

LETTER

FROM THE

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

ADDRESSED

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS,

CALLING ATTENTION TO

The provisions of the tenth section of the act making appropriations for the current and contingent expenses of the Indian Department for the year ending June 30, 1876, and suggesting an amendment thereto so as to include all Indian agents and subagents in its provisions.

DECEMBER 14, 1875.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed, to accompany bill S. 79.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, December 11, 1875.

SIR: I have the honor to invite your attention to section 10 of the act making appropriations for the current and contingent expenses of the Indian Department for the year ending June 30, 1876, which is as follows:

That hereafter the security or securities upon the bond required by the act of February twenty-seventh, eighteen hundred and fifty-one, to be given by each Indian agent before entering upon the duties of his office, shall file a sworn statement with the Secretary of Interior, setting forth the nature and kind of property owned by such security or securities, the value of the same, and where situated; and that no money appropriated by this act shall be paid to any Indian agent hereafter appointed until the security or securities shall have filed such statement. Each Indian agent shall keep a book of itemized expenditures of every kind, with a record of all contracts, together with the receipts of money from all sources; and the books thus kept shall always be open to inspection; and the said books shall remain in the office at the respective reservations, not to be removed from said reservations by said agent, but shall be safely kept and handed over to his successor; and true transcripts of all entries of every character in said books shall be forwarded quarterly by each agent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs: *Provided*, That should any agent knowingly make any false entry in said books, or in the transcripts directed to be forwarded to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, or shall knowingly fail to keep a perfect entry in said books as herein prescribed, he shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and, on conviction before any United States court having jurisdiction of such offense, shall be fined in a sum not less than five hundred nor more than one thousand dollars, at the discretion of the court, and shall be rendered incompetent to hold said office of Indian agent after conviction under this act.

The reference in the above-quoted section to the act of February 27, 1851, limits the application of the provision of the above section to a portion only of the Indian agents in the employ of the Government. I have required the Indian Office to extend the provisions of said section

to all Indian agents, subagents, and special agents, so far as the preparation of their bonds and the keeping of the books of itemized expenses is concerned, but am without power to extend the penalties provided by said section to any other agents than those referred to therein. I therefore have the honor to request that the section may be so amended as to extend the provisions and penalties of said section to all agents in the Indian service; and an amendment is herewith submitted, which is believed will accomplish the object desired if the same shall be enacted into a law.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Z. CHANDLER,

Secretary.

Hon. W. B. ALLISON,

Chairman Committee on Indian Affairs, U. S. Senate.

○