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Appropriations for Sioux Indians. Letter from the Secretary of the Interior recommending an appropriation to pay vouchers approved by General Harney, on account of Indian Service in the Sioux Indian District

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APPROPRIATIONS FOR SIOUX INDIANS.

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LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

RECOMMENDING

*An appropriation to pay vouchers approved by General Harney, on account of Indian service in the Sioux Indian district.*

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FEBRUARY 18, 1870.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, D. C., February 15, 1870.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a communication of the 9th instant from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, reporting an outstanding indebtedness on account of the service in the "Sioux Indian district," and respectfully invite the attention of Congress to the subject, with the recommendation that one hundred and twenty thousand dollars be appropriated to pay the said indebtedness.

Very respectfully,

J. D. COX,  
*Secretary.*

Hon. J. G. BLAINE,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C., February 9, 1870.*

SIR: I have the honor to state that, from reports received from General W. S. Harney, there is, at present, an outstanding indebtedness incurred by him on account of the service in the Sioux Indian district, while the same was in his charge, for the payment of which there are no funds at the disposal of the department.

The history of this indebtedness, briefly stated, is as follows: By the Indian appropriation act, approved July 27, 1863, (Stat. 15, p. 222,) the

sum of \$500,000 was appropriated to pay the expenses of the Indian Peace Commission, and to carry into effect the provisions of treaties made by the commission with Indians, the same to be expended under the direction of General Sherman. General Harney was selected by General Sherman to take charge of the various bands of Sioux to be located on a reservation in Dakota Territory, agreeably to the treaty made with them. In making improvements on said reservation, in supplying the Indians with subsistence, and in paying the necessary employés, the amount placed at the disposal of General Harney by General Sherman was greatly exceeded; and Congress, by act approved April 10, 1869, appropriated the sum of \$485,784 21 to cover such excess, or, in other words, to pay the expenses incurred in making and preparing homes, furnishing provisions, tools, &c., for said Indians, under the supervision of General Harney. The amount so appropriated was found to be insufficient to pay such expenses, and, by direction of the President, the further sum of \$100,000 was set aside for that purpose, out of the appropriation of \$2,000,000. These two sums, in all \$585,784 21, have been used to pay off the indebtedness incurred as aforesaid; but there are still unpaid vouchers, issued or approved by General Harney, that amount in the aggregate to \$107,546 31.

Many of these vouchers are in this office, and a great number of them are for services rendered by employés. The owners, not only of these but of all the vouchers, are urging their payment by this bureau; but, as before stated, there are no funds on hand that can be used to pay them.

Although not fully advised in regard to the matter, yet I am of the opinion that said sum of \$107,546 31 will not prove sufficient to pay the indebtedness in question, and that it will take at least \$120,000 to liquidate all of it.

I respectfully recommend that this matter be laid before Congress with the view of having the necessary funds appropriated to liquidate said indebtedness.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. J. PARKER,  
*Commissioner.*

Hon. J. D. Cox,  
*Secretary of the Interior.*