

Apush native american essay

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The United States government used many different techniques to remove Indians from Western lands so they could use it for their own selfish needs. Some of these methods were clearly harmful, while others were written to seem reasonable and helpful. Nomadic Indians were finding it hard to live due to declining bison herds and deteriorating grasslands. This situation was made worse by thousands of pioneers pouring into the west because of the new discovery of silver and gold in the Rocky Mountains. The government attempted to solve this problem by creating a structure of smaller reservations for Indians.

They would use force if necessary. The Indian's responses varied from tribe to tribe. The Pueblos, Crows, and Hidastas happily and obligingly adjusted to their new life. Others felt differently, however. The Navajos and the Sioux strongly opposed the new reservations, but failed in the end. Ten years later, eight new western reservations had been established. Many Great Plains tribes retaliated faced the U. S. army in a series of battles for the West. Similarly, soldiers who were a part of the local militia destroyed Cheyenne and Arapaho camps, who responded with many attacks on travelers.

The governor of Colorado authorized white citizens to find and kill and hostile Indians. He then ordered a set of troops to massacre a peaceful group of Indians, including women and children, at Sand Creek. These Indians had originally believed they would be protected by federal troops. This massacre and others that were similar revitalized debate over federal Indian policy. In 1867, Congress sent a peace commission to end the disputes. They set aside two large land reserves, hoping the tribes living there would take up farming and convert to Christianity.

Although hidden, here it is clear that one of the government's main goals was assimilation. The plan seemed to be successful at first. Most Indians believed that they were not meant to live like the "white man." They were given hunting grounds and animals to hunt by God, and that was the way they wished to live their lives. Indians with these beliefs did not move to the reservations or refused to remain on them once there. Hoping to take a stand against the reservations, war parties of angry Cheyennes, Arapahos and Sioux raided settlements in Kansas and Colorado, setting fire to homes and killing white men. Army troops responded by sending army troops to attack, even the peaceful ones. That same fall, Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer's raiding party struck a Cheyenne village at night, killing over a hundred men, shooting their horses, and taking women and children as prisoners. In 1871, Congress decided that the treaty making process was not working, and they began to only send out executive orders and acts. This set off a series of retaliations from the Indians.

In 1874, southern Plains Indians started the Red River War. This particular war ended badly for the Indians, who ended up losing their independence. Soon after, in Arizona and New Mexico, the Apaches fought a guerrilla war until surrendering in 1886. All of these battles and conflicts were truly horrible, but none compare to the battles fought in by the western Sioux tribes. To protect their sacred hunting grounds, they raided nearby non-Indian settlements, intimidated federal government workers, and harassed anyone else who came onto their land.

In 1874, the government took action against these Indians by sending a force led by Colonel George Armstrong Custer into the Black Hills of South
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Dakota. Negotiations to buy this area had been broken because the Indians were asking for too high of a price, therefore Custer's new goal was to drive the Indians out of this area. Indians still outside the reservations would be hunted down and taken in by force. The battle fought in this land in June 1876 was a great unexpected Indian victory, which only angered and motivated the U. S. army more. Indians were chased down and imprisoned, but most refused to cooperate.

Many Indians created dramatic escapes, such as a group following a Dull Knife, who shot the guards and broke away for freedom. Small efforts such as these proved that the Indians were going to keep on fighting for as long as possible. The government's continual habits of breaking their treaties led to a number of groups and societies devoted to Indian's rights. The Women's National Indian Rights Association was founded in 1883, along with other groups with similar causes. Helen Hunt Jackson published *A Century of Dishonor*, which promoted public opinion against the broken treaties.

Many white Americans began new reform movements of creating schools for Indians. Their main goal was to stamp out their Indian identities. Despite these goals, the movements often backfired. The Indians would learn the english language and how to farm, but still had the Indian inside of them. In addition to the schools, many people believed the Indians would be better off if their reservations were broken up, gradually incorporating them in society by giving them the rights of citizens. Most of these people genuinely wanted to help the Indians. This division of reservations was enforced by the Dawes Severalty Act.