



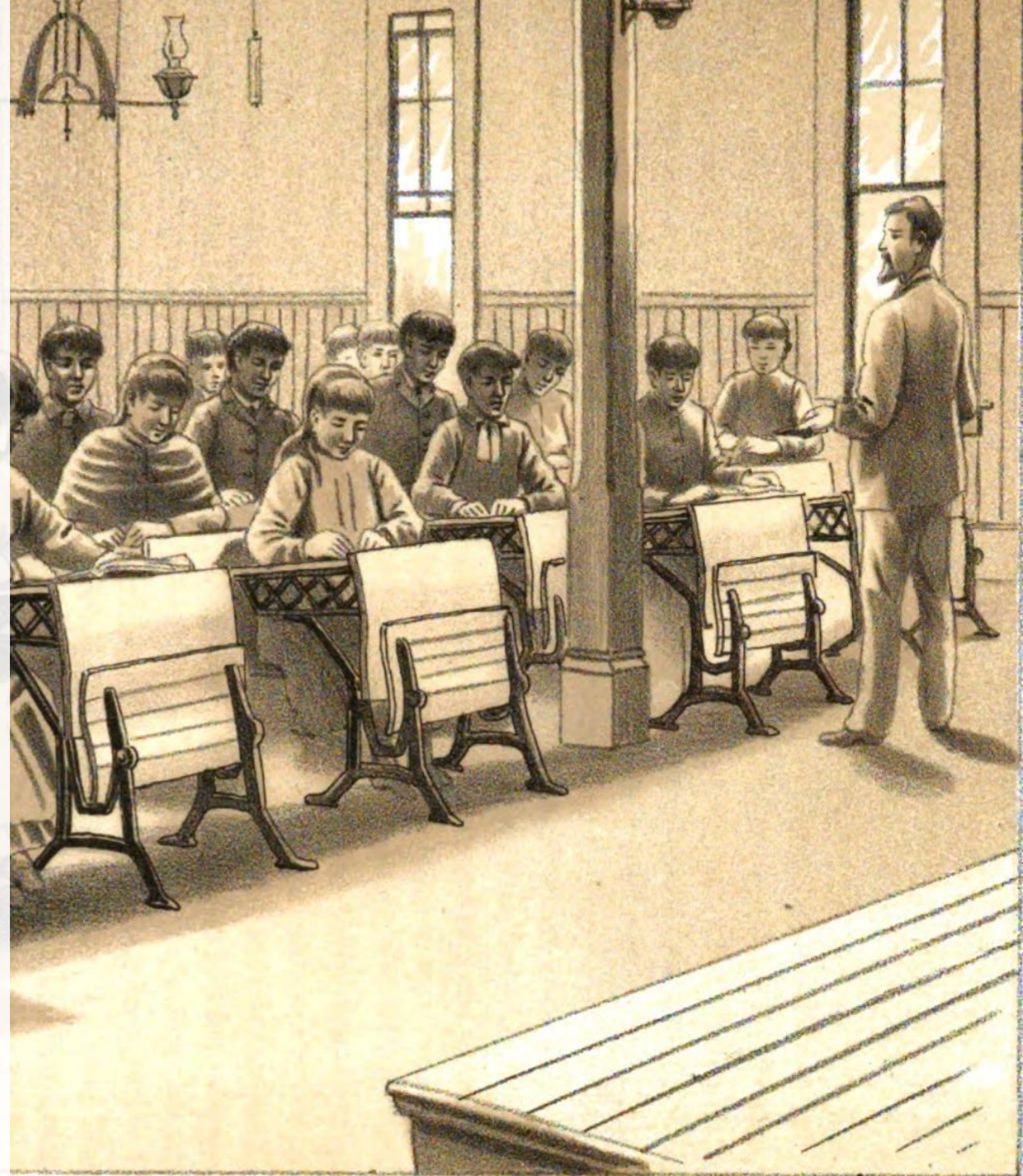
GRADE 10

The Termination Era



Assimilation

The belief that Indigenous people should abandon their traditional cultures and become “civilized” has been the basis of the U.S. government's policy toward Native Americans for centuries.



Allotment

Dawes Act of 1887 (aka General Allotment Act of 1887)- After each Tribal member present was assigned an allotment, the Secretary of the Interior could close the allotment rolls and declare the rest of the Tribe's reservation "surplus" and force the Tribe to cede those unallotted lands.



Image: *Lincoln County Leader*, April 14, 1905. Image provided by University of Oregon Libraries.

Persistent link: https://oregonnews.uoregon.edu/lccn/sn85033162/1905-04-14/ed-1/seq-4/print/image_523x817_from_603,724_to_3769,5666/

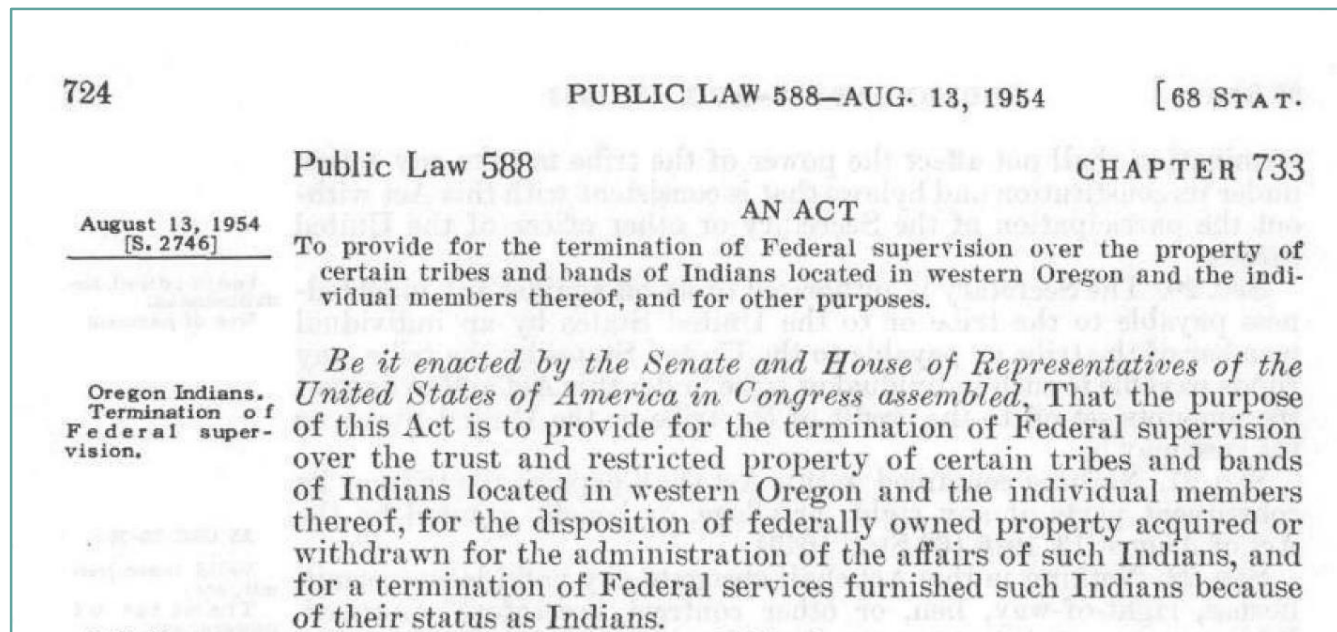
Indian Reorganization Act (1934)

- Reaffirmed the U.S. government's recognition of Tribal sovereignty, including the right to self-governance, but it also perpetuated the government's paternalistic approach toward Native Americans in other ways.
- Repealed the Dawes Act in recognition of the devastating effects of massive Native land losses.
- To benefit from the Indian Reorganization Act, Tribes had to accept a template constitution—one that required the Secretary of the Interior's approval. (The Siletz people ultimately chose not to do this.)
- A policy of Tribal self-government was implemented.
- Tribes could incorporate businesses and access credit established to further such business interests.
- Education and employment opportunities were somewhat improved.



Termination

Federal policy that ended reservations and federal obligations to Tribes and dissolved relationships with Tribal governments.



Behind Termination

The persistent idea of assimilation, combined with federal financial concerns, fueled the push to termination:

- In 1943 the U.S. Senate survey of Indian conditions showed living conditions on the reservations were extremely poor
- The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was blamed for these conditions
- Congress concluded that some Tribes no longer needed federal "protection"

(Public Law 588) Western Oregon Indian Termination Act

- Passed by Congress in 1954 as part of the U.S. government's Indian termination policy.
- Termination was imposed upon the Tribes of Siletz by the U.S. government in 1956.
- Termination removed all relationship and support between the Siletz Tribal government and the U.S. government.

Tribal Consent?

“The vote came quickly, and I do not think that the members of the Council really understood all the things that Termination stood for.”

—Archie Ben, Siletz Tribal council member

Other Tribal members who were present at the time have said the only vote they remember was to authorize the Tribal Council to continue discussions with the BIA about termination. They do not remember a vote to accept termination ever being proposed.



Effects of Termination Policy

- Siletz Tribal land was sold off
- Siletz families and friends dispersed
- Economic and social conditions worsened
- The sense of Tribal identity suffered