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Appropriations for Sioux Indians. Letter from the Secretary of the Interior asking for an appropriation to pay to the upper and lower bands of Sioux Indians according to Treaty of June 19, 1858

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APPROPRIATIONS FOR SIOUX INDIANS.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

ASKING

For an appropriation to pay to the upper and lower bands of Sioux Indians according to treaty of June 19, 1858.

JUNE 16, 1870.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, June 13, 1870.

SIR: On the 19th day of June, 1858, treaties were concluded between the United States and the upper and lower bands of Sioux Indians in Minnesota. Each of these two treaties, in the 3d article, contains a stipulation that an amount not exceeding \$70,000 shall be paid out of the proceeds of the sale of the lands mentioned in the 2d article of said treaties, to satisfy the just debts and obligations of said Indians.

The treaties were negotiated in this city, and several of the creditors of the Indians were present. The different bands were desirous that all their obligations should be canceled, and the sum named in the 3d article of the treaties was based upon an estimate which, at that time, was thought to be sufficient to cover all demands that might be made against them; but upon an examination of the accounts which, after examination and abatement by the Indian Department, were allowed, it was ascertained that after the payment of the amount provided by the treaty to satisfy the indebtedness of the Indians, at the date of the treaties, a balance of \$57,616 35 remained against them.

In 1862, the Indians, parties to the treaties, commenced hostilities against the citizens of the United States, known as the Sioux Indian massacre, which resulted in the abrogation of all treaties with the Sioux, their removal from the reservations in the State of Minnesota, and the confiscation of their annuities.

There is also due by the lower bands of Sioux Indians the sum of \$8,196 12, being a balance of claims against them arising subsequent to the treaty of 1858.

Mr. Secretary Smith, on the 31st day of May, 1861, after a consideration of the subject, directed the payment of the debts of the Indians to the extent named in the treaties, viz: \$140,000, which amount was to be paid, *pro rata*, to the claimants in full satisfaction of all demands against them.

The money was accepted by the creditors, under protest, and application was afterward made to the department for the balance due by the Indians, and it appears that Mr. Secretary Usher was inclined to direct the payment of the same, but there was no appropriation within the control of this department applicable thereto.

In the treaty of 19th February, 1867, with the Sioux Indians, (upper bands,) provision was made for the payment of the balances due by them to their traders; but the Senate struck out of said treaty articles 6 to 14, inclusive, which embraced the provision referred to, and the matter has, since that time, remained unacted on.

The parties to whom the balances are due are now applying to be paid.

An examination of the case satisfies me that the claims are probably just and should be paid; but there are no funds at the disposal of this department that could be applied to their payment.

I therefore respectfully invite the attention of Congress to the propriety of making an appropriation to meet these claims, for which the sum of \$65,812 47 would be necessary, to enable the Secretary of the Interior to pay to the parties entitled thereto the balances due the creditors of the upper and lower bands of Sioux Indians, on account of supplies furnished said Indians prior to the 3d day of December, 1860.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. D. COX,
Secretary.

Hon. JAMES G. BLAINE,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.