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Certain unpaid accounts in Indian Bureau

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CERTAIN UNPAID ACCOUNTS IN INDIAN BUREAU.

APRIL 6, 1830.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

Mr. WHITEAKER, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 3458.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred bill H. R. 3458, having had the same under consideration, beg leave to make the following report thereon:

It appears there are now many claims filed in the Indian Department and with the accounting officers of the Treasury for services and supplies furnished at various Indian agencies, which services and supplies seem to have been furnished in good faith, and which were actually needed in carrying out the policy of the government with regard to the Indian service, and which supplies and labor were absolutely necessary to the subsistence of the Indians who received them; but that they were obtained and liabilities created therefor in excess of appropriations then made for such purposes. From information obtained from the department, it seems these claims are generally small, but owed to persons who cannot well afford to lose a small sum when honestly due them. The bill proposes to direct the accounting officers of the Treasury to audit and allow these claims where the services and supplies shall be found to have been actually applied to the benefits of the Indians. The bill seems to be just in its provisions, for if the supplies furnished and services were not necessary and applied to the benefits of the Indians, the accounting officers will have no authority to allow them; and if they were furnished in good faith and were necessary to the service, and the Indians got the benefit of them, they ought to be paid for. A letter from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, in which he recommends the passage of this bill with certain amendments, is hereunto annexed and made a part of this report.

The committee therefore report the bill back with amendments to the House, and recommend that the amendments be adopted and that the bill do pass.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington March 23, 1830.

SIR: I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, in which you inclose, at the request of Hon. J. Whiteaker, the bill (H. R. 3458) "to authorize the auditing of certain unpaid accounts in the Indian Bureau," and in which you request an expression of the views of this office on the bill and the proposed amendments noted thereon.

In reply, I have to state that the legislation proposed by the inclosed bill is a just

and necessary measure, and would afford relief to a large number of creditors who have filed valid claims, and have been deprived of their just dues for services rendered and supplies furnished for the Indian service, for want of necessary appropriations to meet the same.

Regarding the proposed amendments, as indicated in lines 6, 7, 8, and 9, I respectfully recommend the following, viz: that lines 6, 7, and 8 be changed to read "in the fiscal year 1879 and prior years," and in line 9 to insert the word "its," so as to read "or its agents."

I would also recommend that the title of the bill be amended by adding the words "and accounting officers of the Treasury," for the reason that a large percentage of the claims in question are now in the office of the Second Auditor of the Treasury for examination.

The bill is returned herewith.

Very respectfully,

R. E. TROWBRIDGE,
Commissioner.

A. H. GALLAWAY,
Clerk House Committee on Indian Affairs, House of Representatives.