for the Komagata Maru incident.

