

COLONEL JOHN SHAW.

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DECEMBER 22, 1854.—Laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

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Mr. ORR, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, made the following

REPORT.

*The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the petition of Colonel John Shaw, for compensation for provisions furnished to and property taken by the Menomonee Indians in 1846, 1847, and 1848, report:*

That they have carefully considered this claim, and, whilst the misfortunes of the petitioner have inclined the committee to take the most favorable view of his case, they are constrained to report adversely. The petitioner wholly neglected to comply with the provisions of the intercourse act when the alleged depredations were committed by the Menomonees, by making complaint to their agent, and enabling the government thereby to withhold a sufficient sum out of their annuities to indemnify for the trespass. The petitioner has likewise wholly failed to assign any satisfactory reason for this neglect.

The other branch of the case cannot be recognised. If every private citizen were allowed to furnish provisions to suffering Indians without the knowledge or consent of any agent of the government, and to be constituted the judge of the necessity and the extent of the relief, it would lead to the most frightful frauds, and almost bankrupt any government. Most of the border tribes have agents to look after their wants, and annuities to afford to some extent the means of support. If this petitioner were paid, it would open an unlimited gate to perjury, fraud, and speculation.

The committee, therefore, recommend that the prayer of the petitioner be rejected.