American Indian Policy

**Background:** Beginning in 1887, the federal government attempted to “Americanize” Native Americans, largely through the education of Native youth. By 1900 thousands of Native Americans were studying at almost 150 boarding schools around the United States. Instructors at these schools insisted that students drop their Indian names, forbade the speaking of native languages, and cut off their long hair. Not surprisingly, such schools often met fierce resistance from Native American parents and youth. But the schools also fostered a sense of shared Indian identity that transcended tribal boundaries.

“A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one, and that high sanction of his destruction has been an enormous factor in promoting Indian massacres. In a sense, I agree with the sentiment, but only in this: that all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, and save the man.”

Capt. Richard H. Pratt on the Education of Native Americans

1. Re-write the last sentence of this quote:
2. Capt. Pratt was *not* promoting violence toward the American Indian…he actually thought he was saving them; explain:



1. If the image above represents *Americanization* how would you define the term?
2. This is a very famous image entitled “American Progress”. It is often used to symbolize Manifest Destiny. Analyze this image. What do you see? What does the artist believe Americans have achieved? What have they yet to conquer?

"Our conduct toward these people is deeply interesting to our national character. Their present condition, contrasted with what they once were, makes a most powerful appeal to our sympathies. Our ancestors found them the uncontrolled possessors of these vast regions. By persuasion and force they have been made to retire from river to river and from mountain to mountain, until some of the tribes have become extinct and others have left but remnants to preserve for awhile their once terrible names. Surrounded by the whites with their arts of civilization, which by destroying the resources of the savage doom him to weakness and decay, the fate of the Mohegan, the Narragansett, and the Delaware is fast overtaking the Choctaw, the Cherokee, and the Creek. That this fate surely awaits them if they remain within the limits of the states does not admit of a doubt. Humanity and national honor demand that every effort should be made to avert so great a calamity."

Andrew Jackson

1. In the 1830s President Jackson signed the infamous Indian Removal Act which led to the heartbreaking [Trail of Tears](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUILURVoPhw) (watch the video before continuing). Above, Jackson attempts to defend his decision. Why would Jackson say the Indian Removal Act was necessary and humane?