

AGREEMENT WITH INDIANS ON THE COLVILLE RESER-  
VATION.

APRIL 9, 1892.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. WILSON, of Washington, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany H. R. 7557.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 7557) to ratify and confirm an agreement with the Indians on the Colville Reservation, in the State of Washington, with certain modifications, and to make the necessary appropriation for carrying the same into effect, and for other purposes therein named, having had the same under consideration, report as follows:

Your committee recommend the passage of the bill.

By the act of August 19, 1890 (26 Stat., 355), the commission was authorized to visit the Colville Indian Reservation, in the State of Washington, and negotiate with said Colville and other bands of Indians on said reservation for the cession of such portion of said reservation as said Indians may be willing to dispose of, that the same may be opened to settlement.

The Colville Indian Reservation was originally set aside by executive order of April 9, 1872, for the bands of Indians in Washington Territory named in a communication of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated April 8, 1872, "and for such other Indians as the Department of the Interior may see fit to locate thereon," and by executive order of July 2, 1872, the tract of country referred to in the executive order of April 9, 1872, was restored to the public domain, and in lieu thereof a tract bounded on the east and south by the Columbia River, on the west by the Okanagon River, and on the north by the British Possessions was set apart as a reservation for said Indians and for such other Indians as the Department of the Interior might see fit to locate thereon.

Instructions were given the commission for this purpose on the 21st of October, 1890, which instructions were duly approved by you (copy herewith).

The report of the commission is dated June 8, 1891. The commissioners report that they held various councils with the Indians and obtained the signatures of 506 of the male Indians residing on the Colville Reservation above the age of 18 years, who signed an agreement ceding about one-half of their reservation. They report that there are 685 male Indians above 18 years of age residing on the reservation; that of said number 49, according to the census of the Colville Indians, are between the ages of 18 and 21; that there are 636 male adult Indians, or those above 21 years, on said reservation according to the census of

1890; that from the census and from evidence obtained 319 constitute a majority of all the male adult Indians on said reservation, and that 500 of said male adult Indians have signed the agreement of sale. That of said Indians who are above the age of 18 years, 343 constitute a majority, and that 506 of such signed said agreement. The agreement is also signed by a number of widows and other female heads of families, and it is executed in proper form and properly certified to by the interpreter and witnessed by the agent in charge of the Colville Agency.

By the first article of the agreement the Colville Indians residing and having their homes on the Colville Reservation surrender and relinquish to the United States all their right, title, claim, and interest in, to, and over the following-described tract of country on said Indian reservation:

Beginning at a point on the eastern boundary line of the Colville Indian Reservation where the township line between townships 34 and 35 north, of range 37 east of the Willamette meridian, if extended west, would intersect the same, said point being in the middle of the channel of the Columbia River, and running thence west parallel with the forty-ninth parallel of latitude to the western boundary line of the said Colville Indian Reservation on the Okanagon River; thence north, following the said western boundary line to the said forty-ninth parallel of latitude; thence east along the said forty-ninth parallel of latitude to the northeast corner of the said Colville Indian Reservation; thence south, following the eastern boundary of said reservation to the place of beginning, containing, by estimation, 1,500,000 acres, the same being a portion of the Colville Indian Reservation created by executive order dated April 9, 1872.

This line from east to west practically divides the Colville Reservation into two equal portions, of which they cede and relinquish the northern half.

By the second article of the agreement each and every Indian residing upon that portion of the reservation thereby ceded, and who is so entitled to reside, is entitled to select from said ceded portion 80 acres of land to be allotted to such Indian in severalty. No restrictions as to locality shall be placed upon such selections other than that they shall be located so as to conform to the Congressional survey or subdivision of said tract of country. All such allotments are to be made at the cost of the United States, under such rules and regulations as the Secretary of the Interior may from time to time prescribe.

By the third article of the agreement all the Indians residing on the lands ceded have the right, if they shall prefer to do so, under the direction of the Indian agent, to occupy and reside upon such portions of the Colville Indian Reservation not ceded as are not occupied or in the possession of any other Indian or Indians.

The necessity for the opening of at least a portion of so large a reservation is apparent because of the following reasons:

(1) Sixty miles of the reservation being on the international boundary, the Government does not have that security there which it ought to have, the consequences of which are seen in the constant passing over the line from British Columbia and the north of Indians that have no right on the reservation, the illicit sale of whisky, and a state of constant trouble and disorder which constitute a menace to the peace and progress of the State of Washington as well as a danger to the entire country.

(2) The concentration of the Indians on a diminished reservation, that would be surrounded by civilized communities all belonging to the United States, and the erection of school buildings, blacksmith shops, and sawmills as provided in the treaty would, while giving the Gov-

ernment more complete control, bring to bear more immediately and effectively the influences of education and civilization upon the Indians and save them in a greater degree from the demoralizing and ruinous traffic in illicit whisky. I believe it is now generally conceded that the Government should have a benevolent rather than a hostile purpose in dealing with the Indians; that they should be trained with fairness and kindness in the direction of full and responsible citizenship, and that nothing conduces so much to this end as the placing of the Indians in close contact with peace-loving, educated, and industrious communities of white men. A most striking illustration of the beneficial effect of such conditions is found in the advanced state of the Indians on the Cœur d'Alene Reservation in Idaho, a few miles southwest of the city of Spokane. This reservation now consists of a little over 400,000 acres, about 50,000 acres of which are admirably adapted to agriculture. According to the last enumeration the number of Indians living there was 487, the area of land to each inhabitant being two-thirds less than in the case of the Colville Reservation. In a report made to Congress in February, 1888; from the office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs the following was justly said of these Indians:

Each one has a comfortable house on his farm and nearly all have equally comfortable houses at the mission, which together make quite a village. They remain at their farms during week days and on the Sabbath repair to their dwellings at the mission to attend religious services and see their children who are at the mission schools. \* \* \* Long experience in self-reliance and traffic with the neighboring whites has made them cautious, shrewd, and provident in the use of money. A better ordered and better behaved Indian community can nowhere be found.

In a report made to the lower House of Congress in March, 1890, by Mr. Dubois, of Idaho, from the Committee of Indian Affairs, the above was confirmed and the further statement made that the Cœur d'Alene Indians were probably further advanced in agriculture, stock-raising, varied husbandry, and civilization generally than any Indians west of the Rocky Mountains. The older citizens of Spokane, our merchants, bankers, and tradesmen, verify these statements as to the prosperity of the Cœur d'Alenes. It was among them that Father-De Smet planted his mission almost half a century ago, and as their reservation borders upon the fertile Palouse country, where prosperous white settlements have long existed, and as on their east border are the rich Cœur d'Alene mines, they have not only been encouraged by the example of the white men, but they have found in the towns and camps along the line of railroad running through the surrounding country a market for their wheat, hay, vegetables, beef, and other products.

A lessening of the dimensions of the Colville Reservation, the planting of active, prosperous and well-ordered white communities on every side of the Indians, the building of railroads, the creation of towns and cities, the opening of mines, and the consequent establishment of markets near at hand so the Indians can realize an income on their industry, would be the greatest blessing we could bestow upon these children of benighted savagery. However much disposed the Colville Reservation Indians might be to the ways of industry and self-reliance, they now have little or no encouragement in these directions. The reservation is surrounded on two sides by the Columbia River, on one side by the wilds of British Columbia, and on the other by a portion of Washington that has no outlet by rail because the reservation itself stands as a barrier to all railroad construction from the east. The Government maintains a farmer on the reservation to teach the Indians how to farm, but why teach them the art of farming when they are not able to get

a bushel of wheat or oats or ton of hay to market? Living as they do on a body of land of such wide extent and so completely isolated from well-settled communities of civilized people, exposed for 60 miles on the north to the constant inroads of vagabond wanderers of their own race as well as the worst of white men from a foreign country, it is not surprising that they should be so far inferior in all respects to the Cœur d'Alene Indians. In asking, therefore, for the ratification of a treaty providing for the opening of the upper half of the Colville Reservation we are asking for what must inevitably be for the betterment of the tribes that now make their home there.

(3) The reservation as it stands to-day is a great obstacle to the development of the State of Washington and the general progress of the Pacific Northwest. So long as it continues to be the sporting ground of so sparse, thriftless, and irresponsible a population its lands will remain untilled and its mines will remain unopened, being more than the Indians need for sustenance and comfort, yielding no revenue to the General Government and being of no taxable value to the State of which it is an inseparable and essential part. It cuts off communication between the eastern and western portions of the State and blocks the way to railroads that stand waiting at its borders. A railroad company, a local corporation, have constructed a line from the city of Spokane, the metropolis of eastern Washington, to Marcus, a point on the Columbia River 100 miles distant, at an expense of over \$2,000,000, and have surveyed an extension through the reservation to the Okanogan country, an extensive region between the Colville Reservation and the Cascade Mountains, rich in minerals and agricultural products but wholly without railroad transportation. The projectors of the road, however, can not afford to build their line across 60 miles of uninhabited and profitless country in order to get there. There are other lines of railroad that would be built to the same region were this barrier to progress not in the way. In a State whose population increased from 75,000 in 1880 to 349,000 in 1890, and whose taxable wealth has grown from \$23,000,000 in 1880 to \$339,000,000 in 1891, there is no room for so vast an area of unemployed land as that in the Colville Reservation, and its continuance as such is no less an injustice to the Indians themselves than a menace to the prosperity of the surrounding Commonwealth.

Your committee have modified so much of said treaty as provided for the payment of \$1,500,000 to said Indians in two several payments, and provide in article 4 that such lands as are not required for allotment or for use of the Indian, shall be open to settlement and entry under the homestead and general land laws applicable to said State upon the payment of \$1.50 per acre by each entryman before receiving final certificate and patent covered by his entry, and the proceeds of the sales of all of said lands under any of the land laws of the United States shall be deposited in the Treasury of the United States, to the credit of said Indians and such portion thereof shall be paid to said Indians in such sums and under such conditions and regulations as shall be deemed best by the Secretary of the Interior.

In other words, your committee have not thought it advisable to make this payment in cash, as agreed upon between the commission and the Indians, but have adopted what seems to them the better plan of letting the lands as fast as sold, the money received therefrom to be placed to their credit. An appropriation for survey and allotment and payment to the chiefs and securing of their assent to these new modifications is necessary, as the lands could not be sold unless surveyed.

Your committee therefore recommend an appropriation of \$41,000 for these several purposes.

Your committee therefore recommend the passage of the bill with the following amendments:

In line 20, page 21, strike out the words "twenty-five" and insert "fifty," so as to read "one dollar and fifty cents per acre for each acre thereof."

In line 24 on page 22, strike out the word "five" and insert "four," so as to read "four per centum per annum."

In line 26, page 22, after the word "such" insert the words "conditions and."

In line 25, page 23, after the word "dollars" insert "for the payment of expenses for procuring assent of the Indians to the changes and modifications made in the original agreement, five hundred dollars, which said sum of five hundred dollars shall be immediately available out of any sums in the United States Treasury not otherwise appropriated; in all, forty-one thousand dollars, which said sums shall be reimbursable from the proceeds of the lands when sold as hereinbefore provided."

And as thus amended your committee recommend the passage of the bill.