

1932

The Policy of the United States Government in its Relation with the Navajo Indians

Katherine Diana Brown

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POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN ITS
RELATIONS WITH THE NAVAJO INDIANS - BROWN

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THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE
NAVAJO INDIANS

BY

KATHERINE DIANA BROWN

A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

1932



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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

the writer wishes to express her appreciation and thanks to Dr. Marion Dargan for valuable information concerning sources of data; to Professors Lansing G. Bloom and Frank D. Reeve for encouragement and constructive criticisms; and to Dean S. P. Nanninga and Dr. J. E. Seyfried for helpful suggestions on how to proceed with the study. She desires also to express her deep gratitude to Miss Wilma Shelton and Miss Ruth Russell for cheerful, untiring assistance in securing material.

INTRODUCTION

Although much has been written in criticism of the policy pursued by the United States government in its relation with the Navajo Indians, no investigations have yet been made to determine the nature and development of this policy. The writer chose the subject of this thesis with the hope that she might discover evidence that would make it possible to answer these questions. Having lived in close contact and association with the Navajos during her entire life she naturally feels a personal interest in their problems and welfare.

Stated more definitely, the purpose of this study is to trace the policy of the federal government in its relations with the Navajo Indians, and to determine if the policy has been consistently followed. The problem is delimited to the period from 1846, the year the United States government took control of New Mexico, to 1932.

As used in this study, the term "policy" may be defined as a course of action adopted and followed by the federal government.

By Navajo Indians is meant the large tribe of

Athapascan stock that has inhabited the northwestern part of New Mexico, the northeastern part of Arizona, and the southeastern part of Utah during an indefinite period preceding the Spanish occupation down to the present.

Official records of the federal government are the chief sources of data utilized in this study. The various documents and publications used are listed in the bibliography.

The period covered in this investigation divides itself naturally into five divisions. The first, from 1846 to 1871, when the government was dealing with the Navajos through treaties, may be called the treaty period. The second, from 1871 to 1887, is the Reservation period. During this time these Indians were segregated on a reservation, issued rations, and placed under complete control of agents. The third, from 1887 to 1906, when citizenship was given with an allotment of land, is the Allotment period. The fourth, the Individualistic period, extends from 1916 to 1929. In this period the Indian did not receive a fee simple nor citizenship until he had reached such a stage of development that he was capable of managing his own affairs. Finally, from 1929 to the present

time, came the Humanitarian period, for the period during which the personal affairs and the property of the Indians were dealt with separately. In each division the aim and method pursued by the government have been treated and the results summarized.

THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN ITS
RELATIONS WITH THE NAVAJO INDIANS

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND

① The Navajo Indians call themselves Dine', meaning "The People". The term "Navajo", signifying a large area of cultivated land, is never used by them except when speaking English. In order to distinguish the tribe from other "Apache" bands, Benavides, in 1630, referred to them as "Apaches de Navajo". A record by Oñate may refer to these Indians as early as 1598. However, Zárate-Salmerón, about 1629, was the first to mention them by name.¹

According to their own legend, the Navajos were created in Arizona about five hundred years ago. They maintain that other peoples had inhabited the earth prior to this time, but that most of them were

1. Hodge, Frederick W., Handbook of American Indians north of Mexico, v. 2, p. 41.

destroyed by giants or demons. From this myth it is certain that they do not know when ~~they~~ ^{Came to} they came. They ~~must have wandered into~~ New Mexico in small groups. Although most of the groups were of Athapascan stock some were descendants of other stocks, as Keresan, Shoshonean, Tanoan, Yuman, and Aryan. Evidently, the Navajos are a composite people, in fact, so much so, that it is impossible to describe a prevailing type. They range in stature from men of six feet or more to men of exceedingly limited height. In features they vary equally as much.²

The Navajos are bold and fearless, following a code of honor and morals handed down from generation to generation. Under the penalty of ostracism, death, or banishment from the tribe, they have ever regarded it a sacred duty to obey this code. They are celebrated for intelligence and good order, being the noblest of American aborigines. So happy are they in disposition that they are prone to jest and banter among themselves. They are self-reliant and industrious; even the proudest do not scorn remunerative labor. Since

2. ibid., pp. 42-43.

3. Connelley, Wm. E. (ed.) Hughes, Doniphan's Expedition, p. 316.

they adapt themselves easily to changing conditions, they have progressed under the most adverse circumstances.

21 (R) The tribe is divided into many clans. At the head of each clan is a chief, elected by members of his own group. ~~this lack of centralization has been the main reason for the failure of the government to make permanent treaties with the tribe.~~ The Navajo is the pioneer advocate of woman's rights. The woman retains her name after marriage and controls the home, the children, and the property. Out of her hope chest and marriage dower received from her husband she insures to her children a proper inheritance. The man is of secondary importance; his property descends to his brothers and sisters. The Navajo clan so closely resembles a kinship, that a man cannot marry in his own clan, but he must seek his mate elsewhere. After marriage he accepts a subordinate position in his wife's family, and following the wedding ceremony never again does he look upon the face of his mother-in-law.

22 The Navajos are today the largest tribe of Indians in the United States, numbering approximately forty-five thousand. Their reservation, consisting

of 14,360,000 acres, is in the northwestern part of
 New Mexico, northeastern Arizona, and southern Utah.

Words are inadequate to describe the rugged beauty
 and the fantastic enchantment of the country which
 they inhabit. The lofty peaks, the deep chasms, and
 > the flat mesas are indescribable. ~~Have~~ one wonder
 why many of the mountains ~~with their~~ ever ^{changes} changing
 colors have become sacred to the Navajos? Surely
 the gods could not have chosen a more beautiful
 Parnassus. And could the Navajos fail to be religious
 amid such surroundings, a land where "the savage looks
 through nature up to nature's God?" ~~The~~ The average
 elevation of their land is six thousand feet above sea
 level, and the average rainfall thereon, nine inches
 only. Many of the mountains are covered with piñon
 trees. Every five or seven years these bear abundant
 crops. The very nature of the country explains why
 these Indians have devoted little attention to agri-
 culture and have become a pastoral people.

A ~~shepherd's~~ ^{their nomadic life} life being nomadic, prevents him
 from living in communities. Since he must ever seek
 for green pastures and for protection against the
 snow, he takes his sheep up to high plateaus for the
 summer and down into the valleys for the winter.

X The home, or "hogan", of the Navajo, as one would



expect, is crude. It is conical in shape, constructed of a frame of sticks, and covered with branches, grass, and earth. In the center is an opening through which the smoke can escape and the evil spirits emerge. The door, always facing the rising sun, must be made by crossing three sticks at the top. Such construction is believed to be a protection from the wrath of the gods. When the "hogan" is completed, in order to make it happy, an impressive ceremony is held.

The Navajos acquired their first sheep from the Pueblo Indians in 1542.⁴ From the same tribe they later learned the art of weaving. Probably they did not develop a high degree of skill in weaving until the early part of the eighteenth century. The blankets are woven by the women. The wool, sheared from their own sheep, is washed, dyed, carded, spun, and deftly woven by hand on home-made looms. (Navajo blankets containing geometric figures and designs of symbolic significance on backgrounds of harmonizing colors are truly beautiful. No two are identical, although many are similar.)

The men work as silversmiths. The same distinctive beauty and design are shown in this type of handiwork


4. Hodge, Frederick W., The early Navajo and Apache.
p. 239.



as is displayed in the blankets. Soft silver is shaped into squash-blossom necklaces, rings, bracelets, buttons, and belts. Every Navajo wears some ornament. The poor may have only a turquoise bead tied in their hair; this trinket is a divine protection against sickness and evil powers. The rich adorn themselves with many pieces of silver jewelry, besides beads of coral, Zuni jet, abalone shells, and cannel coal. In fact, wealth is gaged by the amount of jewelry which the individual wears.

The mythological tradition of the Navajo is remarkably accurate, according to historical authority. The Navajos arrived at their present home in the latter part of the fifteenth century, but not being aggressive, they did not start their raids until the seventeenth century. The Pueblo Indians, their closest neighbors naturally were the first prey. Emboldened by their initial success, they extended their incursions in other directions.⁵ By 1622, they had forced the Pueblos to abandon Jemez. The Pueblos were not molested until after the harvest, the time when plenty of food could be seized for use during the winter close at hand.

5. Ibid., p. 234.

 The first white people with whom the Navajos came in contact were the Spaniards. Although the Spanish policy of dealing with the Indians has always been cruel, the treatment was in direct conflict with the laws of Spain. In 1529, Cortés, the captain-general of New Spain, was instructed as follows:

"To give his principal care to the conversion of the Indians; that he should see that no Indians be given to the Spaniards to serve them; that they paid such tribute to His Majesty as they might easily afford, and that there should be a good correspondence between the Spaniards and the Indians and no wrong offered to the latter either in their goods, families, or persons."⁶

Bishop Don Sebastián Ramírez de Fuenleal, president of the second audiencia of Mexico from 1530-1535, earnestly endeavored to execute these humane laws.

~~Frequent~~ Orders were received by the officials of New Spain urging them to protect the Indians and to treat them well. The rights of their landed possessions were fully recognized by the laws enacted for the government of the "Kingdom of the Indies." However, the government never accepted the idea that the natives had a possessory right to the whole territory, but only to that part which they actually occupied, or which was necessary for their use. The Spaniards could

6. Cyrus, Charles C., Indian land cessions, v. 18, pt. 2, p. 539.

secure only land grants which did not conflict with the rights of the Indians. Although the Spanish government never purchased the Indian's titles, it clearly and distinctly recognized them. The Indians were compensated by lands in lieu of those taken.

⑤ further instructions were issued:

"Should the natives attempt to oppose the settlement (of a colony), they shall be given to understand that the intention in forming it, is to teach them to know God and His holy law, by which they are to be saved; to preserve friendship with them, and to teach them to live in a civilized state, and not to do them any harm or take from them their settlements. They shall be convinced of this by mild means, through the interference of religion and priests, and of other persons appointed by the governor, by means of interpreters, and by endeavoring by all possible good means, that the settlement may be made in peace and with their consent; and if, notwithstanding they do withhold their consent, the settlers, after having notified them pursuant to law ... shall proceed to make their settlement without taking anything that may belong to the Indians, and without doing them any greater damage than shall be necessary for the protection of the settlers and to remove obstacles to the settlement." 7

From this decree it can easily be seen that Spain's chief motive of colonization was to Christianize the Indians. Yet many of the citizens used colonization merely as a means of exploitation, principally through the encomienda system. This was a right granted by the king to an "encomendero" to collect tributes from

7. ibid., p. 540.

Indians living upon a certain allotment, in return for ~~spiritual and temporal guidance.~~ The privilege was often grossly abused by demanding so much from the natives that they were actually kept in peonage, with only enough left for a meager subsistence. Since this method could not be used with the nomadic Indians, little was done to Christianize them. Many of their women and children were captured for slaves, however. In New Mexico the Navajos were especially prized on account of their intelligence and industry.

The tribe was friendly to the Spaniards until 1700,⁸ notwithstanding the fact that they had as early as 1692 advised the Moquis not to trust the Spaniards. About that time came so many reports of Navajo raids that the governor started on an expedition against them. Peace was made at Taos with the Navajo chief. The results were not lasting.⁹ In July Don Roque successfully led an expedition against them. Captain Serna also defeated them in 1709.¹⁰

In 1744, two padres went into the Navajo country to inquire whether missions were wanted. The Navajos

8. Bancroft, H. H. v. 17, History of Arizona and New Mexico, v. p. 222.

9. Ibid., p. 223.

10. Ibid., p. 228.

seemed eager for salvation, accepted the presents, and promised to come to Santa Fé at the next full moon. The viceroy attempted to investigate these Indians, but after examining twelve witnesses concluded that little was known about them. In 1746, he authorized the founding of four missions, with thirty soldiers for protection. Since the padres were too poor to make any gifts, the Navajos became dissatisfied. Neither pueblo life nor Christianity had any charm for this nomadic tribe. Although the members would permit the priests to baptize their children, they continued to worship their own gods. The attempt to convert them was abandoned in 1750.¹¹

In the last of the Spanish period the Indians caused much less trouble than in former years. The efforts of the military forces, combined with a system of gifts and treaties encouraged peace.

In 1803-5, the Navajos entrenched themselves in their impregnable stronghold, Cañon de Chelly. Governor Chacón led several expeditions against them. Lieutenant Antonio Narbona who did likewise, finally forced them, in 1805, to sue for peace. By the terms of the treaty they were to receive no more presents

11. Ibid., pp. 247-248.

until they returned the 400 sheep, 150 cattle, and 60 horses which they had stolen.

In 1806, the Navajo chiefs complained of having received no gifts. General Salcedo informed them that they must depend upon their own efforts for sustenance.¹² They remained peaceable until 1818-19, when they renewed hostilities.¹³ Twice were they defeated. Colonel Viscarra, by his untiring energy, succeeded in keeping them in submission for a number of years. After his departure, however, no other officer had the strength to inspire sufficient fear to keep them in a peaceable mood.

It was the custom for the tribe every spring to make terms of peace with the governor at Santa Fé. These terms were regularly accepted, and each fall regularly broken. This state of affairs enabled the Navajo to plant his crops at leisure, dispose of his property as he wished, and in the winter to renew his game of rapine and destruction.

In 1835, a volunteer company of Mexicans was raised in order to wage war on these Indians. The company, as it started to enter the land of the Navajo, was

12. Ibid., p. 285.

13. Ibid., p. 286.

intercepted by a band of Indians stationed at the mountain pass. The invaders were so surprised and so badly frightened that a panic ensued. Those who did not fall from their horses, hastily fled. Two, including the commanding officer, Captain Hinojos, were killed.¹⁴

The following incident exemplifies the treachery of the Mexicans in their relations with the Indians. Shortly after the independence of Mexico, a number of Navajo chiefs were invited by the government of New Mexico to meet in a conference at Cochiti to celebrate a treaty of peace. The Mexicans killed every chief who attended. Such acts of cruelty naturally provoked hostility.

The Mexican government was unable to cope with such situations or to protect the Indians. Three Comanche prisoners were butchered before the very eyes of government officials by the Jicarilla Apaches.¹⁵

One need not wonder that the Mexicans were warred upon by these Indians. The Navajos openly declared that they would have exterminated the Mexicans had they not

14. Gregg, Josiah, Commerce of the prairies. v. 1, pp. 287-289.

15. Ibid., p. 287.

deemed it more profitable to use them as shepherds.¹⁶

It is evident from the brief historical review presented in the preceding paragraphs that many of the evils with which the United States had to contend originated in the late Spanish and Mexican periods. The Navajos had become the lords of New Mexico, and as such, considered themselves to be unconquerable. The Navajos considered the Mexicans as enemies, and that their property, consequently, should be regarded as spoils of war.

The extensive territory involved, the weakness of the local government in New Mexico, and the treacherous dealings with the Indians were the conditions mainly responsible for the lack of control over the Navajos during the Spanish and Mexican periods. No definite policy was formulated, and even when a policy was instituted, seldom did the unscrupulous officials in charge enforce it. (Fear of the Indians, and lack of unity and cooperation among the Mexicans, made control of the Navajos an impossibility.) The central government did not supply aid, either in the form of men or money, to assure law and government. Bribes and

16. Bancroft, op. cit., p. 459.

treaties, the only means used to check the Indians,
proved demoralizing and ineffectual. Laissez faire!
This was the policy!

CHAPTER II
THE TREATY PERIOD
1846-1871

It has been pointed out in the preceding chapter that the policies of both the Spanish and Mexican governments proved ineffectual in combating many of the evils instigated by the Navajo Indians. When the United States government assumed control of New Mexico in 1846 conditions were still as they had been for many years. The Indians were hostile, and continued to be enemies of the Mexicans.

Stephen Watts Kearny was in command of the army of occupation. In his proclamation issued in Las Vegas, August 14, 1846, he made his first statement concerning the Indian policy for New Mexico. He promised the people of the newly acquired territory that the United States would protect them from the depredations of the nomadic tribes.¹ Because the Navajos did not come to Santa Fé to make terms of peace, and since they had participated in a series of depredations, Kearny ordered Colonel Doniphan to proceed against them.

1. Sen. ex. doc. 7. 30th cong. 1st. ses., serial 505.



Major Gilpin, stationed at Abiquiu, and lieutenant-Colonel Jackson, stationed at Cebolleta, were ordered to penetrate the Navajo district by different routes.² On the 20th of October, Captain Reid and thirty men went into the heart of the country. They encountered many hardships. Lack of water and the necessity of having to cross deep chasms, precipices, and canons greatly handicapped their march. They continued on their journey for thirty days. Everywhere they found the Navajos favorably disposed toward the Americans, and anxious to come to Santa Fe to attend the treaty council..

[One hundred and eighty Americans and 500 Navajos met at Ojo-del-Oso, Bear Springs. Colonel Doniphan made known through an interpreter the objects of his visit and the designs and intentions of his government. He stated:

"That the New Mexicans had surrendered; that they desired no more fighting; that it was a custom with the Americans when a people gave up to treat them as friends thenceforward; that we now had full possession of New Mexico,.....and that the country and everything in it became ours by conquest, and that when they now stole property from the New Mexicans they were stealing from us....that this could not be suffered any longer; that it would be greatly to their advantage for the Americans

2. Bancroft, op. cit., p. 421.

to settle in New Mexico, and that they then could open a valuable trade with us, by which means they could obtain everything they needed to eat and wear in exchange for their furs and peltries."³

Although the Navajos proclaimed friendship and admiration for the Americans, they declared their hatred for the Mexicans. They could not understand why the United States should interfere in the warfare prevailing between them and the Mexicans.⁴ The terms of the treaty, signed November 22, included a firm and lasting peace between the Navajos and the Americans, and assured reciprocal free trade and mutual restoration of all captives and property taken since August 18th. Gifts were exchanged.

This treaty marks an important step in the policy of the government with regard to the Navajos. It was the basis for future action.

Another important step toward establishment of a policy, was the opening of the way for local adjustment of the Indian problem by having the tribes peacefully settle their differences. Constant warfare had waged between the Navajos and Zunis. Colonel Doniphan and three Navajo chiefs went to Zuni. After hearing the

3. Connelley, Wm. E. (ed.), Hughes, Doniphan's expedition, pp. 300-7.

4. Twitchell, Ralph E., Leading facts in New Mexican history, v. 2, p. 216.

complaints and grievances of both sides, he drew up a treaty of peace.

The Navajos paid little attention to the treaties mentioned, and in quest of plunder, continued to attack settlements on the Rio Grande. Their raids were not discouraged by the Americans so long as they were directed against the Mexicans.⁵ Finally the Navajos became enemies of the Americans. They had so little realization of the power of the United States government that they regarded its proffer of peace as an indication of weakness and fear. When hard pressed they were willing to make a treaty, with the secret conviction that it could be broken when their interest justified such action. Treaty breaking like treaty formulating was simply an incidental feature of their business methods. Conditions were aggravated by the fact that the Navajos were less subject to the control of chiefs than were other Indians. One band could fight even though other bands deemed it unwise for them to do so.

The failure of the government to cope with the situation that confronted it was due to ignorance.

5. Bancroft, op. cit., p. 438.

Five thousand dollars appropriated on March 3, 1847, for gathering statistics on the Indians produced no appreciable benefits. Conditions were still further complicated by disagreements between civil and military authorities, and by serious dissensions among the military officers. Much dissatisfaction with Colonel Price's management was manifested.⁶

Colonel Newby's expedition in 1848 against the Navajo Indians culminated in a treaty. Even though the treaty was ratified, its terms were violated.

The federal Indian service was reorganized March 3, 1849, by the act which created the department of the interior. The division of Indian affairs was designated as an office under this new department. However, the war department, through military officials in New Mexico, still exercised much influence.⁷ In fact, the local bureau of Indian affairs continued to be largely dependent upon it.

On March 29, James S. Calhoun was appointed as Indian agent. He was to be located at Santa Fé, to which place that agency had recently been moved from

6. Bancroft, op. cit., p. 439.

7. Act of March 3, 1849. United States statutes at large, 30th. cong. 2nd sess., v. 7, p. 395.



Council bluffs. The task of formulating a policy and plan of administration devolved upon him. Unfortunately, he had very little knowledge of the conditions with which he was forced to cope. For the most part throughout his work as agent he was hampered by lack of intelligent instructions from the federal government.⁸

At this time rumors were afloat that the Apache, Comanche, and Navajo Indians had combined. Major Washington was cognizant of the difficulties involved as a result of the extensive Indian territory to be controlled. The military force was so weak and inadequate that he found it necessary to recruit volunteers at the expense of the federal government.

He and Calhoun led three hundred men composed of government soldiers and armed Pueblos to Cañon de Chelly, the stronghold in the Navajo country. They left Jemez, August 22, going by way of Santo Domingo. At Tunicha, several hundred Navajos, who professed their willingness to submit to the power of the United States, were met. They attributed the recent Indian depredations to the bad and uncontrollable men of the tribe. After surren-

8. Abel, Annie H., (ed) Official correspondence of James S. Calhoun, p. 3.

dering some of the stock which they had stolen, they opened negotiations for a treaty.

During the meeting at Tunicha a deplorable incident occurred. A dispute arose over a horse that had been stolen from a Mexican.⁹ Washington ordered that the animal be seized. Some of the Indians started to run, and were fired upon. Chief Narbona was killed.

Canon de Chelly was reached September 6th, and on the 9th a treaty was signed, the terms of which were:

- I. The Indians shall acknowledge the jurisdiction of the United States.
- II. Perpetual peace and friendship shall exist. Hostilities shall cease and all cases of aggression shall be referred to the government for adjustment and settlement.
- III. Laws now in force regulating trade and peace shall be obligatory upon the Navajos.
- IV. The Navajos shall deliver the murderer or murderers of M. Garcia to the United States authorities in Santa Fe.
- V. Captives and stolen property shall be delivered to the United States officials by the 9th of October.
- VI. All citizens of the United States who commit outrages upon the Navajos shall be subject to the penalties of the law.
- VII. People shall have free and safe passage through the territory of the Navajos.

9. Bancroft, op. cit., p. 463.

VIII. Military posts and agencies shall be established by the government.

IX. The United States shall adjust territorial boundaries.

X. Donations, presents, and implements shall be given; and the government shall adopt such other liberal and humane measures as it shall deem proper.

XI. The treaty, after being signed shall be binding and shall be liberally construed.¹⁰

The result of this expedition influenced the future Indian policy in New Mexico, opened the country to the American forces, and revealed conclusively the need for a definite, consistent government policy. The Indians failed to live up to their agreements. However, they did return three captives and renewed their promise to deliver the others at Jemez. They claimed that they had started to Jemez, but that they had turned back because they were informed that the Pueblos, Mexicans and Americans expected to attack them.¹¹

Calhoun considered the obstacles in the way of settling the Indian question to be mainly financial. The chief difficulties were high prices and poor

10. Kappler, Charles, Indian land cessions. ser. 4624, v. 2, pp. 583-4.

11. Abel, or. cit., p. 49.

accommodations for members of the agency. He asked for \$10,000 for maintenance, including funds to supply interpreters, escorts, transportation, presents, and various miscellaneous items.¹² Later, as he became more intimate with the habits of the Indians, he modified and elaborated upon his earlier projects for control. Particularly did he desire a reservation policy that could be enforced by a strong military guard.¹³ Not until the Indians were willing to conform to the laws and regulations of the government should they be given presents, was his contention.¹⁴

In February, 1850, Calhoun wrote that trouble with the Indians was more serious than it has been in fifty years. He complained that the division of authority over the Indians had greatly restrained and hampered his work. He went on to say that because of lack of coordination, he was in some instances ignorant of the work of the military department in New Mexico. To overcome such a situation he urged that he be given authority to demand necessary information from any branch of

12. Ibid., p. 82.

13. Ibid., pp. 263-265.

14. Ibid., p. 550.

the public service. He had to depend upon the military officials for assistance in executing his plans. This dependence led to embarrassing complications--some of which could be avoided only by giving the agent command over the troops. The agency was even dependent upon the quartermaster's department for most of its provisions.¹⁵ Unfortunately, the agency and the quartermaster's department did not work harmoniously.

Nothing had been done from 1846 to 1850, except the making of several treaties. They proved ineffectual because of lack of military force and financial support. The expeditions into the Navajo country had acquainted the loyal officials with topography of the country and had furnished information for the guidance of federal legislation. The experience gained was the most valuable outcome of more than four years of work.

In the winter of 1851, Colonel Sumner made an expedition against the Navajos. Although a treaty resulted, it was broken before he arrived home. In his report he asserted that the proper policy was not understood in Washington. To Calhoun he wrote:

15. Ibid., p. 280.

"With regard to the Navajos, they have broken, and set at naught so many treaties, that it seems useless to treat with them. I think it will be better to let them feel, for a time that we have a grasp upon them that they cannot shake off and then when we do treat with them they will keep faith. If the large post established at the Cañon Bonito in the heart country, does not effectually restrain those Indians, and put a stop to further depredations, nothing will do it but their entire extermination."¹⁶ ~~#15~~

On the other hand, the secretary of the interior asserted that most of the depredations committed by the Indians on the frontiers were the offspring of dire necessity and that the advance of our population led the Indians to relinquish fertile lands and to seek refuge in sterile regions. The theft of horses, mules, and cattle, as well as the punishing of settlers, was the result of our encroachments, he went on to say.¹⁷

In a letter dated February 29, 1852, Calhoun wrote that the Navajos seemed happy and contented, and that they had committed no depredations since October 18. Traders, who had traveled alone through the Navajo country reported that the Indians were kind, generous, hospitable, and manifested a deep feeling of friendship.¹⁸

In 1853, in order to force the Navajos to surrender a murderer, Colonel Sumner prepared to make another

16. Ibid., p. 280.

17. Sen. ex. doc. 32nd cong., 1st. sess., sec. 612, p. 503.

18. Abel, op. cit., p. 488.

campaign. Before he had started, however, a new commander was appointed to succeed him. In 1854, the Indians hanged a man in the presence of federal troops. This act greatly pleased the government officials, as they were informed that the person executed was the murderer. Later, however, it was learned that they had not hanged the murderer, but a Mexican captive.¹⁹

Governor Merriwether, in 1855, signed a treaty with the Navajos. Although the treaty was never approved, peace was enjoyed until 1858. In July of this year hostilities were renewed as a result of the killing of a negro slave owned by an army officer stationed at Ft. Defiance. A prominent Navajo killed him because his own wife had been unfaithful. According to the customs of the tribe somebody must be killed; he chose the negro. The surrender of the murderer was demanded by Colonel Miles. The Navajos offered to pay for the slave, but refused to give up the murderer. In the warfare which ensued the Indians did not fight as well as usual, probably because they were using guns instead of bows and arrows. Fifty Navajos and seven or eight soldiers were killed in the outbreak.

19. Bancroft, op. cit., p. 675.

An armistice was signed July 25. The people considered this action to be a mistake. The killing of a negro by a Navajo was believed to be merely an excuse for yielding to the great pressure of the citizens for a war against the Navajos. In 1859, Major Simonson made another unsuccessful expedition to enforce compliance. Depredations still continued. In April 1860, an attack was made by the Indians upon Ft. Defiance. After they were repulsed they proceeded to raid within a few miles of Santa Fé. In July their outlawry was continued in the vicinity of Albuquerque and Manzano.

The authorities at Washington became so concerned that they ordered Colonel Canby to conduct an active campaign against the Navajos. The regular troops were aided by a large force of volunteers, including many Ute and Pueblo Indians. Little except the destruction of Navajo livestock was accomplished. Nevertheless, the Navajos sued for peace and a treaty was signed, February 1861.

By July of the same year following the outbreak of the civil war all of the military units except two stationed at Ft. Wingate had been withdrawn. Soon thereafter more trouble arose. Mexican troopers refused to pay to a Navajo the stakes which he had won in a horse-

race held at the Fort. The Indians were fired upon and several killed. In retaliation they started plundering. The government was unable to send troops because they were needed to fight in the civil war. The Navajos became bolder and bolder. Often were they blamed, however, for attacks made by Mexicans and Americans. All efforts of New Mexico companies to subdue them were unsuccessful.²⁰

In September 1862, General Carleton, a man of superior military talent, arrived in New Mexico with the "California Column" and relieved General Canby as department commander. Eighteen Navajo chiefs called to enter into a treaty with him.²¹ Carleton sent them home after telling them that treaties confused matters. The chiefs were informed that if they robbed, they would not be forgotten, even though they had a treaty.

In a few weeks other robberies were committed by these chiefs and their followers. True to his word, General Carleton started war. Colonel "Kit" Carson, who had been placed in charge of the troops, commanded the Navajos to go to Bosque Redondo on the Pecos river, a

20. Bancroft, op. cit., pp. 675-78.

21. Ibid., pp. 678-79.

reservation of forty square miles set aside for them. He vowed that if they failed to do as ordered he would hunt and destroy them.²² According to Carson, the United States would not make peace with the Navajos under any terms, since they had too frequently deceived the government, and robbed and murdered inhabitants of the territory. The war would be continued, Carson contended, until they complied. Mexicans, Utes, Pueblos, and Americans volunteered to go with Carson, as he continued his ruthless warfare right into the Navajos' "impregnable fortress". He killed their sheep and stock and destroyed their crops and fruit trees. By the end of the winter, more than 7000 Navajos had been forced to surrender or to starve. By 1865 as many as 8,491 had assembled at Bosque Redondo. The water on the reservation was alkaline; wood was scarce. In fact conditions were generally unhealthy and unfavorable. Although the government issued rations the Indians did not know how to prepare or to utilize them.²³ Since the Navajos were not farmers, and most of their stock and sheep had been destroyed, they were in a serious predicament.

22. Meline, James. F. Two thousand miles on horseback, p. 285.

23. Coolidge, Dane and Mary Roberts, The Navajo Indians, p. 24.

The Mescalero Apaches and the New Mexicans living in that vicinity were a source of trouble to the Navajos. The latter did not wish them to remain in this territory. Conditions were further aggravated by Comanche raids, initiated by the traders. Change of climate, poor food, and exposure produced much sickness and many deaths. Only twenty could be accommodated in the hospital, a dilapidated, two room adobe building.²⁴ Words are inadequate to describe the misery of the tribe as a whole. Members begged to be permitted to return to their beloved mountains--back to the home of their fathers, where firewood, pinons, and game were plentiful. They were willing to do anything in order to get away from that lonesome flat country.

About this time such a controversy arose over what to do with the Navajo Indians that a political issue resulted. Some urged that they be placed on a reservation in Oklahoma; others contended that they should be permitted to return to their own country, where a reservation should be provided for them.²⁵

According to the annual report of Indian affairs, there were three causes underlying the depredations of

24. Annual report of Indian affairs, 1866, pp. 150-51.

25. Ibid., pp. 131-35.

of the Navajos; first, ill-treatment by the whites; second, unfaithfulness of government agents; and third, failure to punish the whites who had transgressed the rights of the Indians.²⁶

Upon investigation it was discovered that Navajo captives were being sold at a price of \$75 to \$400.²⁷ This disclosure made it evident that something must be done to improve conditions. (It became obvious that the Navajos should either be supported and educated for an industrial life or be turned over completely to the care of civil authorities. It was urged that the government adopt energetic measures of improvement and reform in all matters that related to the Indian affairs of the territory.

After much deliberation it was decided to permit the Navajos to return to their own country, where a reservation was awarded to them. A treaty to this effect was signed July 25, 1868. It has never been broken by the Indians. They had learned their lesson, and learned it well. The terms of the treaty are as follows:

26. Ibid., pp. 16-17.

27. Ibid., 1866, p. 135.

I. From this day forward all war between the parties agreed shall forever cease.

- (a) Peace and friendship shall exist.
- (b) Offenders against Indians shall be arrested and punished.
- (c) Offenders shall be tried according to law, and any person offended shall be reimbursed, providing he is not guilty of violating the treaty. The President may prescribe rules resulting from violations of the regulations passed by the commissioner of Indian Affairs.

II. Reservation boundaries shall be as follows: 37° north latitude, south by an east and west line passing through the site of old Ft. Defiance at Canon Bonito, east by parallel of longitude about 109° 30', and west of Greenwich, provided it embraces the outlet of Canon de Chelly. No one shall reside on the reservation except by consent of law.

III. Buildings shall be erected. The cost of the warehouse may not exceed \$2500. An agency, carpentershop, blacksmith-shop, and as soon as the children can be induced to attend, a school and chapel, not to exceed \$5,000 in cost, shall be constructed.

IV. The agent shall reside in the agency building. The office shall be kept open for complaint of the Indians. All cases of depredation may be referred to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

V. Heads of families may select 160 acres of farming land.

- (a) Any person over eighteen years of age may have 80 acres of land if he is not the head of a family.
- (b) Certificates shall be delivered by the agent and be recorded in the Navajo book.

(c) The President of the United States may order a survey.

(d) Congress may pass proper laws to control the descent of property.

VI. Children between the ages of six and sixteen years shall attend school. For every thirty children a house and teacher competent to teach the elementary branches of an English education shall be furnished. The teacher shall reside among the Indians and faithfully discharge her duties. The provisions of this article shall continue for not less than ten years.

VII. When the head of the family has selected a tract of land he shall receive seed and implements not exceeding \$100 in value. Each year he shall receive \$25 additional.

VIII. Finally, for ten years, on each September 1st, the government shall provide the Indians with:

(a) Clothing, goods or raw material not to exceed \$5 in value.

(b) The agent must make and report an annual census of the Indians. Indians shall be encouraged to make their own blankets.

(c) Ten dollars for each person who engages in farming or mechanical pursuits, which sum shall be used by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to purchase necessary articles. Army officers shall attest the delivery of goods, check the quantity, and make a suitable report thereon.

IX. All other territory shall be relinquished. Unoccupied land may be used as hunting grounds. The Indians agree:

(a) To the construction of railroads on the reservation.

- (b) Not to interfere with the construction of railroads on the reservation.
 - (c) Not to attack any persons at home, traveling, nor to molest or disturb any wagon, train, coach, mules or stock.
 - (d) Never to capture or abduct women or children.
 - (e) Not to oppose the construction of railroads, wagon roads, mail stations or any other works of utility which may be ordered by the United States, providing the government shall pay all damages inflicted by such utilities. Damages shall be assessed by three commissioners, one a chief of the tribe, appointed by the President.
- X. Cession of reservation shall not be valid unless at least three-fourths of all the adult male Indians approve it. No individual shall be deprived of his rights in any tract of land without his consent.
- XI. Indians shall go to the reservation when required, the United States paying for their subsistence enroute and for the care of the sick and feeble.
- XII. \$150,000 shall be disbursed as follows:
- (a) \$50,000 to pay for the removal of the tribe from the Bosque Redondo.
 - (b) \$15,000 for sheep; \$30,000 for goats.
 - (c) Five thousand beef cattle and a million pounds of corn to be held at the military post nearest the reservation for relief of needy Indians during the winter.
 - (d) The remainder for the maintenance of the Navajos, pending their removal.



XIII. The reservation shall be the permanent home of the Navajo Indians. If they settle elsewhere they shall forfeit the rights, privileges and annuities conferred by the terms of this treaty. They agree to attempt to get all other members of the tribe to return and settle permanently in one of the territory reservations set apart for their exclusive use and occupation.²⁸

When the Navajo Indians returned from the Bosque Redondo they were in a serious economic condition. Their houses, only crude structures, had fallen; their fruit trees and live stock had been destroyed; and it was too late in the season to plant crops. The reservation consisted of 3,916,800 acres of mountainous country.²⁹ The only agency was at Ft. Defiance, situated at the head of Cañon Bonito. It was one of the coldest and most unhealthy locations on the reservation. Since this was the only point where the Navajos could secure rations, hundreds remained there. Many were in such a weakened condition from exposure, poor food, and diseases contracted during their sojourn in Bosque Redondo that they died during the first winter on the reservation.³⁰

28. Kappler, Charles, Indian land cessions, serial 4624, v. 2, pp. 1015-23.

29. Annual report of Indian affairs, 1917, p. 277. P. *W. W. W.*

30. Ibid., p. 376.

Not one acre in fifty on the reservation was suitable for cultivation.³¹ However, the Navajos planted their crops in valleys where the arroyas had overflowed, leaving sediments of rich loam. Their method of farming, although crude, was adapted to the arid country which they inhabit. They still follow these practices, in fact.

Each day the government issued rations of one-half pound of shelled corn or wheat and one-half pound of beef to each person. By August, 1870, all of the annuity had been distributed. No further provisions were issued until the next February, when 11,785 pounds of corned beef, borrowed from the quartermaster at Fort Wingate, were distributed. In March, 37,610 pounds more were prorated. During the early winter months much stealing and depredation occurred. After the issuance of beef in February the robberies ceased. A meeting of the Navajo chiefs was called on April 26, in order to get back stolen stock. Only a few heads were recovered, as the stock had been utilized for food. Two thieves were arrested. The agent suggested

31. Ibid., p. 377.

hiring, at attractive pay, fifty or a hundred of the best men of the tribe to serve as policemen.³²

Such a large number of complaints concerning the depredations of the Navajos were made during those few months that the governor of New Mexico declared all of the tribe to be outlaws. According to the secretary of interior, this pronouncement was not justifiable, as the main body were living peaceable on their own lands and endeavoring to fulfill their treaty obligations. Furthermore, the secretary recognized the Indians to be brave and quick-witted, ready for either mischief, play or hard work. He contended that they could be trained and guided into useful citizens, but that if they were neglected, they might become the most troublesome of outlaws.³³

(11) (19) A school was established at Fort Defiance, October, 1869. The average attendance until April was twenty-two. The teacher reported that the children were easily controlled, quick to learn, ^{and had} ~~and~~ gifted ^{good} ~~with retentive~~ memories. In 1870, ^{the} ~~a~~ uniform ~~course of~~ ~~study~~ was introduced in all of the Indian Schools throughout the United States. ~~This marked another step~~

32. Ibid., 1871, pp. 376-77.

33. Ibid., 1869-1970, p. 464.

in the federal government's policy toward the Navajos. The facilities of the school at the Fort were ^{not enough.} ~~woefully~~ inadequate, and nothing better could be provided until more money was available. The buildings were ^{bad} ~~dilapi-~~ dated. The walls were falling, and the rooms were without floors and poorly lighted. The cost of repairs would exceed ^a ~~that for~~ new buildings. The estimated cost for new buildings was \$35,000 or less.³⁴

x The records of the Indian bureau show that large quantities of useless goods were purchased at an exorbitant price, and that moneys appropriated for buildings were never used for the purposes designated. Moreover, they state that in many instances promises to give the Indians cattle and sheep have not been fulfilled.³⁵

In an endeavor to secure men who were better suited to occupy the positions of Indian agents, President Grant adopted the policy, in 1869, of delegating nominations for these positions to the several religious organizations interested in missionary work among the Indians.³⁶ During that same year, an act was passed creating a board of ten commissioners to

34. ibid., 1871, pp. 276-77.

35. ibid., 1869-1870, p. 464.

36. Schmeckebier, Laurence F., The office of Indian affairs, p. 54.

assist the secretary of interior in the disbursement of appropriations. This board was to be chosen from "men eminent for their intelligence and philanthropy, to serve without pecuniary compensation." ³⁷ From these two changes it can readily be seen that the government was striving to improve conditions in the Indian Service.

During most of this period the policy of the United States government proved to be ineffectual in dealing with the Navajo Indians. Failure to take definite steps to control the situation and lack of sufficient appropriations to execute a constructive program were the chief drawbacks. Treaties were signed, but never enforced. Inadequate military strength, divided authority, and failure of government officials situated in Washington to grasp the situation made it impossible to enforce the agreements between the government and the Navajos.

37. Ibid., p. 56.

CHAPTER III
THE RESERVATION PERIOD
1871-1887

From the discussion in chapter II it is reasonable to conclude that the policy pursued by the government in dealing with the Navajos during the treaty period was ineffectual. The economic condition of the Indians was deplorable and their school facilities greatly inadequate. After much deliberation in congress, consequently, it was decided that the treaty system had outlived its usefulness. To negotiate with tribes within the territory of the United States as if they were foreign nations constituted an anomalous situation.

On March 3, 1871, an act was passed, providing that:

"Hereafter no Indian nation or tribe within the territory of the United States shall be acknowledged or recognized as an independent nation, tribe or power with whom the United States may contract by treaty....That nothing herein contained shall be construed to invalidate or impair the obligations of any treaty heretofore lawfully made and ratified with any such Indian nation or tribe." ¹

This did not change the status of the individual

1. United States statutes at large, v. 16, p. 566.

Indian; it was merely a step in the direction of fitting him to merge into the social and economic life of the prevailing civilization. Heretofore the method of the government had been to remove him from the states and territories which had developed economically and culturally, and to place him on the frontiers in proximity to the population which had the least respect for his rights.

The termination of the treaty period was not the end of negotiating with the Indians, but after 1871 agreements were ratified by both houses of congress, and generally made a part of the annual appropriation act.²

The reservation period extends from the passage of the act providing that no more treaties should be made to the enactment of the law providing for allotment in severality. "The predominant characteristics of these years were the segregation of the Indians on the reservations, the issuance of rations, and the endeavor to exercise complete control by the agents."³

On account of lack of water and shortness of season, the Navajos had little success at farming.

2. Schmeckebier, op. cit., p. 65.

3. Ibid., p. 66

In the agent's report of 1871, he stated that it was foolish to issue seeds that take a long time to mature. Although the government had given them 14,000 sheep and 1,000 goats in 1870, he urged that more be given to them as the country was suitable mainly for grazing purposes. He also advised that a special agent be appointed to visit all parts of the reservation in order to ascertain the needs and condition of the Navajos.⁴

Again, in January 1872, the subsistence which had been furnished them was exhausted. Much suffering among the poorer class resulted. Limited supplies of beef and corn were issued in April and July, but it was not until September 14 that contracts were made to purchase a liberal amount. The Indians worked faithfully all summer, but as little rain fell the crops were a failure.

During the year sixty head of stock owned by settlers living near the reservation, had been reported stolen. These men blamed the Navajos for stealing when any stock was discovered missing and held the whole tribe responsible, even though only a few thefts

4. Report of Indian affairs, 1871, p. 378-79.

had been committed.⁵ The Indians were living peacefully in spite of the fact that they were getting insufficient government rations to sustain life. In 1872 there were 9,114 Navajos, an increase of 880 in two years. The increase was due partly to the fact that a number who had been held captives by the Mexicans had returned. Approximately 130,000 head of sheep and 10,000 horses were owned by these Indians.⁶

Each year the same difficulty arose; all of the rations would soon be issued, leaving many of the Navajos without food. The ration plan was not a success. It was suggested that efforts be made to make the tribe self-supporting. "If the expenditure of a single year could be doubled and properly applied under the administration of an efficient, clear-headed agent in supplying seed, tools, stock, cattle and additional herds of sheep and goats, and furnishing rations to the Indians only when earned, the present unsatisfactory plan could be helped."⁷

On October 29, 1877, the president of the United States set aside a tract of land as an addition to the

5. Ibid., 1872, p. 6.

6. Ibid., p. 296.

7. Ibid., 1875, p. 71.

reservation.

"It commenced at the northwest corner of the Navajo Indian reservation on the boundary line between the territory of Arizona and Utah; thence west along said boundary line to 110° west longitude; thence south along said degree to 36° north latitude; thence east along said parallel to the west boundary of the Navajo reservation; thence north along said west boundary to the place of beginning"⁸

Ten years after the signing of the treaty of 1868, which permitted the Navajos to return to their own country, they had developed from barbarism and pauperism into a prosperous, industrious, shrewd, and intelligent people. They had been pauperized by the relentless warfare of the New Mexico militia under Colonel Carson, and forced to cease their depredations and to proceed to the Bosque Redondo. Previous to this ruthless treatment, they had owned large numbers of sheep, cattle, and horses.

The efforts of the government to encourage the Navajos to use modern methods in agriculture produced little benefit. As was previously mentioned, although their primitive farming methods involved much more labor, the returns were much larger than from modern methods.

In 1880 the reservation was again ceded land situated as follows:

8. Royce, op. cit., p. 892.

"Commencing in the middle of the channel of the San Juan River, where the East line of the Navajo reservation in the territory of New Mexico, as established by the treaty of June 1, 1868, crosses said river; thence up and along the middle channel of said river to a point fifteen miles due East of the eastern boundary line of said reservation; thence due south to a point due East of the present Southeast corner of said reservation thence due South six miles; thence due West to 110° West longitude; thence North along said meridian to the Southwest corner of said reservation in the territory of Arizona, as defined by executive order dated October 29, 1878".⁹

According to the 1881 report of the agent, a drought caused the Navajos to experience a trying year. Since the crops had failed and the flocks had not increased, they should have received aid from the government. The Indians needed food both for themselves and for their stock. Wagons, harness, plows, and harrows were needed also; but they could not be furnished on account of the small appropriation. The agent asserted that the Utes and Apaches received fifty times as much assistance from the government as the Navajos, yet the Navajos had a population several times larger. The report further stated that the Navajo Indians, who obey the law, who try to conform to the customs of the government, and who endeavor to cultivate habits of

9. Ibid., p. 892.

industry and sobriety, are not encouraged, whereas certain lazy, turbulent, and insubordinate Indian tribes get all which they demand.¹⁰

Lack of consistency and unfairness in the government policy in dealing with the Navajos was deplored by the agent in 1882. Congress had appropriated \$275,000 a year to 4,570 undeserving San Carlos Apaches, or \$60 a person, while it gave only \$5,000 to 17,000 deserving Navajos. The latter amount included the salary of the government farm agent. The remainder provided only twenty-five cents a person for tools and food. The per capita distribution was not enough for flour, sugar, and coffee. Fortunately, a large amount of rain fell during this year, producing abundant crops and much pasture. With the aid of Indian labor, the government farm agent built a dam sufficiently large to irrigate one hundred acres of oats, and three acres of millet, in addition to providing water for considerable corn fodder.¹¹

The agent at Fort Defiance, in 1884, complained about the neglect of the government in its dealing with the Navajos, charging and attributing "gross wrongs to

10. Annual report of Indian affairs, 1881, pp. 137-39.

11. Ibid., 1882, pp. 127-29.

ignorance, malice, or neglect."¹² He said that the government had never fulfilled the terms of the treaty of 1868. The Navajos had to depend almost entirely upon the income from their sheep and goats for a livelihood. Little or no aid was received from the government. Even the sick and indigent were not assisted. Although the reservation embraced 15,000 square miles, and contained 17,000 Indians, the agency was without hay or grain. The winter had been so severe, often registering 20° below zero, that the wool was not up to standard. Moreover, the method of shearing was so wasteful that a large amount of wool was lost. The wool was never washed. He advocated issuance of blooded rams in order to improve the quality of the sheep. Horses were so plentiful that they consumed the grass which was needed for the flocks.¹³

A \$10,000 saw mill without a roof had been installed. Indifference and neglect on the part of the legislative branch of the government seemed to be common. The Navajos had been standing still.¹⁴ Why they had made little progress, the reader may readily deduce.

12. Ibid., 1883, p. 119.

13. Ibid., pp. 119-23.

14. Ibid., p. 123.



On May 17, 1884, the president withdrew from the part of the reservation situated in New Mexico the following land;

"Beginning at 110° west longitude at 36' 30'' north latitude; thence due W. to 111° 30' W. longitude; thence due North to the middle of the channel of the Colorado River; thence up and along the middle of the channel of said river to its insection with the San Juan River; thence up and along the middle channel of the San Juan River to West boundary of Colorado; thence due South to the 37 parallel North latitude; thence west along said parallel to 110° W. longitude; thence due south to the place of beginning."¹⁵

This was the most valuable part of the reservation, as it could be irrigated easily and at small cost, by digging ditches. As the white people wanted this land, the government took it from the Navajos.

The boundary line of the reservation has been a continual source of trouble between the white people and the Indians for many years, each claiming that the other was infringing upon his rights. The agents requested again and again that the line be surveyed. Although the cose was estimated at approximately \$100,000 the amount appropriated for the purpose was only \$5,000 in 1881¹⁶ and an additional \$5,000 in 1884.¹⁷

15. Royce, op. cit., p. 916.

16. Annual report of Indian affairs, 1881, LXVI.

17. Ibid., 1884, p. XLIII.

The agent at Ft. Defiance implored the government to aid the Navajos if it really wished them to improve. He stated that their sheep were of an inferior grade, and the wagons which the government had issued to them were so light in weight that they could not give long service in a dry climate. He urged that money be appropriated to improve the water facilities for the stock. As a result of his request, the dam across Canon Bonito was completed the following year.¹⁸

The withdrawal of the townships on the San Juan River caused great strife between the Navajos and the white settlers. Apprehension concerning these relations was such that a special agent advised the restoration of this land to the Navajos. His recommendation was followed, and April 24, 1886, the land was returned to the Navajos.¹⁹

According to their agent the Navajos were not self-sustaining in 1887. It was his contention that they were in a transitional stage. Doors, windows, tools, a portable saw-mill, wagons, and plows were needed, he said. Although he believed in economy,

18. Ibid., p. 135.

19. Ibid., 1886, p. I.

he was of the opinion that it was unwise to practice it when supplies were needed as badly as they were in the Navajo agency.

A loss of 500 horses and 50,000 sheep occurred during the winter of 1887 on account of cold and a scarcity of food. The wool clip for the year was 300,000 pounds below the average. The Navajos had raised 8,000 pounds of pumpkins, 15,000 pounds of melons, 15,000 bushels of beans, and 135 bushels of potatoes the preceding season. For the first time, the Indians were using their own teams to freight for the government. Seventy-five hundred dollars had been spent for development. Fifteen springs were opened, five dams constructed, fourteen reservoirs built, and a number of irrigation ditches dug. Had money been available, fifty other springs would have been developed.²⁰

Every agent had requested larger appropriations in order to improve conditions. Yet by the act of June 20, 1884, \$156,651.74 was turned back to the treasury. The amount was the accumulation of the amount due to the Navajos by virtue of article VII of the treaty of 1868. This article provided that the head of the

20. Ibid., 1887, pp. 170-77.

family who cultivated the soil, "shall be entitled to receive seeds and agricultural implements for the first year, not exceeding in value \$100, and for each succeeding year he shall continue to farm for a period of two years, he shall be entitled to receive seeds and implements to the value of \$25".²¹ In 1869 congress appropriated \$140,000 for 1,400 families, and in 1870, \$35,000 for each of the two succeeding years, to be used for seeds and agricultural implements. The total for these families amounted to \$210,000. The expenditures from July 1, 1869 to June 20, 1884, were \$53,348.46. In June 20, 1884, the unused part of the appropriation was combined with the amount which reverted to the treasury. The total amount was treated as a surplus fund. The attorney general ruled that the total accumulation was due to the Navajos.²² If it were returned to the Navajos it would be unnecessary to make further appropriations to them for several years. This money could be used to aid in their advancement.

At the end of the treaty period, the school at

21. United States statutes at large, v. 15, p. 667.

22. Report of Indian affairs, 1882, p. LXVIII.

Ft. Defiance had been in existence for two years. The enrollment was thirty-five and the average daily attendance, sixteen. The children were taught the alphabet and instructed in reading, writing, arithmetic, knitting, and sewing.²³ The teacher received an annual salary of \$600.²⁴ On account of irregular attendance, the school was unsuccessful.²⁵ Apparently the children were capable and industrious. To remedy conditions the agent advocated an industrial or manual-training plan curriculum, with a farm in conjunction with the school.²⁶ In 1875, only one school, with two teachers, was in operation on the reservation containing 11,786 Navajos. According to a report of 1871, the roofs of the buildings were falling in,²⁷ and yet nine years later construction of the new building had barely been started.²⁸ One need not wonder that the Navajo children had to be forced to attend school when the building in use was a mere hovel.²⁹ In 1878, the agent said:

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23. Ibid., 1871, pp. 375-76.
 24. Ibid., 1872, p. 296.
 25. Ibid., 1871, p. 378.
 26. Ibid., 1872, p. 303.
 27. Ibid., 1871, p. 376.
 28. Ibid., 1881, p. 139.
 29. Ibid., 1878, p. IV.

"The failure of the Department to carry out the provisions of section III of the existing treaty with these Indians has, doubtless, had much to do with the successive failures of teachers and agents in the matter of education. Had comfortable and attractive schoolhouses been erected at proper points, and at once, as provided for by treaty, and necessary discretion given to agents to enable them to encourage the attendance of children at the schools by the liberal but discreet use of agency supplies and annuities, at least something might have been accomplished for education, whereas the lamentable spectacle presents itself of an almost expired treaty, and expenditure of thousands of dollars upon transient teachers and more transient scholars, and not a solitary Navajo who can either read or write. That some such course as that indicated above was not pursued from the commencement with regard to the education of this people is a matter profoundly to be regretted, inasmuch as only through the education of the young can the eradication of superstition from the tribe be effected:- superstitions which are the great obstacle in the way of their advancement to a higher plane of civilization, and operate as a fruitful source of crime and contention."³⁰

A three-story school building was constructed, in 1882. Fifty-four students were enrolled by the first of February. During the next year, eighty were enrolled. No system of industrial work had yet been established as the building was not completed by the opening of school. Success was greatly limited by the government's ~~dial-~~^{In 1884} ~~terry methods.~~ The dormitory was so poor and so crowded in 1884 that it was stifling. The morale of the school

30. Ibid., 1878, p. 108.

had to suffer accordingly.³¹ Few girls attended school, as their marriage was usually arranged by the time that they reached twelve years of age. Evidently, the Navajos did not materially improve in education during this period. The one school on the reservation had an average daily attendance of forty-three. Failure of the government to furnish proper buildings at suitable places as the treaty required, kept the attendance exceedingly low.

Most of the white people with whom the Navajo came in contact had no thought of aiding him morally. Even the agents were not of the highest type, since well qualified men could not be obtained at a yearly salary of \$1,500.³²

Housing facilities had not improved materially. Improvement of buildings was slow as the Navajos were so superstitious that they could not be induced to remain in a house after a person had died. Such a viewpoint hindered them from desiring to erect more permanent homes.

So much drunkenness occurred among the Indians that an act was passed, May 27, 1878, authorizing the

31. Ibid., 1884, p. 135.

32. Ibid., 1882, p. 1V.

appointment of Indian police for the maintenance of order on the reservation and the control of liquor traffic. The privates received five dollars and the officers eight dollars a month.³³ Although the police were inefficient, there was less crime among the 17,000 Navajos than among inhabitants of any community in the United States of comparable size. In 1875, some "squaw men" were removed from the reservation for selling whisky to the Indians. Some trouble ensued, but nothing was done as it was doubtful whether the reservation came under the jurisdiction of the court of New Mexico.³⁴ Two prospectors were killed by several Navajos who thought that they were infringing upon their rights.

④ Since many of the single government employees were guilty of immoral relations with the Navajo women, the agent recommended that only married men be employed. The many cases of adultery of the Navajo women with white men on the reservation resulted in venereal disease among the Indians. Until the coming of the Anglo-race, it is maintained that venereal diseases were unknown among the Indians. There is some evidence

33. Schmeckebier, op. cit., p. 78.

34. Report of Indian affairs, 1875, p. 331.

to controvert this contention, however.

By an act of congress, the court of Indian offenses was established in 1884. With the approval of the commissioner of the Indians, one to three judges were to be appointed by the officer in charge. The offenses consisted of destroying or stealing property, misdemeanors, and civil suits. The punishment was generally in the form of a fine, although the court might order imprisonment. All decrees were subject to the approval of the officer in charge of the reservation, and on appeal might be taken to the Indian commissioner. In 1886, the Indians on the reservation were made subject to the United States courts for crimes of murder, manslaughter, rape, assault with intent to kill, arson, burglary, and larceny. This was an advanced step since it made the Indians liable under the general laws.³⁵ In the same year the whites residing on the edge of the reservation and the Indians had trouble over water rights. As a result a Navajo was killed in Gallup. A settlement was made by money being paid to the family immediately concerned.³⁶

⑨ ~~that~~ the government was lax in protecting the

35. Schmeckebier, op. cit., p. 77.

36. Report of Indian Affairs, 1886, p. 204.

rights of the Indian is illustrated by the following evidence. An Indian had been living on a ranch for twelve years. In order to secure title to the property which he occupied, he paid \$160 for a paper which proved to be worthless. Although the act was reported to the office at Washington nothing was done.

From the evidence in this chapter, the Indian policy of the government manifests inconsistencies. In fact, it embraces two mutually inconsistent policies that reflect upon each other. The one regulates "the treatment of the tribes which are potentially hostile.. ..repressed just so long and so far as they are supported in idleness by the government."³⁷ Inadequacy and inconsistency of policy have caused much ridicule and partisan abuse. It is illogical for the government to give more to the indolent and undeserving Indians than to those who are striving to do their best; yet, it has done so. The Indian policy has been considered justifiable merely because on the frontier it has reduced the loss of life and property.³⁸

The Navajo Indians were successful economically

37. Ibid., 1872, p. 3.

38. Ibid., 1872, p. 4.

during this period in spite of the fact that the government had not aided them materially. Efforts toward education were failures. The coming of the white man seemed to be a social handicap to the Navajos. The government was not only parsimonious in its dealings with the Navajo Indians, but it failed to fulfill its treaty with them. Since the government's policy was inconsistent and since education was a failure, it is reasonable to conclude that the Navajos progressed during this period mainly through their own efforts. Only the future can tell about the social effect which this period has had upon the Navajos.

CHAPTER IV
THE ALLOTMENT PERIOD
1887-1906

By the end of the Reservation period the Navajo Indians had achieved considerable economic success. Large amounts of stock had been accumulated. Attempts in behalf of education had been failures, however. The coming of the white man seemed to be a social handicap. For several years the public officers and students of the Indian problem had recommended the passage of an allotment act. Not until February 7, 1887, was a law enacted, providing for the allotment of land to individual Indians and for conferring citizenship on all Indians entitled to allotments.¹ "This act effected a marked change in the status of the individual Indian to whom its provisions were applied, and much of the present activity of the Office of Indian Affairs results from the application of this law and various statutes amendatory or supplemental to it."²

It was unnecessary that allotments be made within any definite period. The president was to take action

1. United States statutes at large, v. 24, p. 388.
2. Schmeckebier, op. cit., p. 78.

on allotments whenever he judged any reservation to be suitable for agricultural or grazing purposes. The head of each family was to be given one-quarter section of land; single persons over eighteen and orphan children under eighteen, one eighth section; and other children under eighteen, one sixteenth section.³ Double allotment was allowed in each instance if the land was adaptable to grazing purposes only.⁴ The Indian could make his own selection of land, but if he failed to do so within four years from the time set for the allotment, the secretary of the interior was given authority to order the selection to be made by an officer of the government.⁵

The Navajo reservation was so rocky and had so little water that it was unsuitable for division. In fact, it would have been inhuman to have forced the Indians to take up allotments and to remain upon a homestead. Their natural environment had forced them to a nomadic existence in order to obtain food and water for their wandering herds.

3. Sen. doc. 49th cong., 2nd.ses., v. 18, pt.1, p.1008.

4. United States statutes at large, v. 26, p. 794.

5. Schmeckebier, op. cit., p. 80.



Seven or eight thousand Navajos living off the reservation had been in continual trouble with the white people who resided in the vicinity. The government sent a special agent to investigate the situation, and if possible, to effect a settlement. He reported that it would be cruel to force them back to the reservation where water was so scarce.⁶ The next year \$10,150 was used to develop water, thus enabling many Indians to return to the reservation. The agent leased some of the land for grazing purposes. Although this brought in a fair compensation and gave employment to the Navajos as herders, the leasing was in violation of the treaty of 1868, since the land had been rented without the permission of the Indians.⁷

In 1892, the executive act of May 17, 1884, was modified in order to restore to the public domain all lands west of the 110° of west longitude within the territory of Utah.⁸ In this year a strained feeling developed between the white people and the Navajos, as the latter, from necessity, went beyond the boundaries of the reservation for food and water for their stock.

6. Annual report of Indian affairs, 1887, p. LXVIX.

7. Ibid., 1889, p. 31.

8. Royce, op. cit., p. 944.

To overcome this practice it was recommended that the reservation be divided and that some form of water supply for the sheer be developed.⁹ Later it was suggested that a number of wells be drilled, for in many places the water was only a short distance from the surface of the earth. Irrigation could easily be supplied in the San Juan valley. It was estimated that 58 per cent of the tribe were living off the reservation, in accordance with a right assured by the treaty of 1868. They could not have supported sufficient sheep in the allotted limits to provide a living. Eight acres were necessary for the maintenance of a sheep for one year, and if they continued to graze on the same area year after year, the grass would die. In 1888, a council of two hundred Navajos asked for the land ten miles east to the railroad and to the Little Colorado river, promising that if this were added to their territory all of the tribe would return to the reservation.¹⁰

A geologist was sent by the government in 1892 to ascertain if valuable ores were in the mountains. None

9. Annual report of Indian affairs, 1892, 125-26.
10. Ibid., 1892, p. 580.

were found, and consequently the land was not taken from the Navajos.¹¹

That same year the government issued no rations, and distributed goods amounting to only twelve cents per capita. Scanty rainfall made the grass scarce. The agent asked for three or four hundred dollars to improve an old ditch in the San Juan district. A flume, fifteen hundred feet long, was built to carry water from the Bonito creek. The saw mill had proved successful, ninety two thousand feet of lumber having been sawed during the year immediately preceding.

According to the agent's report of 1893, a drought placed the tribe in a worse condition than it had been in for a number of years. It became necessary to sell many sheep, and to kill the cattle of others to supply food for the children. It was a case of steal or starve. The agent seemed to think that the Navajos were going backward rather than forward.¹² The next year, they were even poorer than they were the year before, and yet only \$7,500 was given by the government toward their support.¹³

11. Ibid., 1892, p. 75.

12. Ibid., 1893, pp. 109-10.

13. Ibid., 1894, p. 99.

In 1894, a limited fund was appropriated for the location of points or areas suitable for wells.

The drought continued, causing further unfavorable conditions throughout 1895. Not only were the crops failures, but many sheep died from hunger and disease. The price of wool had fallen from eleven cents a pound to three to five cents a pound. The agent at Ft. Defiance was compelled to buy ten thousand pounds of flour on his own responsibility. Food had been so scarce in the past two years that many had had nothing to eat but meat. The government gave only forty dollars, and this to provide for poor children.¹⁴ The Indian rights association, after visiting the reservation in January, sent clothing, seed, and tools. Some of the Indians walked for three days in order to obtain their allowance. Congress made a special appropriation for seed. The money voted for the development of irrigation was entrusted to a man who knew nothing about the work. On account of his poor leadership the project was an absolute failure. The instability and the transiency

14. Ibid., 1895, p. 120

which characterized the whole project was lamentable.¹⁵

In 1894, Black Creek dam, Red Lake dam, two dams at Newell Park, Wheatfield ditch, and Carreso ditch were started; none were completed successfully, however.

In 1897, the Navajos became enthusiastic over the irrigation improvement on their reservation. To finish the Carreso creek ditch, which reclaimed three hundred acres, \$1,133.73 was spent. Wheatfield ditch, irrigating five hundred acres, was dug at a cost of \$2,500, and the agency ditch from Bonito creek was completed at a cost of \$3,500.¹⁶ Many other ditches were repaired. The ditches on Wheatfield, Cottonwood, and Defiance creeks were finished.

The winter of 1899 was severe, causing great loss of sheep and horses. For the first time in the history of the reservation, a good road was constructed. Three hundred and twenty Navajos were working upon the Santa Fé railroad because they realized that the resources of the reservation would not support them. As the rainfall was scant for several years, the Red Lake

15. Ibid., 1896, pp. 1008-9.

16. Ibid., 1897-98, p. 29.

ditch, which would irrigate five-hundred acres under normal conditions, supplied water for only two farms.¹⁷ In 1901 an appropriation of \$800 was made to repair ditches, and \$1,500 for improving springs.¹⁸

The drought continued for three years. The agent urged additional development of irrigation along the San Juan river to make one-third of the families self-supporting.¹⁹ In 1901 the reservation was enlarged as follows:

"The boundary line....commences at a point where the south line of the Navajo Indian Reservation intersects the Little Colorado river. It runs thence due south to the fifty standard parallel; thence east on that parallel to the middle or the south line of township 21 north range 15 east; thence due north to the south line of the Moqui Reservation; thence west to the place of beginning."²⁰

On 1904, two irrigation ditches were begun. One, reclaiming 822.4 acres of land, was built at a cost of \$10,644.63. The other, the San Juan ditch, estimated to cost \$66,831.81 was never completed on account of insufficient funds.²¹ The following year a number of small ditches were substituted at the cost of \$3,000. The agent reported that not one-fifth of a tract of

17. Ibid., 1898, p. 29.

18. Ibid., 1901-2, p. 65.

19. Ibid., p. 65.

20. Ibid., 1902-3, pp. 117-118.

21. Ibid., 1903-4, pp. 44-5.

the best irrigable land was in cultivation, as it was being held by a clan. He suggested assigning fifteen acres to a family. In 1905, blooded Rambouillet rams to the number of 335 were issued to improve the quality of the sheep.²²

At the beginning of the Allotment period, the average daily attendance in the school had decreased in one year from forty-three to thirty-five. The death of several children from the gross neglect of the physician was an important factor in the decrease, as was the superintendent and matron's lack of interest in the pupils.²³ Although the school had been established for twenty years, only thirty Navajos could read.²⁴ This condition was not the fault of the children, for they were quick to learn and responsive to teaching. The educational facilities were insufficient and the salaries paid to those in charge were so low that it was impossible to secure capable employees. Another serious drawback was the uncertainty in tenure of office. Politics had played such an important part in

22. Ibid., 1906, p. 167.

23. Ibid., 1888, p. 194.

24. Ibid., 1890, p. CXLIII.

the selection of employees that the management of the schools was handicapped by partisan influence. Supplies were often of such an inferior quality that they gave poor service.²⁵

Parents were opposed to the plan of educating their children at a point removed from the reservation, especially since Chief Manuelito's two sons had died while attending a school in the east.²⁶ In 1890, thirty children were seized and sent to Junction City, Colorado, without consent of the parents. So homesick did the children become that half of them ran away and came home telling pitiful stories of their hardships.²⁷ The agent took seven police to Round Rock, Arizona, in 1892, to procure twenty-five or thirty children to attend school. He was opposed so strongly by Black Horse and a band of other Navajos that he called for the aid of a lieutenant and ten soldiers.²⁸ This incident is indicative of the feeling that was prevalent among many of the tribe. The school at Ft. Defiance, the only one on the reservation, was

25. Ibid., 1890, p. CXLIH.

26. Coolidge, Dane and Mary Roberts, The Navajo Indians, p. 278.

27. Ibid., p. 279.

28. Annual report of Indian affairs, 1892, pp. 156-7.

reputed to be among the lowest of Indian schools in trade education. Excepting for the excellent work done in the shoe-shop, instruction was of an inferior caliber. The school produced no worthwhile results, notwithstanding the fact that the Navajos are a people of unusual mechanical ingenuity and skill. The enrollment was seventy-five.²⁹ Poor attendance was caused by illness and by many pupils running away. Sanitary conditions in the school were deplorable. Two tubs or tanks without running water were provided. It was necessary for several children to bathe in the same water. The mattresses in the boys' dormitory had an offensive, nauseating odor, even during the vacation period.³⁰

In 1893, the civil service law was extended to include physicians, teachers, matrons, school superintendents. The latter were required to furnish a bond. As to capacity, training, and experience for entrance to the service, there is no information available.³¹

That same year fifteen representatives of the Navajos were sent to the Chicago exposition. So

29. Ibid., 1893, pp. 109-10.

30. Ibid., 1893, p. 19.

31. Ibid., 1894, pp. 4-5.

amazed were they to find the remarkable progress which other Indians had made that upon their return they awakened an interest in education among the members of their tribe. By June, 1894, the enrollment of the school had swelled to 197, an increase of more than a hundred per cent. The school building provided for only 150 children. To accomodate the children who desired to attend, all of the sitting-rooms and play-rooms had to be converted into dormitories. In September of the following year the enrollment dropped to 185. An old commissary at Fort Defiance was divided into two school rooms.³²

On May 6, 1896, the civil service was extended to all employees of the Indian service, except those persons employed as laborers and those who had to be nominated and confirmed by the senate.³³

By 1898, the school enrollment had increased to 54 girls and 131 boys. Only three of the former were over 14 years of age. Yet, according to the annual report, these children made in addition to many small

32. Ibid., 1896, p. 3.

33. Ibid., 1896, p. 3.

blankets, 264 aprons, 98 capes, 172 combination suits, 175 drawers, 108 dresses, 350 napkins, 113 pairs of pants, 179 pillow slips, 193 sheets, 75 shirts, 505 towels, 61 waists, 22 curtains, 18 tablecloths.³⁴

Little time or effort could have been spent upon books or play. The superintendent asked for a small boy's dormitory, as the old one was so crowded that proper ventilation was impossible.³⁵ Although the same request was made the following year, the dormitory was not built until 1902. During 1898, considerable sickness developed among the pupils, and six deaths resulted.³⁶

A school with a capacity of 60 pupils was established at Tuba City, ninety miles north of Winslow. Within one year its enrollment was 118 and its average daily attendance 106. It can readily be seen that the Navajos were taking advantage of the educational facilities offered to them.

At Ft. Defiance, the agent was constantly appealing for new buildings and better equipment. The enroll-

34. Ibid., 1898-99, p. 125.

35. Ibid., 1898-99, p. 123.

36. Ibid., 1901-2, p. 182.

ment in 1905 was 280, and the average daily attendance 211. relatively little progress in school work was made.³⁷ The sanitary condition of the school was deplorable--the sewer system was faulty and the water was both inadequate and polluted. The agent asked that day schools be established in different parts of the reservation. Each year policemen had to be sent to the homes to collect pupils. At the end of this period the enrollment in the schools was only 400. Necessary buildings had not been erected, and there was little practical instruction offered in industrial subjects.³⁸

A feeling of discord had gradually become apparent during the first year of the Allotment period. Much bitterness had developed in the San Juan district. Although the land which had been withdrawn from the reservation by an executive order of May 17, 1884, was restored on April 24, 1886, many white people had filed upon this land while it was in the public domain. The Indians were cut off from water as a result. The trouble which ensued could not be adjusted satisfacto-

37. Ibid., 1905-6, p. 386.

38. Ibid., 1905-6, p. 386.

rily until the settlers were removed and indemnified for their improvements.³⁹

An attempt had been made to arrest a Navajo for stealing, and not being guilty, he resisted arrest. In the struggle he and three white men were killed. The loss of 157 horses in March caused the white people to accuse the Indians of theft, and more bitterness ensued. A Navajo was killed in a dispute, May 6; the murderer fled. Another conflict between an Indian and a white man resulted in the death of both combatants. Such disturbances were usually caused by the white men.⁴⁰

The settlers on the San Juan river were ejected by the government officials, in 1888. This action relieved the deplorable situation that had prevailed for some time. During the rest of the year the conduct on the reservation was generally good. Crime was limited; the only major offense was the killing of a whisky peddler by the Navajos.

In 1892, five Navajos from the reservation met with violent death. The sheriff of Apache county,

39. Ibid., 1887, p. 174

40. Ibid., 1887, pp. 174-5.

Arizona, attempted to arrest one for stealing cattle and horses. The Indian, armed with an ax, defied arrest. A cow-boy deputy killed him. Another was killed by a whisky peddler; a third was killed by the Indians for witchcraft; a fourth was murdered by an Indian soldier, and the fifth was killed accidentally.⁴¹

So rapidly was the liquor traffic increasing that each year the agent lamented about its headway.

The only physician on the reservation was located at Ft. Defiance, one hundred miles away, well beyond reach of the Indians on the San Juan river.⁴² In 1897 a mission hospital was built at the agency.

Twenty men were employed in 1897 to assess the property of the Navajos in Coconino county, Arizona. Sixteen families had their sheep in a grazing district between the Little Colorado and the Grand Cañon. The county officials demanded five dollars for every 100 head of sheep grazing in the area, and the Indians were informed that unless they complied they would have to move. In answer to the Indians' request for further time to consider, their houses and corrals were burned,

41. Ibid., 1892, p. 208.

42. Ibid., 1893, p. 113.

and their sheep were driven into the river, many of which were drowned. Several thousand dollars' worth of property was lost. The government asked for an explanation from the sheriff. Since he contended that no harm was done, no action was taken.⁴³ As had ever been the custom, the Navajo must vacate if the white man desired the land.

The Indians who worked upon the railroad often became demoralized by their contact with white men. Many of the women became prostitutes. In the winter of 1904, there was considerable sickness. No medical attention was rendered except the little supplied by the missionaries. No physician was stationed at Ft. Defiance at the time. The small hospital was so small and so poorly equipped that no one could be properly treated in it.⁴⁴

The Indian department was constantly endeavoring to improve its methods of dealing with the Indians. In 1889, the Indian commissioner recommended a number of changes which he felt would be beneficial to the Indians. He said:

1. Reservations must vanish.

43. Ibid., 1897-8, p. 65.

44. Ibid., 1904-5, p. 145.

2. Indians must be absorbed in our national life.
3. Individuality must be recognized. Each Indian must be treated as a man, hold property, and have the protection of the courts. He is not entitled to be supported in idleness.
4. They must conform to the white man's ways.
5. In order to prepare the rising generation for the new order of things, the school system must be changed.
6. Tribal relations should be broken up, socialism destroyed, and the family and autonomy of the individual, substituted.
7. In the administration of Indian affairs integrity, justice, patience, and good sense should prevail.
8. The chief requisite of employees should be character.⁴⁵

In 1890, he advocated improvement in the personnel of the service, elevation of the schools, development of all the industries through instruction, modification of the ration system, discouragement of Wild West shows, and inculcation of the principles of patriotism.⁴⁶ The next year he said, although no two tribes are the same and their customs and languages differ greatly, all have been dealt with en masse. The government should have a definite aim of teaching citizenship and adapt the means to this end. They should be aided if

45. Ibid., 1889, p. 3.

46. Ibid., 1890, p. VII



necessary, and taught to surrender their autonomy and become a part of the nation. He added further, that the Indians were living in the twilight of civilization and should be treated justly. The course of the government should adhere to it.⁴⁷

Frequent changes in commissioners have been responsible for laxity, indecision, and shifting policies. From 1832 to 1892, twenty-five different commissioners with an average term of less than two and a half years have had supervision of the Indians. In such a short time it has been impossible to do more than to learn the duties of the office. As expected, the commissioners often have been dominated by public opinion. One of the most serious drawbacks to the service ~~arose~~ ^{came} from the practice of congressmen turning their constituents who were clamoring for office over to the Indian department. The opportunities for fraud and dishonesty were so numerous and enticing that many of the employees took advantage of them.⁴⁸ In 1892, the government in an effort to improve conditions decided to appoint army officers

47. Ibid., 1891, p. 5-9.

48. Ibid., 1892, p. 134.



as Indian agents.⁴⁹

Thus it has been shown that during the Allotment period, the Navajos progressed economically. The government endeavored to aid them by developing better water facilities and by supplying blooded rams to improve the quality of their sheep. In the years under discussion the Navajos took more interest in education, especially after the fifteen representatives sent to the Chicago exposition reported that other Indians had made much progress, and since the personnel of the employees had improved by the inauguration of civil service.

It has been pointed out in this chapter how unfairly the Navajos have been treated on various occasions. The real proof of their character is that they have not been ruined by contact with the white people. They should be judged according to their own standards, and not according to ours. Having a distinct individuality, they should be treated as individuals. Their development has been gradual, and it must continue to be gradual. By no means should the government attempt to remold them by uprooting their traits. A lack of interest on the part of the government in dealing with

49. Ibid., 1892, p. 6.

the Navajos has not been the cause of their limited progress; rather the lack of judgment in the appointing officers and employees for Indian service has been the chief retarding factor. Moreover, short tenure of office and lack of funds and authority have been instrumental in lowering the efficiency of those charged with the immediate direction and supervision of the Navajos.

CHAPTER V
THE INDIVIDUALISTIC PERIOD
1906-1929

During the Allotment period, the Navajos not only progressed economically, but improved educationally. The character of the land on the reservation was such, however, that none of the tribe could afford to take advantage of the Dawes plan of immediate citizenship with allotment. By the Burke act of May 8, 1906, it was no longer possible for an Indian to receive citizenship with his allotment. Citizenship was not available to him until he received a simple patent, and not until the secretary of the interior felt satisfied that the allottee was capable of managing his own affairs was a fee simple granted.¹ This change, it was hoped, would encourage the individual to strive for personal improvement. From 1906 to 1929 has been designated the Individualistic period on account of the emphasis that was placed on the individual.

The number of sheep increased each year--and as expected, the need for food and water increased in

1. United States statutes at large, v. 34, p. 181.

proportion. In 1906, the government appropriated over \$72,000 to repair ditches and to develop irrigation. The amount consisted of \$10,484 for Ft. Defiance, \$10,800 for San Juan, \$1,550 for the Navajo extension, \$6,620 for the western Navajo reservation, \$9,135 for engineering and office work, \$14,325 for construction, and \$20,700 for equipment.² The department, it would seem, finally had come to realize that the Navajos, if they were to be successful in the future, must have material aid for the advancement of agriculture and industry.

(R) 10 An extension of 53,000 acres in New Mexico and 30,000 acres in Arizona was added to the reservation in 1908.³ The next year 80 acres of agricultural land and 160 acres of grazing land were ~~allotted~~ ^{given} to each of 1667 Navajos.⁴ By 1911, 9,600 acres of farming land and 319,363 acres of grazing land had been allotted. The number of sheep owned by the tribe was estimated to be 500,000.⁵ (~~Considerable work had been accomplished in improving protecting small springs;~~)

2. Annual report of Indian affairs, 1906-7, p. 26.

3. Ibid., 1908, p. 96.

4. Ibid., 1909, p. 40.

5. Ibid., 1911, p. 9.

~~several wells had been drilled by 1916.~~ In the same year the government began negotiating for the purchase of lands and water rights amounting in value to \$32,233, to be added to the reservation.⁶ In 1917, the Navajos asked to exchange some of their land for land held by the Santa Fe railroad. Failure of the government to act on this proposal resulted in the loss of excellent water rights. Food and water were so scarce on the reservation near Leupp, Arizona, that unless the government ^{gave} ~~soon furnished~~ aid many of the sheep would die.⁷

^{including} In 1919, "the Navajo country, ^{the} ~~lying~~ in three states, included the ~~superintendencies of~~ Pueblo Bonito in New Mexico, the Navajo and San Juan in Arizona and New Mexico, the Moqui, Western Navajo, and Leupp in Arizona, and about 600,000 acres in the southern part of Utah. It embraced parts of San Juan and McKinley counties in New Mexico, the Navajo and Apache counties in Arizona and the southern part of San Juan county in Utah."⁸ Each year conditions on the reservation grew more serious and the ranges became overstocked. It was impossible for a Navajo to exist on an allotment of a quarter section, since eight acres were required

6. Ibid., 1916, p. 50.

7. Ibid., 1917, p. 363.

8. Ibid., 1919, pp. 229-30.

to graze a steer. } A constant plea for more land was heard. Five hundred of the tribe were living near Ramah, New Mexico. In 1910, they had 10,000 sheep; ten years later the number had decreased to 7,000. Many sheep had died from ~~improper inbreeding and from~~ starvation. Most of the land was leased by white men. It was suggested that the government rent 40,000 acres from the Santa Fe railroad for the use of these indians *as a solution to the problem.* This could be done for \$600 annually. Five hundred sheep would insure an annual income of \$125.⁹ Since the business men of New Mexico and Arizona objected to having any more of their taxable land taken for reservation purposes the government made no exchange for railroad land. Had the Navajos paid taxes, the chief objection would have been eliminated. The non-reservation Indians would have been willing to do this in order to secure land for permanent use.¹⁰ The tribe was constantly increasing, and the need for water, the prime essential for the economic and social development of the Navajos, was becoming acute. By 1919, as many as 125 wells had been drilled, but no money had been appropriated for their maintenance. In the Pueblo Bonito

9. Ibid., 1919, pp. 241-42.

10. Ibid., 1919, p. 233.

district, although there was not one living stream, eight artesian wells and twenty stock wells made it one of the best Navajo grazing regions.¹¹

In order to eliminate skin diseases from the sheep and to raise the quality of wool, the government installed dipping vats throughout the reservation. The Navajos were compelled to dip their sheep, paying a few cents a head for the privilege. They objected seriously at first, but after noticing the marked improvement of their sheep, they cooperated in every way possible. This is evidence that the Navajos are an alert progressive people. At one time only two pounds of wool could be clipped from each sheep, whereas the yield for each sheep has been increased to six¹²

According to the Indian commissioner's report of 1924, the urgent need of the Navajo was land. Although the reservation was immense, it had such scanty rainfall that the land could be used only for grazing purposes. It was especially adaptable to sheep raising. However, the reservation was overstocked; the Navajos' love for the horse was an extravagance in which

11. Ibid., 1919, p. 232.

12. Ibid., 1924, p. 13.



they indulged at the expense of remunerative stock.¹³ Too many horses and too many goats intensified the grazing shortage. It was suggested, as a remedy, that each goat in excess of a certain quota be taxed ten cents a head. The commissioner recommended that appropriations be increased for labor and well equipment, and that \$200,000 be set aside to purchase additional land adjoining the reservation.¹⁴

About one hundred Indians living around Ramah, New Mexico, had received their allotment of 160 acres adjoining privately owned lands. As a quarter section was not enough to support their flocks, a number of the Indians soon lost their interests to an Albuquerque bank. This bank offered to sell its holdings at three dollars an acre. The Indian commissioner suggested that congress appropriate \$150,000 payable from tribal funds to provide better land for these Navajos. The coal and timber, belonging to the tribe would furnish ample security, it was stated.¹⁵ Since the policy of the government has been to equip the Navajos to live in harmony with the economic life of the prevailing

14. Ibid., pp. 13-4.

15. Ibid., p. 14.

civilization, this was a really opportune time for it to do something to advance this policy, and thereby to aid the Navajo to become self-supporting.

It was further advocated that an appropriation be made for the development of a water supply in the western Navajo reservation. Of the six divisions of the reservation this is the most westerly. It is one of the most interesting, fascinating, picturesque sections of the United States. In it lie Monumental Valley, Rainbow Bridge, and Navajo Mountain country, Painted Desert, and many marvelous geological and topographical abnormalities, and ruins of cliff dwellers'.¹⁶ The six thousand Navajos living on it own 280,000 sheep and goats, 2,000 cattle, and thousands of ponies and burros. In the entire country only one well had been drilled by the Indian service. It was at Kayenta, seventy-five miles north of Tuba City, the home of a small boarding school. An irrigation project undertaken by the government at this point proved a failure as no one took enough interest to induce the Navajos to use it, or even to

16. Ibid., 1924, p. 18.

keep the ditches free of sediment and other obstructions.¹⁷ Although the greater part of the region was of such a character that the average white man could not have existed on it, for generations the Indians had succeeded in making a living there. Had they been given some substantial encouragement, such as practical help in the development of water, they would have become prosperous. An appropriation of \$15,000 had been requested for water development, \$5,000 for a well rig, \$5,000 for material and supplies, and \$5,000 for the expense of a small crew to begin developing springs.¹⁸ The request was not granted.

In 1925, congress authorized the exchange of the alternate sections of railroad and public domain lands on the Navajo reservation of Arizona. A similar exchange had previously been made in New Mexico. This was done for the purpose of consolidation of land sections of similar character so as to make it practicable to set aside solid grazing areas for the Navajo Indians. The owners of private lands did not cooperate with the department and there was no way to force them

17. Ibid., 1924, p. 18.

18. Ibid., 1924, p. 18-9.

to do so. As has been shown, the condition of the Navajos on the public domain was precarious, for they owned no land. A few years previous congress had made an appropriation for leasing and purchasing land for them. This action temporarily improved conditions.¹⁹

At the beginning of this period the enrollment of the school at Ft. Defiance was 242 and the average daily attendance was 223. The girls' dormitory had been greatly improved by installing bath tubs, lavatories, and toilets. The school at Tohatchi had an enrollment of 152.²⁰

The teachers were beginning to realize the importance of adapting the instruction to local conditions and to the immediate needs of the pupils.²¹ Many were still unable to grasp the fact that there was a difference in heredity and environment between the white child and the Navajo child, and that the methods employed in instructing the former necessarily must be modified when used to teach the latter. To make a success of teaching the Indians, the individual child had to be studied. A Navajo is quick

19. Ibid., 1925, p. 5.

20. Ibid., 1906-7, pp. 183-4.

21. Ibid., 1907, p. 134.

and responsive, if led, but slow and stubborn if driven. The teacher's methods were often restrictive rather than developmental. Discipline in the schools, consequently, became a serious problem. The curriculum throughout the whole Indian service was uniform. Such was not desirable, as a course of study adaptable to eastern Indian children, was poorly suited to the Navajos. The environment and interests of the two classes were not similar, in fact, not greatly alike. The curriculum needed to be adapted to individual abilities and needs. "Indian tribes and individual Indians within the tribes vary so much that standard content and method of education, no matter how carefully prepared, would be worse than futile."²² In many instances the work of the schools proved so difficult and confining to the children, and so different from their home life, that it undermined their health.

In 1910, the education system of the Indian service took a step toward decentralization by dividing the schools into six supervisory districts.²³ But in 1917, the government took a step in the opposite direction by requiring all children to pass uniform examinations

22. Ibid., 1908, p. 141.

23. Ibid., 1910, p. 13.



sent periodically from Washington. It also attempted to make the curriculum parallel to the academic work of the public schools. This emphasis on academic work was not adapted to the needs of the Navajo, as it did not train him to live on the reservation, his future home.

In this year, the agent at Leupp asked that the schools be enlarged and that educational facilities in general be expanded. He said that this could be done without serious overhead expense.²⁴ However, nothing had been accomplished up to the time the 1919 annual report of the Indian commissioner was published. According to this report there were 9,693 Navajo children eligible to attend school; and although the maximum capacity of the schools was 2,072, as many as 2,089 were in attendance at one time. The children at Moqui enjoyed no educational facilities. Because economic conditions would not permit these Indians to live in villages, the commissioner thought that it would be best to provide boarding schools for them. He deplored the conditions then existing.²⁵ It was his opinion that the progress of the Navajo was to be accomplished

24. Ibid., 1917, p. 364.

25. Ibid., 1919, pp. 235-6.

through the education of his children. To make the government policy successful in dealing with this tribe, schools must be established to accommodate all of the children, he said.

High prices in 1921 were responsible for lowering the standard of work done in the schools. Since the appropriation was not raised, money that should have been used for educational supplies and equipment had to be used for subsistence.²⁶ Yet in this year the commissioner said that in order to better the condition of the Navajo it would be necessary for the government to give exceptional consideration to the advancement of education, health, and economic pursuits among the Navajos.²⁷

In 1922, the enrollment was larger than ever before. The whole tribe, in an effort to become better able to compete with the growing economic needs of the day, seemed anxious for an education. In the San Juan district there were a thousand children without school facilities.²⁸ The slogan of the Indian service for

26. Ibid., 1921, p. 5.

27. Ibid., 1921, p. 25.

28. Report of Board of Indian commissioners, p. 36.

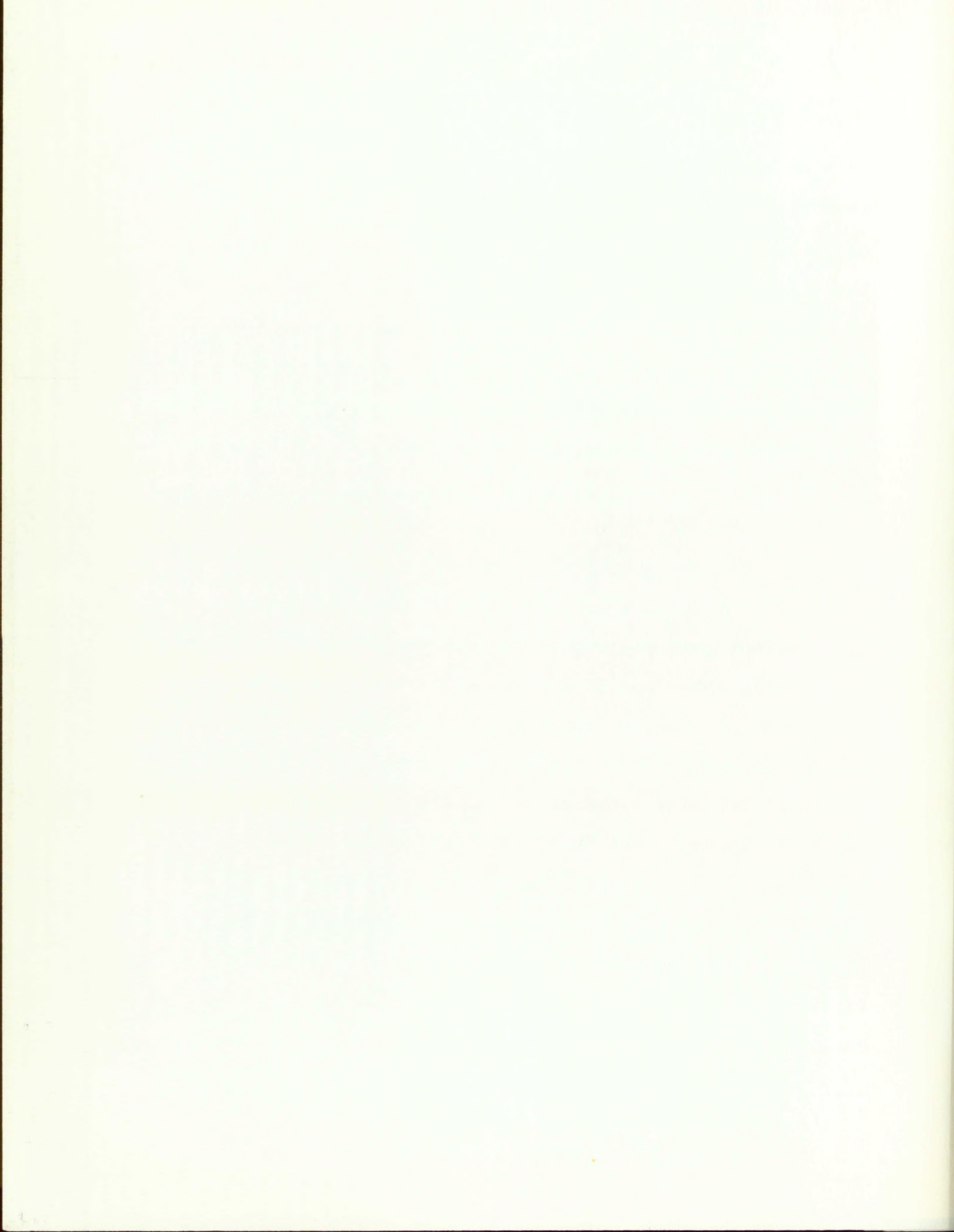
the year 1923, was: "Every eligible Indian child in school every day. Every school filled to its limit."²⁹ The inconsistency of the policy of the government in its relations with the Navajo children is evident, as every school on the reservation had been overflowing for years. Since few schools had not been established, educational needs were pressing.

In 1924, the advantage of the existing form of education was seriously questioned by the Indian commissioner. He said that the economic condition of the reservation was such that every member of the family must labor in order that the tribe might be successful. The children must help to herd the sheep. Nothing which they had learned in school had prepared them to become better shepherds or to improve their circumstances on the reservation. They might be taught to read, write, or to become mechanics and carpenters; but could they use this knowledge after it had been learned? The children attended the reservation schools only until they completed the first three grades. From this point on, their education was obtained at a boarding school removed from the reservation. Often they were placed

29. Report of secretary of interior, p. 36.

in such an environment that upon returning home they were unable to fit into the home and industrial life of their family and tribe. The commissioner felt that the problem of the government was not merely a matter of providing schools for the children and children for the schools, but one of transforming an entire people from one stage of culture to another. The Navajos had been progressing economically; if uprooted, what would be the result? He urged further, that the school curriculum should be planned to prepare the children for the life that they would have to lead, not for an ideal life or for the life of white children. To him the greatest need was a more liberal policy toward the schools and a realization of the fact that there is a point at which economy serves to defeat the purpose of any work. Saving money should not be an end in itself, he said. The object of the government should be to train the Navajo so that he may better his status in life. The educational situation should be studied from an industrial viewpoint. More authority in matters of local affairs should be delegated to the superintendent, and less sent to Washington for action, he contended.³⁰

30. Ibid., 1924, p. 16.



In 1926, the school program was changed. One-half of the time was to be spent in classroom instruction, one-fourth in vocational activities, and one-fourth in institutional work.³¹ The change represents another step forward.

According to the report made in 1928 by Meriam and his survey staff, Indian children in government boarding schools have been grossly neglected. Diet has been the outstanding neglect. An effort was made to feed a child for eleven cents a day, excluding the cost of products raised on the school farm. The diet has been deficient in quantity, quality, and variety. Upon investigation it was found that trachoma and tuberculosis were prevalent among the Navajo school children. Both of these diseases, medical authorities say, can be prevented by proper diet and wholesome living conditions. Although it was evidently known that the diet should contain milk, fruit, and fresh vegetables, the children were not adequately provided with these foods. In 1927, the schools at Ft. Defiance and Tohachi were set aside for children suffering from trachoma. Even after the change, milk was not a part

31. Report of commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1926, p.7.

of the regular diet. As has been mentioned, all of the schools on the reservation were so filled beyond capacity that even the dormitories were crowded. Medical supervision of the children has been inadequate. The physical examinations have been superficial and the defects discovered have not been remedied.³²

In 1928, \$300 was allowed for the annual expenses of a child who was attending a school of less than two hundred pupils, and \$270 for one attending a school of more than two hundred pupils. These amounts must meet all expenses, including teachers' salaries, supplies, food, and clothing.³³ It may be seriously questioned whether the education of the Indian can be greatly improved without more adequate appropriations.

Gradually the personnel of the Indian service had been improved. In 1916, eighteen men were sent to inspect every Indian activity in the several districts, including reservation, and irrigation projects. This corps of workers consisted of faithful, intelligent men, possessed of human sympathy and business ability.³⁴

32. Meriam, Lewis and associates, The problem of Indian administration, pp. 11-12.

33. Annual report of Indian affairs, 1928, p. 57.

34. Ibid., 1916, p. 70.



Their recommendations and suggestions were followed by the Indian service so far as the small appropriations would permit. Large sums of money were used for hospitals, medical supplies, field dentists, and medical supervisors. The pullman towel system was installed in the schools, and children who were suffering from trachoma were segregated.

Infant mortality among the Indians has been high, three-fifths of children die before the age of five. More physicians are needed on the reservation in order to correct this deplorable condition. Care should be given to expectant mothers, the heaviest burden-bearers of the tribe.³⁵

According to the suggestions made in 1916 by the Indian commissioner, the government should endeavor to improve the health of the Navajos, suppress the liquor traffic, further the development of vocational training in Indian schools, and protect Indian property.

In 1923, the government held its first annual council with the Navajos for discussion of the economic, the educational, and the social needs of the tribe.

35. Ibid., 1916, pp. 3-4.

The conference has created a better understanding between the two factions, thereby paving the way for greater advancement in the future.

The following year, Dr. John McMuller was appointed head of a staff of doctors to make a campaign against trachoma. He found that thirty per cent of the Navajo adults and 46.64 per cent of the school children were infected.³⁶ Field nurses were needed to aid in fighting the disease.

An inter-tribal Indian ceremonial was planned in 1922 at Gallup, New Mexico, by a number of leading citizens. The ceremony has become an annual event, with its chief objectives as collecting myths and legends, including their accompanying rites and rituals, preserving these myths and legends for future generations, and perpetuating the ancient arts and crafts. Prizes are awarded for the best exhibits in all Indian handicraft, such as blankets, silverwork, basketry, and pottery. School exhibits, fruits, vegetables, and other products made or raised by the Indians are exhibited and judged. In the first few years many of the Navajo exhibits were inferior, but they have improved so much that they now take many of the prizes. The

36. Ibid., 1924, p. 20.

annual ceremony has aroused the Navajos' latent powers or natural abilities to a degree that they have greatly improved themselves economically, educationally, and socially. The Indian department is now cooperating by urging the schools to participate in the exhibition. It feels that the ceremonial has proven one of the most potent agencies to encourage the individual Navajo to improve himself.

In summarizing the Individualistic period it may be said that, in the years concerned, the government aided economic advancement of the Navajos by installing vats to eradicate certain sheep diseases, by developing water facilities, and by adding land to the reservation. Notwithstanding the fact that much has been done to improve sheep-raising, constant heed still exists for some method to alleviate over-crowded grazing conditions. The Navajos have progressed educationally in spite of uniformity of curriculum, crowded conditions in the schools, and insufficient funds for Indian activities. The social development of the tribe has been slow on account of a lack of understanding and human interest on the part of the government. The Indian traders have exerted greater social influence than the government because of their closer contact and deeper personal



interest in the Navajos' general welfare. The Navajos cannot be forced into the white man's ways through legislation, but they must be advanced at a rate compatible with their own capacity and degree of culture.



CHAPTER VI
THE HUMANITARIAN PERIOD
1929-1932

At the close of the Individualistic period there was a pitiable economic condition among the Navajos, a crowded condition on the reservation, a need for curricular revision in the educational system, a need for adequate funds with which to promote an educational program, and, most of all, a need for a humanitarian interest in the Indian. In the humanitarian period there is an increase in feeling for, and of interest in, the Navajo as a human being. For the first time, the administration of the activities relating to the Indian's person is separated from the administration of those relating to his property. The divisions of health, education, and agricultural extension and industry are grouped under an assistant commissioner in charge of "human relations"; and the divisions of forestry, irrigation, and lands are grouped under an assistant commissioner in charge of property.¹

The latter's duty is to keep the activities of

1. Report of the commissioner of Indian affairs, 1931,
pp. 3-4.

the division in charge of property in harmony with the plans and projects of the division in charge of human relations, and to promote a sympathetic cooperation between the two. Common sense administration was not possible under the old system, as nothing could be done without legislation from Washington. The guardianship of person has been inseparable. In fact advancement of the individual indian toward self-support has been retarded in order that it might not exceed the slow pace which a distant government has adopted for the administration of his vast properties.

In order to accelerate his advancement, the supervision of the indian must be lessened through gradual dissolution of the old reservation system.² With this end in view, the government has devised a new plan, one which will, it is hoped, fit these people to merge into the social and economic life of the prevailing civilization. In order to train them to become self-supporting and self-respecting citizens, rather than to remain wards, it is necessary to develop a more practical system of education, one that will enable the indians to take a place in the industrial and

2. Annual report of the secretary of the interior, 1930, pp. 24-5.

agricultural life of the nation. No longer should they be viewed as wards; rather should they be looked upon as potential citizens. To do this, the objective should be to place the Indian and his property upon a normal basis, and within the period of twenty-five years to eliminate the Indian bureau.³

The culture of the Navajos, which to them has been a partial means of subsistence, ought to be preserved. Every effort should be made to encourage the silversmiths and the blanketweavers to continue their works of art. The Navajos, with their skillful hands, should soon find a self-supporting place in this modern civilization, a civilization which is ever calling for a higher degree of mechanical and technical ability.

The immediate problem of the government is that of training Navajos to conserve their grazing lands. With this goal in mind they are being taught the value of a few sheep of high quality over many sheep of poor quality. Effort is being exerted to discourage them from keeping a large number of useless horses and goats. At present, sheep are yielding the Navajos an estimated return of sixty per cent of the maximum

3. Ibid., 1929, p. 14.

possible return.⁴

Unquestionably, lack of water for the stock is a factor in causing the ranges to be overgrazed. To get water, the sheep must travel long distances, and in doing so, much grass is trampled and destroyed. To insure sufficient water, the stock are allowed to concentrate in the vicinity of the supply. If, year after year, range grass is eaten during the growing season, it will eventually die. Water should be so developed throughout the entire range that sheep would not have to travel more than three or four miles. Damage to the range grass would be reduced to a minimum by such a plan. Moreover, water should be developed at various points in order to permit the construction of additional dipping vats. At present there are only sixty-five vats on the entire reservation. In some localities sheep must be driven thirty or forty miles before they can be dipped. On one occasion it was necessary to dip approximately 90,000 sheep in one vat.

The type of sheep maintained by the Navajos also tends to contribute to the generally depleted condition of the range. Practically all of the sheep on

4. Hagerman, H. J., The Indians of the Southwest, p.20.

the Navajo ranges, except the few which have been bred in accordance with the recommendation of the agents, are long-legged, long-necked, improperly inbred sheep that are descendants of the original strain introduced by the Spaniards. In the past year much work has been done to improve the quality of the sheep by introducing pure-bred rams and by attempting to teach the Navajos the best methods of caring for their flocks. The greatest damage resulting from overgrazing of a range is the promotion of erosion. Within a period of twenty years small streams have changed overgrazed lands to a series of arroyos, some forty to sixty feet deep, and more than a hundred feet across.⁵

The government has a plan of procedure to eliminate, at least to partially eliminate, the depletion of range lands. This plan may be divided into two parts: first, those activities which will produce results immediately, and second, those which will produce results slowly.

Under the first come rodent control, elimination of useless animals, and development of water supply. To eradicate prairie dogs will cost \$25,000 to \$30,000

5. United States, 71st. cong., Hearings on Indian affairs, pp. 8125-7.



annually for a period of four years. A dozen prairie dogs can destroy enough range to feed a sheep for one year. The thousands of useless horses must be decreased at the earliest possible date. The sentimental value which the Navajos attach to horses will make this a difficult task. But since a horse consumes four or five times as much feed as a sheep and drinks ten times as much water, the movement must be forwarded.

Development of water will be the move most certain to produce early results. It is planned to have a group composed of a grazing expert, a local stockman, an engineer, and a geologist from the irrigation division make a survey to determine desirable locations for water centers. The reservation is to be divided into three classes according to the water needs. It is intended that all new developments shall be of permanent construction. During the coming fiscal year approximately \$75,000 is to be spent on repairs of present plants. The development of springs will cost \$100,000.

The second method for improving conditions is through education. The program has two main objectives, namely; (1) to teach present sheep owners improved methods of breeding and handling stock, and (2) to

instruct the young Navajos in range practices and stock-raising. To aid in executing the program, well-trained stockmen who are in sympathy with the Indian problem are to locate upon the reservation wherever they are needed. They are to stress the elimination of goats from the flocks and to teach the Navajo the science of breeding and caring for sheep.⁶

It has also been suggested that if the range were divided into three grazing-zones, the over-grazed condition would be greatly improved. The higher mountains and forests should be used for summer grazing, and the open grasslands for winter grazing. To utilize the ranges to the best advantage, it will be necessary to combine the small flocks into one large flock, and to place it under the supervision of a capable stockman.⁷

A large amount of money has been spent upon irrigation projects on the reservation--much of it unwisely and ineffectually.⁸ As mentioned before, the appropriations were often too small for more than temporary construction, and many times incapable men were

6. Ibid., pp. 9127-9132.

7. Ibid., pp. 9677-8.

8. Hagerman, op. cit., p. 24.



entrusted with their expenditure. The present commissioner recommended that a dam be built in the San Juan district at an estimated cost of \$500,000. Such a dam would irrigate 8,000 acres. He also urged the spending of \$100,000 to develop the irrigable land along the river between the Hogback and the town of Farmington.⁹ A number of small areas ranging from 300 to 4,000 acres, scattered throughout the reservation, are to be developed. Although the water supply is irregular, with tremendous silt volume, and the altitude is conducive to killing frosts, the possibilities for grazing justify the expenditures made by the government.¹⁰

On May 29, 1928, the government purchased 150,270 acres of land to be added to the reservation. Twenty-five hundred acres were exchanged in lieu of lands owned by the Santa Fé railroad. In addition non-reservation members of the tribe have filed on approximately a half million acres in San Juan and McKinley counties in New Mexico.¹¹ It was suggested, in 1930, that other lands be acquired and added to the

9. Ibid., p. 24.

10. Report of commissioner of Indian affairs, 1931, p. 21.

11. Hagerman, op. cit., p. 25.

reservation. Two districts can be obtained by a congressional act: first, the Piute strip, composing 600,000 acres in southern Utah; and, second, two tracts in the Tusayan Forest on the western edge of the present reservation, one of approximately 50,000 acres, and the other of about 32,000 acres. A bill is now being prepared to add these areas to the reservation. It is claimed that this bill will meet with no opposition.¹²

Acts were passed May 29, 1928, and March 4, 1929, to purchase lands for the Navajos, at a cost not to exceed \$400,000. The money was to be taken from the tribal funds during the fiscal years of 1929 and 1930. Up to the present time a total of \$218,230.17 of the amount has been spent; and the pending appropriation act for the fiscal year 1931 carries an item authorizing the expenditure of the remainder of the \$1,200, for further purchases.¹³

It has been recommended by the commissioner that at least sixty per cent of all moneys coming from tribal funds be set aside for land purchases, rentals, and expenses until enough land can be procured to care for

12. United States, 71st. cong., hearings on Indian affairs, p. 9041.

13. Ibid., p. 9042.

the Navajos' needs. He says that the Navajo council has been suggesting for several years that fifty per cent or more of its tribal fund be set aside for land purchases. About \$911,000 has been credited to this fund. To date only \$218,000 has been spent for land. The remainder, except \$25,000, has been spent for other purposes. All of the money accruing to the tribal fund has been used as quickly as it has been received. This is not in accordance with the desires of the Navajos. To buy the land which is needed, including the districts of Ramah, Cañoncito, and Puertocito, \$1,500,000 more will be required.¹⁴

A vast amount of coal is found on the reservation, but the market is so limited at present that it has no value except for local use. Oil has been produced by three operating leases in the Shiprock field in the northwestern corner of New Mexico. These leases are the Hogback, the Table Mesa, and the Rattlesnake. They produce daily from a shallow sand 500 barrels, 200 barrels, and 1,000 barrels, respectively, of high grade oil. In addition, the Rattlesnake has one deep well, drilled at a cost of \$200,000, which produces a low-grade oil. It

14. Ibid., p. 9053.

is possible that there may be a big pool of deep oil at Rattlesnake, since the present well is down to a depth of 7000 feet. As this well was defective a second well is being drilled. To drill in this area is both difficult and expensive. The operators have spent several million dollars in equipment, stabilization plants, and pipe lines. The Navajos have received a little over a million dollars in royalties.¹⁵ Although excellent timber is found on the reservation, only one contract for cutting has been let. Lumber prices have been so low recently that the contractors have postponed operations.¹⁶

It would seem that in the future the Navajos on the reservation will have to depend very largely, just as they have in the past, on stock-raising for a living. If such is true, then only through improvement in stock-raising methods can they hope to become more successful economically.

At the beginning of the period under discussion the system of education was changed in order to make it conform to the government's revised method of dealing

15. Hagerman, op. cit., pp. 16-7.

16. Ibid., p. 18.

with the Navajos. The chief objective has become: "to train the Indians as rapidly as possible to become self-supporting citizens".¹⁷ The educational program has had to be made practical and vocational in character.¹⁸ Such a change has necessitated larger appropriations.

To secure better teachers, the civil service qualifications have had to be raised, and real educators placed in charge of the schools.¹⁹ Visiting teachers who are specialists in their fields are now being sent to all schools to supervise and to encourage improvement. Instead of conducting the entire Indian school system according to a uniform plan, each locality is now permitted to work out a curriculum adaptable to local conditions and to individual needs. The purpose of Indian education today is to help the children to adjust themselves to modern life, and at the same time to teach them to protect and preserve the best of their own civilization. How to capitalize on the economic and cultural resources of the tribe, both to their own benefit and

17. Report of board of Indian commissioners, 1929, p. 3.

18. Report of secretary of interior, 1929, p. 14.

19. Ibid., p. 35.



the benefit of modern civilization, is an important aim today.²⁰

boarding schools are to be abandoned whenever possible, and day schools substituted for them, especially for small children. Often arrangements are made to permit the Indian children to attend public schools. The Luepp Indian School was recently abandoned because of the flood menace presented by the Little Colorado river. The Indian bureau officials plan to replace the institution with several day schools. The tentative plan is to locate students over twelve years of age in the public schools, preferably in Winslow, Arizona. The government agrees to pay tuition consistent with school costs. The children are to be housed in cottages built by the government at an approximate cost of \$150,000. Twenty-five or thirty children will live in each cottage under the care and direction of a matron.

According to the report of 1929, the Charles H. Burke Indian School at Ft. Wingate, New Mexico, had an enrollment of five-hundred pupils. The equipment was very poor, and only fourteen cents a day was allowed for feed. As could be expected the rations were inadequate, with insufficient fats and no milk. Approximately twenty-two dollars was granted for each pupil

20. Report of commissioner of Indian affairs, 1931, p.4.

for clothes, although fifty dollars is the amount that is needed. All schools on the reservation were similarly handicapped on account of insufficient funds. Even the one at Ft. Defiance, which had been set aside for children suffering from trachoma, could not afford to furnish milk to the pupils in attendance.²¹

The curriculum of the Charles H. Burke School was made vocational in nature in 1930. This was a wise move, as the Navajo children, in their present mode of life, are not ready for an education of the regular academic type. However, the opportunities for vocational work on the reservation are very limited at present; the main source of livelihood is the raising of an inferior grade of sheep. Seldom do the Navajos remain away from their people for a long period, even though they secure industrial positions elsewhere. For this reason the main objective of their schools is, and should be, to prepare the children to live on or near the reservation as useful, independent, and progressive citizens. As the years pass, the program will be changed as required to conform to varying needs. Trade-training, and perhaps a college preparatory curriculum, will be added. The schools are now operating on the

21. Report of board of Indian commissioners, 1929, p. 29-30.

6-3-3 plan. The work in the junior high school is of a pre-vocational nature, that in the last three years of high school is purely vocational. The work is not based on the credit system and does not prepare for college. Grading is on the basis of accomplishment. No failures occur in the several courses. As they perform the vocational work, the pupils are taught the fundamentals of the related subjects, such as English and mathematics. The pre-vocational students attend related classes one-half of each day, applied work one-fourth, and vocational work one-fourth. Vocational students devote one-half of each day to vocational classes, one-fourth to applied work, and one-fourth to related subjects. When the student has completed his twelve years of work he is awarded a "certificate of completion" stating the subjects pursued and number of hours that were devoted to each. The school assumes the responsibility of satisfactory vocational placement. At the end of six months, upon evidence of having successfully completed the prescribed work, the student is graduated.

The school also has special courses for adult students who have had little or no previous training.



Many demonstrations in stock-raising, forestry, and agriculture are offered. The superintendent of the school has requested the building of new dormitories for both the senior girls and the senior boys. The only available dormitories are inadequate buildings which were erected for army barracks. The cost of each new dormitory with equipment would amount to \$90,000. He has also asked for a new hospital building for school and community use with a bed capacity of forty-five or fifty. The present building has been condemned several times, as being inadequate in size and improperly arranged. A modern obstetrical division, a clinic, and an x-ray machine are badly needed. The total cost is estimated at \$88,000. A home economics building costing \$14,000, employees' quarters at \$16,000, sheep sheds, \$3,000, and a hog barn at \$1,500 have been requested also. The total cost of the improvement needed is estimated to be \$309,500. This seems to be a large amount of money to request in any one year. On the other hand, if the government expects to make a success of its present method of education, it must replace its parsimonious appropriation system by a system built on the policy of reasonable liberality. Expenditures for



Indian education constitute one of the smallest items in the national budget. The problem of financing the education of the Indians will be solved within a comparatively few years if the government will adopt a businesslike procedure. Persons who are experts in educational administration should be placed in full control, and they should be provided with sufficient funds to execute their program.²²

Although the Charles H. Burke School is the only Indian school that has an extensive plan of vocational training, the boarding schools at Crown Point, Ft. Defiance, Tohatchi, Chin Lee, Kayenta, Toadlena, and Leupp have been performing excellent work in this field. The day schools are accomplishing considerable, too. In fact, an effective system of vocational education is being developed for the Navajos. The principal objective of the schools is to improve the Navajo's condition and to prepare him to take a place in the environment in which he will have to live.

The government has finally awakened to the realization that the Indians need to be improved rather than transformed. In 1929, the department was reorganized for the purpose of executing and accelerating

22. United States 71st cong., op. cit., pp. 9540-55.



progress in conformity to the new viewpoint. Attention is now focused on the basic social and economic facts underlying the Indian problem. An effort is being made to help the Navajos to find paths to survival without surrendering too much to the demands of what we choose to call modern civilization. The Navajos wish to conform, not to amalgamate; to adjust, not to destroy. They know quite well that sullenness and indifference will result in disintegration.²³

The government has not exercised much social influence over the Navajos, mainly because it has not taken personal concern in this aspect of their lives. For the first time an interest is being displayed in human relations among the Indians. Results are highly dependent upon careful selection and placing of employees in the field service, it is true.²⁴ A field representative, specially qualified for work of this character, has been appointed to direct and to supervise the staff. The character and personality of applicants for social service are investigated before they are employed, and they are judged also as to ability to

23. Hagerman, op. cit., p. 2.

24. Report of commissioner of Indian affairs, 1950, r.5.



understand and to get along with the Indian.

Clubs or chapters have been formed throughout the reservation for the purpose of promoting community interests. Such matters as industrial improvement of health conditions, education, law, and order are considered by these clubs. The officers of the clubs consist of a president, vice-president, and secretary, who are elected by the popular vote of the respective districts. The voters endeavor to elect their ablest men, as they have learned that the success of these organizations depends greatly upon the quality of the leadership. The meetings which are held monthly, are well attended. A representative from the Agency attends the meetings. Agency farmers and government stockmen often act as club advisers. Special meetings at which several clubs participate are held quarterly. These general meetings, by engendering considerable friendly rivalry, strengthen the individual organizations. It has been recommended that a community house, including auditorium, kitchen, bathrooms, and a laundry, be built in each district.²⁵

During the past year these organizations have done

25. Ibid., pp. 9172-3.



much to stimulate the Navajos, to develop leadership, and to encourage them to work toward their own advancement. Through these organizations they have demonstrated that they are capable and trustworthy when responsibility is placed upon them.²⁶ They are enthusiastic over these clubs, as they realize the personal advantages to be derived by participating in such work.²⁷ Since the Navajos have lived in isolated, homogeneous communities they have been comparatively free from interference on the part of the whites. Much of their tribal life and customs have been retained as a result.²⁸ It is safe to say that the clubs have had more influence on their life than any other movement or activity sponsored by the government.

For many years the amount allowed for the support of a pupil in an Indian boarding-school was limited to \$167.²⁹ Since it has been raised to \$350, better food and clothing are being provided. In fact, the whole Indian bureau has been reorganized on a sound basis. Specialists in vocational and in elementary education

26. Ibid., p. 9181.

27. Ibid., p. 9172.

28. Meriam, op. cit., p. 763.

29. Report of Secretary of Interior, 1929, p. 36.



and field supervisors have been added to the service. An office of "personnel supervisor" has been created to have charge of promotions and questions relating to various employees. The retirement for the Indian service has been lowered from seventy years to sixty-five years of age.³⁰

One of the most formidable barriers to a successful and harmonious solution of the Navajo problem has been misunderstanding by the Indian as to what was to be done for him and what benefit the program in operation would bring to him. Since the annual councils have been started, the two parties concerned have gained a clearer conception of each other's views. The government has learned to give proper consideration to the Indian's attitude of mind and to his racial characteristics. The Navajos are proud and do not wish to be driven. To be consulted and trusted is their deep and abiding desire.

To accomplish the best results both parties must be tolerant and patient. The government may have to make slightly increased expenditures for a short time, but the gain in goodwill derived therefrom and the

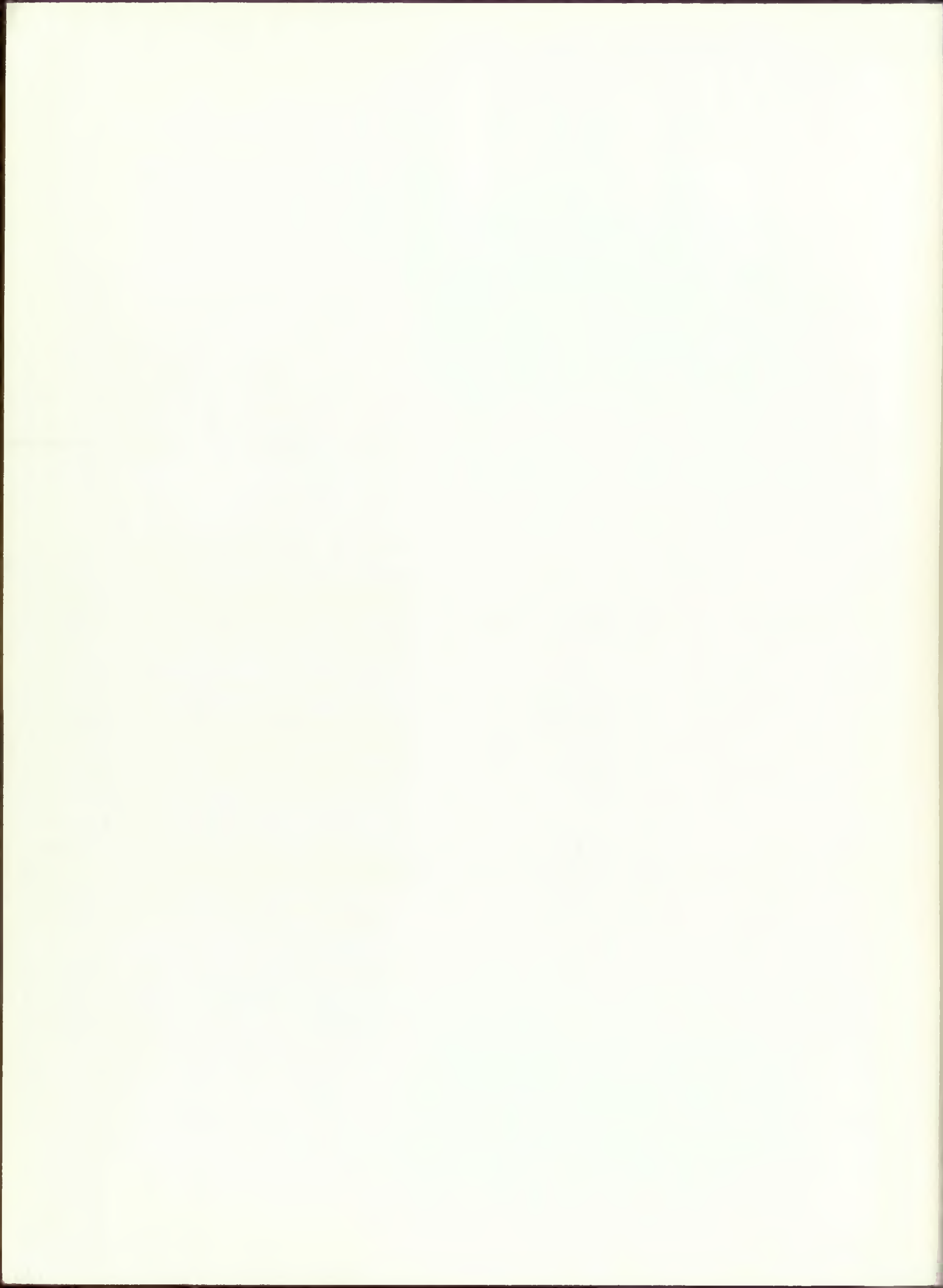
30. Ibid., 1930, p. 26.



increased confidence instilled in the Indian will more than offset the outlay, as will the future financial saving. Friendly cooperative relations will do much to bring the Indian problem to a happy solution.³¹ Heretofore the government has used a stern bureaucracy to deal with the Navajos, with the idea of forcing them to become a white race. They will probably remain Indians with Indian color, with Indian traits of mind, and with Indian ancestral traditions. Nevertheless, they can become progressive citizens and merge into the social and economic life of the America of today.

During the Humanitarian period the government has arrived at the conclusion that the best procedure to follow in dealing with the Navajos is merely to direct their Indian culture into vocational channels, at least until it becomes advisable to provide regular academic training for them. As a result, the Navajos are now being trained to do better, more wisely and more efficiently what they are already doing. Special effort is being made to adapt their knowledge and skill to personal needs, so that they may live

31. Dept. of Interior (Immediate release Jan. 6, 1932), p. 3.



effectively and contentedly, and at the same time, may become better Indians in whatever paths they desire to follow. Their social development has been greatly improved by clubs or chapters organized and conducted on the reservation. In these clubs matters of health, general education, principles of law and order, economic development, in fact anything through which the condition of the Navajos may be improved, are emphasized. In the manner outlined the government of the United States hopes that within the next twenty-five years the Navajos will be properly prepared to accept citizenship. "With their release from the vague limbo of wardship into full citizenship, and with their property rights secure they will be qualified to work out their own genius--to become a new Dineh, as distinctive and indomitable as that remnant once sheltered in Cañon de Chelly".³²

32. Coolidge, op. cit., p. 294.

CONCLUSION

The data presented in this study justify certain conclusions. The policy which the United States first assumed in its relations with the Navajos was indefinite, having the general purpose of keeping the Indians from molesting the white men, and doing so at a minimum expense to the government.

The policy developed later was to train these Indians to live in harmony with the social and economic life of the prevailing civilization. The federal government has not been consistent in observing this policy, however, and has violated it in these specific instances:

1. The Navajos were forced to reside upon a reservation and were not supplied with sufficient rations, thus encouraging many to steal in order to attain food to sustain life. E 10 N
2. The children were not provided with proper educational facilities, as the treaty of 1868 stipulated that they should be. 50
3. The land allotted to them was insufficient for grazing purposes on account of lack of water. The water supply was limited because appropriations were not large enough to develop E 10 N

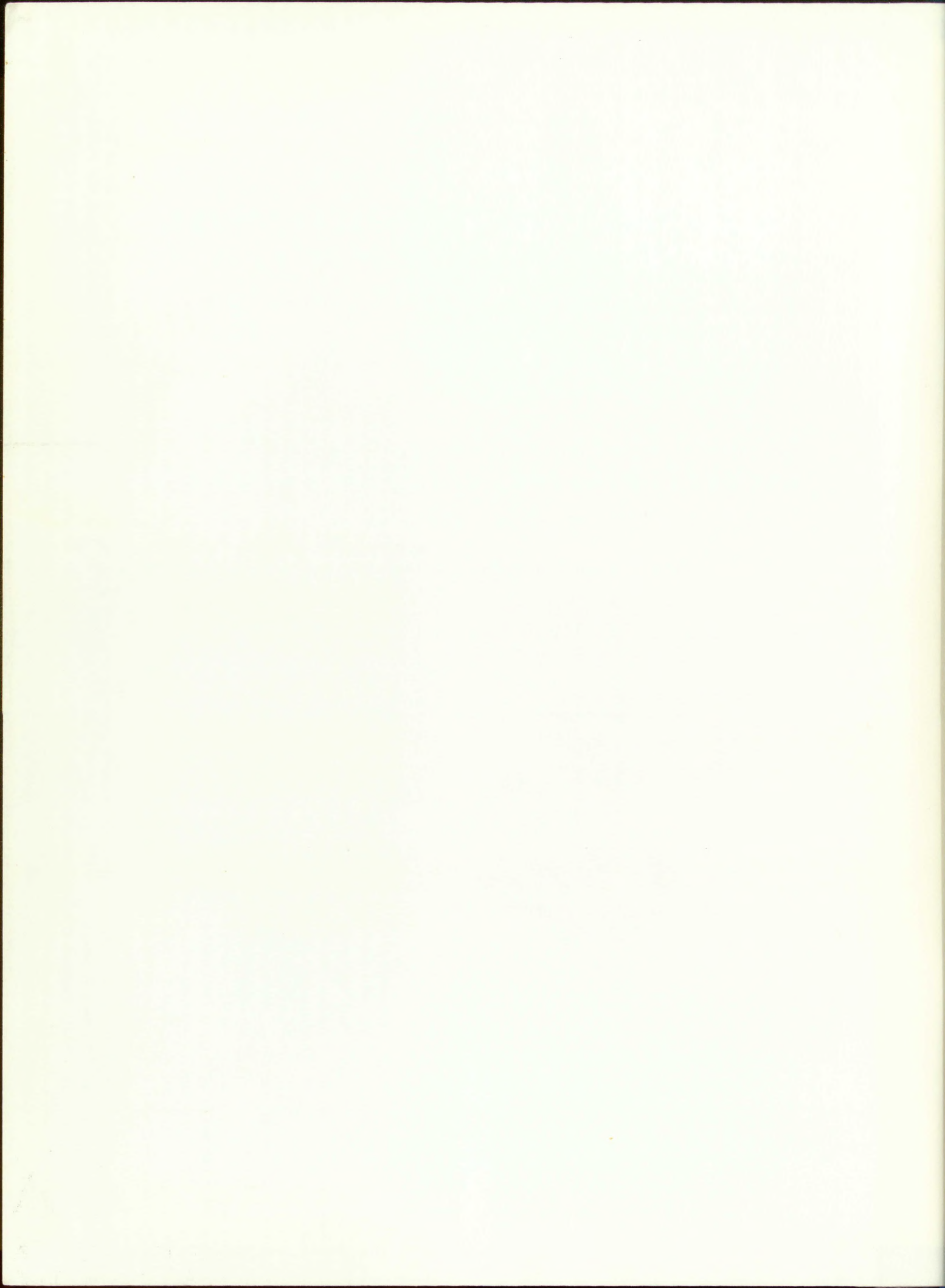
permanent irrigation projects or other water facilities, and because incompetent men were often put in charge of water developments.

4. The government endeavored by legislation to force the Navajo into the prevailing civilization without proper consideration for the culture of his race and for his ability and interests.
5. Inefficiency in the Indian service was general on account of:
 - (a) Low salaries.
 - (b) Positions were secured through political influence.
 - (c) Indian commissioners short tenure of office. They were unable to complete the program initiated by them. Usually they were out of office by the time they had learned their duties. Often they were controlled by public opinion.

At the present time the outlook upon the government's policy of training the Navajo Indians is encouraging. Methods are being developed to relieve the overgrazed condition of the reservation, educational facilities adapted to their needs are being provided, and clubs



are being organized to improve the chief interests of the tribe.



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