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Letter of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, in closing matters of appropriation and legislation which, in the opinion of the Department of the Interior, should be provided for.

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LETTER
OF
THE COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,

INCLOSING

Matters of appropriation and legislation which, in the opinion of the Department of the Interior, should be provided for.

MARCH 1, 1871.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations, to accompany Mr. Harlan's proposed amendments to bill H. R. No. 3064.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., March 1, 1871.

SIR: I have the honor to call your attention to the accompanying provisions for appropriation and action, which the Conference Committee of both Houses of Congress have agreed to leave out of the Indian appropriation bill, and as such action will work great hardship upon the Indians and other parties for whose benefit such appropriations and legislation were intended, I respectfully recommend the same be provided for in some other manner, if practicable.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. S. PARKER,
Commissioner.

Hon. JAMES HARLAN,
Chairman Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
February 28, 1871.

SIR: With regard to the several proposed amendments to the Indian appropriation bill for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1872, I have the honor to report as follows, viz:

1. * * * * *

2. The policy of the Government in collecting the various isolated bands of civilized Indians and locating them in the Indian Territory, where, like the Cherokees and others, they may become tillers of the soil, renders it imperative that the means should be at the disposal of the Government of giving each a well-defined piece of land for farming purposes. It, therefore, is necessary that the appropriation for surveys in what is known as the "leased district" should be retained in the bill.

3. The committee of "Friends" in charge, as a religious body, of the Northern superintendency, as well as the superintendent himself, are of the opinion that the Indian tribes would be greatly benefited by being permitted to sell a portion of their reservations, which, in many

cases, are extensive, and apply the proceeds to educational and other purposes looking to their advancement in civilization, and in some cases for the purpose of purchasing homes in more desirable locations.

I have concurred with the "Friends" in this plan, and I am of opinion that many of the tribes would be benefited by it. Hence I have favored the passage of a general bill for these purposes, and deem it advisable that it should not be stricken from the appropriation bill, as proposed.

* * * * *

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. S. PARKER,
Commissioner.

Hon. C. DELANO,
Secretary of the Interior.

DAKOTA TERRITORY, OFFICE INDIAN AFFAIRS,
February 28, 1871.

SIR: I have the honor to invite your attention to the bill (H. R. 2615) making appropriations for the current and contingent expenses of the Indian Department, and for fulfilling treaty stipulations with various Indian tribes, for the year ending June 30, 1872, as reported to and amended by the Senate, and respectfully to submit that the following items, included in the general estimate of this office, but stricken out by the Committee on Appropriations, or curtailed in amount, cannot be dispensed with without manifest injury to the service and embarrassment in the administration of Indian affairs, viz:

* * * * *

Pages 12, 13, lines 281-287. Eleven thousand three hundred and twenty-nine dollars, to pay for supplies furnished by C. E. Hedges to the Yankton Sioux, from November, 1866, to May, 1867.

The evidence adduced in this case appears conclusive that the supplies were furnished, that the prices charged were reasonable, and that the Indians were saved from suffering and starvation by the timely assistance afforded by Mr. Hedges at a time when they had no other means of subsistence. Hence I regard it as an act of justice to Mr. Hodges that an appropriation to meet his claim should be made.

Page 16, lines 350-363. Twelve thousand dollars, to be deducted from any funds in the Treasury of the United States belonging to the Kaskaskias, &c., and expended, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, to aid these Indians in establishing themselves in their new homes, as provided by the 24th article of the treaty of February 23, 1867.

I can see no reason why this request of the chiefs should not be complied with, and I therefore recommend the adoption of the proposed amendment.

Page 16, lines 368-370. Four thousand two hundred and ninety-eight dollars and ten cents, for deficiency incurred in paying annuities to Eastern Cherokees under the act of July 29, 1848.

This is the amount taken by Mr. Swetland, late special agent, from funds placed in his hands in 1869, for payment to the Eastern Cherokees, under the act referred to, to defray the expenses of his special agency. The money belongs to the said Indians, and should be restored; and I earnestly request that the said amount, or so much thereof as shall be found necessary, be appropriated

Page 16, lines 371-378. Two thousand three hundred and forty-three dollars and fifty cents, to pay for expenses incurred, and supplies furnished for the Indian service in Montana Territory, under the direction of Mr. James Tufts, while acting governor and *ex officio* superintendent of Indian Affairs, from the 10th June, 1868, to the 1st July, 1869.

Governor Tufts appears to have been left on his own resources, without any pecuniary support from your Department during the whole year of his superintendence of Indian Affairs in Montana, and I have no reason to doubt the correctness of the account now presented by him. I respectfully ask that an appropriation be made to meet this indebtedness.

Page 13, lines 288-296. Twelve thousand dollars, to pay for supplies furnished by Durfee and Peck to the Crows, Gros-Ventres, and Assinaboines, within the Montana superintendency in the winter of 1868 and spring of 1869.

These supplies were furnished under the same exigency as in the preceding case, and demand the same consideration.

Page 13, lines 300-305. Two thousand dollars, to pay for the rent of buildings for Upper Missouri agency at Fort Berthold, for the year ending June 30, 1870.

These buildings are occupied for agency purposes, and there are no funds at the disposal of the Department that can be used for the payment of the rent. The appropriation asked for is absolutely necessary.

Page 15, lines 339-342. One hundred thousand dollars, for the support of industrial and other schools among the Indian tribes not otherwise provided for.

Liberal means should be provided for the establishment and support of schools among those tribes with whom we have no treaty relations, and to assist the missionary and other benevolent societies in their efforts to bring these Indians within the pale of civilization. I earnestly recommend that the proposed appropriation for these purposes be made.

Page 16, lines 379-385. Seven thousand five hundred and fifty-three dollars and forty-four cents, to pay for expenses incurred in the Indian service at the Tulalip agency in Washington Territory, under the late sub-agent, H. C. Hale.

From the evidence adduced in this case I am satisfied of the correctness and justice of this claim, and recommend its payment.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. S. PARKER,
Commissioner.

Hon. C. DELANO,
Secretary of the Interior.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., February 15, 1871.

SIR: Under the provisions of the sixth article of the treaty with Seminoles of March 21, 1866, and ninth article treaty with Creeks of June 14, 1866, (U. S. Stat., vol. 14, pp. 758-788,) the sum of \$20,000 was, by the act of July 28, 1866, (U. S. Stat., vol. 14, pp. 319, 320,) appropriated for the erection of suitable agency buildings on the reservations of said tribes.

On the 7th September, 1867, these funds were placed in the hands of

James Wortham, late superintendent Indian affairs, and, on his removal from office, on the 15th July, 1868, transferred to his successor, Mr. L. N. Robinson.

At the time of the rendition of his final accounts up to September 30, 1869, the office of the Southern Superintendency having in the mean time been abolished, the funds referred to still remained in Mr. Robinson's hands, and were not restored to the Government until after the passage of the appropriation act of July 12, 1870, by the fifth and sixth sections of which (U. S. Stat., 41st Cong., 2d sess., p. 251) these funds appear to be placed beyond the control of your Department.

In order to enable this office to fulfill treaty stipulations with the Creeks and Seminoles as herein referred to, I respectfully suggest that this matter be laid before Congress, with the request that such action be taken in the premises as will replace at the disposal of your Department the sum of \$20,000, originally appropriated for the erection of agency buildings on their reservations.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. S. PARKER,
Commissioner.

Hon. C. DELANO,
Secretary of the Interior.