

LETTER

FROM THE

ACTING SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,

TRANSMITTING

*A letter from the Secretary of the Interior relative to an appropriation for payment of damages to Chippewa Indians.*

APRIL 6, 1886.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
April 5, 1886.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith, for the consideration of Congress, copy of a letter of the Secretary of the Interior of the 2d instant, and its inclosures, relative to an appropriation of \$128,375.01 for the payment of damages to Chippewa Indians in Minnesota, growing out of the construction of reservoirs at the headwaters of the Mississippi River.

Respectfully, yours,

C. S. FAIRCHILD,  
*Acting Secretary.*

Hon. JOHN SHERMAN,  
*President pro tempore United States Senate.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
Washington, D. C., April 2, 1886.

SIR: In accordance with the provisions of section 2 of the act of July 7, 1884 (23 Stat., 254), I have the honor to transmit herewith for presentation to Congress, copy of a letter of 1st instant from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, inclosing an item of appropriation in the sum of \$128,375.01 for the payment of damages to Chippewa Indians in the State of Minnesota, growing out of the construction of reservoirs at Lake Winnebagoish and Leech Lake, at the headwaters of the Mississippi River. (See Ex. Doc. 76, H. R., Forty-eighth Congress, first session.)

The recommendation of the Commissioner has the concurrence of this Department.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

H. L. MULDROW,  
*Acting Secretary.*

THE HON. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, April 1, 1886

SIR: I am in receipt of the inclosed letter dated the 30th ultimo, from Hon. H. L. Dawes, United States Senate, calling my attention, in connection with the Indian appropriation bill, to the report of my predecessor for 1884 (pages 47 and 48), and inquiring whether any steps have been taken for the payment of the award therein set forth. Senator Dawes thinks that if negotiations are about to be opened with the Chippewa Indian and the various tribes of Chippewas in Minnesota for the purpose of bringing them all upon the White Earth Reservation, that much more could be done and much more favorable terms obtained if the matter of that award was out of the way, &c.

In reply, I have the honor to state that I agree with him that it would facilitate negotiations with the Chippewas if the amount due those Indians for permanent and annual damages was paid; but it was not included by me in the Indian appropriation bill for the reason that the amount originally appropriated for damages done to the tribal and individual property was received by this office from the War Department by transfer requisition, was originally appropriated in the river and harbor bill, approved March 3, 1881 (Stats. 21, page 481), and was not considered by me as an item to be included in the estimate of appropriation for the current and contingent expenses of the Indian service, &c.

The amount received by this office from the War Department was \$15,966.90. Of this amount the sum of \$303.73 was expended in going to the reservation and offering to make the payment, leaving a balance now on the books of this office of \$15,663.17. Within the last two months I have asked the agent to propose to the Indians to accept this amount, trusting to Congress to appropriate at some future time the balance, but they have refused to do so. The first commission appointed assessed the damages at Lake Winnebagoishish at \$8,393.30, and at Leech Lake of \$7,037.60, or a total of \$15,466.90, but the Indians refused to accept any portion of it, holding that it was inadequate.

A second commission was appointed, who made awards as found on pages 47 and 48 of the Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1884, assessing the damage done to personal and private property at \$10,038.18, and the *annual* damages at \$26,800.

I earnestly recommend that some steps be taken by Congress, either by an amendment to the Indian appropriation bill or by the insertion of an item in the sundry civil bill, to enable this office to pay these Indians the amount awarded them, and inclose herewith an item of appropriation amounting to \$128,375.01, which covers the assessed damages of \$10,038.18 and the annual damages of \$26,800 for the fiscal years 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, and 1887, less the sum of \$15,663.17 on hand.

Very respectfully,

J. D. C. ATKINS,  
*Commissioner.*

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

*Item of appropriation.*

That the sum of \$128,375.01, or so much thereof as may be required, be, and is hereby, appropriated out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to enable the Secretary of the Interior to pay to the Chippeway Indians in Minnesota the sum

of \$10,038.18, being amount of injury to personal and tribal property sustained by said Indians by reason of the construction of certain reservoirs at Lake Winnebago-shish and Leech Lake, on the headwaters of the Mississippi River, and the further sum of \$134,000, being annual damages awarded to these Indians on account of the construction of said reservoirs for the fiscal years 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, and 1887, or a total of \$144,038.18, less amount of \$15,663.17 on hand applicable for the payment of these damages.

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UNITED STATES SENATE,  
*Washington, March 30, 1886.*

SIR: I would like to call your attention, in connection with the Indian appropriation bill, to the report of your predecessor for 1884 (pages 47-48), and to inquire whether any steps have been taken for the payment of the award therein set forth. It occurs to me that if negotiations are about to be opened with the Chippewa Indians and with the various tribes of Chippewas in Minnesota, for the purpose of bringing them all upon the White Earth Reservation, that much more could be done and much more favorable terms obtained if the matter of that award was out of the way. You will observe the urgency with which your predecessor pressed it upon the consideration of Congress. I do not think anything has been done, but certainly something ought to be done in the matter.

Yours, truly,

H. L. DAWES.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

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