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Letter from the Acting Secretary of the Interior, relative to the condition of the Pi-Ute Indians

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PI-UTE INDIANS.

LETTER

FROM THE

ACTING SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

RELATIVE TO

The condition of the Pi-Ute Indians.

JANUARY 7, 1873.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, D. C., December 19, 1872.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a letter from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated the 17th instant, inclosing a copy of a report of Agent G. W. Ingalls, in reference to the condition of the Pi-Ute Indians.

It is the desire of the Indian Bureau, in view of the fact that these Indians—who are represented as being peaceable, with a few exceptions, and well-disposed toward the whites—are scattered over various parts of Eastern Nevada, Southern Utah, Arizona, and Eastern California, to gather them on a reservation to be set apart in what is known as the "Muddy Valley," in Lincoln County, Nevada, hoping thereby to influence them to adopt the habits and pursuits of civilized life.

It appears that there are a few settlers and improvements on the tract of land which it is designed to reserve for these Indians, and the Commissioner submits an estimate of appropriation, amounting to \$35,000, for the purpose of purchasing said improvements, collecting and locating the Indians on said reservation, and providing them with articles necessary for their comfort and advancement.

I commend the subject to the favorable consideration of Congress.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

B. R. COWEN, *Acting Secretary.*

The Honorable the SPEAKER
of the House of Representatives.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., December 17, 1872.

SIR: I have the honor to present herewith duplicate copies of a report of G. W. Ingalls, United States Indian agent, dated "Pioche, Ne-

vada, November 1, 1872," with reference to the present condition of the Pi-Ute Indians.

These Indians, divided into various bands, and numbering some three or four thousand souls, are scattered through Eastern Nevada, Southern Utah, and on the Colorado River in Arizona and Eastern California. They are represented, with a few exceptions, as a quiet, peaceable people, well disposed toward the whites; and there are good reasons for the belief that they may, if encouraged by the Government, be led to adopt the habits and pursuits of civilized life. In their present scattered localities it would, however, be impracticable, without a very heavy expense, to make any systematic efforts with this object in view, and the agent suggests, in order to remove this obstacle to their civilization, that they be gathered upon a reservation selected for them in Lincoln County, Southern Nevada, in what is called "Muddy Valley," extending from Saint Thomas, on the South, to West Point, on the North, and the full width of the valley east and west.

There are a few settlers and improvements on this tract of land; of the latter a system of irrigating ditches, which are said to have cost the Mormons who formerly occupied that part of the country many thousands of dollars, but which are now offered to the Government without any consideration, while the other improvements may be purchased for a moderate sum. I have carefully considered this matter, and fully concur in the views expressed by the agent in his present report, and respectfully ask that the subject-matter may receive the favorable consideration of the Department and of Congress.

An estimate of the probable cost of establishing these Indians upon the reservation, and of paying for the improvements thereon, amounting to \$35,000, is herewith inclosed, with request that it be submitted to Congress.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

F. A. WALKER,
Commissioner.

Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

OFFICE INDIAN AGENCY,
Pioche, Nevada, November 1, 1872.

SIR: I have the honor of herewith submitting some facts, together with some suggestions for the consideration of the Department.

I have recently returned from a very thorough examination of my field, having visited all the various bands of Indians properly belonging to my agency, save a few who were in the mountains gathering pine-nuts.

The Indians of this agency are scattered over the three southern counties of Utah, that part of Arizona north of the Colorado River, all Lincoln County, and part of Nye County, Nevada. I am fully persuaded these Indians number between three and four thousand, divided into bands as follows: The Sherwits, Pa-Weapits, Kaibabits, Unkar kauagats-Ta-Nouts, Wu-ia, Kuraintu-kwakats, Unka-toma, Kwigunts, Kavvarumaup, Urai-Nuints, *in Utah*; the Chimewawas, *in Arizona*; one band each at Las Vegas, Saint Thomas, mouth of Rio Virgin, Overton, Saint Joseph, West Point, Eagle Valley, Parangut Lake, Panaca, and three in the Meadow Valley Wash.

To reach all these various bands of Indians requires a circuit of over one thousand miles of travel, and the Department will readily see that the item of transportation is no small one.

No organized effort in way of education or civilization can be successfully inaugurated and maintained without an enormous expenditure of money.

I held two councils of the Indians—one at Saint George, Southern Utah, composed of the representative principal men of the various bands in Utah and Arizona; the other at Saint Thomas, represented by the various bands in Southeast Nevada.

I was greatly assisted by Major J. W. Powell, of the Colorado River exploring expe-

dition, who acted as my interpreter, and delivered quite an address, setting forth the advantages derived by the Indians if they would generally adopt the propositions I had submitted to them. I endeavored to impress upon them the importance of speedily acceding to the wishes of the Government in giving up their savage, wandering life, and give their attention to agricultural and mechanical pursuits, and adopting a civilized mode of living, and securing the benefits of an education. I was surprised at the general expressions of approval and willingness to adopt at the earliest practicable moment the suggestions given.

I learned from Major Powell, who has been nearly five years among the Indians, and over two years with the Pi-Utes, that these Indians will very generally give their attention to farming, and can be led, with but few exceptions, to give up their wandering life; and further, that he has generally found them desirous of education and to live as whites, and to come *together*, if necessary, upon a reservation.

I am very desirous of carrying out the policy of the Government and the special instructions of the Department. I am specially desirous of doing more for them than simply distributing supplies, and preventing trouble between them and white settlers. *If I do more*, I am convinced there must be systematic and organized effort, and this can only be brought about by one or more reservations.

I have conferred freely with Major Powell and Lieutenant Wheeler, who are well acquainted with the country of my agency; and I have also personally examined the same, and would most respectfully suggest that so much as might be deemed necessary be set off for the exclusive use of the Indians of my agency, and also admit of provision for an increased number than are now in the agency.

I would respectfully suggest that so much of Lincoln County, Nevada, as lies in what is called the Muddy Valley, extending from Saint Thomas on the south to West Point on the north, and the full width of the valley east and west, (being about two miles.)

I would suggest for the Utah Pi-Utes a tract lying east of Kanab, embraced in one of the most fertile valleys in Southern Utah.

My reasons for early attention to this matter are apparent when I state that a railroad is now being built by Brigham Young south from Salt Lake City, which will connect with the thirty-fifth parallel railroad.

Prominent capitalists of Nevada are only waiting the assembly of the legislature to secure necessary enactments, and will at once begin the construction of a narrow-gauge railroad from Elko, on the Central Pacific, and run south and connect with the thirty-fifth parallel and other railroads now under construction.

The Muddy Valley tract has some few settlers and improvements; of the latter is a good system of irrigating ditches, which cost the former and original settlers—Mormons—over \$75,000, but which are offered to the Government without consideration.

A large body of timber, sufficient for *future* and *present* needs of a reservation, lies in close proximity to the valley of the Muddy.

I am in receipt of a recent communication from General Crook, of Arizona, urging me to withdraw several bands of Pi-Utes in Arizona and California across the Colorado River and into the Muddy Valley, as they are not now attached *to* or provided for *by* any agency; they are very destitute, and at present causing serious trouble. General Crook further informs me if these Indians are gathered across the river, as indicated and provided for, it will do much to shorten the Indian war in Arizona.

These Indians and others similarly conditioned number nearly fifteen hundred, and justice demands that some provision be made for them.

Since my return from my trip I have visited Indian Agent Bateman, of Wadsworth, Nevada, and from him I learned more fully of the condition of these Indians, and am persuaded that unless relief is extended to them soon, many of them will be driven to the necessity of stealing from the settlers in Mono, Inyo, and San Bernardino Counties, California. Many of those settlers have written Agent Bateman frequently and urged that some provision be made for these Indians, as they are in a truly pitiable condition.

The rapid development of the Arizona and Nevada silver mines, and to encourage their continued progress and keep open the new routes to and from these mines, every obstruction should be removed, one of the most important of which has been from the Indians, who claim the whites should pay them for grass and water in traveling through their country.

I would respectfully suggest that an appropriation be made for this object in addition to the present amount intended for the Southeast Nevada agency, sufficient to enable it to be accomplished, and at the earliest practicable moment.

I am yours, very respectfully,

G. W. INGALLS,

United States Sub-Indian Agent, Southeastern Nevada.

Hon. F. A. WALKER,

Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

For this amount, or so much thereof as may be necessary, to be expended under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, in establishing the Pi-Ute Indians in Southern Nevada, Eastern California, Southern Utah, and Northwestern Arizona, upon a reservation in Muddy Valley, Nevada; in instructing the Indians so established in agricultural and mechanical pursuits; in providing employes, educating children, procuring medicine and medical attendance, care for and support of the aged, sick, infirm, and helpless orphans of said Indians, and in any other respect to promote their comfort, civilization, and improvement.....	\$25,000
For this amount, or so much thereof as may be necessary to enable the Secretary of the Interior to pay the amount found by him to be due to settlers upon the reservation established in the Muddy Valley, Nevada, for the Pi-Ute Indians, for improvements made by said settlers prior to the date of the passage of this act.....	10,000