

MEMORIAL
OF THE
LEGISLATURE OF THE TERRITORY OF MONTANA,
CONCERNING

The treatment of Indians and depredations committed by them upon settlers and their property.

DECEMBER 4, 1883.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled :

Your memorialists, the council and house of representatives, comprising the legislative assembly of the Territory of Montana, respectfully represent to your honorable bodies :

That the tribe of Indians known as Piegans, comprising a portion of the Blackfoot Nation, whose agency is located on Badger Creek, in said Territory, have been continuously for years stealing horses, killing cattle, and committing divers other depredations upon the rights and property of the citizens of said Territory; that where heretofore game was plentiful, in their accustomed hunting grounds, little or none can now be found; that the subsistence furnished at said agency is utterly insufficient to supply the demands of necessity, and these Indians are frequently driven to such desperate rigor as to be compelled to resort to these means to avert starvation.

That by reason of the causes aforesaid the depredations of said Indians, instead of diminishing, have been increasing, until they have become so frequent of late that the lives and pursuits of industry (particularly that of stock raising) of the white settlers in their vicinity have been greatly endangered and seriously jeopardized. While it is a well known fact to the citizens in the vicinity of said agency that these raids have been occasioned from causes of extreme necessity, yet is a conceded fact that unless some action is taken to avert these aggressions in future a collision between these Indians and the whites must inevitably ensue.

Your memorialists would most respectfully further represent that frequent complaints have been made and petitions presented to the Indian Department at Washington, the agent of said tribe, and the military in this Territory, setting forth the wrongs and grievances aforesaid, and requesting that said tribe be kept upon their reservation, all of which has been ineffectual, until your memorialists have despaired of any relief save through the interposition of your honorable bodies.

Your memorialists would also most respectfully represent that said Piegan tribe of the Blackfoot Nation would readily adapt themselves to

the pursuits of husbandry, and in a great measure, if not entirely, become self-supporting, thereby averting the evils aforesaid, and relieving the Government of great inconvenience and expense, if their supplies for subsistence are made commensurate with their actual wants at the present, and they are furnished with the humbler implements employed in the ordinary pursuits of agriculture; that in this way they can be made to remain contented upon their reservation, their valuable tillable lands made available for some useful and beneficial purpose, and their complications with the white settlers ultimately terminated.

Wherefore, your memorialists respectfully request that such action be taken in the premises by your honorable bodies as shall be deemed expedient and proper to meet the emergency and satisfy the demands of justice.

And your memorialists will as in duty bound ever pray.

ALEXANDER E. MAYHEW,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.
GRANVILLE STUART,
President of the Council.

I hereby certify that this memorial originated in the council.

JAMES B. WELLS,
Chief Clerk.

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