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Message from the President of the United States, transmitting a communication from the Secretary of the Interior relative to the use of certain funds for the benefit of the Indians on whose account they were covered into the Treasury.

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MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

A communication from the Secretary of the Interior relative to the use of certain funds for the benefit of the Indians on whose account they were covered into the Treasury.

MARCH 18, 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 16th instant from the Secretary of the Interior, submitting, with accompanying papers, a draft of a bill prepared by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, providing for the use of certain funds, proceeds of Indian reservations, covered into the Treasury under the provisions of the act of March 3, 1883, for the benefit of the Indians on whose account the same is covered in.

The subject is recommended to the favorable consideration and action of Congress.

GROVER CLEVELAND.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, *March 18, 1886.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, March 16, 1886.

To the PRESIDENT:

I have the honor to submit herewith a copy of communication of 15th instant from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in relation to funds in the Treasury of the United States, "proceeds of Indian reservations," covered in under the provisions of the act of March 3, 1883 (22 Stat., 590), amounting at this time to \$25,912.21.

The Commissioner states that the Indians of the tribes or bands entitled to the benefits of this fund are very much dissatisfied at being deprived thereof; that the complaints of the Indians are just; that under a decision of the Treasury Department the funds in question are not available without further legislation, and he presents the draft of a bill providing for the use of such proceeds of Indian reservations as may be covered into the Treasury under the law referred to, under the direction of this Department for the benefit of the tribe on whose account it has been or may hereafter be covered in.

The Commissioner reports that there is urgent necessity for the passage of such a law.

I concur in his views, and respectfully recommend that the matter may be presented to Congress with request for the favorable consideration of that body.

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, March 15, 1883

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR:

SIR: I have the honor to invite your attention to the subject of "Indian moneys" discussed on pages 36 and 37 of my annual report, with a view of getting such legislation as will remedy an existing and a growing evil. The evil complained of is the dissatisfaction of certain Indians because they are deprived of money which is rightfully theirs. As stated in my report, several complaints had then been received from the Indians; more have been received since. The fund is constantly accumulating. From \$13,096.81, the amount on hand at the date of my report, it has increased to \$25,912.21, the amount now actually in the Treasury.

The complaints of the Indians are just.

It is not disputed that this money belongs to them, nor is it denied that it was the intention of Congress, as expressed in the act of March 3, 1883, that they should have the benefit of it. Such was the construction put upon that act by the then Secretary of the Interior, who decided that the Department had the right to use the money in question without further legislation or specific appropriation. But as the Treasury has decided otherwise, there is no alternative but to get such legislation as will allow this money to be taken from the Treasury and put to its legitimate uses.

To that end I have prepared the inclosed bill, which I believe answers the purpose. I request that it may be transmitted to Congress, and that an earnest attempt be made to secure its passage.

Respectfully,

J. D. C. ATKINS,
Commissioner.

Be it enacted 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 use the money which has been, or may hereafter be, covered into the Treasury under the provisions of the act approved March 3, 1883, and which is carried on the books of that Department under the caption of "Indian moneys, proceeds of labor," for the benefit of the several tribes on whose account said money was covered in, in such way and for such purposes as in his discretion he may think best.

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