

Not Without Our Consent: Lakota Resistance to Termination, 1950-59



Not without Our Consent: Lakota Resistance to Termination, 1950-59 by Edward Charles Valandra

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English
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In the mid-20th century, the United States government embarked on a campaign to terminate the legal status of Native American tribes and assimilate their members into American society. This policy, known as termination, had far-reaching consequences for Native American communities, including the loss of land, resources, and cultural identity.

The Lakota people of South Dakota were among the most vocal and successful opponents of termination. They organized protests, lobbied Congress, and filed lawsuits to challenge the government's policies. Their resistance culminated in the passage of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, which reversed the termination policy and recognized the right of Native American tribes to self-govern.

The Impact of Termination on the Lakota People

The termination policy had a devastating impact on the Lakota people. The loss of their land and resources led to widespread poverty and unemployment. The government's assimilationist policies, such as the forced relocation of Lakota children to boarding schools, also eroded their cultural identity.

In addition to the tangible losses, termination also had a profound psychological impact on the Lakota people. The government's policies conveyed a clear message that their culture and way of life were not valued. This led to feelings of shame and powerlessness.

Lakota Resistance to Termination

Despite the challenges they faced, the Lakota people refused to give up. They organized protests, lobbied Congress, and filed lawsuits to challenge

the government's policies. They also worked to preserve their culture and traditions, establishing schools and cultural centers.

One of the most important leaders of the Lakota resistance was Russell Means. Means was a charismatic and outspoken activist who used his platform to raise awareness of the plight of the Lakota people. He helped to organize the American Indian Movement (AIM), which played a key role in the fight against termination.

The Lakota people's resistance to termination was ultimately successful. In 1975, Congress passed the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, which reversed the termination policy and recognized the right of Native American tribes to self-govern. This victory was a testament to the Lakota people's resilience and their determination to preserve their culture and way of life.

The Legacy of Lakota Resistance

The Lakota people's resistance to termination is a powerful example of how a people can overcome adversity and fight for their rights. Their victory has had a lasting impact on the lives of Native Americans, and it continues to inspire activists around the world.

The Lakota people's story is also a reminder of the importance of cultural preservation. The government's assimilationist policies were designed to destroy the Lakota culture, but the Lakota people refused to let that happen. They fought to preserve their language, traditions, and way of life, and they continue to do so today.

The Lakota people's resistance to termination is a story of hope and resilience. It is a story that shows that even in the face of great adversity, it is possible to fight for what you believe in and to win.



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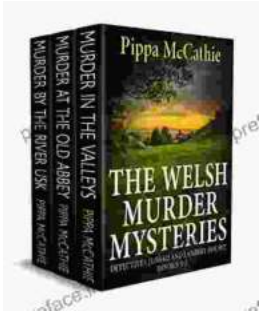
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