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Appropriations for friendly Indians. Letter from the Secretary of the Interior, relative to the necessity of an early appropriation for the purpose of subsisting friendly Indians.

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APPROPRIATIONS FOR FRIENDLY INDIANS.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

RELATIVE TO

The necessity of an early appropriation for the purpose of subsisting friendly Indians.

APRIL 20, 1868.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

Washington, D. C., April 17, 1868.

SIR: I herewith transmit a copy of a communication, dated the 16th instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, urging the necessity for a new appropriation to be made at an early day for the purpose of subsisting friendly Indians.

Concurring in the views of the Commissioner, I have the honor to request the favorable action of Congress upon the subject.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. T. OTTO,

Acting Secretary.

HON. SCHUYLER COLFAX,

Speaker of House of Representatives.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,

Washington, D. C., April 16, 1868.

SIR: Referring to the matter of the subsistence of friendly Indians, I desire to say that the amount appropriated last year for that purpose is nearly exhausted, and that it will be necessary for a new appropriation to be made at an early day to meet the wants and necessities of the most destitute bands and tribes.

From the latest reports received at this office from agents of the department, there are at present, and probably will be for some time to come, nearly 20,000 Indians in the northern, central, and southern superintendencies that require assistance in the way of subsistence. To supply that number with sufficient food to prevent actual suffering, delivered at points where it can be issued, will cost nearly, if not quite, \$3,500 per day. As the summer advances, and those

who have been or will be able to plant crops begin to realize therefrom, the number to be assisted will gradually decrease, but more or less assistance will have to be furnished during the entire year.

By the terms of the contracts under which the subsistence is being furnished at the present time, the contractors are to continue delivering for thirty days after they shall have received notice to cease doing so. There is now left of the appropriation hereinbefore referred to only about \$62,000, with some of the stores issued in March yet to be paid for. It will, therefore, be necessary to give the contractors notice at once to cease furnishing unless a further appropriation is made, in which case the delivery can be continued under the present contracts until new ones are entered into.

It is difficult to determine how much will be required to furnish the necessary subsistence; in fact, it is impossible to ascertain with accuracy the amount that will be needed for the purpose. I am of the opinion, however, that the sum of \$1,000,000 should be appropriated and placed at the disposal of your department, to be used so far as the same may be necessary in affording relief to the destitute and needy members of the different bands and tribes in said superintendencies, and also for those in any other superintendency, whenever it is found necessary to do so.

I do not deem it necessary to give the reasons why the appropriation should be made, or why it is good policy—in fact the best and most economical that can be adopted—to feed Indians, to keep them quiet and peaceable: they are well known to all. The necessity for this at present is more urgent than heretofore, for the reason that the country is becoming settled so rapidly that buffalo, the Indian's principal means of support, are growing more and more scarce every day. The Indians, consequently, are unable to procure a sufficient quantity of food, and, as is perfectly natural, will depredate upon and steal from the settlers to prevent starvation. These acts are followed by retaliation on the part of the whites, and usually end in an Indian war, with horrible accompaniments. It is also deemed unnecessary to set forth the wants and necessities of those who have in late years depended mainly upon their success in hunting for an existence, as they have been frequently represented and are well known to Congress.

I respectfully recommend that this matter be laid before Congress, with an urgent request for early action thereon, and request to be advised whether notice shall be given to the present contractors to cease furnishing supplies under their contracts.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

N. G. TAYLOR,
Commissioner.

HON. O. H. BROWNING,
Secretary of the Interior.

APPROPRIATIONS FOR FRIENDLY INDIANS.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

TRANSMITTING

Communication from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs relative to appropriations required for subsistence of friendly Indians.

JULY 15, 1868.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, D. C., July 15, 1868.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a communication of this date from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, reporting a deficiency in the appropriation made for the subsistence of friendly Indians, amounting to one hundred and seventy-two thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven dollars and eleven cents, (\$172,827 11.) and invite the attention of Congress to the favorable consideration of the recommendation of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, that the above amount be appropriated to enable the department to pay the indebtedness to contractors and special agents, as indicated by that officer.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

O. H. BROWNING, *Secretary.*

Hon. SCHUYLER COLFAX,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., July 14, 1868.

SIR: Referring to the matter of the subsistence of friendly Indians, and to the appropriation of \$300,000 made last year for that purpose, I have to say that, in each of the contracts made by this bureau for supplies for such Indians, there was a clause to the effect that the contractor should continue furnishing supplies for thirty days after receiving notice to cease the delivery.

Timely notice was given to the contractors to stop furnishing supplies; but, owing in a great measure to the great distance and isolated location of the points where the subsistence was being issued to the Indians, the agents of the contractors continued delivering, and the special agents of the department con-

tinued receiving supplies, until the cost thereof, together with the cost of articles furnished by various parties under orders of the Indian peace commission, and the expenses incident to the delivery of the subsistence to the Indians, largely exceeded the amount of the appropriation.

There are vouchers now in this office, in favor of Thomas A. Osborn, for supplies furnished under his contract, to the amount of \$31, 042 93
 And in favor of Louis Stettauer for supplies furnished to about 5,479 Indians, in February, March, April, and May last, to the amount of 66, 981 65

Total 98, 024 58

I am also advised that there are vouchers, not yet presented for payment, in favor of Mr. Osborn, to the amount of about \$69,802 53, for supplies furnished during month of May last, to about 14,000 Indians. This will make about the sum of \$167,827 11 due and owing to Messrs. Osborn and Stettauer under their contracts.

In addition to this there will be required for salary of special agents, and to pay their necessary expenses, the further sum of \$5,000, making in all a deficiency of \$172,827 11 in the appropriation for subsistence of friendly Indians.

I respectfully request that this matter be laid before Congress, with an urgent recommendation that the sum of \$172,827 11 be appropriated, to enable the department to settle up this indebtedness, and to pay the balances due the special agents.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
 N. G. TAYLOR, *Commissioner.*

Hon. O. H. BROWNING,
Secretary of the Interior.