

GOVERNMENT MEDICINE AND THE "VANISHING AMERICANS"  
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Perhaps the reason the American Indian is vanishing is that his medical, dental and hospital care is provided by the federal government.

In a story appearing in Monday's (February 17, 1964) *Chicago Tribune*, it was reported that American Indians have the highest disease rates and the lowest life span of any major segment of the U.S. population.

Free medical, dental and hospital care is provided to the 340,000 Indians living as wards of the Federal Government on the 250 Federal reservations in 23 states.

The report indicates that the average life span for the government-cared-for Indian is 43 years compared with 63 years for the American people as a whole. The infant mortality rate is 25 per thousand live births for the general population and 43 per thousand live births on the Indian reservations. Indians have four times as high a death rate from tuberculosis, three times as high a death rate from influenza and pneumonia, eight times as much from hepatitis, ten times as much strep throat, twenty times as much meningitis and a hundred times as much dysentery as do other Americans.

To some observers, in view of the Indian's plight, increased resistance to placing our aged population under a government medical scheme is not surprising.