DOES THE US GOVERNMENT CARE? ADDRESSING THE NATIVE AMERICAN PLIGHT

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ABSTRACT

Native Americans are the most impoverished ethnic group in the United States: in some of the reservations the poverty rate is more than three times the national average. In addition, reservations show rates of unemployment, education level, health, standard of housing, infrastructure, and safety much lower than the ones in the rest of the country. These phenomena have been extensively discussed in the media as well as in the scholarly literature, and particular attention has been placed on the US government, often considered the entity most responsible for their predicament. The US government, however, has been mainly discussed in terms of its role as the holder of the legal title to and manager of Native Americans' land, with little attention to the financial support that it provides to these communities. The scope of this paper is to put forward a more comprehensive understanding of the role played by the US government to address the challenges of the Native American communities and suggest policies to improve its actions.

Keywords: *Native Americans, Poverty, US Government*