

EXTENDING PROVISIONS OF THE PRE-EMPTION ACT  
OF 1841.

[To accompany Joint Resolution No. 34.]

JANUARY 20, 1857.

Mr. QUITMAN, from the Committee on Military Affairs, made the following

REPORT.

*The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred House resolution No. 34, extending the provisions of the pre-emption act of September 4, 1841, and the acts amendatory thereof, to a portion of the Fort Ripley reservation, therein specified, respectfully report:*

That from the letter of the Secretary of War, and that of the delegate from Minnesota, which are herewith printed for the information of the House, the committee are of opinion that the resolution should pass. They accordingly report it back without amendment.

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, April 29, 1856.

SIR: In reply to your letter of the 12th of February, I have to state that this department has had under consideration the expediency of reducing the limits of the military reservation east of the Mississippi river, made for the use of Fort Ripley, and does not doubt that the reduction would be expedient. Under existing laws, however, this department has no authority to dispose of or to relinquish a reservation made since the 3d of March, 1819, and consequently can take no measures to open the reservation to settlement. The necessity of legislation on this subject has, as you must be aware, been repeatedly brought to the attention of Congress.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JEFF'N DAVIS,  
Secretary of War.

Hon. H. M. RICE,  
House of Representatives.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, *July 9, 1856.*

MY DEAR SIR: In 1848 the Winnebago Indians were removed to the Territory of Minnesota—Fort Ripley was established on the line of their reservation, on the west side of the Mississippi river. To enable the troops to prevent the introduction of ardent spirits into the country, and to give control of the ferry, and of ground for gardens, a reservation was made east of that river, which is about twenty miles long and four wide. Last year the Indians were removed. This reservation has become a serious obstacle to our citizens, lying for so great a length upon that river, the land on both sides being subject to settlement. It is necessary that the citizens should be enabled to make roads and build bridges connecting their various interests through this reservation. Again, so great a reservation prevents that union of interest as would enable the citizens in its vicinity from building school-houses, supporting schools, and doing various other things conducive to the interests of a rural district. I herewith send a joint resolution, and a letter from the Secretary of War, for the consideration of your honorable committee.

With great respect,

H. M. RICE.

Hon. J. A. QUITMAN,

*Chairman of Committee on Military Affairs.*