

1-25-1876

Winnebago Indians of Nebraska. Letter from the Secretary of the Interior, inviting the attention of Congress to a letter of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs of the 18th instant, recommending legislation for the relief of the Winnebago Indians of Nebraska.

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Recommended Citation

H.R. Exec. Doc. No. 101, 44th Cong., 1st Sess. (1876)

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WINNEBAGO INDIANS OF NEBRASKA.

L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

INVITING

The attention of Congress to a letter of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs of the 18th instant, recommending legislation for the relief of the Winnebago Indians of Nebraska.

JANUARY 25, 1876.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, January 20, 1876.

SIR: Referring to Department letter of 17th instant, addressed to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, in reply to a resolution of January 6, 1876, calling for information in relation to the disposition of annuities, &c., of certain Pottawatomie and Winnebago bands of Indians, under the provisions and requirements of the Indian appropriation act of June 25, 1864, I now have the honor to invite the attention of Congress to the inclosed copy of a communication, dated the 18th instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, upon the subject of the insufficiency of the present annuity fund of the Winnebagoes of Nebraska, consequent upon the enforcement of the law above noted, and submitting a draught for a joint resolution granting relief in the premises.

Agreeably to the request of the Commissioner, the matter is respectfully presented to Congress for the early and favorable consideration of that body.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Z. CHANDLER,
Secretary.

The SPEAKER,
House of Representatives.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., January 18, 1876.

SIR: Referring to Office report of the 14th instant, relative to certain Winnebago Indians in the State of Wisconsin, wherein it is stated that the proportion belonging to said Indians of the tribal annuities for the present fiscal year will be retained in the Treasury, under the provisions of the act of June 25, 1864, subject to the action of Congress, I have the

honor to state that although strictly in accordance with law, the retention of said funds will seriously embarrass the interests of the Winnebagoes in Nebraska.

The appropriation under treaty stipulations with the Winnebagoes, for the present fiscal year, amounts to \$47,931.84. Of this sum \$30,859.01 has been disbursed in the payment to the Nebraska Winnebagoes of money annuities, purchase of annuity goods, supplies, and the necessary expenses of the agency, leaving a balance on hand, at this date, of \$17,072.83.

The amount to which the Wisconsin Winnebagoes are entitled of the above appropriation is \$16,173.69, which, deducted from the amount on hand, leaves \$899.14 applicable for the use of the Indians in Nebraska during the balance of the current fiscal year. This sum is entirely inadequate for the necessary expenses of the agency for the present and the next quarter. Besides the necessary agency employés whose salaries are paid from the Winnebago funds, purchases of subsistence supplies, agricultural implements, and probably stock, are requisite.

The Winnebagoes in Nebraska are largely engaged in agricultural operations; have three day-schools in operation, and are becoming each year more and more self-sustaining.

In view of these facts I am of the opinion that it would be positively detrimental to the interest, not only of the Indians, but of the Government, to withhold from them all funds which it was intended should be used for their support during the balance of the current fiscal year.

I therefore respectfully submit whether it would not be for the best interests of the Indians and of the Government to ask of Congress the necessary legislation to authorize the Department to use for the benefit of the Nebraska Winnebagoes the amount set apart for the Wisconsin Winnebagoes from the tribal funds for the current fiscal year, (and which could not be used for their benefit without further legislation,) thereby relieving the urgent necessities of the former Indians, and enabling them to continue their advance toward civilization, without injury to the interests of the latter.

I beg that this matter, so important to the Nebraska Winnebagoes, whose first halting steps toward civilization have at last been taken, and upon whom this unexpected withdrawal of appropriations, under a hitherto neglected provision of law, will fall with depressing and discouraging weight, may receive the very early and favorable consideration of the Department and of Congress; and, to that end, I transmit, herewith, a draught of a joint resolution, with request that it be forwarded to Congress at an early day.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. Q. SMITH,
Commissioner.

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

JOINT RESOLUTION authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to use certain funds for the benefit of the Winnebago Indians in Nebraska.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized to expend for the benefit of the Winnebago Indians in Nebraska the proportion of the tribal annuities due to and set apart for the Winnebago Indians in Wisconsin, under the act of June 25, 1864, of the appropriations for said tribe for the fiscal year 1876, the same amounting to sixteen thousand one hundred and seventy-three dollars and sixty-nine cents.