Native Americans and US Government

The Tohono O'odham (Desert people) are Indians that mainly lived in the Sonoran Desert. In ancient times they were called Papago. The problem between them and the United States began in 1853 when the Gadsden Purchase took place. The purchase created a border between Mexico and the United States, cutting through the middle of the Tohonos’ main land. This caused much conflict and forced many native Tohonos to live on the Mexican side or the US side. In 1850, Apache warriors began killing Natives and selling their children as slaves in Mexico. To help, the United States set aside a reservation only for the Tohono O'odham native Indians. They now have the second largest Native American reserve in the US. Throughout the years the Indians have developed their own form of government that is recognized and approved of by the US Government. They started becoming more accepted in professional jobs like medical field and started attending college and receiving benefits from the US Government that I will later discuss.

Do I think they were compensated for their losses? Not necessarily. They receive education benefits and more social acceptance than before, and they have their own land reserved in the US. They still hurt from their loses because they believe that the border ruins wildlife habitat and makes it hard for them to see their families in Mexico. If it were to be me and my beliefs and way of life had been damaged or had to be rearranged, I would be hurt but when it comes down to it, life can sometimes just not be fair. With all the new developments and economic issues arising, different guidelines and ways of living are going to be made to keep peace and help keep citizens safe.

The Native Americans will always hurt from the Gadsden Purchase. That land was their homeland and no matter how much land they are given, or how many benefits they receive in the years to come, it will not matter. Everyone is raised a certain and special way depending on their parents’ beliefs and religions, and when that is taken away without a choice to fight back or have a say against it, it will hurt and it will feel incredibly unfair. The Native Americans lost the battle because the US government is more powerful and always gets what it desires for. As decades passed, the US government defined Native Americans as self governing individuals at times, and other times they would make up stories of Natives killing many settlers in their land. This however was not true, the Natives would actually help the settlers across the land and help by being messengers. With empty promises continuing, more and more treaties began to develop which would cause the Native Americans to leave their land with non- natives flooding their area.

The US government would consistently try to “Americanize” these Natives by making these treaties or using force. Many of the Natives did not survive this, and through diseases carried by the colonizers relocation or military defeat, the Native American population decreased to fewer than 250,000 by 1890. The Natives will never be fully forgiving of the US, but not as much chaos has taken place, so maybe they are becoming at peace because they know there is no hope in trying to fight it.

Work Cited

http://www.victoriana.com/history/nativeamericans.html