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Letter from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting communication of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, asking appropriation of \$28,200 to compensate Sioux Indians for ponies taken from them.

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1884-61

LETTER
FROM
THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,
TRANSMITTING

Communication of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, asking appropriation of \$28,200 to compensate Sioux Indians for ponies taken from them.

FEBRUARY 14, 1884.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, February 12, 1884.

SIR: Under date of February 17, 1883, I had the honor to transmit to the Congress, copy of communication from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, with inclosures recommending an appropriation in the sum of \$14,100 for the purchase of stock cattle, &c., for the benefit of Sioux Indians of "Red Cloud" and "Red Leaf," to reimburse them for 705 ponies taken from them in the year 1876, with an item of appropriation in the sum named for the purpose indicated, which was recommended to the favorable attention and action of the Congress, but I am not advised of any action having been taken by that body upon the subject.

I now have the honor to invite attention to a further communication from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs of the 9th instant, with inclosures therein noted, from which it appears that the amount stated in the former report was entirely inadequate to properly cover the loss of the Indians on account of the taking of their ponies, which are now stated to have been worth at least \$40 apiece upon an average.

The Commissioner recommends, in view of the statements presented, that the amount previously recommended be increased to \$28,200, in which recommendation I concur.

An item of appropriation in the sum of \$28,200 for this purpose is presented in the deficiency bill now before the Congress.

Very respectfully,

H. M. TELLER,
Secretary.

The PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE OF THE SENATE.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, February 9, 1884.

SIR: Referring to office report of February 16, last (copy herewith), relative to certain ponies taken by the military authorities from the Red Cloud and Red Leaf bands of Indians, in the year 1876, I have the honor

to invite your attention to the inclosed copy of a letter dated the 2d instant, from Col. George W. Manypenny, of Newark, Ohio, in which he says that he—

had ample opportunity to see the herds. The Sioux Nation were proverbial for having good ponies, and the herds of Red Cloud and Red Leaf were equal to the best. I think they were well worth \$40 per head. Had I owned them I would not have sold them at that price.

It is observed that in office report of February 16, last, it is stated that Colonel Manypenny had not seen these ponies, but in view of his statement in his letter of the 2d instant, it appears that the office was in error in this regard, and also as to the true value of the ponies. I therefore beg to amend my recommendation in the report aforesaid, by substituting \$40 per head for the ponies instead of \$20 as therein recommended. This change will make the aggregate allowance amount to the sum of \$28,200, for which amount I respectfully renew my recommendation of February 16 last.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. PRICE,
Commissioner.

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

NEWARK, OHIO, *February 2, 1884.*

SIR: Your communication of December 28, 1883, referring to the Indian ponies taken from Red Cloud's and Red Leaf's bands of Sioux Indians by the military authorities in the year 1876 only reached me yesterday.

You request my views in regard to the quality and general condition of these Indian ponies at the time I saw them, and what they were worth per head.

During the time that the Sioux Commission was at Red Cloud Agency in September, 1876, there was one issue of supplies to the bands of Red Cloud and Red Leaf, consisting of flour, sugar, coffee, &c., from the agency warehouse. On the day of this issue there was a large body of Indians present, accompanied by their herds. On another day there was an issue of beef cattle on the hoof, from the corral about five miles from the agency to the Indians of the bands referred to. All the young men of both bands were there, armed and equipped, mounted and in line, ready, as the cattle were issued to them, to receive their share. There were about 250 head of cattle issued. These were divided into bunches of from two to perhaps eight, and turned over to the young men representing the family or families to whom they were issued. Each squad drove off the cattle assigned them, and ran them over the prairie for about two hours, and then shot them down, and turned over the carcasses to the Indian women, who took off the hides, and cut the meat into quarters, and packed it on *their* ponies, and bore it away. I spent the day at and adjacent to the corral, and witnessed the whole performance. The number of Indian ponies present on that occasion was very large.

During the stay of the Commission at the agency, the members one day took a drive of some 12 or 15 miles to examine a peculiar mound, and on the way passed through a camp of these Indians. Their ponies were grazing on lands adjacent, and we had ample opportunity to see the herds. The Sioux Nation were proverbial for having good ponies, and the herds of Red Cloud and Red Leaf were equal to the best. I think they were well worth \$40 per head. Had I owned them, I would not have sold them at that price. I think you will find on investigation that about 350 of these ponies were taken by General Crook and given to his Pawnee Scouts to remount them. The residue were sold at a nominal price. The matter of the seizure of these ponies is referred to by the Sioux Commission in their report made December, 1876.

Very respectfully,

GEO. W. MANYPENNY.

Hon. H. PRICE,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, February 16, 1883.

SIR: Referring to the copy of an interview between yourself and Col. George W. Manypenny, dated the 9th instant, and the interview with Red Cloud and others, under date of the 15th ultimo, informally referred to me on the 14th instant, in regard

to certain horses alleged to have been taken from the Red Cloud and Red Leaf bands of Indians, in the year 1876, I have the honor to say, that from the various statements submitted, it appears that some 705 ponies were taken as alleged; that of this number, so taken, 404 were sold at Fort Laramie, in November, 1876; 141 at Cheyenne Depot, December, 1876; and 136 at Sidney, December 27, 1876, and the remainder, 24, were turned over to friendly Indians—Pawnees and others, acting as scouts.

The total sum realized from the various sales amounted to \$4,169.84, being an average of about \$6 each for the 681 ponies actually sold.

These various sales appear to have been made under the direction of Lieut. E. B. Gibbs, of the Army, but what final disposition was made of the money realized therefrom is not known to this office. It is believed, however, that Red Cloud's and Red Leaf's bands have never received any benefit whatsoever from the proceeds of the sales aforesaid, and from all the facts that can be ascertained in connection with this matter, it would seem to be right that these Indians should receive a reasonable compensation for their losses in this respect.

Colonel Manypenny, without seeing them, estimates the value of the 705 ponies taken from Red Cloud's and Red Leaf's bands, at from \$25 to \$50 each. But parties who saw the ponies say that some of them were "broken down," and I find that in a sale of 248 good ponies in 1877 and 1878, by the Indians themselves, of the Cheyenne River Agency, only about \$20 a piece was received.

The estimate of valuation by Colonel Manypenny, even at the minimum price mentioned by him, would be in excess of what I am willing to recommend, and if the price was estimated on the average realized from the sales, the aggregate on this basis would in my opinion be too small. I therefore conclude that a fair price for the 705 ponies taken from the Indians aforesaid, would be \$20 each, making an aggregate of \$14,100, for which sum I respectfully recommend that Congress be asked for an appropriation, with the proviso that the money, when appropriated, shall be invested in the purchase of cattle for the use and benefit of the two bands, reserving therefrom, however, a sufficient amount to be used in the purchase of two horses for the individual use of Red Cloud.

I will add, that should it be hereafter ascertained that any part of the money received from the sale of the ponies has not been accounted for, and is yet available, that money could be turned into the Treasury of the United States. The papers (with copy thereof) referred to in this report, are herewith returned. I also inclose a form for item to be inserted in the sundry civil bill, and two copies of this report.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. PRICE,
Commissioner.

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.