

## 5.4 Canadian Tolerance / Intolerance

The hard times of the depression brought out the best and the worst in people. Knowing how people were suffering without jobs to support their families, many of those with jobs gave money to church groups who provided emergency relief. Soup kitchens were set up to feed the armies of wandering men and sometimes provide them with a place to spend the night out of the cold.

However, in some ways the pressure of ensuring their own family's survival during the depression caused them to act out of fear and anger towards others.

- Jobs and relief efforts were focused on men only during the depression, assuming that they would be the head of a family. Young women received little or no support as it was assumed that they should be living at home with their parents. Single young women and single mothers, usually war widows, really struggled with this intolerance because it left them with no ways to get help. This prejudice towards women was even more harmful for immigrant and minority women.
- There had be prejudice towards Jews in many ways before the depression. Now, many people refused to hire them at all. They were not allowed to buy property in some towns or to belong to certain groups. Many stopped being Jewish in order to survive.
- The Ku Klux Klan continued to grow in the prairies during the depression, creating more hate towards Blacks, Jews, Roman Catholics and any immigrants.
- Even the government gave in to intolerance. During the depression, 17000 immigrants who forced to go on relief assistance were deported from Canada.
- Very little relief was given by the Federal Government to native peoples on reserves because it was assumed they could 'live of the land'. Many groups were not capable of doing this any longer, and in the case of the Prairies, the Provincial Government charged them for illegal hunting and fishing when they tried.
- Immigration was heavily restricted during the 1930's, mainly allowing only those from Britain and the United States. There was a total closed door on Blacks, Jews, Chinese and Japanese immigrants. This was extremely important in the light of the growing Nazi influence in Europe and the growing persecution of Jews there. (see More to the Story, pg 157)

## 5.5 Escaping the Depression

Where the 1920's saw prosperity and the trend of spending money for entertainment and personal expression, the 1930's left people looking for ways to escape the depression with the simpler things in life.

- ✚ Churches organized socials, potlucks, baseball games, and even dances to get people together and enjoy themselves to keep their spirits up.
  
- ✚ Roller Skating, Miniature Golf, board games like Monopoly, were all new ways to pass the time.
  
- ✚ The growing movie industry became a cheap way for mass entertainment rather than going to live productions. Hollywood survived the depression and created such classics as King Kong, Frankenstein, Dracula, Snow White ('37), Pinocchio ('40) and The Wizard of Oz ('39). People could pay a small fee and see newsreels, cartoons, a B movie and the main feature movie. Many of the stars of the time were Canadians, such as Mary Pickford and Faye Wray: coming from the failed movie industry here.
  
- ✚ Newspapers and Magazines were widely read, giving people a cheap way to get up to date with the world. A single copy was often passed on to be read by many people.
  
- ✚ The Radio was the television of the 1930's. People listened in for music, drama and the news. 1931 was the start of Saturday night's *Hockey Night in Canada* with Foster Hewitt.