

## Introduction – “Dirty Thirties”

- Canada was hit extremely hard in 1929
- showed two major weaknesses in Canada
  - dependence on raw material exports
  - dependence on the USA
- when other countries fell into economic depression, they stopped trading (isolationism and protectionism)
  - countries closed borders
  - raised HUGE tariffs (entrance taxes) to limit trade
  - goal: stimulate your own economy and create jobs by forcing people in your own country to produce goods
- as many middle class Canadians still had jobs, this did not affect them
- however, lower-class industrial workers and farmers were hit the hardest
- these people could go on “pogey”
  - had to prove their eviction/bankruptcy status publicly
  - if they could, they received food stamps
  - like an early welfare, but an embarrassing one
- by 1933, over 25% of Canadians were unemployed
- to make matters worse, the prairies were hit by a massive drought – now, not only could you not sell your goods, but now they wouldn’t even grow
- huge winds blew away top soil, making everything dusty
- hence the name “The Dirty Thirties”...