

Native american dbq



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In an attempt to overcome conflicts with the possession of Native American land, the United States set in place policies that were often inconsiderate to the Natives, but that they believed to be better economically, politically, and morally. These policies varied from government provided food for the Natives, to the distribution of the new land, and the treatment of Native for their various practices. All of these things greatly affected the course of Native American people and their cultures to this day. As Americans took over more land in the west, they began to kill the buffalo that lived there for supplies in massive amounts.

Document C, Figure 16. 2, shows a mound of buffalo skeleton bones that would be shipped to the East for various fertilization purposes and represents the " extent of the devastation" to the buffalo population.

Document C also shows the numerous ways that Native Americans used the buffalo in their everyday life. Various purposes that the buffalo served were food from meat and fat, tools and weapons from the bones, clothing from the hide of the buffalo, and many others uses on the long list. No part of the buffalo was wasted by the Natives.

When Americans came to their land and slaughtered the population, the Natives were left without any supplies for living. The Natives were forced to live off of food that was provided for them by the government, even though it was the same white settlers who took away their food supply in the first place (Document C). Economically, this helped the United States. They had more land to sell and make money from, and they benefited off of the buffaloes. This was not equally beneficial to the Natives however. They were

not even considered by the government that continued to invade their homes and lives.

The government may have thought they were helping the Natives by providing them with the small food rations that they did, but the government as actually the root of the Natives food dilemma. There was discussion amongst the nation's leaders over what should be done with the newly ceded land. Secretary of the Interior Carl Scours argued that the tribes are "in the way Of thedevelopment Of the countrys as an obstacle. " To overcome that, his suggestion was to give the Natives portions of the land as reservations, but that sections within that land be used by the government (Document B).

In 1 887, Congress passed the Dates Severalty Act that allowed the President to resurvey Native American land reservations if e see fit that the land could be advantageous for agricultural and grazing purposes (Document E). Then in 1889, Theodore Roosevelt stated that it was obvious for them to " break up the Indian reservations, disregard the tribal governments, allot the land in severalty, and treat Indians as we do other citizens," and that they are respecting Natives more than the Natives have respected them (Document F).

It is made clear though that the Natives wish to be left unbuttered, both them and the land. In a letter to Roosevelt and the " Washington Chiefs" they express their concerns with how they farm and retreat the Hopi land. The Natives had a certain cycle for farming the land that could be ruined by the settlers (Document H). The Americans did not consider this Hopi petition

though. This was a political move to prove to the Natives that they were a "weaker race" and also to pass legislation that supported it.

The Americans may have thought they were doing well to the Natives, as Carl Scours said himself "To civilize them... And absolute necessity if we mean to save them," but they were only disrespecting their land and their requests. One thing that created such a strong barrier between the Natives and the Americans were cultural differences. The Dawes Severalty Act allowed for the United States "to ban crucial aspects of Indian culture, including native practices related to religion, education, language, and even dress and hairstyles" (Document C).

This shows the type of ignorance that the American people had towards the Native American cultures. They knew nothing about them, yet they banned their practices. These sometimes harsh judgments were driven from fear. Some of the Native American practices legitimately frightened the Americans, particularly, the tribal gatherings where "men, women, and children participated in the ritual dance, moving in a circle and singing." These rituals scared them so much, that in December 1890, "U. S. Troops attacked and killed several hundred Indians" (Document G).

The American people again may have thought they were cleansing the Natives, but were only being inconsiderate to them as people. Their actions were morally unjustifiable. This time period has a long lasting effect on the world. Entire tribes and cultures died because of the mistreatment and misjudgment of the Natives. Whether or not the American people thought

they were helping in some way or another, they were only destroying lives as if they truly were just "obstacles" and the nation's course of development.