

CHIPPEWA INDIANS.

L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

TRANSMITTING

*Report relative to the necessities of the Chippewa Indians of Lake Superior,  
and recommending an appropriation for their relief.*

APRIL 8, 1868.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, D. C., April 4, 1868.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit, for the consideration of Congress, a copy of a report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated the 3d instant, upon the accompanying copy of a letter addressed by Luther Webb, esq., to the Hon. C. C. Washburn, relative to the wants and necessities of the Chippewa Indians of Lake Superior.

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

O. H. BROWNING,

*Secretary.*

Hon. SCHUYLER COLFAX,

*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C., April 3, 1868.*

SIR: I have the honor to enclose herewith a letter from L. E. Webb, esq., dated the 7th ultimo, addressed to Hon. C. C. Washburn, and by him left at this office, setting forth the wants and necessities of the Chippewa Indians of Lake Superior, requesting that the matter be laid before Congress with the view of procuring such assistance for said Indians as their necessities actually demand, and stating that the required relief could be afforded for the sum of \$15,000, disbursed for the objects therein designated.

There can be no doubt of the statements made by Mr. Webb in regard to the destitution of said Indians, and it is the opinion of this office that if the sum mentioned by him were appropriated and judiciously expended for the objects named, it would afford considerable relief to the Indians in question, tend to

ameliorate their condition, and remove, in a great measure, their most pressing wants.

I, therefore, respectfully recommend that the matter be laid before Congress for such action as that body may deem proper.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

N. G. TAYLOR,  
*Commissioner.*

Hon. O. H. BROWNING,  
*Secretary of the Interior.*

WASHINGTON, *March 7, 1868.*

SIR: I desire, respectfully, to call your attention to the condition of the Chippewa Indians of Lake Superior. They number (exclusive of the Bois Fort Indians, who made the treaty of 1866) about 5,300 souls, and are scattered over a large extent of country in northwestern Wisconsin and Minnesota.

The treaty of 1842 expired in 1866, and under the provisions of the treaty of 1854 they receive annually \$5,000 in money, and \$6,000 in goods, which is about \$2 *per capita*. Many of them have adopted the habits of civilized life, and are endeavoring to subsist themselves by agricultural pursuits, but their country is not well adapted to agriculture, in consequence of the shortness of the seasons; they are compelled, therefore, to subsist chiefly upon fish, of which the supply is very abundant.

These Indians have always been loyal towards the government, and during the late rebellion large numbers of their young men rendered valuable service in the cause of the Union. They are, therefore, justly entitled to liberal treatment at the hands of Congress.

Seven reservations are set apart for the various bands by the provisions of the treaty of 1854, but they are so poor that they cannot subsist upon them without assistance from the government. As a consequence, many of them are constantly roaming about the settlements on the St. Croix, Chippewa, and Black rivers, to the annoyance of the settlers, and numerous petitions are yearly presented to the legislature of Wisconsin asking for their removal to their respective reservations. They would willingly comply with their treaty stipulations, and reside upon the reservations set apart for their use, if sufficient assistance were afforded to them by the government to enable them to improve their lands, and provide themselves with the necessary agricultural implements. They have a saw-mill, but no means have been provided to run it. Their fish nets are worn out, as are also their sugar kettles and guns.

I would, therefore, respectfully ask that you lay this subject before Congress, and, if possible, procure for these Indians such assistance as their necessities imperiously demand. In my judgment the necessary relief could be provided by the judicious expenditure of the following sum for the various objects named below, viz:

For the purchase of twine for nets, and kettles for making sugar ..	\$4,000 00
For guns and ammunition .....	2,000 00
For provisions and cattle .....	2,000 00
For running saw-mill .....	1,500 00
For blankets, cloth, &c., .....	5,500 00
Total .....	<u>15,000 00</u>

It is perhaps proper that I should here say that I have acted as agent for these Indians during the past seven years, but as I have recently been appointed

to another position, I can have no other interest in this matter than a desire to contribute as far as I can to the amelioration of the condition of a worthy tribe of Indians, who are entitled to just and liberal treatment at the hands of the government.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

L. E. WEBB.

Hon. C. C. WASHBURN,  
*Member of Congress, Washington, D. C.*