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Indian training school at Fort Bidwell.

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INDIAN TRAINING SCHOOL AT FORT BIDWELL.

APRIL 11, 1896.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

Mr. STEPHENSON, from the Committee on the Public Lands, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany H. Res. 152.]

The Committee on the Public Lands, to whom was referred the joint resolution (H. Res. 152) authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to use Fort Bidwell for an Indian training school, beg leave to submit the following report, and recommend that said resolution do pass with amendments as below indicated:

After careful consideration of this resolution your committee would recommend the following amendments:

Strike out the words "be, and the same is hereby," in lines 6 and 7, and insert in lieu thereof the words "having been." Also in line 6, after the word "the" strike out the word "Secretary" and insert "Department," and after the word "Interior" in line 6 insert, "the Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized and empowered to use the same."

This resolution has been referred to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, whose communication and report to Mr. Barham, dated April 2, 1896, is hereto attached and made part of this report.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, April 2, 1896.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 6th ultimo, in which you refer to the desire of this office to establish an Indian training school upon the abandoned military reservation at Fort Bidwell, Cal., for the Indians of that vicinity, who are entirely without school facilities and in great need thereof, and state that you have examined the law on the question of whether or not this Department can use the same for the desired purposes, and are of the opinion that further action of Congress will be necessary therefor; that you intend to do all you can to have established at the said abandoned post a Government training school as above indicated, and would therefore ask that this office give the matter careful consideration and report thereon for the consideration of Congress.

In reply you are informed that under date of March 5, 1896, this office made inquiry of the Commissioner of the General Land Office as to the present status of the said reservation—asking what, if any, improvements or buildings had been sold or otherwise disposed of, and whether or not there was any way in which the said buildings and lands could be used for Government Indian school purposes without going to Congress in order to secure a title therefor for the purposes above indicated.

I am now in receipt of the desired information from the General Land Office, being a report from the Assistant Commissioner of that office dated March 28, 1896, which reads as follows:

"In reply I have to state that the Fort Bidwell Post Reservation was established by Executive order of October 19, 1866; enlarged and connected with the public

survey October 4, 1870. The estimated area is 3,078.19 acres. A wood reservation was established February 7, 1871; area, 640 acres.

"On February 13, 1885, that portion of sec. 8, T. 46 N., R. 16 E., falling within the reservation was relinquished and placed under the control of the Interior Department for disposal under the act of July 5, 1884 (23 Stat. L., 103). The remainder of the reservation was relinquished and transferred to the Interior Department October 2, 1890, for disposal under said act of July 5, 1884.

"After the transfer of that portion in section 8, it was reported to this office that there were 6 structures thereon, 'presumed to be private property,' but on November 17, 1893, the War Department transmitted to this office a schedule showing that there are 40 buildings on the reservation; that their condition is good, and their value \$13,575, exclusive of fences, waterworks, sewerage, etc.

"This office has not yet had occasion to make further inquiry in regard to the ownership of the buildings, but presumes that they belong to the Government.

"No steps have yet been taken looking to the disposal either of the land or buildings, but the general appraiser of abandoned military reservations, now in New Mexico, will probably reach California in the near future, when the buildings on this reservation, and so much of the land as is surveyed, will be appraised with a view to the disposal thereof under the said act of July 5, 1884, unless other disposition thereof is authorized.

"This office knows of no reason why action should not be postponed by the Secretary to allow time for legislative action with a view to the establishment of the desired reservation, provided such action is deemed necessary."

Further, in this connection, this office is in receipt of H. Res. 152, being the joint resolution introduced in the House of Representatives by you under date of March 27, 1896, authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to use Fort Bidwell for an Indian training school. This joint resolution meets the hearty approval of this office, and I have therefore this day reported upon the matter to the Honorable Secretary of the Interior, so stating and recommending that Congress be urged to give the same favorable action.

Very respectfully,

D. M. BROWNING, *Commissioner.*

Hon. J. A. BARHAM,
House of Representatives.