R.McKee to Editors of Times and Transcript, Sacramento City, May 14, 1852, Sen. Ex. Docs., 33 Cong., Spec. Sess., Doc. 4, pp. 330-332 (688).

INDIAN AFFAIRS.

Editors Times and Transcript, Sacramento City:

GENTLEMEN: In your editorial yesterday, in reference to the amendment said to have been proposed by Mr. McCorkle, of this State, to the deficiency bill then before Congress, you take occasion, as has been too much your "wont," to jump at conclusions, and make a fling at the administration over the heads, or in connexion with, the United States Indian agents in California, which strikes me as both illogical and unjust.

I will therefore trespass on your columns to say that I presume there is some mistake about this reported amendment offered by Mr. Mc-

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Corkle; that it has either been misprinted, or, if correctly reported, the honorable member, in his anxiety to prove himself the constant friend of the "*dear people*," has volunteered his services in a matter about which he was but ill advised, and in a manner which could have insured for his amendment nothing but instant rejection.

1st. The sum called for, $520,000, to pay debts contracted by the Indian commissioners or agents in California, is only about $500,000 more than there is any necessity for at present, so far as my knowledge of the debts extends; and I should conjecture full $400,000 more than necessary, even if it shall prove true, as reported, that Colonel Fremont has valuable contracts, at very satisfactory prices, with one of my colleagues, for the supply of the southern Indians, upon which money is due.

2d. If Mr. McCorkle asked for such an appropriation, it must have been, not to pay debts already contracted, but to provide means, estimated as necessary to carry out the provisions of the several treaties made with the southern Indians. That it was a volunteer movement on his part, I infer from the fact that up to that time the treaties had not been acted on in the Senate; and, until they are ratified, it is not customary even for the department of Indian affairs to apply for the appropriations necessary to carry them out.

3d. I think you are fully justified in withholding your belief of "*the one half of the charges which have been made concerning the management of our Indian affairs*," as well as in your closing remarks: "If California desires to obtain anything from the general government, she must discountenance these enormous Indian and other speculations. Her agents in Congress must not press them, to the exclusion of proper and legitimate appropriations. If they do, it will be as heretofore—we shall obtain nothing."

It is quite probable that Mr. McCorkle has, in this movement, acted very injudiciously for California interests in Congress.

4th. I have had occasion to complain several times, Messrs. Editors, that you have allowed your columns to be used in a way calculated to do me personally very great injustice. You write or print about "the Indian commissioners," or "*the* Indian agents;" condemn the acts of *all alike*, as if they were a *joint board of directors*. Of this I have complained time and again, but without success. In vain have I defied those excessively patriotic members of the legislature, or writers for the press, who have indulged in these attacks, to discriminate, to point out a single abuse or speculation in which I have been implicated, or in any way "mixed up;" and I now repeat the challenge to you, "and all the rest of mankind" in California. If such abuses exist in my department of the public service, expose them in welcome. I am responsible only for my own acts. If favoritism has been shown to Col. Fremont, or any other distinguished democrat in California, to the prejudice of others or the public interest, lay it bare; but grapple facts, not surmises or street gossip.

If contracts have been made for beef other than such as were authorized by the department, they will of course be disavowed; and if claims arising under such contracts are ever paid, the responsibility

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will fall upon Congress, a large majority of whom you claim to be your political friends and the special guardians of the public interests.

In all such matters, I say, "*Let every tub stand on its own bottom.*"

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. McKEE.

SAN FRANCISCO, *May* 14, 1852.

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