

Termination (1954)



Grand Ronde Tribal History

1954 Western Oregon Termination Act



✧ August 13th, 1954 Public Law 588,
Western Oregon Termination Act was
signed into law by President
Eisenhower.

The beginning of termination



- ❧ In 1944, the federal government began its effort to liquidate or terminate federal responsibilities under treaty agreements for all tribes in the United States.
- ❧ The Bureau of Indian Affairs conducted inventory of the Grand Ronde reservation and reported positive social conditions and that most of the members were employed.
- ❧ In 1974, Congress concluded that the people on the Grand Ronde reservation were assimilated and no longer needed support from the government.

True or False: Western Oregon Tribes
agreed to termination



False!

Common histories state that Western Oregon Tribes agreed to termination, when they in fact, **did not** agree!

Termination without consent



- ❧ Oral accounts from Grand Ronde Elders stated that the Tribe did not give consent for termination.
- ❧ In 1952, the tribe agreed to the first draft termination bill, which called for an early termination of western Oregon Indians.
- ❧ The first bill allowed for the tribe to keep the land they had been allotted and to manage their own timberlands.

Termination without consent continued



- ❧ In 1953 a second termination bill was submitted to the tribes.
- ❧ This bill stated that along with termination, tribal members had to purchase their land.
- ❧ The tribe refused to approve the bill.
- ❧ Tribal Elders stated that they had no knowledge of hearings regarding Termination in Washington, D.C.

Termination without consent continued



- ❧ In March of 1954, Indian Superintendent E. Morgan Pryse submitted the second bill to Congress, stating that the tribes had agreed, **which in fact was not true.**
- ❧ Congress approved the bill.
- ❧ Later, Indian Superintendent E. Morgan Pryse admitted there were voices in opposition and no vote about the termination draft ever occurred.

What did termination mean for the Tribes of Grand Ronde?



- Terminated the Tribes' federal recognition.
- The tribe lost all its treaty rights and land
- Removed all obligations that had been negotiated through treaties between the United States Government and the Tribes of Grand Ronde.
- More tribes were terminated in Oregon than in any other region in the United States.
- A total of 63 tribes were terminated.

Termination



- ❧ Many tribal members had to move because they could not afford to buy their land.
- ❧ Some tribal members were able to buy their land and stay in the Grand Ronde area.
- ❧ Many cultural traditions were lost.
- ❧ The Tribe had the cemetery that remained community property. They had administrative rights over that property.
- ❧ Tribal members retained fishing and hunting rights during termination, because neither the treaties nor termination expressly addressed fishing and hunting rights.

Termination



☞ “It changed our lives. Things weren’t the same after that.”

☞ “At the stroke of a pen they wiped us away.”

☞ - Margaret Provost,
Grand Ronde Tribal Elder



Post termination



- ❧ The Grand Ronde reservation was officially closed in 1956.
- ❧ The Grand Ronde Tribes were left without any services in health care, education or welfare.
- ❧ Terminated Indians were highly comparable to new immigrants to American, with no resources, no savings, and little help from the government.

Video on Termination



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QyvKAjKBLOk>