

DESTITUTE FRIENDLY INDIANS.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

TRANSMITTING

*A communication from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs relative to the necessity of an appropriation to furnish supplies to destitute friendly Indians.*

APRIL 24, 1868.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, D. C., April 24, 1868.*

SIR: Herewith I transmit a copy of a communication from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated the 23d instant, enclosing to this department the accompanying copies of letters from Messrs. Stettauer and Osborn, relative to furnishing supplies to destitute friendly Indians.

Under the circumstances, I have the honor to invite the immediate consideration of Congress to the subject, and would respectfully suggest that if the Commissioner of Indian Affairs' recommendation meets with the approval of Congress, a resolution may be passed without delay authorizing the department to take the necessary steps to provide for the present urgent necessities of the Indians in advance of an appropriation.

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 23, 1868.*

SIR: I have the honor to enclose herewith copies of letters received from Messrs. Louis Stettauer and Thomas A. Osborn, dated yesterday and to-day respectively, both in answer to office letters, notifying them to cease furnishing supplies under their contracts made with this bureau on the 12th of November, 1867, for friendly Indians at and near Fort Cobb, in the Indian territory, at and near the Big Bend of the Arkansas river, in Kansas, and at and near North Platte City, in Nebraska.

It will be seen that both parties offer to continue furnishing the necessary

subsistence, upon the terms mentioned in their respective contracts, if it is the opinion of the department and of this office that Congress will make appropriations for the purpose.

Not being sufficiently advised respecting the intention of Congress in regard to appropriating funds to continue the feeding of such friendly Indians as may require assistance, to respond to the offers made by said parties, the matter is respectfully referred to your consideration, and for such instructions in the premises as may be deemed necessary.

I would suggest, in this connection, whether it would not be advisable, before responding to Messrs. Stettauer and Osborn, to ascertain, if possible, the views of the members of the Indian committee in each branch of Congress, regarding the probability of an appropriation being made to feed the Indians in question.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

N. G. TAYLOR, *Commissioner.*

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

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WASHINGTON, D. C., *April 23, 1868.*

SIR: Your letter of yesterday is received, in which you inform me that the appropriations for feeding friendly Indians are now nearly exhausted, and that I will, therefore, cease feeding under my two contracts of 12th November last, within thirty days from the date of the receipt of your letter.

You further inform me that this action is rendered necessary by the fact that, although you have recommended Congress to appropriate funds to continue feeding the Indians, it has not yet done so.

If you think that Congress will make appropriations for this purpose, and desire me to do so, I will go on feeding under my contracts until Congress shall have had time to act on the recommendation for further appropriations.

Please advise me what are your views and wishes on the subject.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

THOMAS A. OSBORN.

Hon. N. G. TAYLOR,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs.*

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WASHINGTON, D. C., *April 22, 1868.*

SIR: I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this date informing me that the appropriations for feeding the friendly Indians, under my contract with the department of 12th November last, are nearly exhausted, and although further appropriations have been asked for, they have not yet been made; and directing me, therefore, to cease furnishing supplies under said contract within thirty days from the date of the receipt of your letter.

If the department thinks that Congress will make the appropriations, I am willing to go on feeding the Indians under my contract until Congress shall act on the recommendation referred to.

Very respectfully, yours,

LOUIS STETTAUER.

Hon. N. G. TAYLOR,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs.*