

Bureau of indian affairs

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As early as the 1840s, highly placed officials had outlined a plan to subdue the intensifying rivalry over natural resources and land. Under the terms of their proposal, individual tribes would agree to live within clearly defined zones — reservations. In exchange, the Bureau of Indian Affairs would provide guidance, while U. S. military forces ensured protection. By the end of the 1850s, eight western reservations had been established where Indian peoples were induced to speak English, take up farming, and convert to Christianity. Those tribes that moved to reservations often found federal policies inadequate to their needs. The Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867 assigned reservations in existing Indian Territory to Comanches, Plains (Kiowa) Apaches, Kiowas, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes, bringing these tribes together with Sioux, Shoshones, and Bannocks. All told, more than 100, 000 people found themselves competing intensely for survival. Corrupt officials of the Bureau of Indian Affairs routinely diverted funds for their own use and reduced food supplies, a policy promoting malnutrition, demoralization, and desperation. Meanwhile, white prospectors and miners continued to flood the Dakota Territory. The reservation or discourage Native American culture because once the Indians had been placed on the reservations, they were expected to become agricultural producers. With no buffalo or other wildlife to hunt, the Indians were forced to become producers. Although the government was willing to support Indian tribes in the beginning, after several years, the funding and support granted to the Indians was severely retracted. This coupled with the inability of the Native Americans to thrive in their new homes served as the basis to plunge most Native Americans into abject poverty. Unfortunately, this circumstance is one that remains a

pervasive part of reservation life. Faragher, J. M., Buhle, M. J., Czitrom, D., & Armitage, S. H. (2009). *Out of many: A history of the American people* (5th ed.). Volume II. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.