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Estimate of appropriation to reimburse Subsistence Department. Letter from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting an estimate of appropriation to reimburse the Subsistence Department for supplies furnished Indians by Army officers.

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ESTIMATE OF APPROPRIATION TO REIMBURSE SUBSISTENCE DEPARTMENT.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

TRANSMITTING

An estimate of appropriation to reimburse the Subsistence Department for supplies furnished Indians by Army officers.

JANUARY 11, 1872.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, D. C., January 9, 1872.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a communication, dated the 3d instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and accompanying estimate of appropriation required "to reimburse the appropriation for subsisting the Army with the value of rations issued by officers of the Army for subsisting Indians during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1871," amounting to \$282,893 69.

The attention of Congress is respectfully invited to the subject.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

C. DELANO,
Secretary.

Hon. JAMES G. BLAINE;
Speaker House of Representatives.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., January 3, 1872.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, by reference from the Department, of a letter from the honorable Secretary of War of the 18th November last, requesting that, in the estimate for the subsistence of Indians, to be submitted to Congress at its present session, provision be made for reimbursing the appropriation for subsisting the Army with the value of rations issued by officers of the Army to Indians during the last fiscal year, amounting, it appears, to \$288,915 31, of which \$6,021 62 is stated to have been refunded, leaving a balance due of \$282,893 69.

I have no doubt of the correctness of the above statement, and am well aware that emergencies too frequently arise when subsistence stores provided for the Army have to be resorted to in feeding Indians. When such subsistence is supplied at the request of this Bureau, and there are funds at the disposal of the Department applicable in payment, restitution is invariably made; but as the greater portion of the issues above referred to were made at the discretion and under the exclusive control of the officers of the Army, and are of a magnitude to preclude the possibility of reimbursement from appropriations on hand for the Indian service, I respectfully suggest that, in accordance with the request of the honorable Secretary of War, an application be made to Congress for an appropriation of \$282,893 69, to make good to the Subsistence Department of the Army the cost of rations thus issued.

The honorable Secretary's letter on this subject is herewith returned.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

F. A. WALKER,
Commissioner.

Hon. C. DELANO,
Secretary of the Interior.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington City, November 18, 1871.

To the honorable the Secretary of the Interior :

SIR: Under the provisions of the act of Congress of June 30, 1834, (section 16,) and Army Regulations, and also under special instructions to meet certain emergencies, the Subsistence Department of the Army has, during the past fiscal year, issued to Indians of the various tribes visiting the military posts on the frontier, or in their respective nations, &c., subsistence stores to the value of \$288,915 31, of which amount but \$6,021 62 has been refunded to the subsistence appropriation.

As it is probable that during the present fiscal year the demands upon this appropriation for supplies for Indians will fully aggregate, if not exceed, this amount, and as the Subsistence Department, which undoubtedly affords the most ready and economical agency at the command of the Government for the subsistence of the Indians, especially in those instances where their imperious wants and necessities arise with so much suddenness as to preclude the possibility of relieving them by any other means, should not be burdened with the great expense of feeding them without adequate provision being made therefor, or for proper remuneration, I respectfully request that, in the estimates for the subsistence of Indians to be submitted to Congress at its next session, you will insert a provision for an appropriation for such an amount as will reimburse the present subsistence appropriation and prevent the Indians from becoming a tax upon it.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. W. BELKNAP,
Secretary of War.

Estimate of appropriation required for the Indian service to make up deficiencies for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1872.

For this amount to reimburse the appropriation for subsisting the Army
with the value of rations issued by officers of the Army for subsisting
Indians during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1871..... \$282, 893 69