

Genocidal Precedents for Canadian Concentration Camps

By Richard Sanders

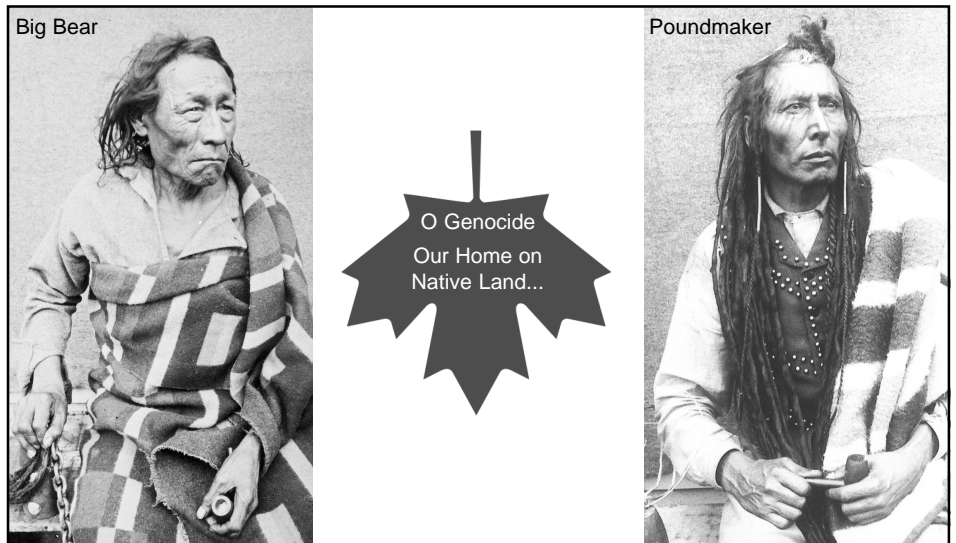
WWI was not the first time that thousands of people had been forced into captivity for threatening the “peace, order and good government of Canada.”¹ In fact, Conservative and Liberal governments alike already had a well-established *modus operandi* that used mass captivity to subjugate so-called “foreign” enemies on the homefront.

Canada’s 20th-century internment camps did not arise in a vacuum. They continued a long-standing tradition of forcing targeted populations into isolated rural locations across the country. Canada’s system of mass confinement followed the US model for segregating Aboriginals into remote ghettos, called reserves. But this was only one weapon in a multidimensional war to destroy First Nations. Besides restricting physical movements, elites used a diversity of tactics, including residential schools, to hold Indigenous people in place. They were also confined within the bounds of a genocidal legal framework that restrained religious, linguistic, social, economic and political freedoms.

Such multidisciplinary genocide cannot be committed by a few sociopaths. Large scale atrocities can only be achieved by an *institutionalised* sociopathy. Those with “Antisocial Personality Disorder” are defined by the US Department of Health as individuals with “a long-term pattern of manipulating, exploiting or violating the rights of others. This behavior is often criminal.”² When state agencies, NGOs or corporations run programs or businesses that inflict these same abuses—*albeit on a vastly more devastating scale*—they go undiagnosed, at least by those rendered prisoner by the reassuring narratives of captive institutions.

Those who are able to free themselves from the confining frames of thought and language imposed by sociopathic institutions, sometimes dare to speak out against the normalisation of antisocial policies. By trying to liberate those who remain enslaved within the narrative webs spun by abusive institutions, activists may be diagnosed as rebels, radicals, conspiracy theorists or, ironically, as psychopaths with “Antisocial Personality Disorder.”

A century ago, racist and xenophobic views were the norm in Canada. Widespread antisocial pathology was pandemic throughout the country. The largest and most highly-respected religious bodies



Following the genocidal US model of “aggressive civilisation,” Canada concentrated Indians in remote ghettos called reservations, held them captive in Christian schools, confined them with laws restricting religious, linguistic, economic & political rights, and framed them with racist narratives.

Photos: Two Cree chiefs held captive by Canada during the Northwest Rebellion, 1885

were captivated by this social illness. This is well illustrated by the Churches’ enthusiastic collaboration with government agencies to plan, conduct, justify and cover-up the genocidal programs of mass captivity inflicted on Indigenous peoples.

But long before Aboriginals were forced into the confinement of reserves and residential schools in the 1880s, Canadians happily profited from the institution of chattel slavery. For two centuries, Blacks and Indians were subjected to the “legalized” captivity and forced labour practised by British and French colonialists. While prominent members of Canada’s Catholic and AngloProtestant churches owned slaves, these institutions also helped perpetuate slavery with Biblical narratives to rationalise their antisocial pathology.

These long-standing patterns of racist, institutionalised abuse and exploitation are the sociopathic precedents for Canada’s widely-supported, mass internment of foreigners and political radicals that began with the pretext of WWI.

Perhaps the most alarming aspect in this history of sociopathy is that progressive, reform-minded Christians—both Protestant and Catholic—were entrapped by Canada’s mass psychosis. Although genuinely sincere in their work, missionaries were restrained by the straightjacket of a widespread, cultural pathology.

Those captured heart and mind by predatory institutions, and working within the strict confines of their myths and nar-

ratives, felt compelled to “uplift” peoples who they saw as inferior, uncivilised, un-Christian and unCanadian. Unable to perceive social reality, and blind to the horrors that their actions were having on others, well-meaning Christians were spellbound by the sociopathy of Canada’s domineering Eurocentric delusions of grandeur.

This social illness went far beyond mere racism and ethnocentrism to become an enslaving cultural narcissism. Those enthralled by the anti-social narratives of Canada’s dominant religious and political institutions were confined by arrogant hubris, an entitled sense of superiority, and a fearmongering paranoia that “strangers” are inherently inferior, dangerous and evil.

Hamstrung by myths of national exceptionalism, many Canadians took up the imperialist call of the “white man’s burden...to serve your captives’ need,” those “new-caught, sullen peoples, Half-devil and half-child.”³ Good Christians justified their genocidal efforts to rend other cultures asunder, with such altruistic goals as civilisation, education and morality. Immured by grand imperial delusions, Canadian nationalists believed that they were building a model country that was bound by destiny to lead the world. As Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier proclaimed in 1904, to cheers from Liberals and Conservatives alike, “the Twentieth Century belongs to Canada.”⁴ This nonpartisan fantasy of national superiority was ingrained, not only in the patrician psyche,