

## **Society in the Roaring Twenties...**

- this was a classic age – an age of great highs and lows
- gangsters, flappers, prohibition, silent film, radio, etc.

### **Highs:**

- this was the age of the automobile
  - Ford's Model-T was very popular
  - Canada had 1600km of good highway
- radio boomed
  - Hockey Night In Canada – 1923 was first broadcast
  - changed the way Canadians saw their world and the world around them (news, and American influence)
- women: politics, work, and play
  - women had the vote!
  - women also began to run for office
    - 1921: Agnes Macphail, MP
  - women had new jobs in the workforce
  - “flappers” – young women who partied for the first time ever
    - danced the Charleston
    - wore revealing clothing
    - a sexual revolution in many ways
- silent movies were very popular
  - Charlie Chaplin and others were celebrities
  - spread ideas about fashion, romance, and places other than where young people grew up

## **Lows:**

- dependence on the USA
  - our major trading partner was flooding Canada with news, culture, and economics
  - will hurt us later...
- Aboriginal peoples
  - still not “persons” under the law
  - not until 1960 could Aboriginal peoples vote federally across Canada
  - age of residential schools and cultural assimilation
- immigrants and other racial groups
  - KKK started up in Sask. (bad bad bad)
  - classic cases of racism (p. 70)
  - immigrants were still restricted
    - Asians faced the worse, as always
- STOCK MARKET CRASH:
  - as the economy appeared to be booming, it really wasn't when one looked deeper
  - money was on “margin” (borrowed, like a loan)
    - lots of money *appeared* to be changing hands, but in reality, there was no money at all
    - like today?
- market crashed in 1929... the worst economic tragedy to ever hit North America – the 20s were over with a bang

## **Riots in Winnipeg:**

- May 1919, metal and building workers walked off the job
  - wanted collective bargaining, shorter week, higher wages
- the whole Winnipeg Labour Union supported this, and 30,000 people went on strike
- Winnipeg ceased to function
  - no firefighters, postal workers, telephone operators etc.
- Citizen's Committee of One Thousand – did not sympathize with strikers
- believed it was Communism trying to overthrow society
- government stepped in:
  - foreign union leaders deported
  - appointed special 'strike breaker' police
- during a protest, RCMP charged into the crowd with billy clubs and pistols
  - known as Bloody Saturday
  - one person died, thirty injured, lots arrested
  - marked the end of the strike
- what did they accomplish?
- short-term was a disaster – people lost jobs and were arrested
- long-term was better
  - royal commission found the workers had a real beef
  - parties like NDP and CCF were founded (left-wing)

## Canadian Regions in the '20s

### The Maritimes:

- Maritimes Rights Movement the strongest voice of protest vs. federalism
  - suffered numerous setbacks
  - Coal mining industry destroyed by increase of oil and hydroelectricity
- Intercolonial Railway taken over by CNR – rate hikes
  - tariffs ensured Maritimes could not compete

### Quebec:

- Conscription crises drove a wedge between rest of Canada and Quebec
  - Quebec nationalism movement – led by Lionel Groulx
    - Promoted Roman Catholicism and rural life
    - Industrialization and urbanization in English Canada seen as a threat to Quebec society
    - Laid grounds for separatist movement
- Henri Bourassa believed Quebec should be *insular*, but should remain in confederation
  - Many Liberals disagreed with Bourassa and Groulx

### Ontario:

- expansion of farmer's movements and parties
  - United Farmers of Ontario (formed in 1914)
    - High value on rural life
    - Supported prohibition and refused to limit teaching of French in Ontario schools
- Conservatives won the 1923 election (1923 – 1930)
  - Sold alcohol w/large taxes and provincial control
  - Increased urbanization and industrialization

### Prairies:

- Unified farmers' parties and movements
  - common enemies: central CDN railroads, banks and industrialists
  - Strongest party: the United Farmers of Alberta
    - Elected and held power through the '20s
      - Led to creation of Alberta Wheat Pool (place wheat in hands of farmers; set prices, etc.)

### British Columbia:

- Forestry, ship-building, mining far more important
  - fruit-growing in the Okanagan Valley
  - pressured federal gov't to revise freight rates
  - railroad links to northern B.C.