

California 10/4/53
Secretary of War
June 4/59

Enclose communications from the
Subsistence Dept. showing that the
Digger-Indians, Cal. have been
subsisted by the War Dept for several
months, which for the future must be
confined to narrow limits: recommend
the distribution of these Indians to the
consideration of the Interior Dept.

Respectfully referred to the Commissioner of
Indian Affairs.

Interior }
June 6/59 } W. W. Lester

Acting clk

~~Rec'd June 6, 59~~

~~File~~

Rec'd June 59
Mr. Bailey

Department of War
June 4: 1859

Sir,

By communications from the Subsistence Department, of which I have the honor to enclose copies, it appears that large issues of provisions, amounting to almost the entire subsistence of the band for several months past, have been made from the Army supplies to the Digger Indians of California. As these issues have already been carried to an extent not contemplated by the authority on which they rest — the Act of Congress approved June 30: 1834 — and, as the means of the Subsistence Department of the Army will be unequal to their continuance, it has been found necessary to give orders which will confine them to very narrow limits for the future, if not entirely discontinue them in this case.

The effect of this unavoidable restriction will, undoubtedly be to leave these Indians in a condition of great destitution and suffering, unless some relief can be extended to them by the Department of the Interior; and I beg leave to recommend the subject to your consideration.

Wm. J. Thompson
Secretary of the Interior.

Very respectfully,
Your Obedt. Servt.

Wm. Dinkard
Acting Secretary of War.

Copy.

San Francisco, California

April 15. 1859

General,

The "Returns of Provisions received and issued" at Fort Crook, California, show a large issue to Indians, and would seem to indicate that the tribes in that vicinity (Diggers) are to a very considerable extent, subsisted by our Department. This expense, it is believed, should be defrayed by the Department of the Interior, rather than by the War Department, whose regulations contemplate only occasional issues in small quantities to Indians when upon visits of ceremony to military posts, or, when their necessities are of so urgent a character as to render such relief, essential to the prevention of hostile acts.

The country in the vicinity of Fort Crook, is represented to be almost destitute of game and fish; and the Indians among whom it is located, are said to obtain but a scanty and precarious living from such roots, berries, acorns, grasshoppers, &c &c as they may chance to find; rendering necessary, at times, in their behalf, on grounds of humanity as well as policy, the kind assistance of the Government.

This subject is brought to your official attention,

for such action as you may judge it deserves; since from the nature of the case, it is believed that unless the Department of the Interior provides the means for affording occasional relief to the necessities of these Indians, the expense of feeding them will be a continued charge upon the appropriation for Army Subsistence, without any fault of those connected with the administration of military affairs in this Department.

Very respectfully, General
Your most Obedt. Servt.
M. D. S. Simpson
Capt. & Co. S.

Major General George Gibson
Com. Gen. of Subsistence,
Washington.
D.C.

Copy.

Office Com. Genl. Sub.
Washington June 2^d 1859

Colonel,

Herewith I transmit a communication from Captain M. D. E. Simpson, C. S. on the subject of issues of Subsistence to Indians at Fort Crook, California.

From the provision returns from this post, it appears that half rations of beef and flour were issued to five hundred Indians (Diggers) during the months of October and November, 1858, and to six hundred and eighty Indians, (Diggers) during the months of December, 1858, January, February and March, 1859.

The 16th section of the Act, approved June 30th 1834, authorizes the issue of such subsistence as can be spared to Indians "visiting a military post," but such section was never intended to compel the Subsistence Department of the Army to support an Indian tribe.

Under these circumstances, it is respectfully requested that instructions may be forwarded through the Commanding officer of the Department of California to the Commanding Officer at Fort Crook, directing that he shall make no further issues to these Indians, and that the condition of this tribe, so far as subsistence is concerned,

may be made known to the Department of the Interior.

Very respectfully.

Your Obedt. Servt.

J. P. Taylor

A. C. G. Sub.

Colonel S. Cooper

Adjutant General