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DOCUMENT 14.4 | Dawes Allotment Act  
1887

The Dawes Allotment Act (also called the Dawes Severalty Act) gave the president and his agents authority to divide up reservations and allot parcels of land to individual Indians as private property, with the return promise of US citizenship.

. . . [I]n all cases where any tribe or band of Indians has been, or shall hereafter be, located upon any reservation created for their use, either by treaty stipulation or by virtue of an act of Congress or executive order setting apart the same for their use, the President of the United States be, and he hereby is, authorized, whenever in his opinion any reservation or any part thereof of such Indians is advantageous for agricultural and grazing purposes, to cause said reservation, or any part thereof, to be surveyed, or resurveyed if necessary, and to allot the lands in said reservation in severalty to any Indian located thereon in quantities as follows:

- To each head of a family, one-quarter of a section;
- To each single person over eighteen years of age, one-eighth of a section;
- To each orphan child under eighteen years of age, one-eighth of a section; and
- To each other single person under eighteen years now living, or who may be born prior to the date of the order of the President directing an allotment of the lands embraced in any reservation, one-sixteenth of a section. . . .

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"Transcript of Dawes Act (1887)," transcription courtesy of the Avalon Project at Yale Law School, National Archives and Records Administration.

**PRACTICING Historical Thinking**

**Identify:** Review the era of Andrew Jackson's presidency (1829–1837). How does the Dawes Allotment Act reflect a change in US policy toward Native Americans?

**Analyze:** What interest would the United States government have in gaining a greater number of Native Americans as US citizens?

**Evaluate:** How did the US economic policies of this time period—exemplified by the Dawes Allotment Act—contribute to national identity?

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DOCUMENT 14.5 | "Consistency," *Puck*  
1891

This image from *Puck* magazine portrays the artist's view of the United States' policies toward African and Asian peoples versus its policies toward Native Americans.