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Appropriations for Sioux Indians. Letter from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting estimate of appropriations for subsisting Teton and other bands of Sioux Indians in Montana

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APPROPRIATIONS FOR SIOUX INDIANS.

L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

TRANSMITTING

Estimate of appropriations for subsisting Teton and other bands of Sioux Indians, in Montana.

JANUARY 25, 1872.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, January 25, 1872.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a report from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated the 23d instant, inclosing an estimate of appropriation of \$500,000 for the purpose of subsisting and clothing the Teton and other bands of Sioux Indians near Fort Peck, in Montana, together with copies of reports of Superintendent of Indian Affairs J. A. Viall, and Special Indian Agent A. J. Simmons, in relation to these Indians.

The report of the Commissioner fully explains the necessity of legislation for the object named.

I concur in the recommendation that there be appropriated the sum of \$500,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary to provide subsistence and clothing, and for such other objects as the Department may deem proper for the civilization and improvement of said Indians, and the subject is respectfully submitted for the favorable consideration of Congress.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

C. DELANO,
Secretary.

The SPEAKER of the *House of Representatives.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., January 23, 1872.

SIR: By instructions from the Department of the 6th September, 1871, Mr. J. A. Viall, superintendent Indian affairs for Montana, was

directed to visit the Teton Sioux roaming through the northeastern portion of that Territory between the Yellowstone and Upper Missouri Rivers, with a view to ascertain the cause of their hostile attitude towards the Government and its citizens, and what steps would be necessary to secure peace and save our border settlements from further depredations on the part of these Indians.

I herewith have the honor to lay before you copies, in duplicate, of the superintendent's report on this subject, and of the proceedings of a council with said Indians, held at Fort Peck in November last.

Before proceeding to the consideration of this report specifically, it may not be out of place to make a brief statement of the present condition of the Sioux Indians generally, and of what has thus far been accomplished through the liberal provisions made by the Government for their subsistence and civilization.

By the terms of the treaty with the Sioux of different tribes, &c., of April 29, 1868, (Stat. 15, p. 635,) a reservation bounded on the north by the forty-sixth parallel of north latitude, east by the Missouri River, south by the north line of Nebraska, and west by the one hundredth degree west longitude, was set apart for these Indians; clothing, goods, and farming-implements were to be furnished them, and school and mission-houses, agency buildings, mills, &c., were to be erected for their benefit. At the time that arrangements were made for negotiating this treaty, large bodies of Sioux, roaming over an immense country, were, with other tribes, in open hostility to the Government, spreading terror and desolation wherever they went, and general Indian war was imminent. They are now gradually being collected upon the reservation, and the reports of the various agents to whose charge they have been committed show a good spirit prevailing among, substantially, all of them, and a willingness on the part of many to abandon their nomadic habits and engage in industrial pursuits.

There are three agencies on the reserve, established under the treaty of 1863, one (known as the Whetstone) near the head of White River, one at the mouth of the Cheyenne, and one at the mouth of Grand River. These are, in addition to the agency on the east of the Missouri, at Crow Creek, established under former treaties with the Sioux.

The Crow Creek agency embraces about two thousand four hundred Lower Yanktonais, Lower Brulés, and Two Kettles, under Medicine-Bull and other chiefs. These Indians, particularly the Lower Yanktonais, are of a quiet, peaceable disposition, engaged to a limited extent in agricultural pursuits, and faithful in the observance of treaty stipulations.

The Whetstone agency has in charge a portion of the Brulé and Ogallalla bands, with about one thousand seceders from other Sioux bands, numbering in all some four thousand five hundred souls. The principal chiefs of these Indians are Spotted Tail, Swift Bear, and Little Wound. Spotted Tail and most of the Indians belonging to the agency are, by executive authority, at present hunting in Western Nebraska, on the headwaters of the Republican River.

The Cheyenne River agency takes in the greater portion of the Minneconjoux, Sans Arc, and Two Kettle bands of Sioux, with part of the Brulé, Blackfeet, Ogallalla, Yanktonais, and Onepapa bands, numbering in all about five thousand. Little Blackfoot, the One Feather, Iron Eyes, and Mandan are prominent chiefs. The Two Kettle band and a few of the Sans Arcs and Minneconjoux manifest a desire to abandon their roving life, establish themselves in homes, and live in peace with all; but the majority of the Indians of this agency are yet wild, and

opposed to laboring for support. Except a few minor depredations said to have been committed by them, they have, however, thus far remained quiet and peaceable.

To the Grand River agency are attached some seven thousand Indians of the Blackfeet, Yanktonnais, Cuthead, Oncepapa, and a few of the Two Kettles, Sans Arc, Ogallalla, and Brulé bands of Sioux, under Two Bears, All-Over-Black, The Grass, and others as chiefs. Except the Oncepapas, who are wild and difficult to combat, the general conduct of these Indians since they were placed upon the reservation has been good, and many of them are anxious to farm and to have lands allotted to them in severalty. About eight hundred acres of ground have been broken by the agent, and the affairs of the agency are in a favorable condition.

On the North Platte, about thirty miles southeast of Fort Laramie, Wyoming Territory, are temporarily located the Ogallalla Sioux, under the chieftanship of Red Cloud. Red Cloud, with a considerable number of followers, has, during the past summer, been hunting in the Powder River country, and has not yet reported at the agency.

There are fed at this agency seven thousand six hundred and thirty-six Sioux Indians, including a few Brulés, Minneconjoux, and Uncpapas, who have seceded from their respective tribes.

From the above statement it will be perceived that there are now collected on the reservation in Dakota, and under the control of the various agencies, some nineteen thousand Sioux Indians, besides those temporarily located in Wyoming.

The number of Sioux who are yet roaming at large cannot be definitely ascertained. During the past fall a large number of these Indians, composed of the Santee, Yankton, Yanktonnais, Sisseton, Wahpeton, and other bands, and numbering some two thousand lodges, collected at or near the Milk River agency, in Montana, and notified the agent at that place that they intended to make their permanent homes in the country occupied by the Assinaboines, Gros Ventres, and River Crows. These Indians have thus far been supplied with food, and have remained quiet and peaceable. An appropriation (\$100,000) to enable this service to be continued during the remainder of the fiscal year has already been asked.

In addition to the foregoing, there is also a large number of Sioux now collected in Montana, some sixty miles south of Fort Peck, on the Missouri River. These Indians, numbering some eleven thousand, are under Sitting Bull and Black Moon, the most aggressive and powerful chiefs remaining in a hostile attitude to the Government. They are known as the Teton Sioux. Most of them have never been upon reservations, and they have uniformly in the past avowed their intention to depredate upon the trading and military posts in that section of the country, and also to prevent the construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad through what they claim to be their lands.

By the inclosed report of the proceedings of a council recently held with the Teton Sioux, the gratifying intelligence is received that these Indians have become anxious, in their turn, for peace, and it is now reasonable to expect that, by judicious management and friendly negotiations, they also may be brought under the control of the Department, and further depredations by them upon the people of Montana and neighboring Territories prevented.

In his interviews with Black Moon and other chiefs, Agent Simmons reports the following terms to have been agreed upon: No war parties are to go out of the Teton camp, and no further hostilities are to be en-

gaged in on their part against the whites, pending negotiations for peace; the agent to report to the Department Black Moon's words, and to ask that subsistence be provided for him and his people. It was also agreed that the agent should visit them again as soon as practicable, bringing the words of the President; Black Moon in the mean time to go to his people, to talk and counsel with them for peace, and urge a delegation to visit Washington.

The agent believes that if the negotiations thus initiated are promptly followed up, the submission of the whole tribe will result.

Concurring in these views, and indorsing the recommendation contained in the superintendent's report, that means be provided for subsisting Black Moon and his followers, conditioned upon a faithful observance of their pledges, I have now the honor to lay before you the inclosed estimate for the sum of \$500,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary to provide subsistence and clothing for the Teton and other bands of Sioux near Fort Peck, Montana Territory, and for such other objects as the Secretary of the Interior may deem necessary and advisable for the civilization and improvement of said Indians, and to request that the same be laid before Congress for favorable consideration.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

F. A. WALKER,
Commissioner.

Hon. C. DELANO,
Secretary of the Interior.

Estimate of appropriations required to care for the Teton and other bands of Sioux, in Montana Territory, up to June 30, 1873.

For this amount, or so much thereof as may be necessary to purchase subsistence and clothing for the Teton and other bands of Sioux in the vicinity of Fort Peck, Montana Territory, and for such other objects as the Secretary of the Interior may deem necessary and advisable to promote the civilization and improvement of said Indians..... \$500,000 00

OFFICE SUPERINTENDENT INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Helena, Montana Territory, December 23, 1871.

SIR: I have the honor to report that, in compliance with Department letter of instructions dated September 7, also inclosing copy of letter from Hon. Secretary of the Interior bearing date September 6, authorizing me to visit the Teton Sioux for the purpose of ascertaining as nearly as possible their desires and what would be necessary to procure peace between these Indians and the white settlers on our north-western border, I had arranged to go down the Yellowstone, expecting to find their encampment between the Yellowstone and Powder Rivers; but the order for a military escort, which at that time was considered absolutely necessary to visit these Indians, and which was obtained at the Department's request, having been subsequently countermanded by order of the War Department, for the reason "of not having a sufficient number of troops in this military district, and believing it unsafe to send a small detachment into their country," I was therefore compelled to adopt some other means of communicating with these Indians.

After consultation with Agent Simmons, the plan of reaching them by the Milk-River route was adopted. I therefore authorized Agent Simmons to organize a party, consisting of good and reliable men, such as he could depend upon, to insure safety in case of meeting with hostile Indians. This was done by employing three men and taking three employes from the Milk River agency, together with five trustworthy Indians, who were on friendly terms with the Tetons and had access to their camp, and who proved of great assistance in bringing about the interviews.

As will be seen by the report of Agent Simmons, a copy of which is herewith transmitted for your information, he met the head chief, Black Moon, and a number of chiefs less in authority, accompanied by two hundred lodges, at Fort Peck, and remained twenty-one days in council. A strong desire for peace was manifested by them, and important arrangements were entered into preliminary to effecting a per-

manent peace, they agreeing to stop all further aggressions until they hear from or see the agent again and ascertain whether the Government will supply them with food as a consideration for the loss of their game in consequence of the proposed construction of the North Pacific Railroad through the country claimed and occupied by them.

I am of the opinion if the Indians are subsisted and judiciously managed, they can be brought upon a peace-footing and further hostilities prevented.

It will be seen, on reference to inclosed copy of report, that Black Moon, head chief of the Teton Sioux Nation, and others, declare they will make peace, and also that Sitting Bull and the soldiers of the camp prevented a war-party from going on the war-path. These are significant facts, worthy of consideration, as showing their desires and efforts for peace.

I would respectfully recommend that measures be adopted for subsisting Black Moon and followers, conditioned upon a faithful observance of their pledges. The established policy of the administration in dealing with Indians, justice, humanity, and economy alike demand that our best efforts should be put forth to aid and assist these people, who now desire peace with the Government, that a savage and a bloody warfare may be prevented.

I inclose herewith map of the Milk River country and that occupied by the Teton Sioux, transmitted with the copy of Agent Simmons's report, for the information of the Department.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. A. VIALL,

Superintendent Indians for Montana.

Hon. F. A. WALKER,

Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

FORT BROWNING, MONTANA TERRITORY,
Milk River Agency, December 5, 1871.

SIR: Pursuant to your instructions directing me to visit the bands of Teton Sioux roaming between the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers, with the object of obtaining full information in regard to their disposition for peace, &c., to enable the Department to take such steps as might be proper in the premises, and to ascertain whether a delegation of said chiefs could be induced to visit Washington for the purpose of concluding a treaty, I have the honor to report that I arrived at Fort Peck, on the Missouri River, near the mouth of Milk River, on the night of the 4th day of November, and found the Tetons encamped from twenty to sixty miles south of that place; that I met the head chief and orator of the Uncpapas or Teton nation, Black Moon, (We Sapa,) and five other chiefs, viz, Iron Dog, Long Dog, Little Wound, Sitting Eagle, and Bear's Rib, besides a great many head-men and two hundred lodges of these people. I remained among them twenty-one days, during which time I held fifteen interviews, of from one to ten hours' duration each.

Before proceeding further, and in order that you may have a full understanding of the matter, I will state a few facts and circumstances concerning the visit of Sitting Bull and other Tetons to Fort Peck prior to my arrival.

These people have been hostile to the whites for many years, having made war upon all the posts on the Upper Missouri, and committed a great many depredations and murders. They have refused all friendly intercourse with whites, not even having been at peace with the white traders on the borders of their country, but have procured ammunition and necessary articles of supplies by traffic with the half-breeds of the north and friendly Indians. From their stand-point, all whites found in or traveling through their country are regarded as enemies intruding upon their hunting-grounds and interfering with their game; but their hostilities have not been confined to these, as they have made frequent incursions out of their country into white settlements and committed depredations.

Fort Peck was established five years ago as a trading-post for tribes who have since moved further west, and the Tetons have come to that vicinity, so that the post may now be regarded as a convenient point to them for trade. The trader at this point has sent frequent messengers to them, with presents of tobacco, inviting them to come in and make peace with the post for purposes of trade, which have been unheeded on the part of the Indians, until the 8th day of September last, when Sitting Bull, the head war chief of the nation, with a small party, came to the post after night-fall and called out his name, stating he came as a friend and for peace. He was treated well by the trader, with whom he established a truce and arranged for his people to trade, after which small parties continued to come in, and on the 12th day of October following Sitting Bull again visited the post. At this visit I am informed he expressed a desire to see an agent of the Government; said that the Tetons would make peace, and that they would not allow any more war-parties to go out of the camp, which declaration

was verified a short time afterwards in the following manner: A war-party had organized and was about starting out upon a foray up the river against other tribes and whites. The "soldiers" of the camp, headed by Sitting Bull, prevented its going, at the cost, however, of a fight, in which eight men and some twenty horses were killed, and the bodies of the refractory persons were cut to pieces by the "soldiers." I was not disposed to credit this statement at first, but it came to me from so many different sources and in such a reliable manner that I became convinced of its truthfulness.

Like most other bands of Sioux, the Tetons have an organization for the government of the camp called the "soldiers," composed of leading and influential men. Their authority is supreme, and their mandates are arbitrary and must be obeyed; otherwise severe penalties are inflicted, such as cutting lodges to pieces, killing horses, and sometimes inflicting the death penalty upon culprits.

On my arrival at Fort Peck I found it wholly impracticable to visit the Teton camp. I therefore sent messengers, with presents of tobacco, inviting the head chiefs and headmen to come in, employing as messengers Oncpapas and the friendly trustworthy Indians who accompanied me. My first messenger was kindly received, but while he was smoking in a lodge and delivering my message, the horse I had loaned him to ride was spirited away by some evil-disposed person. His dignity and outraged feelings not permitting him to accept another, which was proffered by Sitting Bull, he returned on foot, a distance of fifty miles. Sitting Bull, however, dispatched a messenger to me deploring the loss of the horse, and stating he would find it and bring it in when he came. Communication was kept up with the camp, and small parties continued to arrive daily until the 14th of November, when Black Moon, the chiefs before named, and an encampment of two hundred lodges arrived. I was then informed that the "soldiers" had refused to allow Sitting Bull to leave the camp on account of apprehended disturbances among the people, resulting from the conflict above referred to. He sent word he could not come to see me at that time, but that he desired the Black Moon and his brother-in-law Shunkahaska to speak for him. Interviews were now held with Black Moon and party during the following ten days. Much information was elicited, and an agreement entered into whereby a truce was established. Notes were taken of all important conferences, and I herewith present all the main points in as brief and condensed a form as possible.

I told them I came as messenger from the President to learn their disposition—whether they would make peace, or were going to continue their warfare on the whites; the President was anxious to live in peace, on friendly terms with them. Peace would be mutually beneficial; their brethren, the Ogallallas, had made peace a short time ago, and a delegation, headed by Red Cloud, had visited the President and returned to their homes in safety; the Santee and Yanktonais, on the other side of them, had entered into peaceful arrangements last summer with the whites, and were now our friends. All the tribes around them were contented; did not live in constant fear of white soldiers; were getting along better than the Tetons, because they were friends to the whites, and listened to the words of the Great White Father and his agents. Game, upon which they depended for subsistence, was fast disappearing. If they continued their warfare, they would also disappear—would perish with the buffalo; if they made peace, and remained faithful to it, they would live, and the President would keep them as he did all friendly tribes. Told them I had no authority to make a treaty, but urged a delegation of chiefs to visit Washington and arrange terms with the Great Father who had sent for them; I would accompany them to where the superintendent lived, and guaranteed them a safe journey.

Black Moon declared himself emphatically in favor of peace, and stated Sitting Bull agreed with him and would stand by him; that most of their headmen and men of sense wanted peace with the whites. Whatever he said he would do; he would make it so; when he talked in camp all the people listened; was afraid of no Indian, and spoke what he believed to be good and right; he had the power to make good his words. He would now tell me, if we wished to have peace with all the Tetons, what the President must do. He must stop the railroad, (meaning the Northern Pacific;) it was going to pass through their country, and would destroy the game; the white soldiers and citizens must be kept out of their country; the Tetons would not make peace with the soldiers; Fort Buford below, and the Mescalshell trading-post above, must be abandoned. If the Great White Father would do these things it would satisfy all, and they would have peace; demanded of me to tell him whether he would do it. They would smoke over the proposition of going to Washington when he returned to camp.

Others spoke, generally indorsing what Black Moon had said. The railroad was being built through their country without their consent. How could they live when the game was gone? They would die, and rather choose to die like brave men, fighting. One declared he would make war upon the railroad to the last. I replied that the railroad would be built; that they might as well undertake to stop the Missouri River from flowing down stream as to stop the railroad. They had already seen one railroad built across the plains and over the mountains. The Sioux declared at that

time that they would prevent it, but they found themselves powerless to stop it. That road now transported presents and provisions from the President to the Indians in that vicinity. It would be the same with this road if they made peace; it would be a great benefit to them. The Great Father would help them to live if they ceased their warfare. He was strong and powerful; his white children were as numerous as the trees in the mountains. He could exterminate the Tetons if he so desired; they were but a handful with inferior arms to those of the friendly tribes. The Great Father's heart was good; he took pity upon them because they were weak and inferior. He had seven great and good men, who made it their business, without pay, to labor for the improvement of the Indians. The Tetons must do as all the tribes around them had already done—cease their hostilities, make peace, learn the ways and to live as the whites do, and to accept the civilization that was now surrounding them; otherwise they would perish. If they had men who would rather throw their lives away fighting than accept peace and its benefits, would tell them if they were brave men they would think of their women and children, and not subject them to the sacrifice of war and starvation. Brave men who had sense and hearts would not do that. In regard to the country they occupied and roamed through, and through which the railroad would pass, I would tell them that it belonged to the whites, as the Crows and Gros Ventres had ceded it by treaty to the President. The Tetons had no right to it, and could occupy it only by permission of the President. In regard to Fort Buford and the Muscle-shell trading-post, they were outside of the country occupied by the Tetons. They had waged ineffectual warfare on both. Fort Buford stood between them and the tribes below, with whom they were at war, but who were friends to the whites, and Muscle-shell was in their way, as it interfered with their war parties against the upper tribes; hence their desire to have the posts abandoned. If they kept away from these posts they would do them no harm. The Great Father was in the habit of sending his soldiers whenever it was necessary to protect his people and their property. If the Tetons ceased their hostilities and made peace there would probably be no occasion for soldiers coming into their country. They had made war upon whites for several years; had committed many outrages; charged them with having made a raid into the Gallatin Valley last July, and killed two inoffending citizens and driven off a large number of horses; and that some of them now said they would make war upon the construction of the railroad. Would tell them plainly I did not believe their Great Father would submit any longer to such conduct; that if they made war upon the railroad he would send soldiers enough here to punish them severely. They could not now carry on warfare against white soldiers like they had in former times in the lower country. Their game was then abundant; they could fight and subsist. Now, if the white soldiers should rout their camp and keep them moving for thirty days they would starve to death. I had just traveled one hundred and fifty miles without seeing a buffalo. I came as their friend to tell them the truth; urged them to consider well my words, talk and smoke over them in camp—smoke the tobacco the Great White Chief had sent them, and make up their minds whether they would make peace and live, or continue hostilities and die like the wolves. Urged a party of chiefs to go and see the President, who was anxious to shake hands with them and agree upon terms of peace.

Black Moon denied they were going to fight the railroad; they had not all made up their minds what they would do about that. Whoever said he would fight spoke for himself alone. He would tell his people present that a few days ago the chiefs and soldiers in camp did not let a war party go out, and their camp was in mourning in consequence. Wanted to know if this man was writing down his words for me to take to the Great Father. Told him such was the case. He said "Tell him this:" (Repeated the circumstance of the conflict among his people, the "soldiering" of a war party in which eight men and twenty horses were killed and lodges cut up.) "Tell the Great White Father this was done for peace; that these who have sense and think as I do did that, and that we will make things go our way. There were many brave men among them who would throw their lives away fighting the white soldiers; they were fools and would not listen to reason; they could not control them." Said he would talk and counsel for peace with his people. If they refused to listen he would take those who would follow and leave the camp and go to the north side of the Missouri. Many of the people would follow him; was afraid of the white soldiers; deprecated war with them; was alarmed and trembled for his people. As for himself he would have peace. (He then shook hands with eight white men present.) Said it was the Arapahoes who made the raid into the Gallatin Valley; declared that none of his people joined in it. Said in their way this country belonged to them; they had fought for it and driven the Crows and Gros Ventres back. The whites settled in and drove them out of their country below; they were compelled to come here where they could get some game; they crossed the Yellowstone six years ago; they had fought for the country they occupied, and it would be difficult to restrain their people from fighting again; pledged his best efforts for peace; would labor with his people. At the lower agencies they tied up the Indian children and whipped them in trying to learn them

as white children are taught. The Tetons didn't want any civilization, but wanted something to eat. The railroad would fill the country with whites and whites' houses; their game would be destroyed. Made a strong appeal for provisions to be furnished them as a basis for peace and in consideration of their giving up their country to the railroad. Several others talked, concurring with Black Moon; represented the destitution of their people and urged that supplies be furnished them. I replied if they made peace and lived up to it they would receive assistance.

On the 15th of November runners arrived from the main camp reporting scouts had come in giving information of a party of soldiers on the Yellowstone, (Colonel Baker's command from Fort Ellis;) also an expedition had been discovered lower down on that river a short time before, accompanied, they said, by a party of Indians dressed in soldiers' uniform. There was much excitement, much talk, and some preparations for fighting. They wanted to know the object of these soldiers—if they were coming to fight them. I explained that they were escorting the engineers looking the route for the railroad; that they would not harm them unless the Tetons attacked them. I demanded of Black Moon that he make good his words of yesterday. If he was sincere in his expressions for peace, and wished the President to regard him as a big chief, now was the time to act to prevent a conflict which would bring on a war that would be terrible in its result to his people. After consultation among themselves, messengers were sent to camp headed by Black Moon's son, advising them to keep away from these expeditions, and not to begin any war. I furnished tobacco and feasts to take to the "soldiers'" lodge, and dispatched one of my Indians with the party.

In another interview with Black Moon and party the following terms were definitely agreed upon:

No war-parties are to go out of the Teton camp, and no further hostilities are to be engaged in on their part against the whites pending negotiations for peace, I agreeing to report to the Department Black Moon's words, the disposition for peace, and to ask the Great Father to provide them with food, and to visit them again as soon as practicable, bringing the words of the President. In the mean time Black Moon goes to his people to talk, and counsel with them for peace, and urge a delegation to visit the President. He solemnly declares he will have peace for himself and his band proper, and if the others decide upon war he will leave them, and take with him all who want peace.

A few days after this I received a message from Sitting Bull, stating he had found the horse lost by my messenger; that it was not good for him to leave the camp then, but as soon as he could do so he would bring the horse to Fort Peck, and that he and Black Moon would visit me at Fort Browning during the winter.

Becoming convinced that no opposition had been made to the expedition on the Yellowstone escorting the railroad engineers, and believing that Black Moon and others were sincere in their expressions and desire for peace, upon their urgent demands I purchased a small amount of flour, sugar, and coffee, from the trader at Fort Peck, and gave it to them, and sent some presents to the "soldiers'" lodge, with words of encouragement and advice. As little expense was incurred as possible under the circumstances, and the little given them was absolutely necessary in furtherance of the object of my visit. The accounts for the same will be forwarded at an early day.

I was disappointed in not being able to meet the chiefs, Four Horns, Red Horn, and Sitting Bull. However, I am of the opinion that three of those with whom I held council—Black Moon, Iron Dog, and Long Dog—are as influential and as great as any of the tribe.

It was impossible, from the conflicting statements, to obtain anything like a correct estimate as to their numbers, but I am convinced the various bands comprising the Teton Nation, now in proximity to Fort Peck, will not fall short of one thousand four hundred lodges. Estimating eight souls to the lodge, would make a population of 11,200.

That a portion of the Teton Sioux are not only willing, but anxious, to make peace with the Government is certain, and if the steps already taken are promptly followed up, it may lead to a reconciliation of the whole tribe.

Many of the chiefs and leading men fully understand their situation, and the results that will follow the opening up of their country to civilization by the North Pacific Railroad; that game will disappear; that they will be surrounded and overpowered by whites, and will perish by starvation, cold, and warfare, unless they make peace and obtain assistance from the Government. They have a wholesome fear of the power of the Government and its military, which will prove the most influential motive in inducing them to accept peace.

That all further depredations can be prevented, and a thorough peace be maintained with this powerful and aggressive band through friendly negotiations, is, from the very nature of things, uncertain and improbable. However, the surrounding circumstances place them in a favorable condition for receiving peaceful overtures at the present time, and it is certain much good can be accomplished. I would, therefore,

earnestly call your attention to the importance of the Department rendering prompt and substantial aid to the peace party, headed by Black Moon, believing that if this is done before any conflict shall arise with the people of the North Pacific Railroad, and the Indians are made to feel that they will receive assistance from the Government, a general war with the tribe, which would be expensive, protracted, and sanguinary in its results, may be averted.

While at Fort Peck I also met small parties of Indians from Grand River and Devil's Lake agencies, to whom I represented the consequences of roaming from their homes and mingling with the hostile bands, and advised them to return to their agencies, which they promised to do.

I transmit herewith, in duplicate, a map of the Milk River country, showing the present location of Indian tribes. It is made from actual observation, and is believed to be mainly correct. One copy is intended for transmittal to the honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. J. SIMMONS,

United States Special Indian Agent, Milk River Agency.

J. A. VIALL, Esq.,
Superintendent Indian Affairs, Helena, Montana Territory.

H. Ex. 102—2