



The original two solitudes and the rise of anti-Indigenous hate

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By the numbers: Anti-Indigenous hate in Canada

- Statistics Canada and RCMP report a 6% increase in hate crimes against Indigenous people from 2022 to 2023, but only about 1% of hate-related incidents are reported to police.
- National security officials report nearly 10% of online hate posts in early 2024 targeted Indigenous people, dropping to about 2.5% by February this year. Anti-Indigenous posts surge and decline based on news cycles.
- Ethno-nationalists and white supremacists dominate online anti-Indigenous hate postings, primarily on X (Twitter) and Telegram.



A group of men shove an Indigenous woman to the ground, kicking and punching her, during an attack by about 40 Neo-Nazis on an Indigenous sacred site and encampment in Melbourne, Australia, 31 August 2025. Four people were injured; two women were hospitalized. SBS World News

National security professionals are anticipating a surge in anti-First Nations hate postings online by Canadian ethnonationalists and white supremacists inspired by this Australian attack.

What is fuelling anti-Indigenous hate:

Misunderstanding, misinformation, resentment, fear, anger

Example:

Settlers, non-Indigenous people

We've given them everything, but they've always got their hand out for more, and now they want to steal our land.

First Nations, Indigenous people

We've lost so much, and they know how we're suffering under the *Indian Act*, but they're okay with it...or at least not bothered enough to do anything about it.

Both are mistaken.

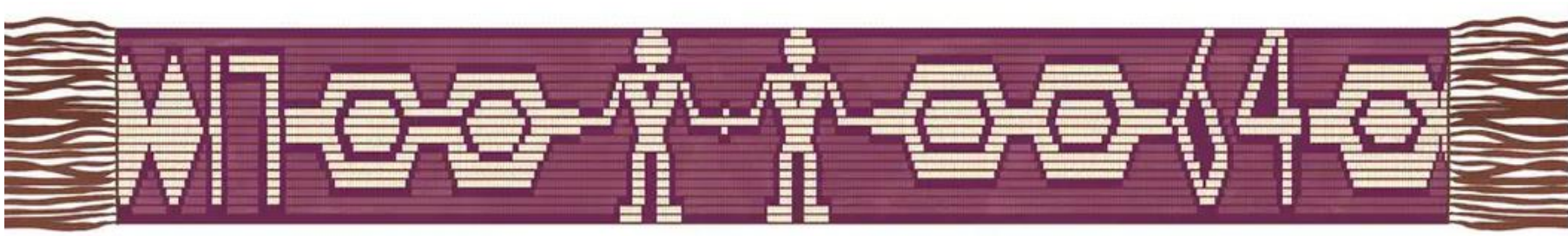
Resolving misunderstandings, resentment, and anger: dialogue

These are the stages for sustained dialogue to transform racial and cultural conflict. They apply to FN people and Settlers:

1. Deciding to engage – believing that dialogue will work
2. Naming problems and relationships
3. Choosing a direction
4. Scenario-building—experiencing a changing relationship
5. Acting together to make change happen

Saunders, 2001

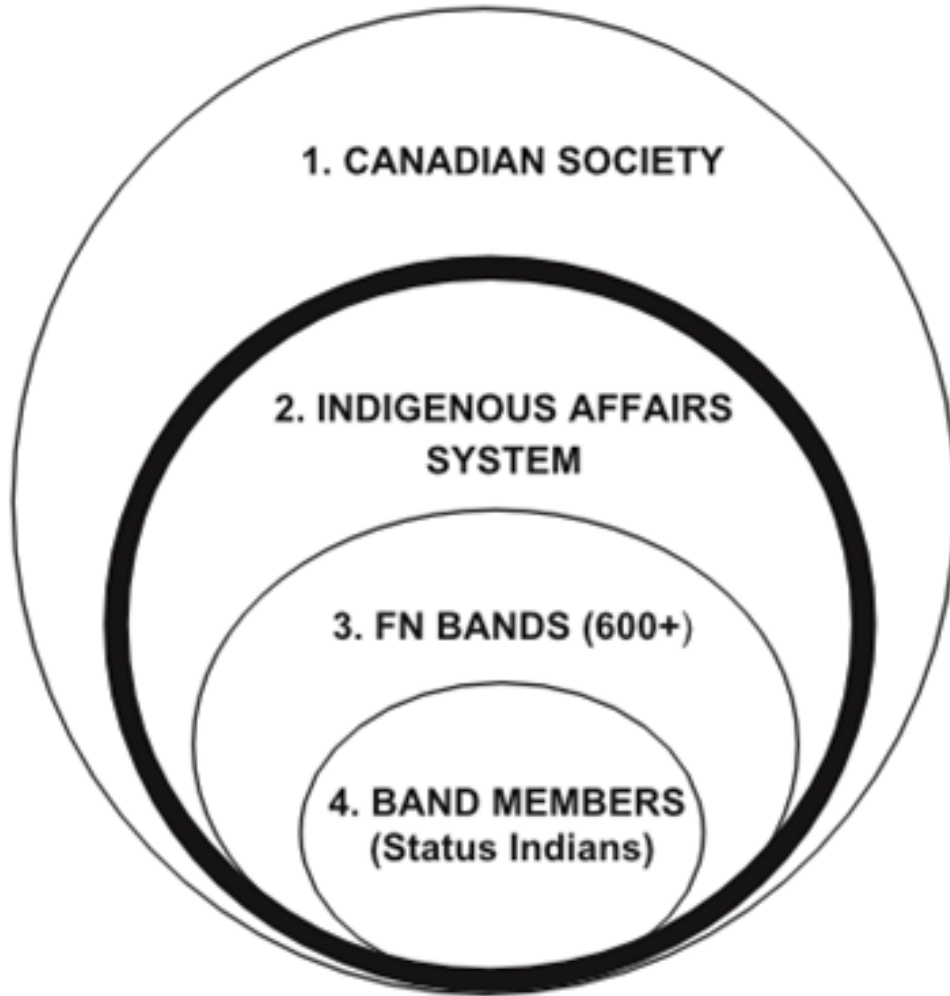
We are stuck at Step 1: there is no mechanism for Settlers and Indigenous people to formally engage with each other – *and that is deliberate.*



The 1764 Great Covenant Chain wampum belt depicts two men leading with their hearts, with partial chain links and diamonds at either end indicating a continuing relationship.

- **Royal Proclamation** of 1763 and **Niagara Treaty** of 1764 establish the founding constitutional principles between the British Crown and First Nations (FN) leaders. Settler minority was not involved, setting the stage for excluding Settlers thereafter.
- The Canadian Crown imposes the consolidated *Indian Act* of 1876, implemented by the Indian Affairs department. Settlers and First Nations people were excluded.
- 1960s – present: The Crown has re-engaged with FN leaders to negotiate modern treaties and land-claims agreements. Settlers are still excluded.

Understanding the Settler-Indigenous relationship today



- A buffer zone separates Canadian society from all within the Indigenous Affairs system...from administering the *Indian Act*, land claims, and Treaties to allocating coffins to FN bands and determining who inherits Grandmother's teapot.
- The buffer zone acts to deaden the voices from within so they cannot be heard by those in Canadian society.
- It was only when a story, incident, or event breaches IA containment that it can be heard or seen by Canadian society.

If the two solitudes could talk to each other

Accusation

Settlers: We've given you everything, but you've always got your hand out for more, and now you want to steal my land.

First Nations: We've lost so much, and you know how we're suffering under the *Indian Act*, but you're okay with it...or at least not bothered enough to do anything about it.



Response

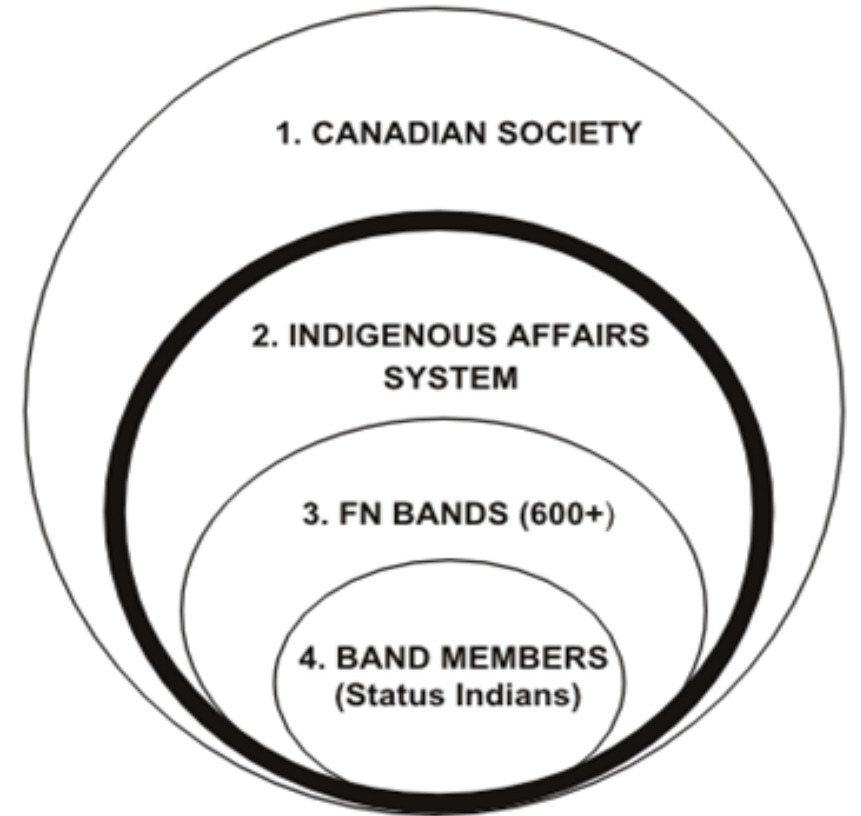
First Nations: We do not want to take your land. All we've ever wanted is for us to share the land, just as agreed in the Treaties.

Settlers: We have no idea what is happening with you except what we see in the news. We would help if we knew what to do that wouldn't make things worse for you.



Reconciliation in a time of two solitudes

- If Indigenous people are inside the IA system and Settlers are outside, how are we supposed to achieve reconciliation?
- The Canadian federal government has declared that reconciliation is “nation-to-nation” and “government-to-government” between the Crown and First Nations, Inuit and Métis leaders (CIRNAC 2025).
- Where does that leave Settlers and Indigenous people?





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