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Letter from the Secretary of the Interior, in relation to an appropriation for the removal of stray bands of Winnebago Indians from the State of Wisconsin

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REMOVAL OF STRAY BANDS OF WINNEBAGO INDIANS.

L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

IN RELATION TO

An appropriation for the removal of stray bands of Winnebago Indians from the State of Wisconsin.

DECEMBER 11, 1872.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, D. C., December 10, 1872.

SIR: I have the honor to inclose herewith a copy of a communication from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated the 7th instant, relative to the removal of the Winnebago Indians in Wisconsin from their present locations in that State to the Winnebago reservation in Nebraska, or to some other location, as provided for in section six of the act of Congress entitled "An act making appropriations for the current and contingent expenses of the Indian Department," &c., approved May 29, 1872. It appears that said Indians were not a party to the treaty which established the Winnebago reservation in Nebraska; were not provided for in said treaty; and, therefore, have no right in such reservation, except such as may be granted by the Winnebagoes of Nebraska. The latter, however, refuse to allow the Wisconsin Indians to come upon their reservation, and some other location, therefore, must be selected for them. The only other available place for them is upon lands in the Indian Territory, west of the 96th degree west longitude.

The amount named in the act above cited for the removal (\$36,000) will doubtless be sufficient for that purpose, if judiciously and economically applied; but an amount should be appropriated for their subsistence in their new homes until they can establish themselves therein. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs recommends that the sum of fifty thousand dollars be appropriated for that purpose, in which recommendation I concur.

I submit herewith the draught of a paragraph to be inserted in the Indian appropriation bill, provided Congress shall conclude to adopt the course herein recommended.

Very respectfully, &c.,

C. DELANO, ~~FRANK~~
Secretary.

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

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., December 7, 1872.

SIR: I have the honor to present, herewith, two letters from Hon. C. C. Washburn, governor of the State of Wisconsin, in relation to the removal of the stray bands of Winnebago Indians residing in that State.

By the sixth section of the act making appropriations for the Indian service for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1873, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to expend, for the removal of said Indians from their present homes in Wisconsin to the Winnebago reservation in Nebraska, or to such other location as may be selected for them, and for their subsistence during such removal, and at their new homes, the sum of \$36,000 originally appropriated by the act of July 15, 1870, for such and kindred purposes.

On the 20th May, 1872, at a council held by the then superintendent of Indian affairs for the northern superintendency, with the Winnebagoes in Nebraska, these Indians refused to receive the Winnebagoes from Wisconsin, unless all the land lying north and south of their reservation, and south and east of the Omaha Creek, amounting to about 15,000 acres, should be purchased for them, and an annual appropriation of \$60,000 be made for the support of said Indians after their removal.

Information of a more recent date has been received from the present superintendent, Mr. Barclay White, to the effect that the tribe in Nebraska peremptorily refuse to receive the Wisconsin bands on any terms whatever.

In view of the fact that the Indians now occupying the Winnebago reservation in Nebraska acquired the same by treaty, this Office is of opinion that those in Wisconsin who have not lived with the tribe proper for many years have no right to any portion of said reservation.

The only place where these Indians can be located is in the Indian Territory. Should it be decided to remove them to that place it will be necessary, as they have no means of their own, that an appropriation of \$50,000 be made for their support during the first year after their removal, and to aid them in establishing themselves in their new homes.

The Office is decidedly of the opinion that, in order to relieve the people of Wisconsin from the annoyance that is caused by the presence of these Indians in their midst, their removal at an early date to some other location would be a great object gained, but is in doubt as to the willingness of the stray bands to leave Wisconsin, and also as to the action that should be taken to accomplish the removal without using force.

The matter is respectfully submitted for the consideration of the Department.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

F. A. WALKER,
Commissioner.

Honorable SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

For this amount to enable the Secretary of the Interior to remove the Winnebago Indians of Wisconsin from their present location in that State to some suitable place, to be by him selected, within the Indian Territory, west of the 96th degree of west longitude, and to provide for their subsistence until they are sufficiently established therein, and are able to provide for themselves..... \$50,000