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Message from the President of the United States, transmitting a letter from the Secretary of the Interior relative to the use of funds for the subsistence of certain Northern Cheyenne Indians.

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MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

A letter from the Secretary of the Interior relative to the use of funds for the subsistence of certain Northern Cheyenne Indians.

JULY 12, 1886.—Read and referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

I transmit herewith a communication of 3d instant, with inclosures, from the Secretary of the Interior, recommending legislative authority for the use of funds from appropriation Sioux, &c., 1887, for the subsistence of certain Northern Cheyenne Indians who have gone or who may go from the Sioux Reservation in Dakota to the Tongue River Indian Agency or vicinity in Montana.

The matter is presented for the favorable consideration of Congress.
GROVER CLEVELAND.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, July 12, 1886.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, July 3, 1886.

The President:

I have the honor to submit herewith copy of a letter of 2d instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, with inclosures, in relation to certain Northern Cheyenne Indians of Pine Ridge Agency, Dakota, who are reported to have lately left their reservation and gone north to join the Cheyennes at the Tongue River Agency in Montana.

The Northern Cheyenne Indians located upon the Sioux Reservation have been leaving the Pine Ridge and other agencies from time to time in small parties and joining their brethren at the Tongue River Agency, Montana. The appropriation of the Indians at the latter-named agency is entirely inadequate to meet the necessities of the increased numbers. These straying Indians, a restless element at their old agencies, appear to be satisfied in their new location, and it is not deemed advisable to force them to return to the Sioux Reservation.

The Department is making necessary preparations with the view of settling all of the Northern Cheyenne Indians located in the vicinity of the Tongue and Rosebud Rivers in Montana upon Indian homesteads, as the best possible arrangement to secure them lands for homes and their future support.

In view of the situation of affairs at the Tongue River Agency, and the necessity for relief, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs recommends that the authority of Congress be had for the expenditure of the per capita share of the moneys appropriated for the subsistence of these Northern Cheyennes who were at Pine Ridge when the estimates were submitted to Congress, and for whose support provision was made in the Indian appropriation act under "Fulfilling treaty with Sioux," &c., 1887, and who may leave Pine Ridge Agency and go to Tongue River Agency in Montana, for their support and civilization at the latter place; for which purpose he submits an item which he recommends may be inserted in the sundry civil bill now pending before Congress.

The recommendation of the Commissioner has the concurrence of this Department. Unless this measure of relief is afforded by Congress at its present session there will probably be great suffering among these Indians, and the Department will be embarrassed and without means or the legal authority to relieve their wants.

I respectfully recommend that the matter may be presented for the favorable consideration and action of Congress.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
L. Q. C. LAMAR,
Secretary.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, July 2, 1886.

SIR: I have the honor to inclose herewith copy of a letter from Capt. J. M. Bell, Seventh Cavalry, acting Indian agent at Pine Ridge Agency, Dakota, dated the 18th ultimo, reporting that about seventy-five Cheyenne Indians have left his agency in violation of his orders, and have gone north to join the Cheyennes on Tongue River; that these Indians are a restless lot, and will never remain at any place for any length of time unless forced to do so, and he recommends that they be arrested by troops at Fort Keogh, and either sent back to his agency under guard or held as prisoners at Fort Keogh, and he adds that until measures of this kind are adopted they will continue roaming from place to place, and will accomplish nothing in the way of civilization.

In view of the embarrassment which this office has encountered in consequence of the decision made by Judge McCreary in the case of Standing Bear (5 Dill, 453), I do not desire to recommend that the suggestions made by Captain Bell be carried out, and that these Indians be arrested, and either forced to return to Pine Ridge or held as prisoners at Fort Keogh. Funds for their support have been provided for in the Indian appropriation bill for the fiscal year 1887, under the head of "Fulfilling treaty with Sioux of different tribes, including Santee Sioux of Nebraska," the Northern Cheyennes and Arapahoes being parties to the Sioux treaties of 1868 and the agreement of 1877. Article three of the agreement of February 28, 1877, with the Sioux Indians and the Northern Arapaho and Cheyenne Indians provides:

The said Indians also agree that they will hereafter receive all annuities provided by the said treaty of 1868 and all subsistence and supplies which may be provided for them under the present or any future act of Congress at such points and places on the said reservation, and in the vicinity of the Missouri River, as the President of the United States shall designate.

In view of the above provision of the agreement of February 28, 1877, this office does not feel authorized to divert the share of these Indians,

appropriated for them under treaty with Sioux, to support them on the Tongue River in Montana, neither is the appropriation made for the support of these Northern Cheyennes and Arapahoes who were in Wyoming and on the Tongue River when the estimates were submitted to Congress last fall, sufficient to feed and properly care for those Indians who now have left Pine Ridge, and as this office is unable to force these Indians to return to that agency, I respectfully recommend that the attention of Congress be called to this matter, and authority be obtained to expend the per capita share of those Northern Cheyennes who were at Pine Ridge when the estimates were submitted to Congress, and for whose support provision was made under fulfilling treaty with Sioux, &c., 1887, and who may leave Pine Ridge Agency and go to Tongue River Agency in Montana, for their support and civilization at the latter place, and for that purpose I inclose herewith an item to be inserted in the sundry civil bill, and respectfully ask that it be forwarded to the Senate for consideration and action.

Very respectfully,

J. D. C. ATKINS,
Commissioner.

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

Item to be inserted in the sundry civil bill.

That the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, is hereby authorized to expend, from the appropriation made in the Indian appropriation act for the fiscal year 1887, approved May 15, 1886, under the head of "Fulfilling treaty of Sioux, including Santee Sioux of Nebraska," the per capita share of those Northern Cheyennes who were, at the passage of said act, located at the Pine Ridge Agency in Dakota, and have since left that agency and located at or near the Tongue River Agency in Montana, for their support and civilization during the fiscal year 1887.

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,
Pine Ridge Agency, June 18, 1886.

SIR: I have the honor to report that about seventy-five Cheyenne Indians (twenty-six families) have left this agency, in violation of my orders, and have gone north to join the Cheyennes on Tongue River Special Agency. They were encouraged in this course by the presence at this agency of Indians from the aforesaid agency.

The Cheyennes are a restless lot of Indians, and will never remain at any place for any length of time unless forced to do so.

I recommend that these Indians be arrested by the troops at Fort Keogh, and either sent back here under guard, or be held as prisoners at Fort Keogh.

Until measures of this kind are adopted, they will continue roaming from place to place, and will accomplish nothing in the way of civilization.

The Cheyennes should all be sent either to this agency, or to the Tongue River Agency. They will not be satisfied until they are all together. They are a hinderance to the progress of the well-disposed Sioux of this agency, and I think could be managed better if they were separated entirely.

In this connection, I desire to ask to what extent I will be justifiable in the use of force to restrain Indians leaving the reservation without authority.

Very respectfully,

JAS. M. BELL,
Captain Seventh Cavalry, Acting United States Indian Agent.

Hon. COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C.