

# We want a strong promise: The Opposition to Indian Treaties in British Columbia, 1850-1990.

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### **Abstract:**

After entering into a series of land cession agreements on Vancouver Island in the 1850s, the colonial authorities and their successors made no more until the B.C. government agreed to the Nisga'a Treaty in 1998. Although Treaty 8 in 1907 secured Aboriginal peoples and their lands in northeastern British Columbia, the province took no part in that process. This article examines the possible reasons for the early cessation of treaty-making in B.C. It also examines the role of Aboriginal organizations and Aboriginal governments in the "B.C. Indian land question" from 1871 to 1990, when B.C.'s long-standing opposition to Indian treaties was finally abandoned after a series of adverse court cases. It therefore covers the colonial and early provincial periods, what I call the "first" legal campaign for title (c.1900-1928), and then, very briefly, the hiatus that followed the enactment of the Indian Act in 1927 and the revival of the campaign for title after it was dropped from the revised Act in 1951.

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