A Timeline of Key Moments

Government of Canada Event

NWAC Event

Indigenous Women Event

The federal government begins to provide funding

Mary Two-Axe Earley stood in front of the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development and asks why her children were denied Status. band membership, and affiliate rights lost because of section 12(1)(b) of the *Indian Act*. Two-Axe Earley would play a critical role in the founding of the Quebec Native Women's Association, and later the Native Women's Association of Canada.

This timeline provides insight into key moments in the history of the Native Women's Association of Canada. While it does not capture every significant issue that NWAC has advocated for, it highlights the founding of NWAC and our defining work related to the Indian Act, the inclusion of Indigenous women in decision-making spaces, the ongoing genocide of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMI-WG2S+), and the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

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Women's **Association of** Canada Anniversary

O 1974

The Native

to support "homemakers clubs" on reserves across Canada with the expressed purposes of encouraging domestic activity and furthering the assimilation of First Nations women. Homemakers' clubs would establish some of the original foundations of NWAC.

1951

A national conference of Indigenous women is held in Alberta, and Bertha Clark Jones is chosen as the chairperson of the National Steering Committee. The National Steering Committee would propose a constitution and the creation of NWAC in 1972.

1973

1930's

The federal government amends the Indian Act to create a centralized Indian Register, formalizing registration control of who could qualify for status. Additional rules, such as the "marry-out rule," were added to reinforce discrimination based on sex in the Indian Act.

1967

The federal government, under Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau, released the "Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy," more commonly known as the "White Paper."

1969

1971

Jeannette Corbiere Lavell and Yvonne Bedard brought separate challenges to the Supreme Court of Canada against section 12(1)(b) of the *Indian Act*. They would lose their case in a close split decision.

> NWAC is legally incorporated, and Bertha Clark Jones is elected the first President of the Organization.

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney opens new discussions on the Constitution of Canada. Known as the Meech Lake Accord. The Accord proposed to strengthen provincial powers and recognize Ouebec as a distinct society. The Accord ultimately fails in 1990.

1987

1985 0

Despite being excluded from Constitutional Conferences, NWAC continued to push for gender-based discrimination to be removed from the Indian Act.

1982

Following a decade of advocacy by Indigenous women, the newly elected Liberal government moves to reform the *Indian Act*. At the same time, the government was looking to repatriate and amend the Constitution.

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney seeks to forge a new constitutional agreement with the provinces, launching the Charlottetown Accord. In addition to recognizing Ouebec as a distinct society and giving more power to the provinces, the new Accord also sought to address Indigenous self-government and representation. However, NWAC was left out of

consultations with aboriginal groups.

1992 0

NWAC undertook a legal battle (NWAC v. Canada) against the Canadian government seeking the right to serve as a recognized national aboriginal group during constitutional consultations. Over the course of the following year, NWAC would be blocked from every constitutional meeting held across Canada.

After the passing of Bill C-31, which amended the Indian Act and removed section 12(1)(b), NWAC expressed concerns that while some gender-based discrimination wasremoved from the Indian Act, it also created new barriers for First Nations women looking to pass on their Status.

0 1984

The Government of Canada repatriated the Constitution Act and introduced the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. NWAC raised issues with amendments to section 35, but was often shut-out of subsequent discussions and conferences related to this issue.

1980

NWAC v. Canada was brought before the Supreme Court of Canada which ruled in favour of the federal government's decision to exclude NWAC from constitutional negotiations.

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2004

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NWAC received funding for the Sisters in Spirit initiative, a multi-year research, education, and policy initiative to establish a database of information regarding missing and murdered Indigenous women.

1994

NWAC launched the Sisters in Spirit Campaign, which sought to lobby the federal government to establish a \$10 million fund for research and education related to violence against Indigenous women.

2005

