

CREATING CANADA:  
*From the Royal Proclamation of 1763 to Modern Treaties*



By the KING,

A P R O C L A M A T I O N .

October 7, 2013 • Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Civilization  
 A Symposium hosted by the Land Claims Agreements Coalition

**ON OCTOBER 7, 1763**, King George III of Great Britain issued a Royal Proclamation "Establishing New Governments in America". Most Canadians are unaware of this document, but it was important in the creation and evolution of Canada. As we approach its 250th anniversary it remains vitally important, particularly to Aboriginal peoples.

The Royal Proclamation is part and parcel of Canada's Constitution. It is specifically referenced in Section 25 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and has been cited many times in the courts. Justice Emmett Hall of the Supreme Court of Canada referred to it as the "Indian Magna Carta". Others have described it as the "Indian Bill of Rights".

The intent of this document is very clear. It decrees that "Nations or Tribes of Indians... should not be molested or disturbed in the possession" of lands "reserved to them...as their Hunting Grounds", referring at the time to all areas west of the Appalachian mountains. It acknowledges "great Frauds and Abuses" in purchasing Indian lands and, to prevent further abuses, stipulates that only the Crown can purchase Indian land "at some public Meeting or Assembly of the said Indians". The Proclamation thus requires the negotiation of agreements – treaties – with the Crown. Indian land was required to be duly and fairly purchased before the Crown could issue title to others to settle on that land.

With these words, the Royal Proclamation of 1763 set the standard for "honourable dealing" with Aboriginal peoples. It provided the basis for the negotiation of treaties in Upper Canada following the American War of Independence, across the Prairies in the nineteenth century, and again after 1973, when the Government of Canada agreed to negotiate "modern" treaties in areas where no treaties had previously been signed.

This legal touchstone has played a major role in shaping the political landscape of North America, and it continues to serve as a foundational document for historic and modern treaties, unresolved land claims and self-government negotiations.

Join the Land Claims Agreements Coalition at the Canadian Museum of Civilization on October 7, as we explore the historic and current implications of the Royal Proclamation of 1763 during a one-day symposium entitled "Creating Canada: From the Royal Proclamation of 1763 to Modern Treaties".

Symposium registration information is available at [www.landclaimscoalition.ca](http://www.landclaimscoalition.ca).