

Suggested Tip Sheet / Sidebar

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Five Things to Admire About John Diefenbaker

- 1) Diefenbaker was the first prime minister to champion Canada's Arctic and the first prime minister of Canada to travel north of the Arctic Circle. He undertook a massive northern infrastructure program ('roads to resources') and 2,250 km of roads were constructed. This included the Dempster Highway, linking Inuvik with Dawson City, Yukon. The town of Inuvik was also established by Diefenbaker.
- 2) Canada's Bill of Rights was passed in 1958, a precursor of the country's Charter of Rights and Freedoms decades later.
- 3) Diefenbaker extended the right to vote for First Nations peoples and also appointed James Gladstone to the Senate, the first ever First Nations senator.
- 4) Diefenbaker fearlessly criticized the Soviet Union under Nikita Krushchev for its repression of minorities when he spoke to the United Nations General Assembly.
- 5) Diefenbaker spearheaded the movement for racial equality within the commonwealth, speaking out against apartheid. This led to South Africa leaving the Commonwealth of Nations.

-- from roderickbenns.com