

The Impact of Focusing Events:

Tracing Immigration Detention Policy in Canada

Pathways to Prosperity 2017 National Conference

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Outline

1. Immigration Detention
 2. Focusing Events
 3. Tracing immigration detention – focusing events
 4. Current State
 5. Conclusion
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OBJECTIVES

1. To contribute to the body of knowledge on immigration detention in Canada.
2. To investigate events that have contributed to the introduction and embedment of immigration detention in Canada's immigration, asylum and refugee policies
3. To develop an understanding of public policies surrounding the immigration detention of non-citizens in Canada

1. Immigration Detention

WHAT: “Deprivation of liberty for migration-related reasons” (International Detention Coalition, 2016)

WHO: Asylum seekers, irregular migrants, convicted permanent residents, failed asylum claimants etc.

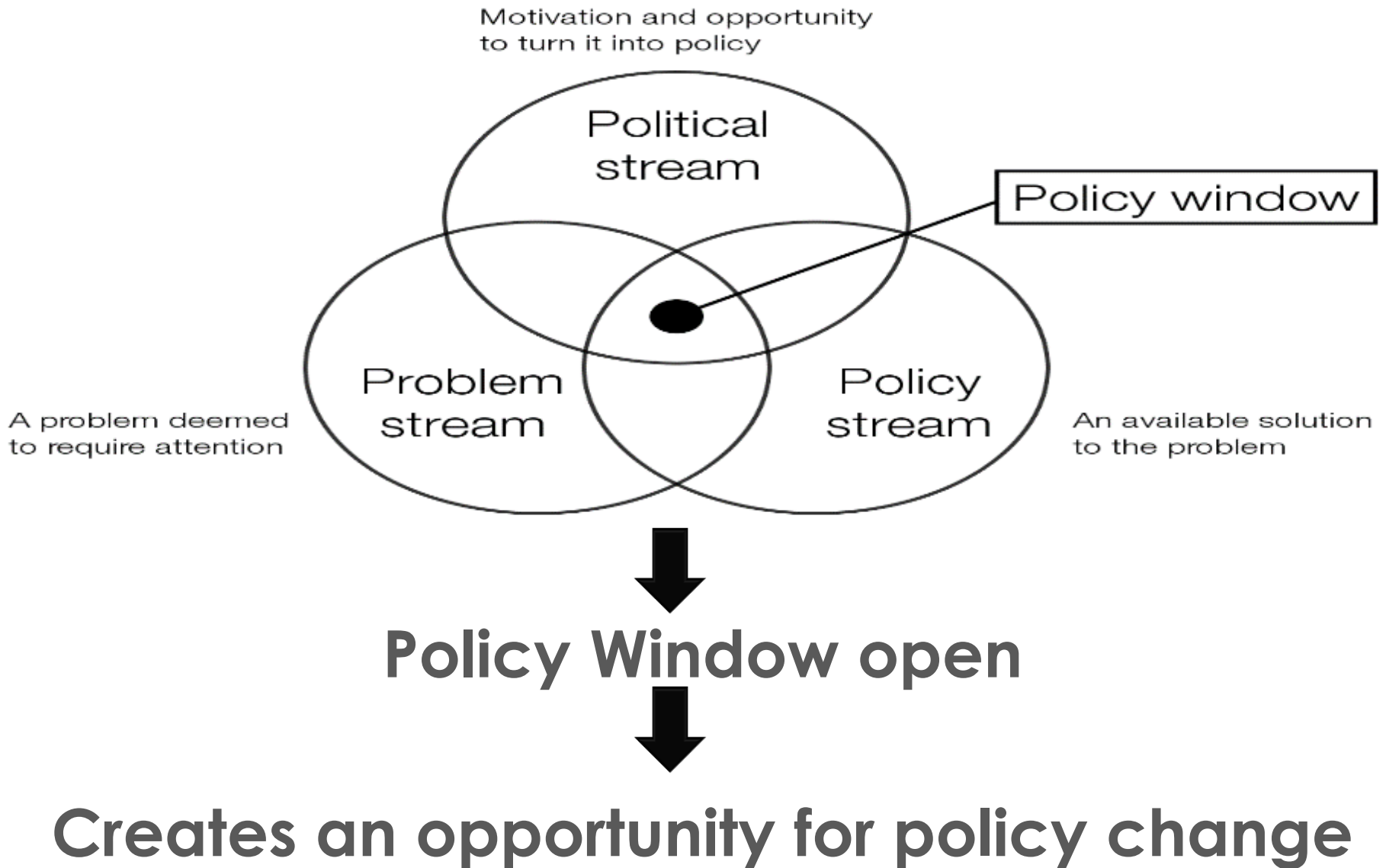
WHY: Identity, Flight risk, inadmissibility grounds (danger, security, criminality, violation of rights)

WHEN: Upon arrival, inland and pre-deportation

WHERE: Immigration Holding Centers/ Provincial Correctional Facilities

OVERSIGHT: CBSA (Jurisdiction); IRB – Detention Review

Policy Window

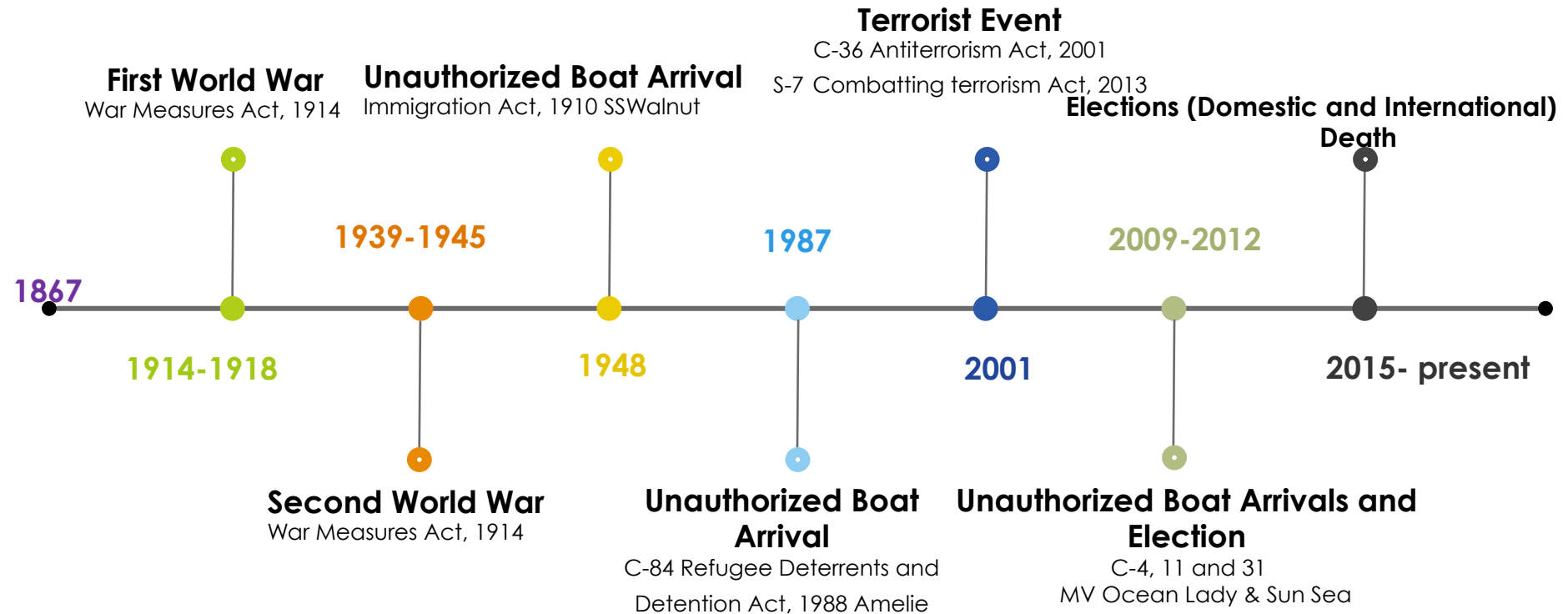


Focusing Events

1. World Wars
2. Unauthorized boat arrivals
3. Terrorist Events
4. Elections
5. Death of immigration detainees

3. Tracing Immigration Detention – Focusing Events

Timeline



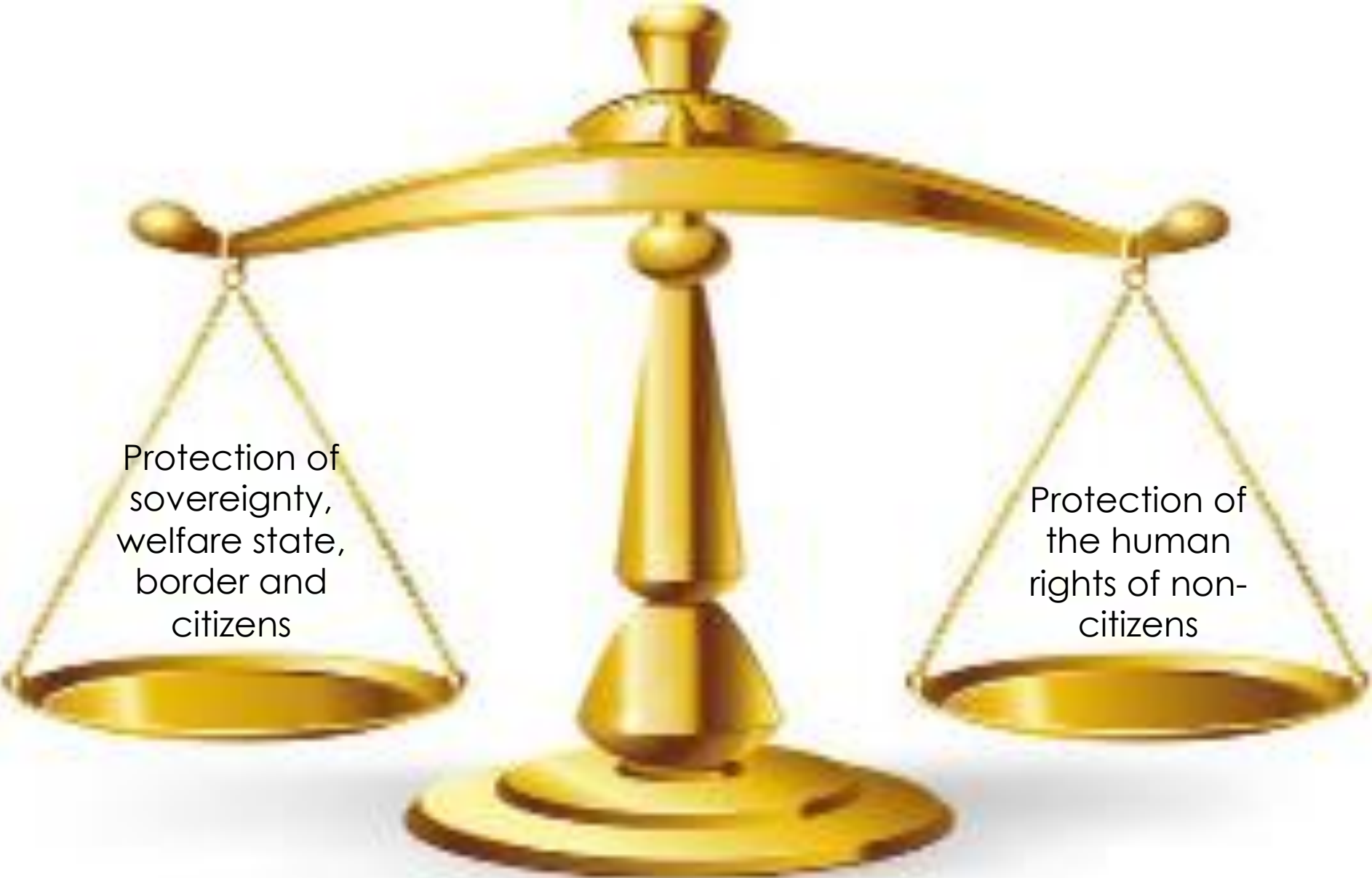
4. Current State

1. Elections
2. Advocacy Actors (Domestic and International)
3. National Immigration Detention Framework
 - ▣ *Infrastructure, Alternatives, Minors and Mental Health*
4. Deaths of immigration detainees
5. Parliamentary Oversight - CBSA
6. Exploration of alternatives to detention of children

5. Conclusion

- Focusing events create opportunities that legitimize immigration detention policies in Canada. These policies impose undue physical and mental hardship on non-citizens.
- The policy of detention of non-citizens for immigration purposes traces back to the early 1900s in Canada.
- Immigration detention was officially introduced in Canada through the passage of C-84 (Refugee Deterrents and Detention Act, 1988)
- Immigration detention is normalized as an automatic response to irregular migration.

Policy Design



Protection of
sovereignty,
welfare state,
border and
citizens

Protection of
the human
rights of non-
citizens

Conclusion

As humans, we must not standby and watch another human die while held for immigration purposes in Canada

THANK YOU!

