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Message from the President of the United States, communicating information in relation to the deficiency of supplies at the Red Cloud Agency, Nebraska.

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MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

COMMUNICATING

Information in relation to the deficiency of supplies at the Red Cloud agency, Nebraska.

FEBRUARY 29, 1876.—Read, referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

To the Senate and House of Representatives :

I lay before you herewith a communication from the Secretary of the Interior, of date 26th instant, upon the subject of the deficiency of supplies at the Red Cloud agency, Nebraska.

This matter has been already presented to you by the Secretary, and the House of Representatives has requested an investigation by a military officer of the cause of this deficiency. I have taken proper steps to comply with this request of the House, but the present need of supplies is not disputed. A prolonged delay in furnishing provisions to these Indians will cause great distress and be likely to provoke raids on white settlements, and possibly lead to a general outbreak of hostilities.

I therefore deem it proper to invite your attention to the importance of early and favorable action upon the estimates heretofore and herewith submitted.

These estimates, and the views of the Secretary in regard to this emergency, meet with my full concurrence, and I recommend that the appropriations asked for be made at the earliest day practicable.

U. S. GRANT.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, *February 28, 1876.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, February 26, 1876.

SIR: I have the honor to lay before you a copy of a communication this day received from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in regard to the condition of affairs at the Red Cloud agency.

The Commissioner reports that further supplies are needed there at once, and gives at some length the reasons for the deficiency now existing. These reasons may be briefly stated as, first, diminished appro-

priations; and, secondly, unusual issues to Indians visiting the agency to meet the Black Hills commission in September last. An estimate for this appropriation was submitted by this Department to the House of Representatives on the 10th ultimo, and attention was again called to the subject on the 26th ultimo. On the 3d instant the House of Representatives requested you to detail a military officer to investigate the cause of this deficiency. But the report of that officer cannot be made under some days or weeks, and the emergency is reported by the Commissioner to be pressing.

The case has additional urgency from the fact that over one thousand members of Sitting Bull's band, heretofore defiant and actively hostile, have come in to this agency in compliance with messages previously sent to them, and it is important that any measures looking to the disintegration of this heretofore united band, and the destruction of Sitting Bull's authority, should have proper encouragement.

The Commissioner is prohibited by law from taking any steps toward supplying the agency in the absence of further appropriations by Congress, and deems it imperative to the best interest of the Indians and of the white settlers alike, that early steps should be taken toward placing supplies at the Red Cloud agency. He recommends an appropriation of \$50,000, in addition to that previously called for, on account of the probable submission of Sitting Bull's band to the Government, and their possible arrival at an agency where supplies are lacking.

I fully concur with the Commissioner in the views expressed in this communication, and transmit herewith copies of all my previous communications to Congress on this subject, with the recommendation that they be laid by you before Congress and that the urgency of the case be again brought to its notice.

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

Z. CHANDLER

Secretary.

The PRESIDENT.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, January 26, 1876.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a letter, dated the 24th instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, with inclosures from J. S. Hastings, esq., United States Indian agent at Red Cloud agency, in relation to the condition of supplies for his Indians.

The subject is respectfully presented for the consideration of Congress in connection with the communication from this Department of the 10th instant, addressed to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, presenting an estimate of appropriation for supplies for Red Cloud and Whetstone agencies.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Z. CHANDLER,

Secretary.

Hon. WM. B. ALLISON,

Chairman Committee on Indian Affairs, United States Senate.

[House Ex. Doc. No. 57, 44th Congress, 1st session.]

Letter from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting an estimate of an appropriation to subsist the Sioux Indians at Red Cloud and Whetstone agencies, &c.

JANUARY 12 1876.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, January 10, 1876.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a communication, dated the 6th instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs—~~together~~ with the copies of correspondence therein noted—upon the subject of the subsistence of the Sioux Indians at Red Cloud and Whetstone agencies, and estimates of appropriation stated.

The Commissioner states, that owing to the fact that extraordinary issues were required to subsist the numerous bands of Sioux, called together at the Red Cloud agency in the conference held at that point by the late commission to treat for the cession of the Black Hills, and to other circumstances stated, the supplies have become nearly exhausted, and that the flour, corn, and beef furnished for Red Cloud agency will be expended by the 10th proximo, the bacon by the 10th of March next, and the sugar and coffee by the 1st of April.

Upon consideration, I have deemed it expedient to suggest that the subsistence called for be reduced as follows, viz: that the item of flour be changed to corn, making a difference of \$2,070, and that the items of sugar and coffee be entirely omitted, making a further reduction of \$9,386, and a total difference of \$11,456 in the amount of the estimate.

An estimate of appropriation is herewith submitted—amounting to \$225,000—for the purpose mentioned; and, with the modification before suggested, the subject is respectfully recommended to the favorable consideration of Congress.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Z. CHANDLER,
Secretary.

The SPEAKER *House of Representatives.*

Estimate of appropriations required to subsist Sioux Indians, and to pay for the transportation of Indian supplies for same Indians.

For this amount to supply the Sioux Indians with necessary subsistence until June 30, 1876.....	\$150,000 00
For this amount to pay for transportation of Sioux Indian supplies, to be transported under existing contracts, and for such supplies as may be purchased during the remainder of the present fiscal year.....	75,000 00
	225,000 00

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., January 6, 1876.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit, herewith, a copy of a letter from James S. Hastings, United States Indian agent at the Red Cloud agency, Nebraska, in which, under date of December 14, 1875, he states that the supplies of flour, corn, and beef, heretofore and yet to be fur-

nished for the use of his agency, under existing contracts, will be exhausted by February 10th, of bacon by March 10th, and of coffee and sugar by April 1st.

In reply to his communication from the agent, he was directed, under date of the 29th ultimo, to reduce his issues of supplies to the lowest practicable point. I forward a copy of my letter so instructing him. That Agent Hastings will be able, however, to so reduce his weekly ration as to avoid the necessity for further purchases, I do not believe; and the temper and numbers of the Indians under his charge seem, in my opinion, to justify a full statement of the facts, to be laid by you, if thought advisable, before Congress at an early day.

Agent Hastings explains this deficiency as, in part, caused by the issue of supplies to the large number of Indians visiting the agency in September last, during the negotiations for the purchase of the Black Hills, a contingency not anticipated when the estimates for the year were under consideration.

In further explanation of this deficiency, I have the honor to state that the amount appropriated for the subsistence of these Indians in 1874, and for some years prior thereto, was \$1,314,000. For the last and the present fiscal years, the appropriation for this purpose was \$1,100,000, though an additional appropriation of \$120,000 for the last fiscal year was made by the act of March 3, 1875.

Moreover, in 1874, Congress appropriated \$100,000 for the subsistence of the Northern Cheyennes and Arapahoes (over 3,500 in number) at the Red Cloud agency, which amount was reduced in 1875 to \$45,000, while for the present year no appropriation whatever was made, and these Indians have been subsisted from the funds appropriated for the Sioux.

After a careful consideration of all the facts, I do not see how the amount required to feed these Indians during the remainder of the present fiscal year can be placed at less than \$150,000. My estimate is based upon the best obtainable data as to the number of Indians at the Red Cloud agency, (which number is now understood to be nearly 13,000,) and has been made with an earnest desire to reduce the heavy expenses for these Indians to the lowest practicable point.

For the further information of yourself and of Congress, I submit herewith tabular statements, showing, in detail, the estimated amount of supplies required for the present fiscal year at each of the Sioux agencies; the amount contracted for; the amount delivered under existing contracts, so far as can be ascertained from the returns in this Office; the amount required to pay for provisions yet to be delivered under existing contracts, and the balance of the appropriation of \$1,100,000 yet unexpended. From this statement, the sum required to meet existing engagements is shown to be \$326,187.30, while the balance of the appropriation is \$317,851.65, leaving to be provided by further legislation the sum of \$8,335.75.

In this connection, I venture to call your attention to the condition of the fund for the transportation of supplies for these Indians. The amount appropriated for this purpose for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1874, was \$150,000, which amount was reduced by Congress to \$75,000 for 1875, and also for the present year.

By the act of March 3, 1875, Congress increased this amount by a deficiency appropriation of \$75,000, leaving, however, the appropriation for the present fiscal year at \$75,000, only one-half of what had heretofore been found necessary. Of this appropriation of \$75,000, \$69,050.20 has already been expended, while many of the vouchers for transporta-

tion during the year have not been presented, and, indeed, a large part of the service contracted for, and necessary, is yet to be performed.

The additional amount required to meet existing contracts for transportation, and to provide for the transportation of the further supplies needed, and hereinbefore called for, will not be less than \$75,000.

In this connection I beg leave to suggest that, in my view, this appropriation should be made applicable to both the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail agencies, so that this Office might utilize the supplies now at Spotted Tail agency out of the supplies herein called for.

In conclusion, I have the honor to request that this matter be laid before Congress at an early day, with such favorable recommendations from the Department as you may be disposed to give.

An estimate of appropriation, as above stated, is herewith inclosed.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. Q. SMITH,
Commissioner.

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

RED CLOUD AGENCY, NEBR.,
December 14, 1875.

SIR: I would respectfully inform the Department that the supplies on hand, and to arrive, will be insufficient to meet the demand for the time for which they were intended. Allowing the issue to be made at the minimum, except in the item of beef, the supplies will have been consumed as follows: Flour, corn, and beef, by February 10; bacon by March 10; coffee and sugar by April 1.

As I understand it, the principal cause of the deficiency is attributable to the issue of supplies to a large number of visiting Indians, who attended the council held here in September last.

In order to successfully carry out the wishes of the Department, and to prevent suffering among the Indians, which must necessarily occur if more food is not supplied, more especially in the item of beef, I urgently request that action be taken in the premises with as little delay as possible.

The additional amount required is as follows: Beef, 4,000,000 pounds; bacon, 80,000 pounds; flour, 200,000 pounds; corn, 200,000 pounds; coffee, 20,000 pounds; sugar, 33,000 pounds.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAS. S. HASTINGS,
United States Indian Agent.

Hon. COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., December 29, 1875.

SIR: I am in receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, reporting that there is not a sufficient quantity of supplies on hand to last until the close of the present fiscal year, and desiring to be furnished with an additional quantity.

In reply, I have to call your attention to section 6, page 34, of the present appropriation bill, which provides that the supplies shall be distributed to the Indians so as to last during the entire year, and to state that owing to the limited amount of funds at the disposal of the Department applicable to the purchase of supplies for the Indians at your agency, no additional purchases can be made unless Congress shall make a special appropriation for that purpose.

Owing to these facts, I have to direct that you use every effort within your power to reduce the issues of the Red Cloud agency to the lowest practicable point, in order that the supplies now on hand and to be delivered at your agency may last, if possible, to the close of the fiscal year, reporting your progress in the matter to this Office in full

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. Q. SMITH,
Commissioner.

JAS. S. HASTINGS,
United States Indian Agent, Red Cloud Agency, Nebraska.

Statement showing number of Sioux Indians, by agencies, with quantities of supplies they would be entitled to according to established ration; also the quantities contracted for.

Kind of supplies.	Ponca agency, 734 Indians.		Santee, 800 Indians.		Yankton, 2,000 Indians.		Red Cloud, 9,136 Indians.		Northern Cheyennes at Red Cloud, 2,172 Indians.	
	Entitled to—	Contracted for—	Entitled to—	Contracted for—	Entitled to—	Contracted for—	Entitled to—	Contracted for—	Entitled to—	Contracted for—
Beef	<i>Pounds.</i> 698,034	<i>Pounds.</i> 300,000	<i>Pounds.</i> 760,800	<i>Pounds.</i> 400,000	<i>Pounds.</i> 1,902,000	<i>Pounds.</i> 1,500,000	<i>Pounds.</i> 8,688,336	<i>Pounds.</i> 9,000,000	<i>Pounds.</i> 2,065,572	<i>Pounds.</i>
Bacon	35,232	Pork 10,000	38,400	.....	96,000	{ Pork 25,000 } { Bacon 25,000 }	438,528	200,000	101,756	.....
Flour	267,910	50,000	292,000	Wheat 300,000	730,000	Wheat 180,000	3,334,640	500,000	792,780	.....
Corn	66,977.2	50,000	73,000	.....	182,500	200,000	833,660	500,000	198,195	.....
Coffee	10,716 2-5	5,058	11,680	5,948	29,200	11,959	133,385 3-5	150,044	31,711 1-5	.....
Sugar	21,432 4-5	10,043	23,360	12,008	58,400	23,960	266,771 1-5	74,612	62,422 2-5	.....
Kind of supplies.	Spotted Tail, 9,610 Indians.		Crow Creek, 3,000 Indians.		Cheyenne River, 7,586 Indians.		Standing Rock, 7,322 Indians.		Arapahoes at Red Cloud agency, 1,565.	
	Entitled to—	Contracted for—	Entitled to—	Contracted for—	Entitled to—	Contracted for—	Entitled to—	Contracted for—	Entitled to—	Contracted for—
Beef	<i>Pounds.</i> 9,139,110	<i>Pounds.</i> 8,000,000	<i>Pounds.</i> 2,853,000	<i>Pounds.</i> 1,800,000	<i>Pounds.</i> 7,214,286	<i>Pounds.</i> 5,000,000	<i>Pounds.</i> 6,963,222	<i>Pounds.</i> 6,500,000	<i>Pounds.</i> 1,488,315	<i>Pounds.</i>
Bacon	461,280	150,000	144,000	{ Pork 37,000 } { Bacon 37,000 }	364,128	{ Pork 50,000 } { Bacon 75,000 }	351,456	75,000	75,120	.....
Flour	3,507,650	400,000	1,095,000	250,000	2,768,890	350,000	2,672,530	350,000	571,225	.....
Corn	876,912	300,000	273,750	300,000	692,222	400,000	668,132	450,000	142,806	.....
Coffee	140,306	59,877	43,800	18,074	110,755	36,127	106,901	39,740	22,849	.....
Sugar	280,612	120,064	87,600	36,081	221,511	72,004	213,802	80,052	45,698	.....

NOTE.—A ration consists of 3 pounds gross beef; 1 pound of bacon four times a month, in lieu of beef; 1 pound of flour; $\frac{1}{4}$ pound of corn; 4 pounds of coffee per 100 rations; 8 pounds of sugar per 100 rations.

DEFICIENCY OF SUPPLIES AT RED CLOUD AGENCY.

Statement showing the kind, quantity, and cost of supplies furnished and paid for from the appropriations for the subsistence of the Sioux Indians from July 1, 1875, to January 5, 1876.

Kind of supplies.	Santee agency.		Ponca agency.		Red Cloud agency.		Spotted Tail agency.	
	Quantity.	Cost.	Quantity.	Cost.	Quantity.	Cost.	Quantity.	Cost.
	<i>Pounds.</i>		<i>Pounds.</i>		<i>Pounds.</i>		<i>Pounds.</i>	
Bacon.....					210,105	\$31,305 63	156,444	\$23,310 16
Pork.....	12,000	\$1,498 20	10,000	\$1,248 50				
Flour.....			50,000	1,485 00	520,100	15,622 65	200,000	5,053 30
Corn.....			50,486	1,009 72	224,456	7,820 19	240,489	5,050 26
Beef.....	367,524	9,059 46	252,760	6,230 53	7,559,074	186,331 14	3,659,962	90,168 73
Salt.....	3,920	34 30	1,960	17 15	27,440	240 10	10,060	98 20
Wheat.....	300,797	4,110 88						
Sugar.....	12,008	1,067 51	10,043	892 82	150,044	13,416 93	120,064	10,733 72
Coffee.....	5,948	1,282 59	5,058	1,090 64	74,612	16,087 83	59,877	12,913 21
Tea.....					6,000	1,800 00		

Kind of supplies.	Standing Rock agency.		Cheyenne River agency.		Crow Creek agency.		Yankton agency.	
	Quantity.	Cost.	Quantity.	Cost.	Quantity.	Cost.	Quantity.	Cost.
	<i>Pounds.</i>		<i>Pounds.</i>		<i>Pounds.</i>		<i>Pounds.</i>	
Bacon.....	74,684	\$10,784 37	76,779	\$11,086 87	36,822	\$5,317 10	25,227	\$3,642 78
Pork.....			50,000	6,242 50	37,000	4,619 45	25,000	3,121 25
Flour.....	350,032	10,395 95	350,000	10,395 00	250,900	7,451 73		
Corn.....	454,570	9,091 44	402,395	8,047 93	300,007	6,000 14	205,851	4,117 02
Beef.....	2,468,752	60,854 74	3,750,638	92,453 22	409,135	10,085 18	1,492,957	36,801 39
Salt.....	5,890	51 45	3,080	26 95			1,960	17 15
Wheat.....							196,915	3,019 37
Sugar.....	80,052	7,107 95	72,004	6,401 16	36,051	3,207 60	23,960	2,130 04
Coffee.....	39,740	8,568 94	36,127	7,789 84	18,074	3,897 16	11,959	2,578 64
Tea.....								

Total cost of bacon.....		\$185,446 91
Total cost of pork.....		16,729 90
Total cost of flour.....		50,408 63
Total cost of corn.....		41,136 70
Total cost of beef.....		491,984 39
Total cost of salt.....		475 30
Total cost of wheat.....		7,130 25
Total cost of sugar.....		44,957 73
Total cost of coffee.....		54,208 85
Total cost of tea.....		1,800 00
Cost of inspecting sugar and coffee.....		31 47
Cost of advertising for supplies.....		4,121 40
Total cost of supplies.....		798,431 60
Balance on hand.....		301,568 40
Amount appropriated.....		1,100,000 00

Statement showing quantity and cost of supplies yet to be furnished under contracts for Sioux Indians.

Kind of supplies.	Agency.	Quantity contracted for.	Quantity delivered.	Still due.	Cost of the latter.
		<i>Pounds.</i>	<i>Pounds.</i>	<i>Pounds.</i>	
Corn.....	Red Cloud	500,000	224,456	275,544	\$9,643 04
Flour.....	Spotted Tail	200,000	None	200,000	5,400 00
Corn.....	do	300,000	240,489	59,511	1,249 73
Wheat.....	Yankton	180,000	136,708	43,292	663 32
Beef.....	Santee	400,000	367,524	32,476	
Do.....	Yankton	1,500,000	1,492,957	7,043	
Do.....	Spotted Tail	8,000,000	3,659,962	4,340,038	
Do.....	Crow Creek	1,800,000	409,135	1,390,865	
Do.....	Cheyenne River	5,000,000	3,750,638	1,249,362	
Do.....	Standing Rock	6,500,000	2,468,752	4,031,248	
Do.....	Red Cloud	9,000,000	7,559,074	1,440,926	
Do.....	Ponca	300,000	252,760	47,240	
Amount required to make payment.....					326,047 31

DEFICIENCY OF SUPPLIES AT RED CLOUD AGENCY.

Statement of funds at the disposal of Interior Department applicable to payment of supplies for Sioux Indians.

Sioux subsistence fund	\$301,568 40	
Northern Cheyenne and Arapahoe fund.....	16,283 25	
		\$317,851 65

Statement of transportation fund.

Amount appropriated.....	75,000 00	
Amount expended.....	69,050 20	
		16,191 65
Balance on hand	5,949 80	
Balance of clothing fund applicable to transportation of same.	10,241 85	
		16,191 65
Estimated amount of funds required to complete the transportation of Indian supplies up to the close of the present fiscal year.....		75,000 00

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., January 24, 1876.

SIR: I have the honor to forward herewith, in connection with my communication of the 4th instant, copy of letter from J. S. Hastings, esq., United States Indian agent at Red Cloud agency, in which, under date of the 10th instant, Agent Hastings states the condition of the supplies for his Indians.

This letter from Agent Hastings is in response to communication from this Office of the 29th ultimo, in which he was instructed to use the utmost care and economy in the distribution of supplies yet remaining in his hands.

I am fully convinced that the agent does not exaggerate the needs of his Indians, and while temporary relief might be given Agent Hastings by diverting to the Red Cloud agency some share of the beef which has been designed for other bands of the Sioux, yet such a relief would only be temporary, and at the expense of other agencies whose Indians would soon become equally clamorous and dangerous under a short supply.

In view of the known power and chronic restlessness of this band of Sioux, which may be increased by not improbable collision between other bands of the same nation and the military, I very earnestly request that, if deemed advisable by you, the attention of Congress be again called to the urgency of this case.

I have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
J. Q. SMITH,
Commissioner.

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

RED CLOUD AGENCY, NEBR., January 10, 1876.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo; and, in reply, would inform you that the ration as issued to Indians here is so small that to reduce it would cause suffering among them. It will be utterly impossible to make the present supply last till the end of the year. There are yet due from the contractor about eleven hundred thousand pounds of beef; allowing that the utmost economy is exercised in the distribution of same, it will have been exhausted

before the end of February, leaving them four months unprovided for with the substantial portion of the ration, and on which they principally depend. The balance of the ration will last about a month later.

Unless some provision is made to supply the deficiency they will be reduced to a starving condition, depredations on the frontier settlers will necessarily follow, and may possibly cause a general outbreak.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAS. S. HASTINGS,

United States Indian Agent.

Hon. J. Q. SMITH,

Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS;
Washington, D. C., February 26, 1876.

SIR: I have the honor to forward herewith a copy of a telegram just received from Agent J. S. Hastings, of Red Cloud agency, in which the agent reports the arrival of over one thousand northern Indians, and the imperative necessity for early action toward providing them and the other Indians under his charge with further supplies. This question has been already made the subject of action by the Department, but I feel justified by the circumstances in calling renewed attention to it.

On the 6th ultimo I had the honor to submit an estimate for an appropriation of \$150,000, to meet a deficiency in the supplies at this agency, together with an estimate for \$75,000, to meet the deficiency in the appropriation for transportation. In support of these estimates your attention was called to the fact that the appropriation made for the subsistence of these Indians at the last session of Congress was \$1,100,000, an amount far below the estimate submitted by this Office, and below any previous appropriation for this purpose, except for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1875, for which Congress made a deficiency appropriation of \$120,000 at its last session. I further stated in that communication that the appropriation for the subsistence of the 3,500 Northern Cheyennes and Arapahoes who are now at the Red Cloud agency, and have necessarily received subsistence there, was reduced from \$100,000 for 1875 to \$45,000 for the present year, and that, in addition to this reduction of appropriation by congressional action, an unexpected issue was rendered necessary by the large number of Sioux Indians of other bands visiting the agency to meet the Black Hills commission in September last. That estimate was reduced by you in the amount of \$11,456, and was laid before the House of Representatives on the 10th ultimo, with your recommendation for the favorable consideration of Congress. It now appears as Executive Document No. 57.

On the 24th ultimo I again called your attention to this subject, forwarding for your consideration a copy of a communication from Agent Hastings, of date 10th ultimo, and requesting that the urgency of the case be again laid before Congress. This communication was forwarded by you, as I am informed, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives on the 20th ultimo. This correspondence now appears in Executive Document No. 103.

On the 3d instant, the House, by resolution, requested the detail by the President of an experienced military officer to investigate the cause of the deficiency and report "his opinion as to any further, and what,

amounts should be appropriated for the subsistence and support of these Indians during the present fiscal year." I am advised that appropriate action has been taken under the resolution, but I do not deem it practicable for the officer charged with the duty to make proper investigation and the report called for in season to prevent serious delay and a possible consequent outbreak by these Indians. The breadth of the inquiry proposed by this resolution, covering as it does the business methods and transactions for nearly a year of an agency for the care of 13,000 Indians, is such as to preclude the hope that an immediate report can be made. Whatever may be disclosed by this renewed investigation as to the cause or causes of this present lack of supplies, that there is such a lack is nowhere denied. Indeed, the existence of such a deficiency seems to me to be admitted by the resolution of the House of the 3d instant.

These Indians are located at points where, even if the season of the year was favorable, agricultural operations are an impossibility, while, were they possessed of the best disposition for labor, they could find no opportunity for it in their present quarters, and the question is thus boldly presented as to whether prompt provision shall be made for their temporary subsistence, or shall they be thrown back upon their own resources. Their supplies of game have been practically cut off by the extension of the white settlements, and they will be forced, by the failure of the Government, to either starve or steal. Left to their own choice, there is little doubt as to their future course. It is certainly too much to hope that they will remain quietly at their agency without food, or that, well mounted and well informed as to the topography of their country, as they are, the agent, with the aid of all the military forces in his vicinity, will be able to prevent parties of greater or less size from raiding on such white settlements as are within reach, and procuring supplies whenever or wherever they can be found.

Should Congress immediately decide to make the appropriation heretofore asked for, it would be some weeks before supplies could be delivered at the agency. By section 7 of the appropriation act of March 3, 1875, this Office is prohibited from purchasing supplies without due publication of advertisements and contracts thereunder, which would necessarily require from two to three weeks, while a delay equally as great would be required to transport the supplies to the agency. But the knowledge that supplies are on the way would be of great assistance in controlling the Indians. The supplies which would be purchased with this appropriation, if made, would be only such as are necessary to support life.

The situation is further complicated by the announcement of the agent that over 1,000 Northern Indians have come in at that agency. These Indians are understood to be a part of Sitting Bull's band, estimated to number from 3,000 to 4,000, who have never heretofore acknowledged the authority of the Government, and who, with all the traditional Indian defiance, have made heretofore open war on the constantly advancing line of white settlements. During last summer this band was unusually hostile toward the Crows and other friendly tribes within reach. All efforts to induce their submission have heretofore proved unsuccessful; but after the late demonstration it was felt necessary that measures should be taken at once for their subjection, and after a conference and full understanding between this and the War Department, the order of the 6th of December was issued to those Sioux agents whose Indians would be most likely to be in communication with the hostile bands, directing the latter to come in before the

31st ultimo to some one of the Sioux agencies or be turned over to the War Department for prompt and effective chastisement.

The Indians now reported at the Red Cloud agency are the first to accept the conditions thus imposed upon them, but as yet only haltingly acknowledge the power of the Government. Any failure to now furnish them with supplies, or appear to break pledged or implied faith with them, will tend to open hostilities. Certainly, in view of the expensive character of previous wars with this powerful nation of Indians, a temporary expenditure for supplies can be fully justified on the score of economy. It is especially desirable that any Indians who choose to break away from Sitting Bull's direct control should meet with a reception that would tend rather to encourage than to discourage such a method of destroying the power and prestige of that insolent chief.

It seems to me, in view of the increase in the number of Indians now at the Red Cloud agency, and of the probable further accession from the remaining bands of Sitting Bull, that the amount necessary for their subsistence is in excess of my estimate of January 6, and I have therefore the honor to submit herewith an additional estimate for \$50,000 to provide for their needs until the end of the present fiscal year.

In closing, permit me to remark that the question herein presented for immediate solution is not, what officer, if any, is responsible for this deficiency, but how shall it be met? It is no relief to an agent, charged with the care and control of 13,000 hungry Indians, to know when and by whom the present trouble was begun; it is of even less importance to the Indians themselves, and I do not see how the attainment of further information on the question of responsibility should of necessity be made by Congress a condition-precedent to prompt and suitable action by that body toward relieving a sore need, whose existence is patent. I am prohibited by section 6 of the appropriation act of 1875, (vol. 18 Stats. at Large, page 450,) from taking any steps to meet this emergency, in the absence of congressional action. To the letter and spirit of that enactment I loyally yield obedience, but I cannot face this condition of affairs without respectfully and earnestly renewing my call on Congress for authority to act.

I beg that this matter may be laid before that honorable body with such favorable recommendation as may seem to you proper.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. Q. SMITH,
Commissioner.

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

Estimate of appropriation required for the subsistence of Northern Sioux Indians.

For this amount, or so much thereof as may be necessary, to be expended under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior for the subsistence of such Sioux Indians as may return to their agencies up to June 30, 1876.. \$50,000 00

NOTE.—This estimate to be considered in connection with the estimate of \$150,000 for subsistence of Sioux Indians, and \$75,000 for transportation of their supplies, under existing contracts, submitted with Office report of January 6, 1876; the whole amount estimated for, when appropriated, to be immediately available for the various Sioux agencies.

[Telegram.]

RED CLOUD AGENCY, *February 24, 1876.*

Hon. J. Q. SMITH,

Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C. :

Our supplies, except tea and coffee, will be entirely exhausted by April 1. Have but one issue of flour, bacon, and sugar. Something must be done at once to feed these people. Over one thousand Indians from the north have arrived in obedience to your request communicated to them by couriers sent from here. More are daily expected. What is the intention of the Department?

JAS. S. HASTINGS,
United States Indian Agent.