

Manitoba, northern Québec, northern Ontario, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut from the Hudson's Bay Company to the Canadian government. The following year, British Columbia was brought into Confederation by the promise of a continental rail link.

Canadian politicians intended to populate the newly acquired lands with settlers from Europe and Ontario. These settlers were expected to buy goods produced in central Canada and ship their harvests by rail to western and eastern ports and then on to international markets. Settling the "Northwest"—as this territory came to be known—in this manner meant colonizing the over 40,000 Indigenous people who lived there.<sup>88</sup>

The Rupert's Land Order of 1870, which transferred much of the Northwest to Canadian control, required that "the claims of the Indian tribes to compensation for lands required for purposes of settlement will be considered and settled in conformity with the equitable principles which have uniformly governed the British Crown in its dealings with the aborigines."<sup>89</sup> These principles had been set down in the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which placed limits on the conditions under which Aboriginal land could be transferred. "If at any Time any of the Said Indians should be inclined to dispose of the said Lands," they could do so, but land could be sold only to the Crown, and the sale had to be at a meeting of Indians that had been held specifically for that purpose.<sup>90</sup> The Royal Proclamation, in effect, ruled that any future transfer of 'Indian' land would take the form of a Treaty between sovereigns.<sup>91</sup> In this, it stands as one of the clearest and earliest expressions of what has been identified as a long-standing element of Canadian Aboriginal policy.<sup>92</sup>

To enable the colonization of the Northwest, in 1871, the federal government began negotiating the first in a series of what came to be termed as "Numbered Treaties" with the First Nations of western and northern Canada. The only alternative to negotiating Treaties would have been to ignore the legal obligations of the Rupert's Land Order and attempt to subdue the First Nations militarily, but that would have been a very costly proposition. In 1870, when the entire Canadian government budget was \$19 million, the United States was spending more than that—\$20 million a year—on its Indian Wars alone. Despite all these pressures, the government took a slow and piecemeal approach to Treaty making.<sup>93</sup>

Through the Treaties, Aboriginal peoples were seeking agricultural supplies and training as well as relief during periods of epidemic or famine in a time of social and economic transition.<sup>94</sup> They saw the Treaty process as establishing a reciprocal relationship that would be lasting.<sup>95</sup> The goal was to gain the skills that would allow them to continue to control their own destinies and retain their culture and identity as Aboriginal people. As Ahtahkakoop (Star Blanket) said, "We Indians can learn the ways of living that made the white man strong."<sup>96</sup> The provisions varied from Treaty to Treaty, but they generally included funds for hunting and fishing supplies, agricultural assistance, yearly payments for band members (annuities), and an amount of reserve lands based on the population of the band.<sup>97</sup> First Nations never asked for residential schools as part of the Treaty process, and neither did the government suggest that such schools would be established. The education provisions also varied in different Treaties, but promised to pay for schools on