

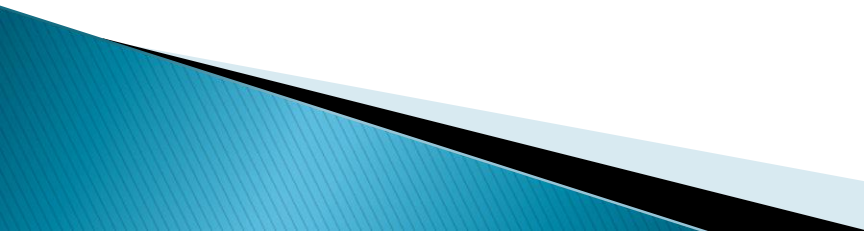
# Life in the Cities and Women

May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014

# Realities of Urban Life

- ▶ Most immigrants at this time were encouraged to live in the prairies. But 1 / 3<sup>rd</sup> settled in the cities.
- ▶ The growth of manufacturing industries is what drew them.
- ▶ 1914: 50% of Canada's population was urban.
- ▶ Life was hard in the cities.
- ▶ They lived in ghettos and stayed in small apartments that were dirty and lacked light, fresh air, or heat.

# Labour Rights!

- ▶ Canadian industry was controlled by a few corporations (eg Imperial Oil, Massey–Harris, Dunsmuir Coal).
  - ▶ The wealth of these corporations in comparison to the poverty of the working class was extreme.
  - ▶ Canadian workers began to organize labour unions.
  - ▶ There was a lot of difficulty here. And the gov't was clearly on the side of the employers.
  - ▶ Companies would hire private police/militias to shut down employees staging public demonstrations.
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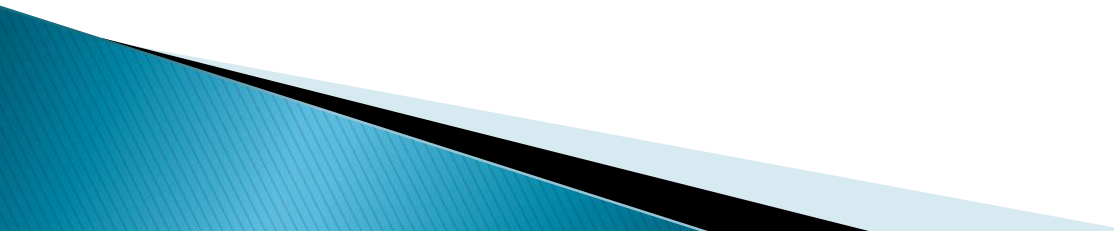
# Big Strike

- ▶ Early 1900s: Vancouver Island coal mines were known for high quality coal. But also for their dangerous working conditions.
- ▶ 1912: Two year strike started in hopes for better working conditions.
- ▶ The Dunsmuir family controlled coal on V.I. Workers had long hours, poor wages, and dangerous conditions.
- ▶ In response they replaced workers who went on strike with Asian workers, who agreed to work for poor wages.
- ▶ 1910: They sold the mines.

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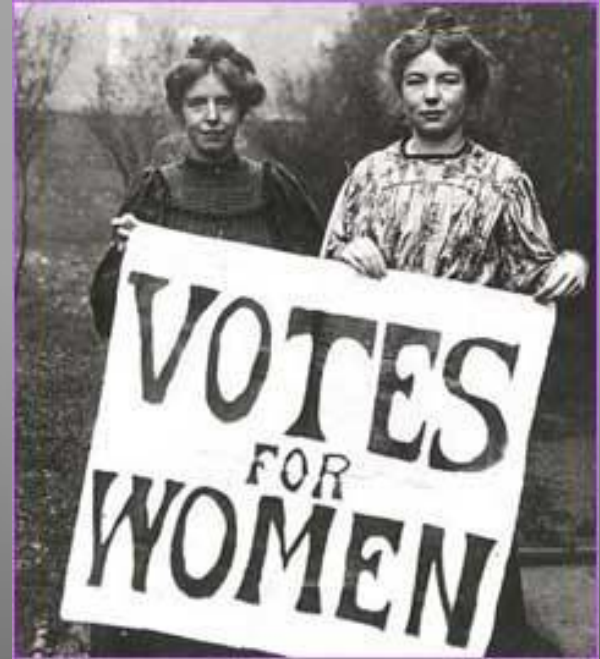
- ▶ The new owners tried to increase profits by lowering wages.
- ▶ 1912: Miners in Extension went on strike.
- ▶ 1913: Miners' families were thrown out of company owned homes.
- ▶ Some disturbances in Nanaimo and Cumberland made the gov't call in the militia.
- ▶ 179 miners were arrested.
- ▶ 39 sent to prison.

# Women's Rights

- ▶ 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Most women had hard lives. Housework and child-rearing took up most of their day.
  - ▶ Middle class women did not work outside of the home after marriage and education was not considered important.
  - ▶ 1896: Secret ballot voting had only been in place for 20 years. But only male property owners could vote.
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# Suffragists

- ▶ The woman's suffrage movement really started here.
- ▶ They thought that women would bring a fresh, more caring attitude to male dominated gov'ts.
- ▶ Suffragists blamed social ills on alcoholism.
- ▶ They wanted to use women's suffrage to bring about prohibition.



# Nellie McClung

- ▶ 1873–1951
- ▶ From Manitoba
- ▶ Teacher, well known author
- ▶ Promoted women's suffrage to better the working conditions for women in Manitoba.
- ▶ Effective speaker

