

No. 101.

Circular to Agents and Sub-agents.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

Office Indian Affairs, August 3, 1853.

SIR: The attention of this office has been called to the fact that, in some superintendencies, traders have been in the habit of keeping their stores open on Sundays. This will not be permitted. Our government, in its intercourse with the Indian tribes hitherto, while constantly endeavoring to promote their physical well-being, has looked earnestly to the accomplishment of a higher and nobler object; it has sought to improve their social condition, to advance their political prosperity, to diffuse knowledge among them, to superinduce an habitual observance of morality, and to make them participants in all the advantages and blessings of a Christian civilization. This beneficent policy has my concurrence; and all superintendents, agents, and employes, are expected to co-operate in carrying it into effect.

The Sabbath, regarded merely as a political institution, is essential to the prosperity of all states and societies; but considered as an institution of the Great Father of the nations of the earth, its observance is required alike of whites and Indians, and its violation is equally destructive to the good morals and highest interests of both races; and it cannot be allowed that traders, holding a license from the government, shall, by desecrating this holy day, retard the civilization of the savages, and bring reproach upon the fair fame of our country.

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You will see that compliance with this direction is strictly enforced in your agency: a violation of it will be considered just cause for the revocation of the license of the offending trader; and you are required to make report of such violation.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. W. MANYPENNY,
Commissioner.

APPENDIX