

Fort Laramie Treaty Essay

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After many years of battling with the Native Americans for land, the United States grew tired of the fight and sought "peace". The first Fort Laramie treaty of 1851 acknowledged the Lakota territory, which consisted of North and South Dakota, parts of Montana, Nebraska, and Wyoming as belonging to the [Sioux](#) Indians. This was a considerably large section of land equating to about five percent of the United States (Calloway, 2012). The U.S. government realized the abundant natural resources of gold that existed in this territory and attempted to enact the Bozeman Trail. This trail ran through Sioux territory into the gold mines of Montana. This attempt at utilizing Indian land to get at the gold brought about Red Cloud's war in which the U.S. army was brought to a complete halt. This was an embarrassment to the U.S. and through this slaughter brought about the second Treaty of Fort Laramie in an effort to bring about "peace". The second treaty enacted in 1868, was full of deception and disharmony. This short analysis of the treaty will examine the snares which were purposely weaved into the wording of this lengthy document, which benefited the United States and chipped away at the Native Americans culture, freedom, and land.

In the spring of 1868 an invitation was sent to various Indians of power to come to Fort Laramie to sign the new treaty. The treaty was meant to end the war, so that all could live

in harmony with one another or at least that is what the Sioux were led to believe. Many of the Indians decided to sign the treaty and receive gifts, however, many including Red Cloud, refused to sign until all of the U.S. military presence was gone from their land and the fort vacated (Calloway, 2012). They made it clear tha...

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...agedy.

By 1873, gold was discovered at a time of desperation for the United States. The Black Hills in Lakota territory was abundantly filled with it. The fact that the gold was located in the Great Sioux Reservation mattered not. The U.S. government was going to mine the gold regardless of the consequences. They were desperate and greedy. Their first attempt to gain access was to buy the Black Hills from the Sioux. The Sioux clearly objected and most of the peoples told the government it was not for sale. Those who were agreeable to the sale of this gold rich land asked a higher price than the government was prepared to pay. The government's second attempt and ultimate victory was much more nefarious in nature.

Works Cited

Calloway, C. G. (2012). First peoples A documentary survey of American Indian history (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

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