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**Navajo Indians in New Mexico. Letter from the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting an estimate of appropriation submitted by the Secretary of the Interior for the relief of the Navajo Indians in New Mexico.**

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NAVAJO INDIANS IN NEW MEXICO.

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LETTER

FROM

THE ACTING SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,

TRANSMITTING

*An estimate of appropriation submitted by the Secretary of the Interior  
for the relief of the Navajo Indians in New Mexico.*

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JANUARY 11, 1895.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

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TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*January 10, 1895.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith, for the consideration of Congress, an estimate of appropriation submitted by the Secretary of the Interior, under date of the 8th instant, for the immediate relief of the Navajo Indians in New Mexico, \$25,000.

Respectfully, yours,

U. S. HAMLIN, *Acting Secretary.*

The SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, December 20, 1894.*

SIR: I have the honor to inclose herewith copies of two communications from Capt. Constant Williams, U. S. A., acting United States Indian agent at Navajo Agency, N. Mex.—one dated December 3, 1894, urging the advisability of asking Congress for a special appropriation of \$25,000, to be immediately available, for the relief of those Indians, and one dated December 11, 1894, written from Bluff City, Utah, again urging that the sad case of these Indians be represented to the Department with a view of securing immediate help for them.

During the past year the condition of these Indians has been brought to the attention of this office from various sources, with a view of

obtaining, if possible, an appropriation for their relief, principally in the shape of subsistence.

The policy of this office is, and has been, as much as possible, to discourage the issue of subsistence to Indian tribes, especially those that have to any extent been self-supporting. The Navajoes have always heretofore been considered in that category, and the office, therefore, has been, and is still, reluctant to inaugurate the ration system with that tribe. In pursuance of this policy nothing has been purchased for subsistence of these Indians beyond a small quantity for the old and indigent. Last summer, however, Charles F. Meserve (formerly superintendent of the Indian industrial school at Lawrence, Kans.) while here made such representations as induced this office to recommend that some action be taken toward relieving these Indians. Accordingly, on August 1, 1894, a letter was addressed to the Department inclosing Mr. Meserve's communication on the subject, and recommending that Congress be asked to appropriate \$25,000 for their benefit. I invite attention to that letter.

For the last few years there has been appropriated annually for the Navajoes \$7,500, to be used for their "support and civilization, including pay of employees and purchase of farming implements and seed." Of this amount \$3,680 is needed for pay of employees; the balance of \$3,820 is applied to the purposes named in the appropriation.

Recently, in order to encourage them by providing a market for their manufactures, this office authorized the purchase, through their agent, of blankets, which they manufacture very successfully, to the extent of about \$1,600, and in furtherance of this plan it is proposed to purchase in the near future as many of their blankets as can be utilized for the good of the service.

By the act approved March 3, 1893, \$40,000 was appropriated, to be expended under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, for the construction of irrigating ditches and the development of the water supply on the Navajo Reservation, and this work is now under way. The funds appropriated will probably not be more than sufficient to construct the irrigating works, and there will be little, if anything, left for other purposes.

While I am unwilling to begin purchasing subsistence for these Indians, I recognize the necessity of affording them some assistance, in the beginning, at least, to enable them to avail themselves of the benefits of irrigation. For that purpose they will need agricultural implements, seeds, and things of that character. They also need sheep for breeding purposes, for, as has been said, their stock has deteriorated by inbreeding. Under these circumstances I am willing to recommend that Congress be asked to appropriate \$25,000 for the purposes described, and therefore inclose a form of amendment to be attached to the Indian appropriation bill.

Very respectfully,

D. M. BROWNING, *Commissioner.*

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
January 8, 1895.

Respectfully forwarded through the honorable Secretary of the Treasury for the favorable consideration of Congress.

HOKE SMITH, *Secretary.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
Washington, December 21, 1894.

## MEMORANDUM.

I have examined and considered the application of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for an appropriation of \$25,000 for the support of the Navajo Indians and to assist them in their agricultural operations next season. This request is based on statements of Captain Williams, their acting agent, who reports them to be in a deplorable condition, owing to the failure of their crops for the past two or three years, and that immediate assistance is necessary to save them from great suffering and perhaps starvation.

There are about 16,000 of these Indians. Very little aid in recent years has been given them beyond a small annual appropriation for seed and for employees at the agency, they having, in a measure, been self-supporting for several years past.

From the statements made in the accompanying papers I am of the opinion that some provision is absolutely necessary to help them until they shall be able to again maintain themselves by their crops, as has been the case for several years until a comparatively recent period.

The amendment proposed by the Commissioner should be amended by adding the words "to be immediately available," so that the Department can take steps on the passage of the bill to extend the aid proposed. If this be not done, then nothing can be done for them until after the 1st of next July—a long time for suffering people to wait for aid.

In my opinion a special bill ought to be passed for their relief, for even if this legislation is enacted with the amendment making the money immediately available, the probability is that it will not become a law until about the 4th of March next, as it is proposed to make this item a part of the Indian appropriation bill.

Respectfully,

W. C. POLLOCK, *Chief Indian Division.*

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*Amendment to Indian appropriation bill, 1895-96.*

For support and civilization of the Navajo Indians, New Mexico, including pay of employees and purchase of agricultural implements, seed, sheep, and such other stock as may be necessary, twenty-five thousand dollars, to be immediately available.

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UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE, NAVAJO AGENCY,  
*Fort Defiance, Ariz., December 3, 1894.*

SIR: I respectfully and earnestly urge upon you the advisability of asking the Congress for a special appropriation of \$25,000, to be immediately available, for the relief of the Navajo Indians. Many cases of destitution have already been reported to me, and I have continual applications for food. As the winter advances there will be a constantly increasing number of cases requiring relief, and no adequate provision has been made to meet this emergency.

As you well know, the Navajo Indians have never asked for rations from the Government; they strive to provide for themselves, and they have been able to do so heretofore, but the general failure of their crops in the last two years and the fall in the price of wool, have now reduced them to the verge of starvation. Besides assistance during the winter and spring they will need farm and agricultural implements and seed for putting in and cultivating their crops next season, and other aid in the improvement of their farms, fencing, etc.

In this connection I respectfully invite your attention to letters on the subject from this agency dated December 29, 1893, and January 31, 1894.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

CONSTANT WILLIAMS,  
*Captain, Seventh Infantry, Acting Agent.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.*

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UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE, NAVAJO AGENCY,  
*Bluff City, Utah, December 11, 1894.*

SIR: On the 3d instant I had the honor to address you a letter from the agency at Fort Defiance, requesting you to ask for a special appropriation for the Navajo Indians. This letter was based upon my own observation and trustworthy information received on the southern part of the reservation.

On the 4th instant I started north, and I find the state of the Indians here truly pitiable. This once prosperous tribe of Indians is now impoverished. Their crops have been failures for two and three years, and they get almost nothing for their wool. Their stock ranges are exhausted, and a number of them are off the reservation with their flocks of sheep trespassing on the impoverished ranges of Utah. I have sent for the headmen of this vicinity, and they will meet me here to-morrow. It will then be my duty to order all Navajoes back to the reservation, but it seems like condemning them and their sheep to death.

I trust that you will represent the sad case of these Indians and secure immediate help for them. Their means of subsistence are about exhausted, and they are deserving of assistance, having always heretofore supported themselves. They are now destitute, not through improvidence, but from causes entirely beyond their control.

They have undoubtedly killed cattle and sheep on this (the north) side of the San Juan River, but they have done so to keep from starving. White men would do the same under similar circumstances.

They will also, as before stated, need assistance in planting and cultivating their fields in the next season.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

CONSTANT WILLIAMS,  
*Captain, Seventh Infantry, Acting Agent.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.*

