INDIAN TRUST FUND

During this time, Indian Moneys were held in a distinct account. While there were policy changes with regards to how funds were used, the moneys were held separate from Canadian funds.

**1867**

**British North America Act**

Consolidated Revenue Fund established for the funding of Canada.

**Pre-1867**

**Pre-Confederation Treaties**

The Indian Fund is established. The fund includes the Indian Trust, Indian Savings and Land Management Fund.

**1876**

**Indian Acts Consolidated**

Sections 58 - 60 establish that the Indian Fund be held separately.

**1880 - 1914**

**Indian Act Amendments**

Governor General given powers to use Indian Fund to pay for needs on behalf of Indians (i.e. teacher salaries, capital costs and provisions).

**1931**

**Consolidated Revenue and Audit Act**

Places funds for a special purpose or Trust under the purview of the Auditor General. The Indian Fund remains separate.

**1930**

**Natural Resources Transfer Act and Indian Fund**

The federal government transfers resources to provinces, but retains reserve lands in trust of the crown.

**1951**

**Indian Act Amendment and Financial Administration Act**

An amendment to the Indian Act moves the Indian Fund to be held within the Consolidated Revenue Fund as Capital and Revenue. This shift happens as Indian Act amendments introduce new status and registration rules, increasing control over First Nation governance and monies and erasing reference to Treaty.

**Pre-1867**

Community Development Program/White Paper

Offloading of fiscal responsibilities while eliminating status through White paper would transform reserves into municipalities.

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**1988**

**Kamloops Amendment**

Indian Act amended to allow for taxation on-reserve; this paves the way for First Nations to begin generating revenue through property taxes.

**2005**

**First Nations Financial Management Act**

Financial management of Indian Moneys is offloaded to First Nation organizations.

**2015**

**New Fiscal Relationship**

Bands provided with 10-year grants at traditional amounts to encourage partnership in mechanisms like the First Nations Finance Authority (FNFA).
Changes to the Indian Act in 1951 aimed to modernize and normalize new kinds of power in the governance of Indigenous peoples. A centralized Indian Registry was introduced that empowered federal authorities to control First Nations through status, which was now fused to band membership, as well, through a registration requirement. There is evidence that a number of factors contributed to the shift in “Indian” identification in 1951, all of which had financial implications. One factor was the absolute mess Indian Affairs was keeping of the treaty records and the amount of fraud and theft underway by Indian Agents of the government. Historian John Leslie writes that officials were at a loss of how to expand social services without clear records on Indian status and eligibility. The new definition and registry brought in through the amendments was “tied directly to an administrative initiative.” The centralized registry also now controlled Treaty annuity payments.

Another factor was that the 1951 Indian Act became more strict with regard to Indianness as a result of an adoption case. According to Métis scholar Allyson Stevenson, the Francis case angered officials when a Métis child became Indian through adoption. This travesty (to officials), “called into question the gendered and racialized parameters used to restrict band membership.”

The amendments doubled down on gender and racial discrimination by legislating the exclusion of status to women who “married out” and to their children.

Finally, the requirement for band membership and rigid control over status were connected to the attempted erasure of the Métis. Métis were already being removed from Treaty rolls prior to the 1951 amendments, though their “Indian blood” provided them certain provisions. Without membership on reserves, only the discretion of the department could keep them “Indian.”

The Indian Trust Fund also moved at this conjuncture under the Consolidated Revenue Fund — the big slush fund of Canadian revenues. This meant that the descendants of Treaty signatories were now submerged into a new fiscal state by virtue of their status, not by the terms of the nation-to-nation relationship assured in Treaty. The CRF was an attempt to move Treaty partners one step closer to assimilation.

What happened in 1951?

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2 Laird, David, McKenna, James Andrew Joseph, and Ross, James Hamilton, Treaty No. 8 (1899 June 21), Treaty no. 8, 1899, presentation copy of the original, 50 x 71 cm, University of Alberta Library Internet Archive collection, https://archive.org/details/treatyno800unse/mode/2up
3 The Adoption of Frances T: Blood, Belonging, and Aboriginal Transracial Adoption in Twentieth-Century Canada Allyson Stevenson, Canadian Journal of History / Annales canadiennes d'histoire 50.3 & 2015, p. 475.

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