

L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

TRANSMITTING,

*In response to a Senate resolution of 2d instant, a communication from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs relative to the alleged armament of Indians in certain States.*

DECEMBER 11, 1890.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
Washington, December 11, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Senate resolution of 2d instant in the following words:

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Interior be directed to report to the Senate any information in his possession as to arms and ammunition in the possession of Indians occupying the Indian reservations in the States of Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota, and also what steps, if any, are being taken for the disarmament of such Indians.

In response thereto I transmit herewith copy of a communication of 6th instant from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to whom the matter was referred, and its inclosure, save as to some names of Indians.

It appears therefrom that these Indians are generally well armed and supplied with ammunition.

On the 13th of November last the President directed the Secretary of War to assume a military responsibility for any threatened outbreak and to take such steps as might be necessary to that end, and on December 1, 1890, the agents among these Indians were instructed as follows:

During the present Indian troubles you are instructed that while you shall continue all the business and carry into effect the educational and other purposes of your agency, you will, as to all operations intended to suppress any outbreak by force, cooperate with and obey the orders of the military officer commanding on the reservation in your charge.

The power of disarmament was thus transferred to the War Department, and no measures to this end have been taken since by this Department.

The substance of all the communications received from the seat of disturbance and from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs was communicated to the honorable Secretary of War as received.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

JOHN W. NOBLE,  
Secretary.

The PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, December 6, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, by your reference of the 3d instant for report, of Senate resolution of the 2d instant, in the following words:

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Interior be directed to report to the Senate any information in his possession as to arms and ammunition in the possession of the Indians occupying the Indian reservations in the States of Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota, and also what steps, if any, are being taken for the disarmament of such Indians.

In reply, I have the honor to transmit herewith so much of the correspondence on matters pertaining to the excitement prevailing among a portion of the Sioux Nation of Indians located in the States of North Dakota and South Dakota as relates to the matter of arms and ammunition in possession of and the steps taken for disarming those Indians.

This correspondence shows that those Indians are generally well supplied with improved arms and ammunition.

In my letter to the honorable Secretary of the Interior of November 27, 1890, I recommended that—

I think it will be well to arrest and confine the leaders of the excitement now prevailing at Pine Ridge Agency whenever the military authorities now operating there to suppress any threatened outbreak shall consider such action can be most prudently and successfully accomplished with least danger. The turbulent ones should under like circumstances be dispossessed by the military of their arms, while those now and heretofore peaceably and quietly disposed should be required to surrender to the agent their arms, taking his receipt therefor; such arms to be held by the Department for such action as it shall hereafter determine to be right and proper; the peaceably disposed Indians to be given to understand that their arms will be either returned to them or fair and reasonable compensation will be made for them whenever Congress shall make an appropriation applicable therefor. I deem such a stipulation necessary, not only as a matter of right and justice to the Indians who willingly give up such property as assurance of their good and peaceable intentions, but also as an inducement to them to make the surrender of weapons whose very possession is calculated to continue and to greatly magnify the present excitement.

I recommend that the War Department be requested to instruct the proper military officers to cause the turbulent ones to be dispossessed of their arms and their leaders to be arrested for imprisonment, all in manner as above suggested. And further, to render the agent of this Department such assistance as he may require in securing the surrender of the arms of the peaceably disposed Indians.

If these recommendations are approved and this Office notified the agent will be instructed accordingly.

It may not be entirely unnecessary to add that the Indians are not furnished by this department with any kind of arms, weapons, implements or means of warfare, nor are the traders who are licensed to trade among them permitted to sell, barter, trade, or otherwise furnish such things to the Indians. This office has persistently refused to furnish the authorized uniformed police with long-range rifles, though often urged to do so by some of the Indian agents as necessary for the efficient equipment of the Indian police force; but nothing more formidable has heretofore been furnished for their use than ordinary police revolvers and ammunition suitable therefor.

No complaints of misuse of weapons by the Indian police come to this office. The Indians generally, however, seem to have ample opportunities for procuring all the most improved firearms and fixed ammunition they have desire and means to possess. All that appears necessary is for the Indian to cross the outer boundaries of his reservation into the adjoining States and Territories to find tradesmen in the towns

near villages and settlements, who are only too ready and willing to sell them such things. When dispossessed of the arms they now have there is nothing to prevent them from procuring others in the same way and from same sources with present means, or as soon as they are able to buy them. There is no law prohibiting the sale of such things to Indians except within any district or country occupied by uncivilized or hostile Indians, as provided in sections 467 and 2136 of the Revised Statutes, which are as follows :

SEC. 467. The Secretary of the Interior shall adopt such rules as may be necessary to prohibit the sale of arms or ammunition within any district or country occupied by uncivilized or hostile Indians, and shall enforce the same.

SEC. 2136. If any trader, his agent, or any person acting for or under him, shall sell any arms or ammunition at his trading post or other place within any district or country occupied by uncivilized or hostile Indians, contrary to the rules and regulations of the Secretary of the Interior, such trader shall forfeit his right to trade with the Indians, and the Secretary shall exclude such trader, and the agent, or other person so offending, from the district or country so occupied.

When hostilities existed among the Indians of the Northwest in 1876, Congress passed a joint resolution in the following words :

Whereas it is ascertained that the hostile Indians of the Northwest are largely equipped with arms which require special metallic cartridges, and that such special ammunition is in large parts supplied to such hostile Indians directly or indirectly through traders and others in the Indian country : Therefore

*Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the President of the United States is hereby authorized and requested to take such measures as in his judgment may be necessary to prevent such special metallic ammunition being conveyed to such hostile Indians, and is further authorized to declare the same contraband of war in such district or country as he may designate, during the continuance of hostilities. (19 Stats., 216.)

Approved, August 5, 1876.

It is not considered that any law against the sale of arms and ammunition to Indians outside of reservations would be effective unless the penalty be by fine and imprisonment.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

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PIERRE, S. DAK., May 29, 1890.

DEAR SIR : The information has come to me, confidentially, through a source that I have confidence in that the Sioux Indians or a portion of them are secretly planning and arranging for an outbreak in the near future, and probably though several weeks or months off.

I do not wish to cause any undue action in alarm, but must suggest the advisability of keeping a careful watch on the different bands and using conservative judgment about allowing any of them to leave their respective agencies.

Yours, respectfully,

CHAS. L. HYDE.

Secretary NOBLE, *Washington, D. C.*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, June 7, 1890.*

SIR : I have the honor to return herewith letter of Charles L. Hyde, South Dakota, dated May 29, 1890, reporting fears of an outbreak among the Sioux, inviting your attention to the inclosed copy of a letter this day addressed to the several Sioux agents, viz, Standing Rock, Cheyenne River, Crow Creek and Lower Brulé, Rosebud and Pine Ridge, directing them to take prompt measures to ascertain whether there

is any ground for the apprehension expressed, and to report the result of their investigation to this office.

I would respectfully submit whether it would not be well to furnish the War Department with a copy of Mr. Hyde's letter and of my letter to the Sioux agents for the information of the military authorities.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, June 7, 1890.*

SIR I inclose herewith copy of a letter dated May 29, 1890, from Charles L. Hyde, of Pierre, S. Dak., stating that he has private information that the Sioux Indians, or a portion of them, are secretly planning and arranging for an outbreak in the near future (probably within a few weeks or months), and advising that a careful watch be kept over the different bands, and wise discretion used in permitting Indians to leave their respective agencies.

You will take prompt measures to ascertain whether there is any ground for this apprehension, and report the result of your investigations to this Office.

Very respectfully,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

JAMES McLAUGHLIN, Esq.,  
*U. S. Indian Agent, Standing Rock Agency, Fort Yates, N. Dak.*  
(Copies of this letter to all Sioux agents.)

MEAD COUNTY, S. DAK., *September 26, 1890.*

We, the undersigned settlers of eastern Mead County, S. Dak. and United States of America, do hereby ask in humble prayer for military protection during the trouble on the opening reservation against the Sioux Indians.

Indians residing in villages along the Cheyenne River from the forks down to Cherry Creek: Chiefs Spotted Elk or Big Foot, Bare Eagle, and Red Skirt, and three bands.

We ask in most humble prayer, and further demand that we have protection of our lives and our children's, and our homes and our property.

ELBERT JONES.  
PETER QUINN.  
J. W. HICKS.  
J. B. HICKS.  
JOHN TARINNEY.  
JOHN KRANCH.  
S. T. BENT.

PASHELA TICOSCUE.  
A. T. CULBERTSON.  
J. W. DUVALL.  
PETE LEMLEY.  
PETER DUNN.  
JOHN DUNN.

I, Thomas Comell, living at the forks of the Skiam River, being personally known to the above-named citizens, I do certify that they are farmers, not ranchers, in this vicinity; squatters, not freeholders. Land not open for settlement.

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
*Cheyenne River Agency, S. Dak., October 11, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to report that a number of Indians living along the Cheyenne River and known as Bigfoot's Band are becoming very much excited about the coming of a messiah. My police have been unable to prevent them from holding what they call ghost dances. These Indians are becoming very hostile to the police. Some of the police have resigned. Information has been received here that the same excitement exists at other agencies.

Nearly all of these Indians are in possession of Winchester rifles, and the police say they are afraid of them, being armed only with revolvers.

The Christian Indians are all quiet and well behaved.

Requesting instructions in regard to this matter,

I remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

PERIAN P. PALMER,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. T. J. MORGAN,  
*Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE, OFFICE OF INDIAN AGENT,  
Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., October 12, 1890.

SIR, I have the honor of replying to your letter marked L 30046-1890, dated October 3, 1890, referring to our Indians participating in certain religious exercises known as the "ghost dance."

In assuming charge of this agency I did so under embarrassing circumstances. I feel that my administration will be badly handicapped owing to the sad mess into which affairs have gotten here. These ghost dances have assumed such proportions that they become very serious. They can not result in anything good, on the contrary, they are sure to do harm, not only to the Indians, but also to the service. I have been carefully investigating the matter and find I have an elephant on my hands. I have been earnestly endeavoring to solve the problem as to which would be the better course to break it up. The mistake was made by not nipping it in the bud four months ago when it was in its infancy. They have been permitted to continue in these foolish and harmful practices until they are entirely beyond the control of the police. As yet I have taken no definite action in the matter, my object being to thoroughly acquaint myself with the situation, so that I could act intelligently and wisely when I did make a move.

In my judgment there are but two ways to settle it: (1) The course that I am now pursuing is to use every effort possible and bring every influence to bear upon the chiefs to get them to pull out of the thing, which would stop it; (2) if persuasive measures fail, then force them to obey by using the military. I very much dislike the idea of bringing the military here, as it would likely prejudice many of the Indians against me during my entire administration, thereby destroying what good I might be able to do under other circumstances.

I intend to act very cautiously until I am convinced that it can not be suppressed without the military, and then I trust I will have the hearty coöperation of the Department.

It is useless for me to undertake to describe the foolish manner in which they conduct themselves during these dances. I can only say it injures them physically, mentally, and morally, and undoes all the Department has done for them in the past. What makes the situation so serious is that every Indian on the reservation is armed with a Winchester rifle, and when they are requested to stop these dances they strip themselves and are ready to fight. Why any Indian on the reservation is permitted to have a gun I am not informed. They certainly have no use for them except to endanger the lives of those who try to suppress them in some wrongdoing. If it were not for this fact alone, we would not have any trouble in controlling them with the police.

I am satisfied that over half of our Indians have joined the dance and many more will follow. Over 600 were seen last week in one circle dancing, and they kept it up for nearly a week, and I am informed that after the next beef issue they are going to have the largest dance of the season. I am here to carry out your orders as far as I am able to do so, and I shall do my utmost to handle these people to bring about the best results, but in doing so I have one request to make: Give me a good police force to back me up. This being the largest agency, and having the hardest lot of Indians to handle, I feel that I am justified in making the request that the police force be increased to its former number—50. The additional expense would be small compared to the benefit the service would derive from it. The police here have not been properly backed by my predecessor and are disheartened and discouraged. They feel that they have lost their power and influence with the Indians. Their guns are in bad condition, many of them almost useless; they have been in use for many years and would be of little service had they occasion to use them. If they could be exchanged for new Winchesters it would cheer the police up and give them new life and energy. They need encouragement badly; they are brave, true men, and their only desire is success, but they have lost that courage they would have were they properly backed up by their agent. The police force is the agent's only protection, and upon them largely depends his success or failure. I trust you will consider this matter favorably and permit me to increase the number to 50, and that you will permit me to exchange the 41 guns they now have for new ones, and by so doing I think we can make our administration such that it will not only be creditable to the service but to myself as well.

Very respectfully,

D. F. ROYER,  
United States Indian Agent.

Hon. T. J. MORGAN,  
Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, October 18, 1890.

SIR: I am in receipt of your letter dated October 12, 1890, in response to office letter of October 3, 1890, in which you state that the "ghost dances" of the Indians of your agency have assumed such proportions that the harm likely to result therefrom, both to the Indians and to discipline at the agency, has become a serious matter; that you have been endeavoring to persuade the chiefs to stop the dances, and that if you should fail in remedying the evil by that method military aid will, in your opinion, be necessary for that purpose. You express the hope that you will have the hearty co-operation of this office in the event of your asking for military assistance.

In reply, I have to say that I am satisfied that the minds of the Indians have been wrought up to a high degree of excitement by the superstitious practice referred to, and that the subject requires prompt and careful action. I agree with you, however, that the presence of a military force at the agency to assist you in putting a stop to these dances would be likely to prejudice many of the Indians against you and possibly destroy your influence for good among them, and I do not think it would be wise to call upon the military unless such force is imperatively demanded.

I approve of your course in using persuasions with the chiefs, and think you had better continue in that direction.

Major-General Miles, commander of the military division in which your agency is situated, and also chairman of the Commission recently appointed to negotiate with the Northern Cheyennes, will shortly visit your agency, probably arriving there the latter part of next week. I would suggest that you consult with him and fully explain the situation and ask his advice as to the wisdom of calling troops to your aid in case you do not succeed in suppressing the evil through the chiefs. I am sure that General Miles's advice would be of value to you, and it would therefore be well to have a full and free discussion of the matter with him.

You will keep this office fully advised of the situation, either by telegraph or mail, as circumstances may require.

Very respectfully,

R. V. BELT,  
Acting Commissioner.

DANIEL F. ROYER, Esq.,  
United States Indian Agent, Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, October 20, 1890.

SIR: I am in receipt of your letter dated October 11, 1890, in which you state that some of your Indians are becoming very much excited about the coming of a Messiah, that your police have been unable to prevent them from holding "ghost dances," and that the Indians are nearly all armed with Winchester rifles and are becoming hostile.

You ask instructions in the premises.

In reply, I have to say that I am officially informed that the same state of excitement exists among the Indians of Pine Ridge Agency; and the Indians of several other agencies are doubtless to some degree affected in this manner.

Under date of the 18th inst. the agent at Pine Ridge Agency was instructed to use all proper means to avert any trouble with his Indians, and to act discreetly in the matter, with a view to avoiding the necessity of securing military aid to enforce discipline among the Indians, etc.

The same instructions are applicable to your agency, and you will be governed accordingly.

You will not do anything which will have a tendency to bring your police into conflict with the participants in said "ghost dances," or to further excite the Indians, unless you should deem the same necessary to secure the personal safety of yourself or others.

If you should find the temper of the Indians to be such as to threaten an outbreak, you will advise this office thereof by telegraph, and prompt steps will be taken to obtain military aid to preserve the peace and enforce discipline.

Very respectfully,

R. V. BELT,  
Acting Commissioner.

P. P. PALMER, Esq.,  
United States Indian Agent, Cheyenne River Agency, Fort Bennet, S. Dak.

P. S.—Exert your efforts to secure the influence of the chiefs and leading men of the bands under your charge to restrain the Indians and to get them to break away from those who are encouraging the "ghost dances."

R. V. BELT,  
Acting Commissioner.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, October 24, 1890.*

SIR: Referring to office letter of June 7, 1890, informing you of instructions issued to the several Sioux agents to investigate basis of reported fears of an outbreak among the Sioux, and submitting whether it would not be well to advise the War Department thereof, I have to say that James McLaughlin, esq., Indian agent at Standing Rock Agency, by letter dated June 18, 1890 (copy herewith), replied to said instructions, stating that so far as the Indians of his agency were concerned there was nothing in either their words or actions to justify the rumor referred to, but that there were a few malcontents there, as well as at all the other Sioux agencies, the removal of whose leaders, such as Sitting Bull, Circling Bear, Black Bird, and Circling Hawk, of Standing Rock Agency; Spotted Elk and his lieutenants, of Cheyenne River Agency; Crow Dog and Low Dog, of Rosebud Agency; and any of like ilk of Pine Ridge Agency, would end all trouble or uneasiness in the future, etc.

I am now in receipt of a report from Agent McLaughlin, dated the 17th instant (copy herewith), in which he refers to the above correspondence and states that there is now considerable excitement and some disaffection existing among certain Indians of his agency, and that while he does not believe the condition to be so alarming as to apprehend any immediate uprising of the Indians, yet that he feels it his duty to report the present "craze" and excitement existing among the Sitting Bull faction of the Indians over the expected "Indian millenium," the annihilation of the white men, etc., which the Indian medicine men promise will take place not later than next spring, when the new grass begins to grow, and is known among the Sioux as "the return of the ghosts."

This superstition, the agent states, his Indians derived from the more southern Sioux agencies.

The agent further states that Sitting Bull is high priest and leading apostle of this latest Indian absurdity; that he is the chief mischief maker at the agency, and that if he were not there said craze would not have obtained a foothold at the agency, and that there is no telling what he may not direct his followers to do; also that he is bitterly opposed to surveys of the reservation; and that his removal and that of Circling Bear, Black Bird, and Circling Hawk from among their people will sooner or later be necessary.

The agent states that Sitting Bull's influence as a disturbing element has been growing worse during the past year, which is partly to be accounted for by the presence of a lady from Brooklyn, Mrs. C. Weldon, who went to the agency in June, 1889, announcing herself as a member of Dr. T. A. Bland's Society, the Indian Defense Association, and opposed to the Indians ratifying the act of March 2, 1889, demanding of the agent permission—which he refused—to pass through the Sioux Reservation to the Cheyenne River Agency and to take Sitting Bull with her, the Sioux Commission being then engaged negotiating with the Indians of the southern Sioux agencies. This lady, the agent reports, bestowed numerous presents upon Sitting Bull, and after her departure kept up a correspondence with him until last spring, when she again returned and located outside of the reservation and about 25 miles from the agency. The agent states that Sitting Bull has been a frequent visitor to her house and has grown more insolent and worthless with every visit; her gifts enabling him to give frequent feasts and hold councils with the Indians, thus perpetuating old customs, and ingrafting with their superstitious nature this additional absurdity of the "new Messiah" and "return of the ghosts."

The agent further reports that recently at the invitation of Sitting Bull, Kicking Bear, chief medicine man of the Cheyenne River Agency Indians, with six others visited Sitting Bull's camp to have a ghost dance; that Sitting Bull used threatening language to some of the police on this occasion, and though it seems the visitors finally departed in obedience to the repeated commands of the police, it is reported that the dancing still continues. The agent recommends that Sitting Bull and the others named in his letter of June 18 last be removed some time during the coming winter and confined in some military prison some distance from the Sioux country.

Dr. T. A. Bland, of this city, under date of August 23, 1890, addressed a letter to this office, in which he stated that he had received a letter from "a correspondent" informing him that Sitting Bull desired to ask him if any order had been given to Agent McLaughlin which contained a threat of any sort against Indians who decline to have their lands surveyed and set off to them, etc.

Dr. Bland's letter is referred to as showing a possible connection between Dr. Bland and the very objectionable conduct of Mrs. Weldon, as reported by Agent McLaughlin.

This office has been recently advised by the agents at Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Agencies, South Dakota, that considerable if not dangerous excitement prevails at those agencies in connection with the ghost dances, and by letters of October 18 and 20, 1890, addressed to those agents respectively, they were instructed to exercise great caution in the management of the Indians with a view to avoiding an outbreak, and if deemed necessary to call upon this office to secure military aid to prevent dis-

turbances, but before resorting to the latter step to endeavor to persuade the chiefs to exercise their influence to stop the dances.

The excitement arising from said superstition is evidently widespread and must be repressed in some manner, although I deem it advisable to move in the matter with caution. After a full consideration of the matter I believe it wise that Agent McLaughlin's recommendation for the removal and imprisonment of said Sitting Bull, Circling Bear, Black Bird, and Circling Hawk in some military prison distant from said reservation be complied with, and I therefore recommend that the matter be submitted to the honorable Secretary of War with the request that he will cause the proper military authorities to arrest the Indians named, to wit: Sitting Bull, Circling Bear, Black Bird, and Circling Hawk, at such time as upon investigation they may think best, and to confine them in a military prison as indicated until such time as their presence on the reservation may not be deemed dangerous to the peace of the Indians.

It is also recommended that the honorable Secretary of War be requested to instruct the proper military authorities to be on the alert with a view to discovering any suspicious movements of the Indians of any of the Sioux agencies in South Dakota in order that they may be prepared to meet any possible emergency.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

FORT WASHAKIE, WYO., *October 27, 1890.*

SIR: The letter of Maj. Guy V. Henry, Ninth Cavalry, referring to reported doings of an Indian "Christ," and excitement caused by him among different Indian tribes, and referred to me by your indorsement of the 18th instant, was received by me just as I was leaving my post to look for log timber in the mountains. I was absent three days on this trip, which will account for the delay in making this report. A band of Cheyennes from Pine Ridge Agency were here a few months ago visiting the Arapahoes. Last month Red Cloud, with a small party of men, women, and children, was here for a few days. He was apparently ill, and came here, he said, to use the water of the medicinal hot spring near the post. No Sioux or Cheyennes have, so far as I can learn, visited the Shoshones during the last year; but this remark would not, perhaps, apply to the Arapahoes, who may have received such visits. I can learn more of the affairs of the Shoshones than of the Arapahoes. There seems to be no unusual excitement in either tribe, although emissaries of the Indian "Christ" have been among them; but, not, I think, recently. This Indian "Christ" is, I am led to believe, one Bannack Jim, a Mormon, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that his attempts to stir up strife have been instigated by Mormons. Bannack Jim is, I believe, at the Lemhi or the Fort Hall Agency.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. R. KELLOGG,  
*Commanding Post.*

ASSISTANT ADJUTANT-GENERAL,  
*Department of the Platte, Omaha, Nebr.*

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE PLATTE,  
*Omaha, Nebr., November 2, 1890.*

Official copy respectfully forwarded to the assistant adjutant-general, division of the Missouri, for the information of the major general commanding the division.

The letter of Major Henry, referred to, was retained at Fort Washakie, but has been called for and will be forwarded on its receipt here.

JOHN R. BROOKE,  
*Brigadier-General, Commanding.*

[First indorsement.]

HEADQUARTERS DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
ASSISTANT ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
*Chicago, November 4, 1890.*

Respectfully forwarded to the Adjutant-General of the Army.

H. C. CORBIN,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General, in the absence of the Division Commander.*



UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
*Cheyenne River Agency, S. Dak., October 29, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to report that the principal leaders in what is called the ghost dance, viz, Big Foot and Hump, were sent for and brought to the agency and personally interviewed by the agent. Big Foot talked freely in regard to the ghost dance, claiming that he was only leading or advising with a view to thoroughly investigate the matters, but that his people had been told that the presence of the whites is all that has prevented the Messiah from coming. It was explained to him that a class of whites who have believed in the coming of Christ very much as the Indians do, have been disappointed a number of times, and in all probability the Indians will be disappointed now.

Big Foot appeared friendly, and talked of other matters which interests him and his followers; said that the reservation lines were not where the commissioners told the Indians they would be, but are many miles east, making the reservation very small, but that his band did not care for the lines and would destroy all the marks. Hump was sullen and had nothing to say. He is one of Big Foot's band who signed the Sioux bill, and by so doing lost his influence with the Indians of that band. He was given a position as district farmer by the former agent, and attempted to regain his original standing by giving the Indians permission to disobey the rules of the agency. This caused a clash between the Indian court and himself, in many ways causing trouble, and on being informed that he had no such authority he resigned his position and sought to be a leader in the ghost dance. In this he has succeeded, and in the opinion of the agent he is the most dangerous character on this agency. His influence can be removed only by removing him. It is the opinion of the agent that the best means of preventing an outbreak among the Indians would be to take these leaders entirely out of the reach of their followers. With their influence gone the Christian and well-disposed Indians would not be intimidated.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

PERIAN P. PALMER,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, October 29, 1890.*

SIR: Referring to office report dated October 24, 1890, relative to ghost dances among the Indians of Standing Rock and other Sioux agencies, and recommending that the honorable Secretary of War be requested to take steps with a view to preventing trouble therefrom, I herewith transmit for your information copy of a letter of the 25th instant from P. P. Palmer, esq., agent at Cheyenne River Agency, S. Dak., reporting that his police have been unable to prevent the Indians from holding ghost dances; that the temper of the Indians is very threatening, and that the friendly Indians of the agency anticipate an outbreak among the hostile Indians. I inclose herewith copy of a letter this day addressed to Agent Palmer upon the subject, and of one to Agent McLaughlin.

Very respectfully,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, October 29, 1890.*

SIR: Your report of October 17, 1890, concerning the present attitude of some of the Sioux Indians on the Standing Rock Reservation has been submitted to the honorable Secretary of the Interior, who directs me to instruct you to inform Sitting Bull and the other Indians named by you as engaged in encouraging the ghost dance and other like demoralizing conduct, and inciting and fomenting dissatisfaction and discontent among the peaceably disposed Indians, that he is greatly displeased with their conduct and that he will hold Sitting Bull to a strict personal accountability for the misconduct, acts of violence, or any threats, actions, or movements to which any of the Sioux Indians may be guided, influenced, or encouraged by him or as the result of his bad advice and evil counsels; that any misconduct by him personally or by others through his incitement or encouragement will be visited by severe punishment. And further, that he must at once show his good intentions and his submission to the

authority of the Department and its agent by prompt obedience to and compliance with all regulations of the Indian service and by doing all in his power to restrain any of the Sioux Indians who may be disposed to acts of disobedience or violence, threats, etc., and that he should exert whatever influence he may have over any of the Indians to turn their backs upon the medicine men who are seeking to divert the Indians from the ways of civilization.

Very respectfully,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

JAMES McLAUGHLIN, Esq.,  
*United States Indian Agent, Standing Rock Agency, N. Dak.*

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE, OFFICE OF INDIAN AGENT,  
*Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., October 30, 1890.*

SIR: Referring to office letter L 32120, 1890, under date of October 18, 1890, I have the honor to report the following relative to the ghost dances on this agency.

As directed in your letter I consulted with Major-General Miles, and explained fully to him the situation of these people in connection with this ghost dance, and the general is of the opinion that it will in course of time die out.

The day following that upon which I talked with the general upon the subject of ghost dance the Indians in council assembled and informed him that they did not intend to give it up, and that they wanted their agent to write to the Great Father and tell him that they would not give it up. To this the general answered, giving the Indians good advice as to what would be best for them, and insisting that they give up and stop the manner of dancing known as the ghost dance.

As I understand it, I was sent here to advance these people as fast as possible on the road to self-support and to suppress, as far as it is in my power, any inclination on their part toward taking backward steps. The membership of this ghost dance is growing steadily each day, and at this time over half or nearly two-thirds of the Indians on this reserve are strong supporters of it.

Some of the disadvantages originating from this ghost-dance are, that the believers in it defy the law, threaten the police, take their children out of school (day schools principally); and if the police are sent after the children they simply stand ready to fight before they will give them up. When an Indian violates any law the first thing he does is to join the ghost dance, and then he feels safe to defy the police, the law, and the agent.

Some of the leading chiefs are still standing by me and doing all they can to weaken the influence of the dancers and get some of the members to pull out of it. American Horse, Young-man-afraid-of-his-horses, Standing Soldier, Blue Horse, Fast Thunder, and Spotted Horse are the prominent chiefs that are doing all they can to stop this most heathenish practice among their people, and are taking my advice in all matters.

Red Cloud, Little Wound, Big Road, and their entire following of about 350 or 400 bucks, are the main leaders, and while Red Cloud is not a prominent man in the dance he is quietly encouraging his people to keep it going. Little Wound a few days ago while in council told me he did not intend to stop his people, but, on the other hand, he wanted them to continue in this dance and be Indians again as they once were, and that he was making arrangements to have some of his friends from another district to come and join his party to spend several days in dancing and feasting, and I am informed that he did get up the party and have the dance. Your Department has been informed of the damage resulting from these dances and of the danger attending them, of the crazy Indians doing serious damage to others, and the different agencies, I suppose, report about the same, but I have carefully studied the matter for nearly six weeks and have brought all the persuasion through the chiefs to bear on the leaders that was possible, but without effect, and the only remedy for this matter is the use of the military, and until this is done you need not expect any progress from these people; on the other hand, you will be made to realize that they are tearing down more in a day than the Government can build up in a month.

Capt. George Sword, who has been on the police force of this agency for nearly twelve years, tells me that he has never seen these Indians worked up to such a pitch of excitement, and has never felt such uneasiness himself as he has since this ghost dance started.

American Horse, acknowledged to be one of the smartest Indians on this reserve (is quite an old man), told me a few nights ago that if this matter was not suppressed that it would result in the killing of some of the white people by some of these ghost dancers, who are in a crazy fit of excitement over the coming of the new Messiah.

He stated that he had been on the warpath himself and knew what war was, and when the time came he would enlist himself and his fifty followers in defense of the Great Father's order, and what was right and best for the Indians, and that in a moment's warning he would be ready to stand by the agent and the Department.

Young-man-afraid-of-his-horses, one of the leading old chiefs here, who I have persuaded to give up the dance, is trying hard to get his people to quit such foolish practices, says that if it is allowed to go on the worst results may be expected, that he has never seen such a foolish craze among the Indians in all his life.

All of the three Indians named are of the opinion that it will take military about six or seven hundred strong to suppress this dance, and that the Indians will surrender as soon as the military comes upon the ground. I am sure that in justice to the Indians that they are trying to do what is right and obeying the orders of your Department, but some action should be taken to break up this ghost dance.

It is very demoralizing to those out of the dance to be hazed and made fun of by those who are into it, and this will in time get some of our best men to join it.

It is useless to write more on this subject, as the matter has resolved into one of two things, that is if the ghost dance is stopped there is some hope for these Indians, and if it is not stopped these people will go backward until they reach the savage mark of the sixties.

I submit this report for your consideration and action, and will stand ready to carry out any order you may feel the case warrants you to issue.

Very respectfully,

D. F. ROYER,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, November 2, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit for your information the following copy of a letter dated at Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 28, 1890, addressed to this office and just received, from A. T. Lea, special United States Indian agent:

"As there are many stories afloat and being transmitted to the Interior Department from this agency in regard to the present troubles, assigning as a cause the suffering of the Indians for want of food, I thought the Department would not consider it presumptuous on my part to volunteer a brief statement of the facts as I have found them to exist in regard to their subsistence. In the first place the Department is fully aware of the nature of my work, which takes me into each house and habitation occupied by the Indians, thus giving me a splendid opportunity to make observations, and I assure you I have not been slow to do so, especially as to how the Indians live and what they live on; and I say now that I have yet to see the first family on Pine Ridge Reservation that showed the least sign of suffering from want of food. In order to ascertain what they subsist upon and what they rely upon for subsistence, I ask the questions, what means of support have you beside your rations? If the answer should be "none," I then ask, are the rations you draw from the Government sufficient for your subsistence, and I have never had a family to complain and say no. And not in the first single instance has an Indian who is reliable and intelligent complained to me of suffering among their people. It has only been a few weeks since one mixed-blood woman, having six in her family, told me that they had all the provisions that they could use, and that if the people generally would take care of their rations in a careful manner, as she did, they would really have more than they could use.

"Now as to their habit of cooking and eating. When they get up in the morning a pot is put over the fire and filled with meat. As soon as it is cooked enough to eat all who are present begin eating and never stop until so full that they can eat no longer. When the meat is cleaned out of the pot it is refilled, and as often as they feel like it they eat. Every neighbor or friend who calls in has a large dish of meat set before he or she, which is invariably eaten. The coffee pot rarely gets cold. With their meat they invariably have bread of some kind. Those who are the most gluttonous in their natures eat up their rations often a day or two before issue day, but they never go hungry. They know who the most provident are, and live off of them until rations day.

"Now, when I know these facts so well, I assert that in my judgment hunger has nothing to do with the present trouble upon Pine Ridge Reservation. It looks to me, viewing the question in an impartial light, that the whole trouble has been brought on by the old bucks, who become restless, partly from idleness, partly from a desire to regain their influence over the people, and partly from undue influence of designing

whites, but largely from inexplicable causes. (Parenthetically, I might add, pure crossedness.) The main leaders in the present trouble are men who have been recognized as big chiefs in days gone by, but not so recognized now. Yet they think they see in this movement an opportunity to regain their lost titles.

"The Indians, half-breeds, and squaw men upon this reservation own many hundred head of cattle, which would be mercilessly slaughtered if hunger was the cause of the trouble. As it is, rarely a cow brute is slaughtered without the consent of the agent and the animal killed proved to be incapable of reproduction."

Special Agent Lea was appointed for and is engaged under a provision in the act making appropriation for the Indian service for the year ending June 30, 1890, which provides—

"That the Secretary of the Interior shall cause a census of the Sioux tribe of Indians to be carefully taken by a special agent, to be appointed for such purpose, with a view of ascertaining how many of them are able to support themselves, and, in ascertaining this fact, their physical capacity to work the land owned or occupied by them, either individually or collectively; the value of the land (its nearness to market and general productiveness shall be considered), and such other facts and circumstances as will aid Congress in determining how many of such Indians are capable of self-support: *And provided further*, That the expenses incident to the taking of such census shall be paid from the money hereby appropriated." (25 Stats., 992.)

In the performance of this duty required of him under this law he is compelled to visit every habitation of whatever character it may be, occupied by any of the Indian families upon the reservation, and to see every Indian. It was in pursuance of this work that the discovery was first made that rations were being issued to over two thousand Indians more than were actually present on the Rosebud Reservation. Special Agent Lea has been engaged for some months past in the duties assigned him among the Indians of the Pine Ridge Agency. He has had special facilities and opportunities for observing and learning the exact condition of the Pine Ridge Sioux Indians, and I am satisfied that his report has not been made without a full knowledge of the facts stated by him, and a clear conviction of duty that the Department should be properly informed of their situation. I think he is better informed on this subject than the military officers, who only see the Indians as they are gathered in camps around the agency away from their homes, and his statements are entitled to the fullest weight and credit. They confirm the position that has heretofore been asserted by this office that these Indians were not in a starving condition, though many of them suffer from hunger more from their improvident habits than from any lack of sufficient food.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
*Rosebud Agency, S. Dak., November 2, 1890.*

SIR: I deem it my duty to call the attention of the Department to the extremely disaffected and troublesome state of a portion of the Indians on this and other Sioux agencies.

The coming new order of things as preached to this people during the past seven months is the return to earth of their forefathers, the buffalo, elk, and all other game, the complete restoration of their ancient habits, customs, and power, and the annihilation of the white man. This movement, which some three weeks ago it was supposed had been completely abandoned, while not so openly indulged in, is continually gaining new adherents, and they are daily becoming more threatening and defiant of the authorities.

This latter phase of the case may in a measure be attributed to the scant supply of rations, to which my attention has been almost daily called by the Indians, and especially to the reduction in the quantity of beef as compared to the issue of former years. They kill cows and oxen issued to them for breeding and working purposes, make no secret of doing so, and openly defy arrest. They say that the cattle were issued to them by the Great Father and it is their right to do as they please with them. This evil is increasing daily and if not checked there will be but very few of this class of stock left on the reservation by spring. During the past week it is reported to me that two Indians in the Red Leaf Camp on Black White Creek had killed their cows for a feast at the ghost dance. I sent a policeman to bring them in; they refused to come.

The following day I sent two officers and eight policemen, and they returned without the men, reporting that after they arrived at the camp they were surrounded by

seventy-five or more Indians, well armed and with plenty of ammunition, and they unanimously agreed that an attempt to arrest the offenders would have resulted in death to the entire posse. On Friday I sent the chief of police, with an interpreter, to explain matters and endeavor to bring the men in. They positively refused to come, and the chief of police reports that the matter is beyond the control of the police. This is one case which could be repeated indefinitely by attempting the arrest of parties guilty of the same offense.

The religious excitement aggravated by almost starvation is bearing fruits in this state of insubordination; Indians say they had better die fighting than to die a slow death of starvation, and as the new religion promises their return to earth, at the coming of the millennium, they have no great fear of death. To one not accustomed to the Indians, it is a hard matter to believe the confident assurance with which they look forward to the fulfillment of their Prophet's promise.

The time first set for the inauguration of the new era was next spring, but I am reliably informed that it has since and only lately been advanced to the new moon after the next one, or about December 11.

The indications are unmistakable; these Indians have within the past three weeks traded horses and everything else they could trade for arms and ammunition, and all the cash they become possessed of was spent in the same way.

One of the traders here reports that Indians within the last few days have come to his store and offered to sell receipts for wood delivered at the agency, and for which no funds are on hand to pay them for one-third the value *in cash*. When asked what urgent necessity there was for such a sacrifice of receipts for less than their face value, they answered that they wanted *the cash* to buy ammunition.

These are some of the signs of the times and strongly indicate the working of the Indian mind.

To me, there appears to be but one remedy (and all here agree with me) unless the old order of things (the Indians controlling the agency) is to be reestablished, and that is a sufficient force of troops to prevent the outbreak which is imminent, and which any one of a dozen unforeseen causes may precipitate.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. B. REYNOLDS,  
*Special United States Indian Agent.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.*

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[Telegram.]

FORT SULLY, S. DAK., November 5, 1890.

COMMISSIONER INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C. :*

Temper of Indians unchanged; hope to be able to manage them if no new apostles come. Police doing good work.

PALMER, *Agent.*

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UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
*Cheyenne River Agency, S. Dak., November 6, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to return herewith papers, prayers for military protection by settlers of Mead County, S. Dak., as per instructions contained in office letter 32741-1890, October 31, 1890, with report of same. There is no doubt the settlers are somewhat alarmed at the action of the Indians and their excitement about the new Messiah, and no doubt there is great need of extreme caution on the part of the settlers not to excite the Indians to any acts of violence. In the opinion of the agent, it might be advisable to have a small detachment of troops sent here to show these hostile Indians that the Department is watching their actions and will punish all offenders. This would no doubt stimulate the police with confidence, and quiet the feeling of uneasiness among the Christian Indians.

Most of the petitioners referred to as praying for military protection are well known by some of the agency employes, are old settlers in this country, and are said to be reliable men. None, however, are personally known by the agent.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

PERAIN P. PALMER,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. T. J. MORGAN,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs.*

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE, OFFICE OF INDIAN AGENT,  
Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 8, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following relative to the ghost dancing now in progress on this agency.

It seems now that this ghost dance originated at the instance of Kicking Bear (a Cheyenne River Agency Indian) who visited this agency some time in the fore part of August on a return trip from Utah in company with one Good Thunder (an Indian of this agency), they told the Indians that they had been up near Salt Lake City, Utah, to visit the new Messiah and that they were told by him that he would soon come to visit them bringing with him abundance of buffalo and other wild game, that a new earth would be formed and would pass just over this one burying the whites beneath and saving all the Indians that participate in the ghost dances. From this time on the Indians began to hold these dances and have kept it up ever since with remarkable success as to increasing membership.

This ghost craze has grown since the first day of its introduction, and is growing today. There are now four large organizations on this agency—one on the White Clay Creek, with about 600 members, under the management of Indians Torn Belly, His Fight, Bear Bone, and Jack Red Cloud; one on Wounded Knee Creek, with about 250 members, under the management of Big Road, Shell Boy, and Good Thunder; one on Porcupine Creek, with about 150 members, under the management of Knife Chief, Iron Bird, and Whetstone; one on Medicine Root Creek, with about 500 members, under the management of Little Wound, who is considered one of the most influential chiefs among the Sioux of this agency, and is the most stubborn, headstrong, self-willed, unruly Indian on the reservation. He has been ordained high priest over all the ghost dances, and in consequence of his elevated position he openly defies all law and orders issued by your office. During the visit of the Cheyenne Commission a few weeks ago Little Wound spoke in council to General Miles and the commission on the subject of ghost dances, and in the course of his talk he said it was the purpose of the Indians to keep the dances up as long as they pleased, and he wished what he had said taken down and sent to the Great Father at Washington, and that he wanted his people to be Indians and live like Indians, and not try to live and act like white people; that the rules of the ghost dances, if strictly complied with, would in a short time accomplish the end he desired.

It will be remembered that this Indian, Kicking Bear, is the man that murdered in cold blood the chief clerk when this agency was located at Camp Robinson, Nebr., some time during the year of 1873.

The killing of Frank E. Lewis (a school teacher) on April 4 last is believed by the Indians here to be the result of Kicking Bear's ghost dance schemes.

Good Thunder is the Indian who, during the year of 1878, visited the different Sioux reservations circulating the story that he had just returned from the British possession where the Queen told him that the United States Government was cheating the Indians out of their land and robbing them of their rights, and that if the Indians would come to the English Government that they would be protected and have plenty without cost, and could live in idleness, etc., thus persuading a large number of Indians from each agency to go with him up to the northern line of the United States and as a result they were compelled to kill their ponies and eat them to keep from starving to death.

The Indians who are identified with this ghost dance and using every means to prevent the suppression of it are those who refused to sign the late Sioux bill, and have in the past fought every measure that tended towards the civilization of the Indians.

There are two factions among the Indians here, "the non-progressive" and the "progressive." The non-progressive, led by Little Wound and his followers (the ghost dancers), who have been and are now hostile to the Department's wishes, who harp in every council on the unfulfilled promises of the Government, defy the agent and his police against law and order. The progressive are those who have always stood by the agent and persisted in carrying out the orders of your Department, made an effort towards farming and stock-raising, and signed the late Sioux bill.

The ghost dance matter has resolved itself into just two propositions; the first is, will the Government stop this most outrageous practice, and by so doing encourage and stimulate the good Indians to do what is right and bring back those that will come into the fold of right, or will it be permitted to continue and tear down what has been built up in the past. I have used every means at my command to persuade the chiefs to give this ghost dance up, but all in vain.

The day following that upon which the Cheyenne Commission left the agency I called in all the most prominent chiefs and talked with them in argument and persuasion, telling them that in the end they would be the ones that would suffer for perpetuating this most heathenish custom, and they simply laughed and said that they would keep it up as long as they pleased. This matter has assumed such large pro-

portions that it is entirely beyond the control of the agent and police force, and if your Department desires to put a stop to it you can do so by sending a sufficient number of troops to arrest the leaders and place them in prison under guard, and then disarm the balance of the Indians on the reservation. I will be pleased to carry into effect any order you may issue.

Very respectfully,

D. F. ROYER,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. T. J. MORGAN,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

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UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
*Western Shoshone Agency, Nev., November 8, 1890.*

SIR: The Indians of this reservation and vicinity have just concluded their second medicine dance, the previous one taking place in August last. They are looking for the coming of the Indian Christ, the resurrection of the dead Indians, and consequent supremacy of the Indian race. Fully one thousand people took part in the dance. While the best of order prevailed, the excitement was very great as morning approached, when the dancers were worn out mentally and physically. The medicine-men would shout that they could see the faces of departed friends and relatives moving about the circle. No pen can paint the picture of wild excitement that ensued; all shouted in a chorus, "Christ has come!" and then danced and sung until they fell in a confused and exhausted mass on the ground. The more intelligent ones freely admit that it is all foolishness, but dare not disobey the order of the medicine-men to attend. I apprehend no trouble beyond the loss of time and the general demoralizing effect of these large gatherings of people.

Several of the leading men have gone to Walker Lake to confer with a man that calls himself Christ; others have gone to Fort Hall to meet Indians from Montana and Dakota, to get the news from that section; in fact, the astonishing part of the business "is the fact that" all the Indians in the country seem to possess practically the same ideas and expect about the same result. So universal is this that I can not think but some designing white man or men are at the bottom of the whole matter, and yet there seems to be nothing beyond the merest suspicion to base that opinion on.

I presume that your Department is in possession of all the facts pertaining to this all-absorbing question among the Indians, yet I thought it might be of interest for you to know that the same expectation exists among these Indians as does among other and wilder reported tribes.

Very respectfully,

WILLIAM I. PLUMB,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.*

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UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
*Cheyenne River Agency, S. Dak., November, 10, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to report the ghost dance still in progress and increasing rather than diminishing. Indians come from other agencies at will and go from this to other agencies. The police have no longer any control of these dancers. There has been hope of checking a further spread of the craze by persuasive means and good counsel, but when told that the Department is displeased with their actions these dancers sullenly answer, the Indian is displeased with the Department, and will dance. About 400 Indians were dancing at the camp on Cherry Creek on November 7, and would not allow any of the police to go near them nor would they allow any white man near the camp.

Rev. Ashley, who has been a missionary among the Sioux Indians for many years, and who speaks the Sioux language well, went out to talk with the dancing Indians on the 7th inst., but was not allowed to go near their camp. He reports quite a number of Christian Indians among the dancers. Reports have been received here, from what seems to be a reliable source, that Sitting Bull's band on Standing Rock Agency are preparing for an outbreak, and there is no doubt now that the hostile Indians at all the dancing camps are preparing to defy the authority of the Department. Captain Hennisee, in command of Eighth Cavalry, in a recent communication, stated that the

Indians have sold some cattle, and attempted to sell more, but were prevented by him from doing so. He reported the name of one white man who had bought cattle from Indians. This man was promptly notified that the Department would hold every person to a strict accountability for any violation of the rules. Reported here that the Indians are using all their available means for the purchase of rifles and ammunition. Now, if these rifles could be taken away from these hostile Indians, all further trouble would be managed by the Indian police, but as long as Winchesters are among the ghost-excited Indians, the police are powerless and can do nothing. No offenses can be punished, and the Indians do as they please.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

PERAIN P. PALMER,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. T. J. MORGAN,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

[Telegram.]

PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., VIA RUSHVILLE, NEBR.,  
November 11, 1890.

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.:*

The situation at this agency is such that I deem it for the best interest of the service that I be permitted to come to Washington to explain to you personally. Please grant authority for me to come at once, as the circumstances justify it.

ROYER,  
*Agent.*

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE, OFFICE OF INDIAN AGENT,  
*Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 11, 1890.*

SIR: Agreeable to you, I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a telegram forwarded you this day, viz:

"The situation at this agency is such that I deem it for the best interest of the service that I be permitted to come to Washington and explain to you personally. Please grant authority for me to come at once, as the circumstances justify it.

"ROYER,  
"Agent."

As reported in former communications the ghost dance at this agency has assumed such large proportions that it has become a serious matter, and if some action is not taken soon the worst results may be expected. To-day I ordered the second lieutenant of police force to arrest an Indian that had violated the law in several instances, one of the charges being that he has been killing cattle promiscuously over the reservation. On being informed by the police that I wished him brought to the office, he drew his knife and positively refused to be arrested, and a mob of the ghost dancers rushed in and relieved their fellow dancer from the hands of the police, taking him away to their camps, and boasting of their power and making all kinds of fun over the attempted arrest and the inefficiency of the police force, etc. For the foregoing reasons I telegraphed you for permission to come to Washington to consult with you as to what is the best course to pursue.

It is useless for me to try and make anything out of these people against such opposition, and it should be stopped at once.

Very respectfully,

D. F. ROYER,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. T. J. MORGAN,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, November 12, 1890.*

SIR: Referring to office reports of October 24 and 29, and November 5 and 8, 1890, relative to ghost dances among the Sioux Indians, I have to say that I am in receipt of a letter from P. P. Palmer, esq., agent at Cheyenne River Agency, S. Dak.,



dated November 4, 1890, stating that the ghost dance "craze" is not spreading, and that if Hump, an Indian who assumes the title of chief medicine man of the ghost dances, should be taken away from the reservation, and the leaders from other agencies kept away, the excitement among the Indians would die out, etc.

I also transmit a copy of a letter from D. F. Royer, esq., agent at Pine Ridge Agency, in said State, dated November 8, 1890, reporting that the ghost dance was introduced among his Indians by Kicking Bear, an Indian of Cheyenne River Agency; that the "craze" has steadily increased until now it has assumed such proportions both in number and spirit of its adherents that it is entirely beyond the control of the agent and police force who are openly defied by the dancers. The agent suggests as a means of stopping said dances to send a body of troops sufficient to arrest the leaders therein and imprison them, and to disarm the balance of the Indians on the reservation.

Agent Royer designates as the leaders of the dance the Indians Little Wound, Torn Belly, His Fight, Bear Bone, Jack Red Cloud, Big Road, Shell Boy, Good Thunder, Knife Chief, Iron Bird, and Whetstone, and states that said Little Wound, who he reports to be the most stubborn and unruly Indian on the reservation, has been ordained high priest over all the ghost dances, and that he defies the orders of this office, etc. The agent further states that said Kicking Bear is the man who in 1873 murdered in cold blood the agency clerk when the agency was located at Camp Robinson, Nebr.

I inclose a copy of a telegram from Agent Royer, dated the 11th inst., requesting, in view of the condition of matters at the agency, authority to visit this city to explain, etc., and copy of my reply thereto refusing permission to such visit, and directing him to report facts by mail, or telegraph, if necessary.

I also transmit a copy of a letter from Charles E. Adams, esq., agent at Kiowa, Comanche and Wichita Agency, dated the 5th inst., reporting that he has learned recently of a letter being sent by mail to an Indian chief from one of the northern agencies relative to the "new Christ," and giving instructions to the Indians which should not be carried out. Agent Adams asks that the honorable Postmaster-General be requested to instruct the postmaster at Anadarko to deliver to the agent for perusal all mail for the Indians under his charge, other than that sent from this office.

Agent Adams's statement is furnished not with a view to withholding mail of the Indians, but merely to show the tendency of the excitement of the ghost dance to spread.

In view of the very threatening attitude of the Sioux Indians, I respectfully recommend that copies of the reports above referred to from the agents be submitted to the honorable Secretary of War for consideration, and that if he has not been furnished copies of the agents' communications referred to in office reports on the subject, of October 24 and 29 and November 5 and 8, 1890, that the same be transmitted to him.

I also inclose a copy of a telegram from Agent Royer, dated the 12th instant, again asking permission to visit this city, and of my reply thereto after receipt of your letter of this date.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner,*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

[Telegram.]

PINE RIDGE, S. DAK., November 12, 1890.

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.:*

Very important that I come to Washington at once. Agency affairs will not suffer during my absence at this time. Will leave good experienced man in charge. Can not explain matters satisfactorily by telegraph or letter. Indians will remain quiet during my absence. You will agree with me when I see you personally that it is important for me to come. Please grant me authority to come at once.

ROYER,  
*Agent.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, November 12, 1890.*

SIR: I acknowledge the receipt of your communication of this date, with copies of telegrams from the agent of the Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., asking permission to come to Washington, and of your reply to him.

I approve the action taken by you in denying his request upon the information furnished.

It seems to me that in these troublesome times the agent should remain at his post and do his duty.

Very respectfully,

GEO. CHANDLER,  
*Acting Secretary.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE, OFFICE OF INDIAN AGENT,  
*Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 12, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit a copy of a telegram I forwarded you this day, viz

"The condition of affairs at this agency when I took charge, whether intentional or not, were to render my administration a failure. Orders of constitutional authority are daily violated and defied, and I am powerless to enforce them. The condition of affairs is going from bad to worse. Yesterday in attempting to arrest an Indian for violation of regulations the offender drew a butcher knife on the police and in less than two minutes he was reinforced by two hundred ghost dancers all armed and ready to fight, consequently the arrest was not made. To-day I received a communication from the offender stating that the policeman who attempted to enforce my orders must be discharged or I could expect trouble, and I was given four weeks to do it.

"The police force are overpowered and disheartened; we have no protection; are at the mercy of these crazy dancers.

"The situation is serious. I urgently request that I be permitted to proceed to Washington at once and confer with you personally, as a correct idea of the situation can not be conveyed otherwise. The Indians have received their beef and rations, and are going home, and there is no immediate danger until next big issue (four weeks from to-day). I can leave now without the service being injured, and I do hope you will grant my request, or let the blame rest where it belongs. I have no other object in view save the best interest of the service.

"ROYER, *Agent.*"

There are matters connected with the agency other than the ghost dance which I would be pleased to talk over with you in person, and as I consider this the very best time for me to get away, I have insisted in my telegrams for you to permit me to come to Washington at once, in order that I might get back as soon as possible.

I trust that you will see the matter in the same light that I do.

Very respectfully,

D. F. ROYER,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE, OFFICE OF INDIAN AGENT,  
*Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 12, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of the following telegram received from you this day, viz:

"The interests of the service require that you remain at agency at this time. Submit matters fully and promptly by letter, or, if emergencies demand it, by telegram.

"R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*"

I submit the following copy of my answer, to wit:

"Very important that I come to Washington at once. The agency affairs will not suffer during my absence at this time. Will leave good experienced man in charge. Can not explain matters satisfactory by telegraph or letter. Indians will remain quiet during my absence. You will agree with me when you see me personally that it is important for me to come. Please grant me authority to come at once."

There is no immediate danger of any trouble with the Indians committing any depredations, but I would be glad to have an opportunity to explain to you personally my ideas in regard to the proper course to pursue in managing this agency.

Very respectfully,

D. F. ROYER,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

[Telegram.]

PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., VIA RUSHVILLE, NEBR.,  
November 13, 1890.

The condition of affairs at this agency when I took charge, whether intentional or not, were to render my administration a failure. Orders of constituted authority are daily violated and defied, and I am powerless to enforce them. The condition of affairs is growing from bad to worse. Yesterday in attempting to arrest an Indian for violation of regulations the offender drew a butcher knife on the police, and in less than two minutes he was reinforced by two hundred ghost dancers all armed and ready to fight. Consequently the arrest was not made. To-day I received a communication from the offender stating that the policeman who attempted to enforce my orders must be discharged or I could expect trouble, and I was given four weeks to do it. The police force are overpowered and disheartened. We have no protection and are at the mercy of these crazy dancers. The situation is serious, and I urgently request that I be permitted to proceed to Washington at once and confer with you personally, as a correct idea of the situation can not be conveyed otherwise. The Indians have received their beef and rations and are going home, and there is no immediate danger until next big issue. I can leave now without the service being injured, and I do hope you will grant my request or let the blame rest where it belongs. Have no other object in view save the best interests of the service.

COMMISSIONER INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, D. C.

ROYER, Agent.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.  
Washington, November 13, 1890.

SIR: Referring to my report of yesterday concerning ghost dances among the Sioux Indians of Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., and elsewhere, and the request of D. F. Royer, esq., agent at that agency to visit this city, I herewith transmit a copy of a telegram from him of even date herewith, showing that two hundred participants in the ghost dances, all armed and ready to fight, had overpowered the Indian police, and that the agency is at the mercy of "these crazy dancers."

The agent urges that he be permitted to visit this city to confer with the Department on the subject, etc.

I deem the situation at said agency arising from the ghost dance as very critical and believe that an outbreak may occur at any time, and it does not seem to me to be safe to longer withhold troops from the agency.

I therefore respectfully recommend that the matter be submitted to the honorable Secretary of War, with the request that such instructions as may be necessary be given to the proper military authorities to take such prompt action as the emergency may be found by them to demand, to the end that any outbreak on the part of the Indians may be averted and the Indians be shown that the authority of this Department and its agent must be respected and obeyed by them.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
Acting Commissioner.

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,  
Washington, November 13, 1890.

SIR: Replying to your several communications in regard to the condition of the Indians at the Sioux and Cheyenne Agencies, I beg to say that some days ago I directed the War Department to send an officer of high rank to investigate the situation and to report upon it from a military standpoint. General Ruger, I understand, has been assigned to that duty, and is now probably at, or on his way to, these agencies. I have to-day directed the Secretary of War to assume a military responsibility for the suppression of any threatened outbreak, and to take such steps as may be necessary to that end. In the meantime, I suggest that you advise your agents to separate the well-disposed from the ill-disposed Indians; and, while maintaining their control and discipline, so far as may be possible, to avoid forcing any issue that will result in an outbreak until suitable military preparations can be made.

Very respectfully, yours,

BENJ. HARRISON.

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, November 14, 1890.*

SIR: Referring to your letter of this date, transmitting for my information and guidance copy of a communication of the 13th instant from the President, in reply to Department letters of yesterday, relative to the threatened troubles at the Sioux agencies, I have the honor to state that I have sent the following telegram to the several agents of the agencies of the Sioux Nation in North and South Dakota, five agencies:

"The President has directed the Secretary of War to assume a military responsibility for the suppression of any threatened outbreak among the Sioux Indians, and that an officer of high rank be sent to investigate the situation among them. He suggests that the agents separate the well-disposed from the ill-disposed Indians, and while maintaining their control and discipline so far as possible, to avoid forcing any issue that will result in an outbreak.

"You will exercise wise discretion in carrying out the President's suggestions, carefully observing the caution he directs and avoiding publicity of these instructions."

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, November 14, 1890.*

SIR: I transmit herewith for your information and guidance copy of a communication of 13th instant from the President, in reply to Department letters of yesterday, relative to the threatened troubles at the Sioux agencies.

The President has directed the Secretary of War to assume a military responsibility for the suppression of any threatened outbreak, and he suggests that the agents be advised to separate the well-disposed from the ill-disposed Indians, and while maintaining their control and discipline, so far as may be possible, to avoid forcing any issue that will result in an outbreak until suitable military preparation can be made.

Very respectfully,

GEO. CHANDLER,  
*Acting Secretary.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, November 14, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to inclose herewith a copy of a report of the 10th instant from P. P. Palmer, United States Indian agent at the Cheyenne River Agency, S. Dak., stating that the excitement among the Sioux Indians and their indulgence in the ghost dances is increasing; that they are selling their cattle and buying Winchester rifles; that the police are powerless and can do nothing; no offenses can be punished and the Indians do as they please. He also states that he has been reliably informed that Sitting Bull's band on Standing Rock Agency are preparing for an outbreak and that there is no doubt that all the hostile Indians at all the dancing camps are preparing to defy the authority of the Department.

I respectfully recommend that the information contained in this report be furnished to the War Department to be communicated to the officer who, under the direction of the President, has been directed to examine into the situation among the Sioux Indians, and for such other action as the War Department may deem proper to take upon the information furnished.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

[Telegram.]

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, November 14, 1890.

ROYER, *Agent Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak.* (via Rushville, Nebr.):

The President has directed the Secretary of War to assume a military responsibility for the suppression of any threatened outbreak among the Sioux Indians, and that an officer of high rank be sent to investigate the situation among them. He suggests that the agents separate the well-disposed from the ill-disposed Indians, and while maintaining their control and discipline so far as possible, to avoid forcing any issue that will result in an outbreak.

You will exercise wise discretion in carrying out the President's suggestion, carefully observing the caution he directs and avoiding publicity of these instructions.

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

(Copy to agents at Rosebud, Pine Ridge, Cheyenne River, Standing Rock, Crow Creek and Lower Brule.)

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, November 15, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to inclose you herewith a telegram just received from Agent Royer, Pine Ridge, S. Dak., Agency, as follows, to-wit:

"PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., November 15, 1890.

"COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,

"Washington, D. C.:

"Indians are dancing in the snow and are wild and crazy. I have fully informed you that employes and Government property at this agency have no protection and are at the mercy of these dancers. Why delay by further investigation? We need protection, and we need it now. The leaders should be arrested and confined in some military post until the matter is quieted, and this should be done at once."

I have the honor to recommend that the War Department be put in possession of this information in order that they may take whatever steps are necessary for the protection of life and property at this agency.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

[Telegram.]

WINFIELD, KANS., November 15, 1890.

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, D. C.:

Will proceed to Pine Ridge Agency at once.

COOPER,  
*Special Agent.*

[Telegram.]

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, November 15, 1890.

JAMES A. COOPER,  
*Special Agent, Winfield, Kans.:*

Go immediately to Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., investigate condition of affairs, and report facts to this office by letter or wire.

Assist agent to allay excitement among Indians.

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

[Telegram.]

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, D. C.:

PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., November 15, 1890.

Indians are dancing in the snow and are wild and crazy. I have fully informed you that employes and Government property at this agency have no protection and are at the mercy of these dancers. Why delay by further investigation? We need protection and we need it now. The leaders should be arrested and confined in some military post until the matter is quieted, and this should be done at once.

ROYER, Agent.

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE, OFFICE OF INDIAN AGENT,  
Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 15, 1890.

SIR: Agreeable to you I have the honor to submit the following copy of a telegram forwarded you this day:

"Indians are dancing in the snow and are wild and crazy. I have fully informed you that employes and Government property at this agency have no protection and are at the mercy of the ghost dancers. Why delay by further investigation? We need protection and we need it now. I have submitted you the result of a six weeks' calm, conservative investigation, and nothing short of one thousand soldiers will settle this dancing. The leaders should be arrested and confined in some military post until the matter is quieted, and this should be done at once.

"ROYER, Agent."

I deem it useless for me to comment any further on the subject at issue, as I have explained in former communications the true situation of affairs.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

D. F. ROYER,  
United States Indian Agent.

Hon. R. V. BELT,  
Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

[Telegram.]

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, November 17, 1890.

COOPER,  
Special Agent, Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak.:

Keep office fully informed as to situation among Indians there. Have some trusty and reliable Indian procure all possible information of any intention of Indians to an outbreak. Captain Swords could perhaps do this if he is still as trustworthy as heretofore.

Keep nearest military officer also posted.

R. V. BELT,  
Acting Commissioner.

MANDAN, N. DAK., November 18, 1890.

DEAR SIR: Herewith please find a statement of facts for your perusal, prepared by the committee whose names are appended. In addition to what is said therein, I would say that the War Department itself appears to regard it as a fact that in the spring there will be an uprising of the Sioux. We are absolutely unprotected here, and nothing but a strengthening of the garrison at Fort Lincoln will be regarded by our people as being safe. We have endeavored to make this statement of facts as concise as possible, and trust that you will give it attention. We recognize your kindness in the past in preventing the abandonment of Fort Lincoln, and believe that you will give this appeal proper attention.

Yours, truly,

R. M. TUTTLE,  
Chairman of Committee.

BENJAMIN HARRISON,  
President United States, Washington, D. C.

## EXECUTIVE MANSION.

The within communication is respectfully referred to the Secretary of the Interior. By direction of the President.

ELIJAH W. HALFORD,  
*Private Secretary.*

At a meeting called by the mayor of the city of Mandan, and held on the evening of November 17, 1890, which meeting was attended by more than three-fourths of the adult male population of Mandan and the immediately surrounding country, the undersigned were appointed a committee to make a statement of facts to be forwarded to the President of the United States regarding the danger which the settlers of the country are in from the depredations of Indians. The statement of facts that this committee desires to make is as follows:

There are located on the Sioux Reservation, south of this county, a large number of Indians, of whom probably there are at least 2,000 warriors. While it has been very generally supposed in the East that these Indians were harmless, that they had in past wars had the desire to fight successfully drubbed out of them, and while as a matter of fact they have during the past few years, when traveling through the country settled by white men, behaved themselves generally in a satisfactory way, yet during the past few months there has been a marked change for the worse. Settlers by the score come to town and tell of Indians armed to the teeth who, when the male members of the family are present and during their absence, act insultingly, draw mysterious circles around their heads, indicating that there will be some scalping done, start fires that require the utmost effort and care to extinguish, and which if not extinguished would burn much property. In the East, where an Indian is a curiosity, it is supposed that these Sioux Indians who regularly receive rations from the Government will obey implicitly the orders of the agent who represents the power that furnishes them with food and clothing. Ordinarily this theory will work. But the fact exists that a great religious excitement prevails among the Indians, not only among the Sioux but among all the Indians in the West. They believe that the Messiah is coming, and that his chief work will be to sweep the whites off the face of the earth and give back the land to his chosen people. They believe that they will be used as the means to kill off the obnoxious whites; and so deeply rooted is their faith that they are spending all their means to buy guns and ammunition, and in advance of the time when their Messiah will give orders to move on the whites they are beginning, when in the presence of an unprotected and peaceable settler, to domineer. They assume menacing attitudes, tap their guns ominously, and show their scalping knives.

Theoretically the Indians, although allowed by the Government to travel all over the country armed to the teeth, will do no harm for fear of having their rations cut off, or for fear of being killed by the soldiers belonging to the Government. Theoretically, as the buffalo and other game is practically all gone from this section of country, the Indians would not be always found loaded down with guns and ammunition. But as a matter of fact they are so loaded down. The men who control the location of the United States Army, who are themselves far removed from all danger from Indians, and who study the situation periodically from the windows of a Pullman car may be right in their surmises that there is no danger and that the Messianic scare will pass over. But, right or wrong, the settlers in this county are very much alarmed, and nothing but adequate protection by the military will assure them of their safety. Common sense teaches that the small band of cavalry located at Fort Yates would be of no avail whatever to prevent the destruction of homes, property, and lives of settlers living north of the Sioux Reservation. The Indian raids could be made without the soldiers knowing anything about it, and the hostile Indians could sweep up north and to Mandan before the cavalry at Fort Yates could be apprised of danger.

There is absolutely no protection from Fort Yates to Fort Buford for the settlers, against the Indians, except Fort Lincoln; and in its present condition, with nearly all the soldiers taken away, it is of little utility. Cavalry is what is needed to be of use in times of Indian uprising, and to inspire confidence on the part of the settlers. We assume that the soldiery of the Government are maintained for the purpose of rendering aid and protection to the citizens of the nation and not merely to act on parade occasions. It stands to reason, viewed from the light of common sense, and by men whose lives bring them into daily contact with Indians and their treachery, that the place for soldiers is where the danger exists, or as near to it as is practical. The settlers whom we represent, and who are the loudest and most emphatic in their demands for protection, are not interested pecuniarily in the maintenance and enlargement of Fort Lincoln. They simply ask it for the sake of the protection and assurance of safety to which they believe they are entitled, and which it is within the power of the Government to give them.

The settlers who live in the country surrounding Mandan desire to urge strongly that the Indian Department from henceforth deny to Indians the right to carry arms

or ammunition off their reservations. Game off the reservations belongs to the white men anyway, and it is utterly impossible for the ordinary white man to see why the Indians should be permitted to roam all over the country off the reservations, as they do, armed to the teeth. Probably the authorities in Washington are not aware of the fact that these Indians go armed with the guns of the most improved and latest manufacture. The Government, which has assumed control of the red men, should, in our opinion, see to it that at least these weapons of such a dangerous character should not be carried over the country by men of the well known treacherous dispositions of the Sioux Indians.

We desire to call attention to the fact that the recent disastrous prairie fires which swept over the southern part of this country and destroyed grass, ranches, cattle, and other property of a value far exceeding \$100,000 were started by Indians who were off their reservation. It is understood that some parties who know nothing about the facts state that the fire was started by the Northern Pacific Railroad Company, but we possess evidence such as would be accepted as incontrovertible in any court of law that Indians originated it. We call attention to this matter for the purpose of showing the absolute necessity, viewed from the standpoint of the white man, that sufficient force be brought to bear to compel the Indian to stay on his reservation. The people in this region regard it as a fact that this Government is powerful enough to carry out any measure which they deem necessary.

While this is being written there are camped within the city limits of Mandan over one hundred Indians, armed to the teeth, and our wives and our children are asking why these red men are allowed to molest and overawe and annoy us. Our people have stood the ravages of prairie fires, drought, and blizzards for a number of years and are still hopeful; but if, added to their other troubles, they are to be subjected to the depredations of Indians who are supposed to be under the control and subject to the Government they will have to leave the country.

The most conservative men in this community will be powerless to suppress the determination of the majority of the settlers to kill off every Indian that presents his face in this county in the future unless the Government does something to protect us. There are scores of men in this immediate neighborhood who were sufferers by the Minnesota massacres in 1862, and they don't propose to be annoyed and harassed any longer. Their property has been destroyed and their children and wives frightened by these worthless nomads, who are permitted by a lax Government to prowl over the country with arms that would not be allowed on the person of a white man. They will stand it no longer, and we ask that something be done to tighten the rules and regulations governing the actions of the Indians who are under the Indian agents of this locality.

R. M. TUTTLE, *Chairman.*  
 JESSE AYERS.  
 P. B. WICKHAM.  
 JOSEPH MILLER.

Attest:  
 J. S. GREEN, *Secretary.*

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
*Standing Rock Agency, N. Dak., November 19, 1890.*

Sir: Having just returned from Grand River district, and referring to my former communication regarding the ghost-dance craze among the Indians, I have the honor to report that on Saturday evening last I learned that such a dance was in progress in Sitting Bull's camp, and that a large number of Indians of the Grand River settlement were participators. Sitting Bull's camp is on the Grand River, 40 miles southwest from the agency, in a section of country outside of the line of travel, only visited by those connected with the Indian service, and is therefore a secluded place for these scenes. I concluded to take them by surprise, and on Sunday morning left for that settlement, accompanied by Louis Primeau, arriving there about 3 p. m., and, having left the road usually traveled by me in visiting the settlement, got upon them unexpectedly and found a "ghost dance" at its height. There were about forty-five men, twenty-five women, twenty-five boys, and ten girls participating (a majority of the latter, boys and girls, were until a few weeks ago pupils in the day schools of the Grand River settlements) and approximately two hundred persons lookers-on, who had come to witness the ceremony either from curiosity or sympathy, most of whom had their families with them and encamped in the neighborhood.

I did not attempt to stop the dance then going on, as in their crazed condition under the excitement it would have been useless to have attempted it, but after remaining some time talking with a number of the spectators I went to the house of Henry Bullhead, three miles distant, where I remained over night and returned to Sitting Bull's house next morning, where I had a long talk with Sitting Bull and a number



of his followers. I spoke very plainly to them, pointing out what had been done by the Government for the Sioux people, and how this faction by their present conduct were abusing the confidence that had been reposed in them by the Government in its magnanimity in granting them full amnesty for all past offenses, when from destitution and imminent starvation they were compelled to surrender as prisoners of war in 1880 and 1881, and I dwelt at length at what was being done in the way of education of their children and for their own industrial advancement and assured them of what this absurd craze would lead to and the chastisement that would certainly follow if these demoralizing dances and disregard of Department orders were not soon discontinued.

I spoke with feeling and earnestness and my talk was well received, and I am convinced that it had a good effect. Sitting Bull, while being very obstinate and at first inclined to assume the role of a "Big Chief" before his followers, finally admitted the truth of my reasoning and said that he believed me to be a friend of the Indians as a people but that I did not like him personally, but that when in doubt in any matter in following my advice he had always found it well, and that now he had a proposition to make to me which, if I agreed to and would carry out, would allay all further excitement among the Sioux over this ghost dance, or else convince me of the truth of the belief of the Indians in this new doctrine. He then stated his proposition, which was that I should accompany him on a journey to trace from this agency to each of the other tribes of Indians, through which the story of the Indian Messiah had been brought, and when we reached the last tribe, or where it originated, if they could not produce the man who started the story, and we did not find the new Messiah, as described, upon the earth, together with the dead Indians returning to reinhabit this country, he would return convinced that they (the Indians) had been too credulous and imposed upon, which report from him would satisfy the Sioux and all practices of the ghost societies would cease; but if found to be as professed by the Indians they be permitted to continue their medicine practices, and organize as they now are endeavoring to do.

I told him that this proposition was a novel one, but that the attempt to carry it out would be similar to the attempt to catch up the wind that blew last year, but that I wished him to come to my house where I could give him a whole night, or day and night, in which time I thought I would convince him of the absurdity of this foolish craze, and the fact of his making me the proposition that he did was a convincing proof that he did not fully believe in what he was professing and endeavoring so hard to make others believe. He did not, however, promise fully to come into the agency to discuss the matter, but said he would consider my talk and decide after deliberation. I consumed three days in making this trip, and feel well repaid by what I accomplished, as my presence in their midst encouraged the weaker and doubting, and set those who are believers in thinking of the advisability of continuing the nonsensical practices they are now engaged in. I also found that the active members in the dance were not more than half the number of the earlier dancers, and believe that it is losing ground among the Indians, and while there are many who are half-believers I am fully satisfied that I can keep the dance confined to the Grand River district.

Desiring to use every reasonable means to bring Sitting Bull and his followers to abandon this dance and to look upon its practice as detrimental to their individual interests and the welfare of their children, I made the trip herein reported to ascertain the extent of the disaffection and the best means of effecting its discontinuance. From close observation I am convinced that the dance can be broken up and after due reflection would respectfully suggest that, in case my visit to Sitting Bull fails to bring him in to see me in regard to the matter as invited to do all Indians living on Grand River be notified that those wishing to be known as opposed to the ghost doctrine, friendly to the Government, and desiring the support provided in the treaty, must report at the agency for such enrollment and be required to camp near the agency for a few weeks; and those electing to continue their medicine practices in violation of Department orders, to remain on Grand River, from whom subsistence will be withheld. Something looking towards breaking up this craze should be done; and now that cold weather is approaching is the proper time. Such a step as here suggested would leave Sitting Bull with but few followers, as all or nearly all would soon report for enrollment and thus he would be forced in himself.

There are not many firearms among these Indians, still there are a few, and as a pledge of good faith on their part, they should be required to turn in all their arms to the agent, and get a memorandum receipt for the same. Knowing these Indians as I do I am confident that I can, by such a course, settle the Messiah craze at this agency, and also thus break up the power of Sitting Bull, without trouble and with but very little excitement. This will be sustained by public sentiment, and conform to the discipline approved by the better disposed Indians. It is true that it would unsettle the Indians of that district in their home life for a few weeks, but after which all worry and uneasiness would cease, while with the ghost practices continued, all the participants being Indians regularly rationed by the Government

without any appearance of withdrawal of this support, anxiety among the well disposed and the greater temptation for many others to join is increased.

A reply as to the suggestion herein contained is respectfully requested.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant

JAMES McLAUGHLIN,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

HON. T. J. MORGAN,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

[Telegram.]

PINE RIDGE, S. Dak., *November 20, 1890.*

COMMISSIONER INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.:*

Indians very much excited; they still continue to dance; General Brooke with five companies of infantry, three troop of cavalry, one Hotchkiss and one Gatling gun just arrived at agency.

COOPER, *Special Agent,*

[Telegram.]

FORT YATES, N. Dak, *November 20, 1890.*

COMMISSIONER INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.:*

Replying to official telegram of yesterday, Sitting Bull, Circling Bear, Black Bird, Circling Hawk, Iron White Man, and Male Bear, being leaders of excitement and fomenters of disaffection, should be removed before next spring, but everything being quiet here at present with no snow and the weather summer like do not think it prudent to make arrests now. My letter of 19th suggests plan of settling matters and suppressing craze at this agency.

McLAUGHLIN.

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE, OFFICE OF INDIAN AGENT,  
*Pine Ridge Agency, November 21, 1890.*

SIR: Referring to office telegram of the 20th instant, in which certain newspaper charges are made against Agent Royer, claiming that he has deserted his post, I have the honor to inform you that if the charges were made for the purpose of conveying the idea that Agent Royer has in any way neglected his duty or left his post, they are false and unwarranted and do not contain one scintilla of truth or justification.

I have the pleasure to inclose herewith a letter from Agent Royer with indorsements for your information and advice.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

JAMES A. COOPER,  
*United States Special Indian Agent.*

HON. R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE, OFFICE OF INDIAN AGENT,  
*Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., Nov. 21, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the following copy of a telegram:

"Special Agent COOPER,  
*Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak.:*

"Newspaper reports that Agent Royer has left agency; if so, receive and act on telegrams. Send him acknowledged receipt of this.

"R. V. BELT,  
*"Acting Commissioner."*

In reply to the above you are informed that I was absent from the agency from Monday evening of the 17th until Thursday morning of the 20th, at Rushville, Nebr., to advise with General Brooke, who desired to consult with me privately before coming

to the agency, and for the further reason that it was impossible for me to keep business matters private over the telephone, so I went to Rushville to avoid creating any unnecessary excitement by making our plans public, and I am very sure that all I did was for the best interests of the service.

Very respectfully,

D. F. ROYER,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*  
(Through Special Agent James A. Cooper, Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak.)

[First indorsement.]

I have read the inclosed, and I approve the action of Agent Royer meeting the troops at Rushville, Nebr.

JAMES A. COOPER,  
*Special United States Indian Agent.*

[Second indorsement.]

I have examined the statement of Agent Royer, and I approve his action in managing secretly our plans for bringing the troops to this agency.

JOHN R. BROOKE,  
*Brigadier-General.*

PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. Dak., November 21, 1890.

[Telegram.]

PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., November 21, 1890.

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.:*

Newspaper reports false. Agent Royer at his post. Details by mail. Indians still dancing. Police report that thirty Rosebud Indians have arrived at this reservation and six or seven hundred more en route to the agency. We hope to settle this Indian cause (craze) without bloodshed. All kinds of rumors in circulation. Will keep Department fully informed.

COOPER, *Special Agent.*

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
*Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 21, 1890.*

SIR: Referring to office telegram of the 20th instant, in which certain newspaper charges are made against Agent Royer, claiming that he has deserted his post, I have the honor to inform you that if the charges were made for the purpose of conveying the idea that Agent Royer has in any way neglected his duty or left his post they are false and unwarranted, and do not contain one scintilla of truth or justification.

I have the pleasure to inclose herewith a letter from Agent Royer with indorsements for information and advice.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES A. COOPER,  
*United States Special Indian Agent.*

Hon. R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

[Telegram.]

CHAMBERLAIN, S. DAK., November 21, 1890.

R. V. BELT,  
*Commissioner, Washington, D. C.:*

Indians at Crow Creek and Lower Brule are under good control; have had three leaders from other reservations under arrest at Crow Creek and have discharged them under promise of good behavior. Indian police are sufficient protection under present indications. I issue no passes nor accept any, and there are no Indians away from the reservation as far as my police can ascertain, and am using extra efforts to keep posted.

A. P. DIXON, *Agent.*

[Telegram.]

ROSEBUD AGENCY, S. DAK., *November 21, 1890.*COMMISSIONER INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C. :*

Names of leaders required in your telegram of yesterday: Short Bull, Mashas-the-Kettle, Two Strike, Crow Dog, Little Eagle, Turning Bear, White Horse, Lance, Big White Horse, White Thunder, Brave Bird, Fins Bird, Born-in-the-Day, Left Hand Bear, White Face Crow, Good Voice, White Crane, Walking Fast Horse, Swift Crocker, Elk Tooth, Turtle Rib.

E. B. REYNOLDS,  
*Special Agent in Charge.*

[Telegram.]

FORT BENNETT, S. DAK., *November 21, 1890.*COMMISSIONER INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C. :*

Names of Indians who should be arrested in order to prevent an outbreak are Pump, Big Foot, Lodog, Blackfeel, and Pretty Hawk.

PALMER, *Agent.*UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
*Fort Peck Agency, Mont., November 21, 1890.*

SIR: In regard to the Messiah craze that is exciting the Indians on the various reservations, I have the honor to make the following observations in regard to the matter at this agency.

The Indians here have a strong and abiding faith in this scheme, as it is propounded at other agencies, to wit: The coming of a Messiah in the spring, the resurrection of their dead brethren, the return of buffalo and other game, and the destruction of the whites. The belief has as yet produced no special excitement, and there will not be trouble here unless the Indians at other places should first begin it. In that case it is difficult to say what might happen here. The number of fighting men here is about 600, as near as I can find out.

It has been said that these people have only a few guns and but little ammunition; that game has disappeared and therefore they could not go to war. This is not true, as I have investigated the arms and ammunition question very carefully in the last few days and find they are better armed, have more ammunition and better equipments than they ever had before. The disappearance of game cuts no figure, in case they should become hostile, as the country abounds in domestic animals, affording them more certain means of subsistence than the buffalo ever did.

We are so near the international boundary line that in case of defeat they have an almost sure and safe retreat. Camp Poplar River is located one-half mile from the agency, and consists of two companies of infantry. There are also about fifty civilians here. With this force, in any case, I think we could protect the agency and Government property here.

In case of continued and further excitement, I would suggest that arms and ammunition be procured from the War Department and sent to the agency to be used in case of necessity.

The Indians are and have been manifesting a great desire to purchase cartridges from the post trader at Camp Poplar River. He will not sell without an order from me, yet they apply to him and endeavor by all means to obtain the same without an order. They can obtain all they want just off the reserve. While I do not regard the situation as serious, yet I think the case calls for the utmost vigilance and precaution.

Very respectfully,

C. R. A. SCOBEEY,  
*United States Indian Agent.*The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.*

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 22, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to inclose herewith a letter written by Special Census Agent A. T. Lea, who has been among the Sioux for some months past and who has an opportunity to find out the true feeling among the Indians.

From the best information I have been able to get I believe Mr. Lea's ideas are practically correct.

I am making diligent inquiry to find out the true feeling of the Indians, and as soon as I can get truthful authoritative information I will report fully to your office.

All kinds of rumors are in circulation, and it is not safe to believe the first story that comes.

The friendly Indians are moving in to the agency to-day and it is hoped that their number will have a good influence over the turbulent ones.

Very respectfully,

JAMES A. COOPER,  
Special United States Indian Agent.

Hon. R. V. BELT,  
Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

Hon. JAS. A. COOPER,  
Special United States Indian Agent:

I returned from the Indian camps upon this (Pine Ridge) reservation, last evening (the 21st instant). Was in the vicinity of two ghost dances, one on Medicine Root Creek, 45 miles from agency, and the other on Porcupine Creek, 25 miles from agency. In the performance of my official duties met many Indians and talked with them in regard to the ghost dance and impending troubles. I found them pretty evenly divided, as to numbers, upon the question of the ghost dance. The progressive and more civilized were opposed to the dance and advocated peace, discontinuance of the dance, and obedience of the rules of the department and orders of the agent. The non-progressive favored continuing of the dance, disobedience to all orders, and war if necessary to carry out their dance craze.

Thursday night and yesterday the hostile portion of the tribe had their young men, painted and decorated in war costume, riding all over the country notifying those who desire to go to war to meet on White River, at mouth of White Clay Creek, and go into camp. The dances on Medicine Root and Porcupine Creeks moved to White River, at camp grounds designated above, on Thursday and Friday (the 20th and 21st). The runners sent out also notified all those who did not belong to the dance, and would not join it, to stay at home or go to the agency; or, in other words, draw the lines so they would know who their friends were.

The war party disclaimed any intention to make an attack, but proposed to continue to dance in defiance of all authority, and if molested by the soldiers to fight.

They said they knew the soldiers would attempt to break up the dance, and the minute they did so it would be the signal for fight. They said they had plenty of arms and ammunition for a big fight, and they would die fighting, but would not surrender alive.

Little Wound, one of the principal leaders, said Wednesday evening that his desire was to see all the whites dead, meaning killed. He appeared very hostile when he heard that United States troops were on their way to the reservation. He said that meant fight, and immediately ordered his dance friends from the east side of the reservation to go to White River.

By being with the Indians continuously for months, I have had an opportunity to watch their movements very closely, and know they are prepared for a fight, and will fight.

Big Road, the leader of the dancing party on Wounded Knee Creek, said Friday morning (the 21st), in a speech to his followers, at the dance grounds, that he would not listen to anybody, but intended to keep up the dance all winter, or fight, or words meaning the same.

On Porcupine Creek, Iron Bird made about the same declaration. From the best information I can gather, if the dance is permitted to continue, it is only a question of time, not longer than spring, until this hostile band will go on the warpath. In fact, they say they are going on a big hunt as soon as grass comes next spring, and that means warpath.

Very respectfully,

A. T. LEA,  
Special United States Indian Agent.

[Telegram.]

PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., November 22, 1890

COMMISSIONER INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, D. C.:

Disaffected Indians assuming a hostile attitude; different bands consolidating; they declare their intention to fight; they denounce all appeals and persuasion from the Department. Serious trouble seems inevitable.

COOPER, *Special Agent.*UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 24, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to forward you the following copy of a telegram forwarded you to-day:

The loyal Indians are nearly all at the agency for rations, while the turbulent ones are slow about coming in. The presence of the military has a subduing influence over the Indians. Have just sworn in additional police, making a total number of one hundred men. Will keep you advised of any material change in the situation.

COOPER, *Special Agent.*

At my suggestion the agent directed all the loyal Indians to camp on one side of the agency and the ghost dancers on the other, which they seemed very willing to do. On the east side of the agency there are about 150 lodges of the loyal Indians, and on the west side, near Red Cloud's house, there are about 60 lodges of the turbulent ones, and some of them the ghost-dance fellows.

Very respectfully,

JAMES A. COOPER,  
*Special United States Indian Agent.*Hon. R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

[Telegram.]

RUSHVILLE, NEBR., November 24, 1890.

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, D. C.:

The loyal Indians are filing home at the agency for rations, while the turbulent ones are slow about coming in. The presence of the military has a subduing effect over the Indians. Have just sworn in additional police, making a total number of one hundred men. Will keep you advised of any material changes in the circumstances.

COOPER, *Special Agent.*

[Telegram.]

MINCO, IND. T., November 24, 1890.

To BELT,  
*Indian Office, Washington, D. C.:*

Held large council at Anadarko, Saturday, with Comanches, Kiowas, and others, regarding Messiah. No trouble anticipated. Council at Darlington to-morrow.

MORGAN, *Commissioner.*DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, November 25, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, by your reference for my views thereon, of two communications from the honorable Secretary of War, one dated on the 22d instant, forwarding copy of a report, through Brigadier-General Brooke and Major-General Miles, made by Capt. C. A. Earnest, U. S. Army, giving his impressions of the situation at Rosebud Agency, S. Dak., and stating that general disaffection prevails among the Indians there and enumerating the causes which he thinks have led to their disaffection.

The other communication is a telegram from Major-General Miles, dated Chicago, November 9, 1890, embodying one received by him from General Brooke, wherein, among other things, General Brooke states that:

"In order to have the settlement of difficulties with these Indians take permanent shape, I have had the agent retain visible control. There will be no curtailment of rations. These people have real grievances on the score of reduction of rations of last year's beef, the failure of the crops last year and this year, which reduces them to great straits in the way of food. This should be corrected at once, and the fact announced to them, and their just claims be granted without delay. \* \* \*"

To this General Miles adds: "General Brooke's recommendation that sufficient food be supplied should be granted at once, and in the future he should have absolute general control over these agencies."

Taking these reports up in their order, I have the honor to state, as to the separate paragraphs contained in the letters of Captain Earnest, that this office is very well aware—

First. That the Sioux and other Indians in North and South Dakota and Montana have been very much discouraged during the past year because of severe droughts, and that they have produced little by cultivation of the soil to add to the rations furnished them by the Government for their subsistence.

Second. That previous to July 1, 1890, rations and annuities for 7,500 Indians were issued to them at Rosebud Agency, and the Indians there actually received and got the benefit of such issues, whereas it was ascertained about the beginning of the present fiscal year that there were only about 5,250 Indians at that agency, and rations have since been issued accordingly to the number found to be there. Naturally, the 5,250 Indians who have been receiving and consuming sufficient, so far as the limited appropriation would allow for 7,500 Indians, feel the loss of the surplus rations formerly issued to them. This office is satisfied that this overissue of rations was secured by overcount of the Indians through well concealed methods of deceit practiced by them upon the agent while taking the annual census. Captain Earnest thinks that the Indians will become acquainted with and reconciled to the new count, and recognize that it is not a legitimate cause of discontent.

Third. The orders sent out by this office forbidding the use by the Indians of the offal of beeves butchered by them was in the interests of their civilization. The manner of butchering beeves and the practice of the Indians in devouring the offal immediately upon its release from the beef, in its heated and filthy condition, was considered not only a fruitful source of disease, but as a filthy habit, serving to nourish their brutal instincts, and this office consequently took action to prevent it. The question as to how far, if at all, this order can be modified to permit the proper and decent use of the intestines of the beef, will be hereafter considered.

Fourth. The delay in the passage of the Indian appropriation act, and the consequent delay in making contracts for supplies, clothing, etc., for the Indians, has seriously crippled and embarrassed this office in the management of the Bureau this season. Heretofore, in the fall and early winter much work in hauling freight from the railroads to the agencies has been done by the Indians, and the Sioux Indians will be employed now as freight arrives at the railroad stations, to transport it to their respective agencies. At many points, however, the season is so far advanced, and the Indian ponies so small, that they are unable to do this hauling and consequently it must be done by the white men, and at much higher rates.

Fifth. The absence of cash among the Indians because they had no freight to haul to earn it has no doubt been a source of some discontent.

Sixth. As to the question of prairie fires, this office has no other information than that contained in the statements made by Captain Earnest.

Seventh. Regarding the restoration of Agent Wright, it may be said that the cause of his suspension was carefully considered, and all the facts and circumstances in connection with the overissue of rations, was carefully weighed, resulting in this office recommending to the Department that Agent Wright be restored to his position, which was done on November 20, by the honorable Secretary of the Interior, and Agent Wright started the latter part of last week for Rosebud to assume charge of the agency under directions from this office, dated the 21st instant.

It is not believed that the action of the Department regarding Agent Wright has contributed to the excitement existing among the Rosebud Indians. It is well known that this excitement first manifested itself among the Sioux at the Standing Rock Agency, and before Agent Wright was suspended.

The Indians at Rosebud Agency as well as those at all of the other Sioux agencies will receive all the rations that it is possible for this office to furnish them with the means provided by Congress for that purpose. The beef supply is on hand and the other supplies are now and have been arriving at the agencies. Open market purchases have been made from time to time as required to make issue until the contract supplies could be delivered.

It is noted that Captain Earnest states that the forty uniformed police armed with revolvers, at Rosebud Agency, have little or no ammunition while the other Indians have plenty of arms and ammunition. No report has been made to this office by the agent or the acting agent, on this point. I will take immediate measures to have ammunition provided for the uniformed police at that point.

With reference to the remarks of General Brooke, that "These people have real grievances on the score of reduction of last year's beef," I have to state that the appropriation for subsistence and civilization of the Sioux Indians, for the fiscal year, ending June 30, 1889, was \$1,000,000. The appropriation for this purpose for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1890, was \$900,000. The full amount of the appropriation was expended for the purpose for which it was made.

The Indians complain of the reduction of rations consequent upon this decreased appropriation to the Sioux Commission, which was negotiating with them for their consent to the recent Sioux agreement, at the time the reduced ration issues began, and the Commission promised them that they would use their efforts to secure from Congress the money necessary to supply the deficiency of beef ration thus made. They did make this recommendation, and the Secretary of the Interior strongly urged that the appropriation be made, and submitted in the draught of the bill presented by him to the President to go to Congress, an item in the following words:

"To enable the Secretary of the Interior to purchase for the Sioux Nation of Indians additional beef required for their use, the rations having been reduced on account of reduced appropriation for the fiscal year ending June thirtieth, eighteen hundred and ninety, one hundred thousand dollars."

Congress did not make this appropriation. It will, however, be in session again soon and the bill including this item is still pending before it. If the appropriation is made this Department will see to its expenditure.

In the appropriation for the subsistence and civilization of the Sioux Indians for the current fiscal year, the sum of \$950,000 is appropriated and that sum is being used for the purpose for which it was appropriated to its fullest extent.

As to General Miles's recommendation that General Brooke "in the future should have absolute control over these agencies," I have to say that the President in his communication of November 13, 1890, addressed to the Secretary of the Interior, informs him that—

"I have to-day directed the Secretary of War to assume a military responsibility for the suppression of any threatened outbreak, and to take such steps as may be necessary to that end. In the meantime, I suggest that you advise your agents to separate the well-disposed from the ill-disposed Indians, and while maintaining their control and discipline, so far as may be possible, to avoid forcing any issue that will result in an outbreak until suitable military preparations can be made."

This direction of the President clearly does not contemplate that General Brooke shall have "absolute general control over these agencies." On the contrary, it specifically directs that the agents maintain their control and discipline in manner indicated by him.

I do not consider that the situation demands assumption of absolute general control of these agencies by the military, and I hope that the issuance of such an order will not for a moment be entertained.

I have not considered from the beginning of this excitement that there was any serious danger of an outbreak nor have I believed that the Indians contemplated doing any acts of violence to the whites either on the reservation or in their vicinity. There has been in it all an absence of any design or clear intent to perpetrate any malicious acts or mischief. It has been a peculiar excitement; the Indians manifesting no disposition to do harm to any one, except perhaps to themselves, by exposure or by overexertion and indulgence in what to them is a religious ceremony. While engaged in this they do not want to be disturbed, and I believe if their proper management would permit them to dance until they are tired of it, no disturbance need occur. But while they are so engaged and excited they are inclined to give little heed to the orders of the agent to cease the indulgence. The enforcement of proper regulations might result in disturbance. These conditions caused some alarm among the whites on and near the reservations and also among the more tractable Indians; hence it was deemed by this Department prudent to have the military establishment, maintained for just such purposes, to take such precautionary steps as the War Department should deem necessary to suppress promptly any disturbance or any threatened outbreak.

The President having by express directions limited the military responsibility to the suppression of any threatened outbreak, I most respectfully recommend that they confine themselves strictly to that duty, without any interference with the duties of the respective civil agents or of their management under direction of this Department of the affairs of the agencies, for the control of which by the military there is no more necessity than there is for them to assume control of the affairs of the government of the State of South Dakota, in which they happen to be now operating.



The excitement is already subsiding on other reservations where no active movements by the military are or have been in operation, and I believe that it will soon subside on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations.

If any special aid shall be required of the military by way of assisting the Indian agents in enforcing the regulations of this Department for government of these Indians and for preserving quiet among them the requests therefor will be made by the honorable Secretary of the Interior upon the War Department.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, November 25, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to inclose herewith two copies of a report of the 19th instant from James McLaughlin, United States Indian Agent at the Standing Rock Agency, N. Dak., showing the situation of affairs at that reservation growing out of the prevailing excitement among the Sioux Indians who are deluded by the superstitious belief in the coming of a new Messiah.

The report indicates an abatement in the excitement and an improved condition in the affairs of that agency.

Special attention is invited to the interview had by Agent McLaughlin with Sitting Bull and Sitting Bull's proposition to the agent for investigation of the truth of this pretended Messiah revelation, the entertainment of which proposition the agent does not encourage or recommend. He however does suggest that something be done looking to the breaking up of this craze, and his suggestion takes the following form:

In case his visit to Sitting Bull fails to bring him to this agency, as invited, that all Indians living on Grand River, where Sitting Bull's followers are located, be notified that those wishing to be known as opposed to the "ghost doctrine" and friendly to the Government, and desiring the support provided in the treaty, be required to report at the agency for such enrollment and to camp near the agency for a few weeks. That those electing to continue their "medicine" practices in violation of Department orders remain on Grand River and from these subsistence be withheld.

Further, that as a pledge of good faith on the part of the Indians, they be required to turn in all their arms to the agent and get a memorandum receipt from him for the same.

The agent expresses himself as confident that by this course he will be able to settle the Messiah craze at his agency and thus break up the power of Sitting Bull without trouble and with but very little excitement.

I think the plan recommended by the agent should be pursued, and I submit the matter for your directions to the end that if it receives your sanction and authority, a copy of the agent's communication, with your instructions in the matter, be communicated to the Secretary of War for the information of the military authorities.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

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UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE, OFFICE OF INDIAN AGENT,  
*Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 25, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to forward the following copy of a telegram sent you this day:

"Condition of affairs practically the same as yesterday. The turbulent element seem restless while the loyal are quiet and satisfied. The presence of the military seems to have a good influence. I anticipate no trouble that will lead to bloodshed."  
"COOPER, *Special Agent.*"

It is very hard for me to state with any degree of certainty just what the outcome will be, as I have not yet been informed just what the purpose of the Department is. In my opinion there are some arrests that should be made, and the parties confined in some prison off the reservation. Those left here should be disarmed, and if at any time they should want to go on a hunt the agent could permit them to take guns for that purpose, and on their return deliver them back to him for safe keeping.

Really the Indian game is a thing of the past, and this howl of wanting to hunt with their arms is all a matter of pretense.

Very respectfully,

JAMES A. COOPER,  
*Special United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

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[Telegram.]

PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK. (VIA RUSHVILLE, NEBR.), *November 25, 1890.*

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C. :*

Condition of affairs practically the same as yesterday. The turbulent element seem restless while the loyal are quiet and satisfied. The presence of the military seems to have a good influence. I anticipate no trouble that will lead to bloodshed.

COOPER, *Special Agent.*

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[Telegram.]

CALDWELL, KANS., *November 25, 1890.*

To BELT,  
*Indian Office, Washington, D. C. :*

No indication of trouble at Darlington; sensational dispatches from there to-day false; good council to-day with the Cheyennes and Arapahoes.

MORGAN, *Commissioner.*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, November 25, 1890.*

SIR: I herewith transmit for your information copy of a letter from J. A. Cooper, esq., United States special agent, dated November 21, 1890, and of one therewith transmitted from D. F. Royer, esq., agent at Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., of same date, showing that Agent Royer's absence from the agency from the evening of the 17th until the morning of the 20th instant was necessary, and that he has not in any way neglected his duty.

I am satisfied that the agent's absence from his post was proper, and recommend that his action in the matter be approved.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

Approved, November 28, 1890.

JOHN W. NOBLE,  
*Secretary.*

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[Telegram.]

YANKTON AGENCY, S. DAK., *November 25, 1890.*

COMMISSIONER INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C. :*

Fifty reliable Indians of this agency offer their services to the Government.

FOSTER.

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VALENTINE, NEBR., *November 25, 1890.*

SIR: Owing to the Indian scare, as they are liable to break out at any time, the settlers are all coming in town and the country is depopulating very fast, and unless

some action is taken to make the Indians give up their arms and fine people who sell them this country is ruined. It is a sad sight to see women and children in groups having no place to sleep, leaving comfortable homes and their stock behind. People will not come here again unless they are confident there will be no more fear.

Very respectfully,

J. FITZGERALD.

The INDIAN COMMISSIONER.

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
Yankton Agency, S. Dak., November 25, 1890.

DEAR SIR: According to your request of the 24th instant I take great pleasure in giving brief statement concerning the new Messiah.

In 1889 there has been some talk at the different agencies in Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Dakota, and Indian Territory about the advent of this new Messiah. The way I came to find out all these is through the reading of some letters for the Sioux and Cheyennes at Pine Ridge from several agencies. I was postmaster at that place then, and parties who could not read letters generally bring their letters to me to read for them.

There was some talk in the fall of 1888 by the Utes, Shoshones, Crows, and Arapahoes who have visited Pine Ridge about the new Messiah, but not so much as what has been prevailing in 1889 and 1890.

In the fall of 1889, in a private council, Chiefs Red Cloud, Young-man-afraid-of-his-Horses, Little Wound, American Horse, Big Road, Fire Thunder, and a few more others appointed a delegation to visit the western agencies in order to find out more about the new Messiah. The young men who were appointed to go out on journey from Pine Ridge were Good Thunder, Yellow Breast, Broken Arm, and another one. From Rosebud Agency were Short Bull and another one; from Cheyenne River Agency, Kicking Bear; also Flat Iron, from Pine Ridge. All these have been writing from Wyoming, Utah, and some distant agencies that the Messiah has now come to the world, and that there is no mistake about the advent of the new Messiah.

When the parties came home in the spring of 1890 there was quite an excitement over the arrival of the visitors from the West.

As soon as they have arrived I had an interview with them all on the subject. All have said that there was a man in the plains at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, near the White Mountains, close to Mexico, who has clothed himself in wonderful garment, scar in the palms of hands, feet, and also on one side, and scars on the forehead, claiming that he was the son of the great spirit, who has been killed by civilized people once, and now he has come down to kill all the white people and will cause a general resurrection in favor of the Indians of this continent. He will also bring all the buffalo and other wild game back for the Indians and kill all the whites. He has performed some wonderful acts. He can make two horses talk or two birds to talk to each other. He makes one object visible at two, or things that no man can do in this world (slide-hand performer and ventriloquist). Now, as he is the Indians' god, that they must pray to him and call him father and he will hear their prayers. He has also come down to the world to revenge for the Indians; that is, to wipe the white race from the face of the earth, because they (whites) have treated the Indians very bad all way through. And that he is also going to exterminate the whites by some phenomena in the spring of 1891; that all the Indians must prepare for this event. Upon my questioning if their father advises them to cause trouble on the whites by next spring, that was the orders they had from their father, but will be kept secret.

In April, 1890, the apostles (they might be called) held a council to organize the new religion and upon discovering the business, I have reported this matter to Col. H. D. Gallagher the United States Indian Agent at Pine Ridge, who immediately took up the case, and have arrested all the visitors and put them all in jail. This jailing of the arrival of visitors made a kind of cool-down for a while.

Red Cloud himself believed it and told me faithfully that he will stand by his father (the new Messiah) and will have his people to do just as they were commanded by the father.

I see the way they have been corresponding from one agency to another is doing some harm, the Cheyennes and Arapahoes at Darlington, Ind. T., are wild with this excitement. This I came to find out by the reading of some letters while at Pine Ridge.

In my opinion this whole business is started or originated by the spies or missionaries of the Mormons, because some of the visitors told me themselves that this new Messiah has told them that the plural wives is not sin; from this I think that this man or Messiah is a Mormon with practice of slide-hand performer and ventriloquist.

In my opinion that there will be a general Indian war in the spring according to what letters I have read for the Sioux and Cheyenne Indians. Also the secret plans that they have been getting up for the last one year or so.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM T. SELWYN.

COL. E. W. FOSTER,  
*United States Indian Agent, Yankton Agency, S. Dak.*

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
*Yankton Agency, S. Dak., November 25, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to report that on the 21st instant Capt. C. W. Conrad, in command at Fort Randall, reported to me that there was a Rosebud Indian at White Swan on this reserve engaged in teaching the ghost dance and preaching the doctrine of the new Indian Messiah.

Upon receiving the information I sent a force and had the man arrested and still hold him in custody. With the party who went to take the Indian I sent William T Selwyn, employed by me as assistant farmer, and directed Selwyn to obtain what information he could from the stranger.

William T. Selwyn is a full-blooded Indian being the son of Medicine Cow, an old chief of this tribe; he is fairly well educated having been a protégé of Hon. John Welch, of Philadelphia, with whom he lived as a member of that gentleman's family. Selwyn's home is on this reserve but for several years he was at Pine Ridge, and other western agencies, employed by the Government in various ways.

I discovered soon after taking this agency that this young man Selwyn had considerable influence with the Indians of this tribe, and I concluded to give him employment if his habits and his character would not prevent.

Selwyn came here about July 1 of this year and soon afterwards I nominated him for assistant farmer and he has been so employed since that time.

I have had frequent talks with Selwyn since he arrived here and soon after his arrival in July he gave me an outline of this new Messiah craze, as it then was being developed at Pine Ridge and at Rosebud. The information had already been given to Agent Gallagher and I supposed of course that your office was well informed in regard to it, so I made no mention of it except to visitors and employés *et al.* here.

At my request Selwyn has written his knowledge of this craze in a communication addressed to me and I herewith inclose it to you for your information. I will say that it contains just about the same information as Selwyn gave me last summer.

I also inclose the written statement of Selwyn, containing an interview with the Rosebud Indian, Ku-wa-pi, whose arrest was made at White Swan last Friday. I had questioned Ku-wa-pi somewhat, through another interpreter, and he told me that he was a partial believer in the new Messiah, that he had tasted of the buffalo meat sent by him, that he had witnessed the ghost dances, that he had had visions, that he expected some convulsions of nature next spring, etc.

I send these written statements to you for your information.

I will add that the most of our Indians treat these revelations with derision and ridicule; yet there is, I observe, in the heart of the *old* Indian a sort of hope, and perhaps belief, that it is true. These old fellows, who are half fed and half starved, dream with delight of the old days when the buffalo bounded on these plains, and to them such a doctrine is as savory as was the advent of Christ to the old Jews who longed for the old days of Solomon and all his glory to be repeated.

I have asked you to authorize me to employ ten additional police at this agency, the object of which is to prevent visitors from the western agencies from coming here; and to restrain the Indians from this agency from going abroad, and at the same time to keep men employed. My own opinion is that the true way to keep people from engaging in this craze is to give them employment. Let them chop wood, work roads, do freighting, and such other jobs as may be conveniently found for them.

Very respectfully,

E. W. FOSTER,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

HON. T. J. MORGAN,  
*Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
Yankton Agency, S. Dak., November 22, 1890.

DEAR SIR: It has been reported here a few days ago that there was an Indian visitor up at White Swan from Rosebud Agency who has been telling or teaching the doctrines of the new Messiah, and has made some agitation among the people up there.

According to the request of Captain Conrad, U. S. Army, of Fort Randall, S. Dak., and by your order of the 21st instant, I went up to White Swan and have arrested the wanted man (Kuwapi, or one they chased after).

On my way to the agency with the prisoner I have made little interview with him on the subject of the new Messiah. The following are the facts which he corroborated concerning the new Messiah, his laws and doctrines to the Indians of this continent.

Q. Do you believe in the new Messiah?—A. I somewhat believe it.

Q. What made you believe it?—A. Because I ate some of the buffalo meat that he (the new Messiah) sent to the Rosebud Indians through Short Bull.

Q. Did Short Bull say that he saw the living herd of roaming buffaloes while he was with the son of the great spirit?—A. Short Bull told the Indians at Rosebud that the buffalo and other wild game will be restored to the Indians at the same time when the general resurrection in favor of the Indians takes place.

Q. You said a "general resurrection in favor of the Indians takes place." When or how soon will this be?—A. The father sends word to us that he will have all these caused to be so in the spring, when the grass is knee high.

Q. You said "Father." Who is this father?—A. It is the new Messiah; he has ordered his children (Indians) to call him "Father."

Q. You said the father is not going to send the buffalo until the resurrection takes place. Would he be able to send a few buffaloes over this way for a sort of a sample so as to have his children (Indians) to have a taste of the meat?—A. The father wishes to do things all at once, even in destroying the white race.

Q. You said something about the destroying of the white race. Do you mean to say that all mankind except the Indians will be killed?—A. Yes.

Q. How and who is going to kill the white people?—A. The father is going to cause a big cyclone or whirlwind, by which he will have all the white people to perish.

Q. If it should be a cyclone or whirlwind, what are we going to do to protect ourselves?—A. The father will make some kind of provisions by which we will be saved.

Q. You said something about the coming destruction on the white people by your "father." Supposing your father is sick, tired out, forget, or some other accidental cause by which he should not be able to accomplish his purpose, what would be the case about the destroying of the white people?—A. There is no doubt about these things as the miracle performer or the father is going to do just as what he said he would do.

Q. What other object could you come to by which you are led to believe that there is such a new Messiah on earth at present?—A. The ghost dancers are fainted whenever the dance goes on.

Q. Do you believe that they are really fainted?—A. Yes.

Q. What makes you believe that the dancers have really fainted?—A. Because when they wake or come back to their senses they sometimes bring back some news from the unknown world, and some little trinkets, such as buffalo tail, buffalo meat, etc.

Q. What did the fainted ones see when they get fainted?—A. They visited the happy hunting ground, the camps, multitudes of people, and a great many strange people.

Q. What did the ghost or the strange people tell the fainted one or ones?—A. When the fainted one goes to the camp he is welcomed by the relatives of the visitor (the fainted one), and he is also invited to several feasts.

Q. Were the people at Rosebud Agency anxiously waiting or expecting to see all of their dead relatives who have died several years ago?—A. Yes.

Q. We will have a great many older folks when all the dead people come back, would we not?—A. The visitors all say that there is not a single old man nor woman in the other world; all changed to young.

Q. Are we going to die when the dead ones come back?—A. No, we will be just the same as we are to-day.

Q. Did the visitor say that there is any white men in the other world?—A. No; no white people.

Q. If there are no white people in the other world, where did they get their provisions and clothing?—A. In the other world the messenger tells us that they have depended altogether for their food on the flesh of buffalo and other wild games. Also they were all clad in skins of wild animals.

Q. Did the Rosebud Agency Indians believe the new Messiah or the son of the ghost spirit?—A. Yes.

Q. How do they show that they have a belief in the new Messiah?—A. They show

themselves by praying to the father by looking up to heaven, and call him "father," just the same as you would in a church.

Q. Have you ever been in a church?—A. No.

Q. Do you faithfully believe in the new Messiah?—A. I did not in the first place, but as I became more acquainted with the doctrines of the new Messiah, that I really believe in him.

Q. How many people at Rosebud, in your opinion, believe this new Messiah?—A. Nearly every one.

Q. Did you not, the Rosebud people, prepare to attack the white people this summer? While I was at Pine Ridge Agency this summer the Ogalalla Sioux Indians say they will resist against the Government if the latter should try to put a stop to the Messiah question. Did you folks at Rosebud say the same thing?—A. Yes.

Q. Are they still preparing and thinking to attack the white people should the Government send out soldiers with orders to put a stop to your new business of the Messiah?—A. I do not know; but I think that the Wojaji band at Rosebud Agency will do some harm at any time.

Q. You do not mean to say that the Rosebud Indians will try and cause an outbreak?—A. That seems to be the case.

Q. You said something about the "son of the great spirit" or "the father;" what do you mean by the son of the great spirit?—A. This father, as he is called, said himself that he is the son of the great spirit.

Q. Have you talked to or with any Indian at White Swan about the new Messiah, his laws and doctrines, or have you referred this to any one while there?—A. I have told a few of them. I did not voluntarily express my wish for them to know and follow the doctrines of the new Messiah.

Q. Yes; but you have explained the matter to the Indians, did you not?—A. Yes, I have.

Q. Do the Yankton Indians at White Swan believe in your teaching of the new Messiah?—A. I did not intend to teach them, but as I have been questioned on the subject that I have said something about it.

Q. Did any of them believe in you?—A. Some have already believed it and some of them did not believe it.

Q. Those that have believed in you must be better men than the others, are they not?—A. I do not know.

Q. Do you intend to introduce the doctrines of the new Messiah from Rosebud to this agency as a missionary of the gospel?—A. No, I did not.

Q. What brings you here, then?—A. I have some relatives here that I wanted to see, and this was the reason why I came here.

Q. Where does this new Messiah question originate—I mean from the first start of it?—A. This has originated in White Mountains.

Q. Where is this White Mountain?—A. Close to the big Rocky Mountains near the country that belong to the Mexicans.

Q. Do you think that there will be trouble in the West by next spring?—A. Yes.

Q. What makes you think so?—A. Because that is what I have heard people talk of. This is all that I have questioned Kuwapi on the subject of the new Messiah.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM T. SELWYN.

Col. E. W. FOSTER,  
United States Indian Agent, Yankton Agency, S. Dak.

CHADRON, NEBR., November 26, 1890.

DEAR SIR: I am instructed by a meeting of the citizens of this town and county, held last evening, to forward you a copy of resolutions unanimously adopted at that meeting, which copy I herewith respectfully submit in print.

Very obediently,

A. A. MCFADON.

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,  
Washington, D. C.

"Whereas it is public information that at this time quite a large body of United States troops has been ordered to and stationed at Pine Ridge, Rosebud, and Standing Rock Indian Agencies on the Sioux Reservation by the Government for the purpose of preventing or suppressing an Indian outbreak; and

"Whereas we, citizens of the State of Nebraska, living near the border of the Great Sioux Reservation, know whereof we speak; and

"Whereas at the invitation of the Government we have purchased our lands from it, paid our money therefor to it, and established our homes upon said lands with the implied assurance of Government protection; and

"Whereas the frequent recurrence of threatened Indian outbreaks is a source of alarm, resulting in injury, loss, and disaster to us, individually and collectively, retarding the further settlement and development of all the country bordering upon or adjacent to said reservation, thereby depreciating and jeopardizing our property and virtually defrauding us of vested rights: Therefore, be it

"Resolved, That we respectfully demand of the Government that such steps be taken at this opportune time as shall effectually dispose of the Indian outbreak subject on the Sioux Reservation, and restore to the citizens the confidence the Government may demand of him.

"Resolved, That the allowing of thousands of savages to be armed to the teeth in the center of a sparsely-settled agrarian State is a condition improvident and unreasonable.

"Resolved, That the leaders and instigators of criminality in savages should receive at the hands of the Government the punishment the law provides for traitors, anarchists, and assassins.

"Resolved, That in our judgment the exigencies of the occasion demand nothing short of the complete disarming of the Indian and making it a crime for any person to furnish him with arms or implements of war, and we respectfully suggest that the shortest route to the satisfactory settlement of the question would be to deprive the savages of their horses, substituting therefor oxen trained to the plow.

"F. S. LITTLE,

"W. RUCKER,

"E. S. RICKER,

"A. C. PUTNAM,

"A. BARTOW,

"Committee on Resolutions."

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UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 26, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to forward the following copy of a telegram sent you this day relative to the situation at this agency:

"The condition of affairs at this agency is unchanged. The situation is still serious. We hope to get matters settled without bloodshed. Since the arrival of the troops I can see no reason for changing my former recommendations. Arrest the leaders and disarm the remainder. A conservative estimate shows that sixty-four should be arrested. List of names by to-day's mail.

"ROYER, Agent."

I do not know that sixty-four will cover the entire number, but it will come very close. I will keep your office fully advised of any material change of affairs at the agency.

Very respectfully,

D. F. ROYER,  
United States Indian Agent.

Hon. R. V. BELT,  
Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

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[Telegram.]

PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., November 26, 1890.

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, D. C.:

The condition of affairs at this agency are unchanged. The situation is still serious. We hope to get matters settled without bloodshed since the arrival of the troops. I can see no reason for changing my former recommendation, arrest the leaders and disarm the others. A conservative estimate shows that sixty-four should be arrested. List of names by to-day's mail.

ROYER.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, November 27, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to communicate for your information the following telegrams received by me this date from the Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak.:

"PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., VIA RUSHVILLE,  
*"November 27, 1890.*

"The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*"Washington, D. C.:*

"For the best interests of the service, and to prevent an outbreak in the spring when the grass comes, which friendly Indians and all here concede will surely come, I urgently request that General Brooke be instructed by the President immediately to arrest all the leaders of ghost dances and imprison them, and disarm all others here. The Indians are all camped near the agency and will receive their beef to-day. They should not be kept here long, as their stock is suffering at home. They say they will obey the military and agent now, as it is winter, but when spring comes they are going to dance again. Now is the time to round them up, before they leave the agency. Sixty or seventy should be arrested to insure peace here. I trust this may be done at once, as schools are closed and everything else suffering.

"ROYER, *Agent.*"

"PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., VIA RUSHVILLE, NEBR.,  
*"November 27, 1890.*

"COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*"Washington, D. C.:*

"In my opinion the best course to pursue for future good is to arrest and confine in some prison off the reservation the violators of the law and disarm the remainder. Action should be taken at once, as the greater portion of the Indians are at the agency now. A large number of Indians are now on Medicine Root Creek destroying the property of the loyal Indians who are now camped at agency headquarters.

"COOPER, *Special Agent.*"

I think it will be well to arrest and confine the leaders of the excitement now prevailing at Pine Ridge Agency, whenever the military authorities now operating there to suppress any threatened outbreak shall consider such action can be most prudently and successfully accomplished, with least danger. The turbulent ones should under like circumstances be dispossessed by the military of their arms, and while those now and heretofore peaceably and quietly disposed should be required to surrender to the agent their arms, taking his receipt therefor, such arms to be held by the Department for such action as it shall hereafter determine to be right and proper; the peaceably disposed Indians to be given to understand that their arms will be either returned to them or fair and reasonable compensation will be made for them whenever Congress shall make an appropriation applicable therefor. I deem such a stipulation necessary, not only as a matter of right and justice to the Indians who willingly give up such property as an assurance of their good and peaceable intentions, but also as an inducement to them to make the surrender of weapons whose very possession is calculated to continue and to greatly magnify the present excitement.

I recommend that the War Department be requested to instruct the proper military officer to cause the turbulent ones to be dispossessed of their arms, and their leaders to be arrested for imprisonment, all as above described. And, further, to render the agent of this Department such assistance as he may require in securing the surrender of the arms of the peaceably disposed Indians.

If these recommendations are approved, and this office notified, the agent will be instructed accordingly.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.



UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 27, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to forward you herewith copy of a telegram sent you this day: "In my opinion the best course to pursue for future good is to arrest and confine in some prison off the reservation the violators of the law and disarm the remainder. Action should be taken at once, as the greater portion of the Indians are at the agency now. A large number of Rosebud Indians are now on Medicine Root Creek, destroying the property belonging to loyal Indians, who are now camped at agency headquarters."

I would respectfully request that whatever course the Department intends to pursue in this matter, that prompt action be taken, as it will in a short time work a great disadvantage to the influence of the agent should the troops be held here for any length of time. In my opinion the people who have violated the law should receive some punishment, and I agree with Agent Royer in his recommendations regarding this matter.

Very respectfully,

JAMES A. COOPER,  
United States Indian Agent.

Hon. R. V. BELT.

Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

[Telegram.]

POPLAR, MONT., November 27, 1890.

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, D. C.:

Indians here are all quiet; no fear of any trouble.

SCOBEEY, Agent.

[Telegram.]

PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., November 27, 1890.

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, D. C.:

For the best interests of the service and to prevent an outbreak in the spring when the grass comes, which friendly Indians and all here concede will surely come, I urgently request that General Brooke be instructed by the President immediately to arrest all the leaders of the ghost dances and imprison them, and disarm all the others here. The Indians are all camped near the agency and will receive their beef to-day. They should not be kept here long as their stock is suffering at home. They say they will obey the military and agent now as it is winter, but when spring comes they are going to dance again. Now is the time to round them up, before they leave the agency. Sixty or seventy should be arrested to insure peace here. I trust this may be done at once, as schools are closed and everything else suffering.

ROYER, Agent.

[Telegram.]

PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., November 27, 1890.

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, Washington, D. C.:

In my opinion the best course to pursue for future good is to arrest and confine in some prison off the reservation the violators of the law and disarm the remainder. Action should be taken at once as the greater portion of the Indians are at the agency now. A large number of Rosebud Indians are now on Medicine Root Creek destroying the property of loyal Indians who are now camped at agency headquarters.

COOPER, Special Agent.

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE, OFFICE OF INDIAN AGENT,  
Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 27, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following copy of a telegram sent you this day:

"For the best interests of the service now and to prevent an outbreak in the spring when the grass comes, which friendly Indians and all here concede will surely come, I urgently request that General Brooke be instructed by the President immediately to arrest all the leaders of these dances and imprison them and disarm all the others here. The Indians are all camped near the agency and will receive their beef to-day. They should not be kept here long, as their stock is suffering at home. They say they will obey the military and agent now, as it is winter, but when spring comes they are going to dance again. Now is the time to round them up, before they leave the agency. Sixty or seventy should be arrested to insure peace here. I trust this may be done at once, as schools are closed and everything else suffering."

In connection with the above I wish to recommend that whatever action the Department intends to take in this matter that it be taken at once, for the reason that business is to a certain extent demoralized on account of the Indians not knowing what is to be done; they, as a matter of course, feel anxious, both the friendly and the unfriendly.

The presence of the troops has brought the ghost dance to a sudden stop, and it is believed by experienced persons that the Indians will not attempt to dance again while the troops are here, but it is also believed that if the troops should leave without making the necessary arrests that the dance will continue in the same old way.

Now is the time to stop the most demoralizing craze that has ever took hold of these people, and the manner of stopping it is to arrest those who have defied the agent's orders and refused to recognize law and order. This letter and telegram is answer to Office letter L under date of November 22, 1890.

Very respectfully,

D. F. ROYER,  
United States Indian Agent.

Hon. R. V. BELT,  
Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

I have read the foregoing letter written by Agent Royer and I heartily concur in the recommendations contained therein.

Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 27, 1890.

Respectfully,

JAMES A. COOPER,  
Special United States Indian Agent.

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
Cheyenne River Agency, S. Dak., November 28, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report from Agent Palmer, who is at this writing in the dancing camp of Hump and Bigfoot, on Cherry Creek. He says upon his arrival there he found 400 Indians dancing the ghost dance. The temper of the Indians was very bad. He further says they refused to talk with him. Bigfoot advised the Indians to buy all the guns and cartridges they could, and all to keep together and remain in one camp.

He states further that the Indians in the dancing camps are very disobedient, and do not respect any order or regulations.

Further reports will be sent you as received, and upon return home of the agent from the dancing camps, full reports will be sent.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

PERIAN P. PALMER,  
United States Indian Agent.  
Per GEO. B. SHOENFELT, Clerk.

Hon. T. J. MORGAN,  
Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., November 28, 1890.

SIR: As there are many stories afloat and being transmitted to the Interior Department from this agency in regard to the present troubles, assigning as a cause the suffering of the Indians for want of food, I thought the Department would not con-

sider it presumptuous upon my part to volunteer a brief statement of the facts as I have found them to exist in regard to their subsistence. In the first place, the Department is fully aware of the nature of my work, which takes me into each house and habitation occupied by the Indians, thus giving me a splendid opportunity to make observations, and I assure you I have not been slow to do so, especially as to how the Indians live, and what they live upon, and I say now that I have to see the first family upon Pine Ridge Reservation that showed the least sign of suffering from want of food.

In order to ascertain what they subsist upon, and what they rely upon for subsistence, I ask the question: "What means of support have you besides your rations?" If the answer should be, "None," I then ask: "Are the rations you draw from the Government sufficient for your subsistence?" And I have never had a family to complain and say, "No." And not in the first single instance has an Indian, who is reliable and intelligent, complained to me of suffering among their people. It has only been a few weeks since one mixed-blood woman, having six in her family, told me that they had all the provisions that they could use, and that if the people generally would take care of their rations in a careful manner, as she did, they would really have more than they could use.

Now as to their habit of cooking and eating. When they get up in the morning, a pot is put over the fire and filled with meat. As soon as it is cooked enough to eat, all who are present begin eating, and never stop until so full they can eat no longer. When the meat is cleaned out of the pot, it is re-filled, and as often as they feel like it, they eat. Every neighbor or friend who calls in has a large dish of meat set before he or she, which is invariably eaten. The coffeepot rarely gets cold. With their meat, they invariably have bread of some kind. Those who are the most gluttonous in their natures, eat up their rations often a day or two before issue day, but they never go hungry. They know who the more provident are, and dive off of them until rations day.

Now, when I know these facts so well, I assert that in my judgment hunger has nothing to do with the present trouble upon Pine Ridge Reservation. It looks to me, viewing the question in an impartial light, that the whole trouble has been brought on by the old bucks, who begin to become restless, partly from idleness, partly from a desire to regain their influence over the people, and partly from undue influence of designing whites, but largely from inexplicable causes. (Parenthetically I might add, pure cussedness.) The main leaders in the present trouble are men who have been recognized as "big chiefs" in days gone by, but not so recognized now. Yet they think they see in this movement an opportunity to regain their lost titles.

The Indians, half-breeds, and squaw-men upon this reservation own many hundred head of cattle which would be mercilessly slaughtered if hunger was the cause of the trouble. As it is, rarely a cow brute is slaughtered without the consent of the agent, and the animal killed proved to be incapable of reproduction.

Very respectfully,

A. T. LEA,  
*Special United States Indian Agent.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, November 28, 1890.*

SIR: Referring to my report of November 27, 1890, advising you of the contents of telegrams of that date from Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., recommending steps to take to prevent future trouble from Indians, etc., I have to say, for your information in connection therewith, that prior to submitting such report, this office had received the following telegram from that agency:

"PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., VIA RUSHVILLE,  
"November 26, 1890.

"COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
"Washington, D. C.:

"The condition of affairs at this agency are unchanged. The situation is still serious. We hope to get matters settled without bloodshed; since the arrival of the troops I can see no reason for changing my former recommendation. Arrest the leaders and disarm the others. A conservative estimate shows that sixty-four should be arrested. List of names by to-day's mail.

"ROYER."

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

[Telegram.]

CHAMBERLAIN, S. DAK., November 28, 1890.

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, D. C.:

First developments of ghost dance discovered on White River, Lower Brulé Agency. Last night police arrested nine, who are now in jail at agency. There are probably as many more participants in same locality. Shall hold prisoners pending trouble. Agency jail now full. Additional quarters for prisoners needed. Can not estimate strength of the movement. Instruct me.

DIXON, Agent.

FORT YATES, N. DAK., November 28, 1890.

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, D. C.:

William F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) has arrived here with commission from General Miles to arrest Sitting Bull. Such a step at present is unnecessary and unwise, as it would precipitate a fight which can be avoided. A few Indians still dancing, but do not mean mischief at present. I have matters well in hand. When proper time arrives can arrest Sitting Bull by Indian police without bloodshed. I ask attention to my letter of November 19. Request General Miles's order to Cody be rescinded. Request immediate answer.

McLAUGHLIN, Agent.

[Telegram.]

PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., VIA RUSHVILLE, NEBR.,  
November 28, 1890.COMMISSIONER INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, D. C.:

Plenty Bears, a friendly Indian, living on Porcupine Creek, reports three hundred and sixty-four lodges Rosebud Indians camped 22 miles from agency. He saw them killing cattle, breaking in houses, stealing hay, and destroying property generally belonging to friendly Indians. They danced ghost dances all last night, and are now riding their horses in a circle, a custom denoting war in past years.

Will property of friendly Indians be protected? The friendly Indians manifest great anxiety about their property while being held here at agency.

This matter has been fully reported to General Brooke; some action should certainly be taken to arrest the lawless parties at once.

ROYER, Agent.  
COOPER, Special Agent.DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, November 29, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to furnish for your information the following copy of a telegram received by me last night at 9 o'clock:

"PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK.,  
" via Rushville, Nebr., November 28, 1890."The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
" Washington, D. C.:

"Plenty Bears, a friendly Indian, living on Porcupine Creek, reports three hundred and sixty-four lodges Rosebud Indians camped 22 miles from agency. He saw them killing cattle, breaking in houses, stealing hay and destroying property generally belonging to the friendly Indians. They danced ghost dances all night, and are now riding their horses in a circle, a custom denoting war in past years.

"Will property of friendly Indians be protected? The friendly Indians manifest great anxiety about their property while being held here at the agency.

"This matter has been fully reported to General Brooke, and some action should certainly be taken to arrest the lawless parties at once.

"ROYER, Agent,  
"COOPER, Special Agent."

In this connection I also invite attention to the following telegrams sent by me on the 26th instant to the agents at the Pine Ridge and the Rosebud Agencies:

“OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
“November 28, 1890.

“Agent ROYER,  
“Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak.:

“Yesterday's telegrams from Cooper and yourself submitted yesterday to the Secretary, with my recommendations for acting on your suggestions. Will notify you of Department directions when received. In-meantime, if General Brooke urges no reason to contrary from military standpoint, order and require all Rosebud Indians to return immediately to their reservation.

“R. V. BELT,  
“Acting Commissioner.”

“OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
“November 28, 1890.

“AGENT ROSEBUD AGENCY,  
“South Dakota:

“Agent Royer reports Rosebud Indians destroying property in homes of peaceable Pine Ridge Indians, who are now camped at agency. Notify all Rosebud Indians to return immediately to their reservation. Secure, if possible, names of all who do not obey instructions.

“R. V. BELT,  
“Acting Commissioner.”

The President having directed the War Department to assume the military responsibility for suppression of any attempted outbreak by these Indians, I respectfully recommend that the information contained in the joint telegram from Agent Royer and Special Agent Cooper be communicated to the honorable Secretary of War, for such action by the military as will put a stop to any lawless conduct or depredations by any turbulent class of Indians upon the Sioux reservations, and particularly that the property of the friendly and peaceable Indians be protected from disturbance or destruction while they, in obedience to requirements of proper authority, are absent from their homes, encamped about the agency, or elsewhere.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
Acting Commissioner.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, November 29, 1890.

SIR: Referring to previous correspondence in relation to the “ghost dances” now prevailing among the Indians on the different reservations, it has been reported to this Office that the “messiah craze” has been inaugurated for the purpose of exciting the Indians, and as a cover for their meetings to arrange for an outbreak.

Sitting Bull has said that at a point (not indicated) near old Fort Stephenson, some 1,500 stands of arms are concealed for use by Indians in case of an outbreak.

I desire that you investigate this matter of concealed arms at once and report the result to this Office,

Very respectfully,

R. V. BELT,  
Acting Commissioner.

JOHN S. MURPHY, Esq.,  
United States Indian Agent, Fort Berthold Agency, N. Dak.

[Telegram.]

ROSEBUD AGENCY, S. DAK., November 29, 1890.

COMMISSIONER INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, D. C.:

Indians notified to return on the 22d and 26th; but few have done so.

E. B. REYNOLDS, in charge.

S. F. DEPOT, NEWTON, KANS., *November 30, 1890.*

BELT,  
*Indian Office, Washington, D. C.:*

Returned from Osage yesterday. Absolute quiet reigns. Sensational dispatches published yesterday and to-day have no foundation. Haskell to-morrow.

MORGAN, *Commissioner.*

PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., *November 30, 1890.*

SIR: Reliable information just received that about five hundred lodges Rosebud and Pine Ridge Indians have crossed White River at mouth of Grass Creek making their way into the Bad Lands, killing cattle and stealing horses. They plundered all the school and private houses on Medicine Root and Porcupine Creeks, stealing all the hay in that section of country. They number six hundred warriors, dressed in war costumes, with plenty of arms and ammunition. Some immediate action should surely be taken to bring to justice these wholesale robbers and thieves.

Direct us what to do.

ROYER, *Agent.*

COOPER, *Special Agent.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIANS AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, December 1, 1890.*

SIR: You are instructed that it is important, owing to the recent seasons of drought, and from a military point of view, especially, that the Sioux Indians shall be for the present allowed the rations prescribed originally in article 5, of agreement of February 28, 1877 (U. S. Stats., vol. 19, page 254), and your Bureau will supply these rations according to the terms and conditions of said act, even if you have to draw on supplies intended to extend throughout the fiscal year, or upon appropriations or funds unusual for this purpose, but legally applicable. You will, however, in case of extraordinary application of means, report the same in form, that it may be transmitted to Congress, with a request for such further appropriation as may be necessary for the express purpose of supplying these Indians their full rations.

You will please report the present amount of supplies being given to each Indian, and what the increase will be, specifying the kind of additional food furnished.

Very respectfully,

JOHN W. NOBLE,

*Secretary.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.*

PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., VIA RUSHVILLE NEBR.,

*December 1, 1890.*

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.:*

Chief herder reports Indians killing many of our beef cattle. They have also fired the range. We are in perfect harmony with General Brooke. Full report by mail.

ROYER, *Agent.*

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,  
*Cheyenne River Agency, S. Dak., December 1, 1890.*

SIR: In compliance with instructions contained in office letter L, November 22, 1890, I have the honor to report the situation now existing at the ghost dancing Indian camp at the mouth of Cherry Creek, having just returned from a visit of all the camps where the Indians are affected by the dance.

The Indians are dancing continually; had been dancing six days previous to arrival of agent. This camp is about 60 miles from the agency headquarters, and notwithstanding the journey of the entire distance was made in one day, and every

precaution taken to prevent anyone knowing where the agent was going, the Indians were informed of his coming more than an hour before his arrival at the camp, and the dancing had stopped and many of the Indians had gone home on the 25th instant. There were 348 Indians dancing at one time. This number includes men, women, and children. About 200 more were present, but not dancing.

All the camps on Cherry Creek were visited by agent on the 27th instant and the Indians were all dressed in citizens' clothing and had no paint on their faces. There are two Indians at the camp called Yellow Owl's Camp, who have not been dancing, but have been helping the farmer. These Indians said that very few of the Indians have worn citizen's clothing for more than a month, they also said that at a council, held on the 25th instant, Big Foot ordered all the Indians belonging to the ghost dance to procure all the guns and cartridges possible to obtain and to stay together in one camp. There is no longer any doubt that the Indians are all well supplied with the best make of guns and cartridges, and in addition to rifles a large majority of them have revolvers. There is positive proof that some of the traders have been supplying the Indians with guns. The friendly Indians say that the dancers want to fight and will fight soon, but will not let them know anything. At all these camps the Indians all appeared friendly to the agent, were very anxious to talk, asked many questions, but appeared uneasy and suspicious about something. The white settlers in the village at the mouth of Plumb Creek number seven men, four women, and three children. There is also a mixed-blood missionary and family. These people are very much excited and said they would leave the village soon, but hope to dispose of their goods. It is believed they have guns to deliver to Indians and are only awaiting their arrival. One of the policemen is watching their movements, but it is very difficult to tell what Indian can be trusted.

The friendly Indians apprehend trouble and are suspicious of the interpreters. They say Indians all lie and interpreters all lie; when they talk on important matters, they want several interpreters present. It is impossible to tell at this time what the dancing Indians intend to do, but they are, no doubt, preparing for an outbreak in some direction; they are closely watched, and the agency is in daily communication with the dancing camp. Bigfoot, Hump, Low Dog, and other leaders of the ghost dance were reported to have refused to see the agent or talk with him. This is believed to be true, as none of these leaders could be found at the camps. The latest report from the farmer Narcesse Marcelle is to the effect that the Indians are still dancing, are suspicious of him and will not talk with him. Says none of the Indians have gone away and there are few visitors among them.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

PERIAN P. PALMER,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. T. J. MORGAN,  
*Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, D. C., December 1, 1890.*

SIR: You will convey to the several agents on duty among the Sioux, the following order, which is hereby made:

"During the present Indian troubles you are instructed that while you shall continue all the business, and carry into effect the educational and other purposes of your agency, you will, as to all operations intended to suppress any outbreak by force, cooperate with and obey the orders of the military officer commanding on the reservation in your charge."

Very respectfully,

JOHN W. NOBLE,  
*Secretary.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

[Telegram.]

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C., December 1, 1890.*

ELISHA REYNOLDS,  
*Special agent in charge, Rosebud Agency:*

By direction of the Secretary "during the present Indian troubles you are instructed that while you shall continue all the business, and carry into effect the educational

and other purposes of your agency, you will, as to all operations intended to suppress any outbreak by force, coöperate with and obey the orders of the military officer commanding on the reservation in your charge."

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

(Copy to agent Rosebud, Cheyenne River, Standing Rock, Crow Creek, and Lower Brulé.)

ROSEBUD AGENCY, S. DAK., *December 2, 1890.*

SIR: I assumed charge yesterday. I find what Indians remain at agency all well disposed and attending to work. Immediately on arrival of troops here a large body headed by Crow Dog, Two Strike, and Short Bull left the agency and are near Pine Ridge. They have demolished property in schools west of the agency and defied authority. See letter of February 12 regarding Crow Dog. Two Strike is opposed to all progress, did not sign treaty. If these parties are arrested and removed trouble will end. To increase rations to all, as per telegram, before this is done will result disastrously. It will serve as a reward for present action and elevate these men in the estimation of their followers. Their highest ambition will be realized and others will be encouraged to do likewise hereafter when dissatisfied. Supplies can and should be increased after order is restored, but careful discrimination in distribution should be allowed between good and bad Indians.

Special Agent Reynolds and military authority here concur in my views. Please answer.

WRIGHT, *Agent.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Office of Indian Affairs, December 2, 1890.*

SIR: I am in receipt of your letter of this date instructing me to convey to the several agents on duty among the Sioux the following order:

"During the present Indian troubles you are instructed that while you shall continue all the business and carry into effect the educational and other purposes of your agency, you will as to all operations intended to suppress any outbreak by force, coöperate and obey the orders of the military officer commanding on the reservation in your charge."

In reply I have to say that I have communicated said order to the agents at Standing Rock Agency, N. Dak., and Cheyenne River, Crow Creek, etc., Rosebud and Pine Ridge Agencies, S. Dak., by telegram to each, dated the 1st instant.

In this connection I deem it proper to invite your attention to office report of November 14, 1890, advising you that this office had by telegram of that date communicated to the several agents of the agencies of the Sioux Nation in North and South Dakota—five agencies, and directed them to exercise wise discretion in carrying out the same, the following directions of the President of the United States contained in letter to you dated November 13, 1890.

"I have to-day directed the Secretary of War to assume a military responsibility for the suppression of any threatened outbreak and to take such steps as may be necessary to that end. In the meantime I suggest that you advise your agents to separate the well-disposed from the ill-disposed Indians, and while maintaining their control and discipline, so far as may be possible, to avoid forcing any issue that will result in an outbreak until suitable military preparations can be made."

This office has in all instructions issued to the agents on the subject, directed them to consult and coöperate with the proper military officers in all measures for the suppression of any threatened outbreak.

I am not advised that any of the agents have refused to coöperate with or obey the military authorities for the purpose indicated. The only instance in which there has been, so far as I know, a semblance of friction between the military authorities and any of the civil agents is in the case of the protest of Agent McLaughlin, of Standing Rock Agency, against the arrest of Sitting Bull by W. F. Cody, under authority of General Miles.

If any of the Indian agents have refused to aid, coöperate with or obey the proper military officers in steps deemed necessary to suppress threatened outbreaks of the Indians this office would be glad to be advised thereof so as to apply prompt corrective measures.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, December 3, 1890.

SIR: I am in receipt of the following communication from D. F. Royer, agent at Pine Ridge Agency, S. Dak., viz:

"PINE RIDGE AGENCY, S. DAK., November 28, 1890.

"SIR: Referring to the office letter 'L,' under date of November 22, 1890, I have the honor to report that since the arrival of the military that I do not think the 'spirit of disobedience to orders and regulations of your Bureau is growing,' on the other hand, I feel safe in saying that the Indians are more quiet and obedient than for sometime past, but it is acknowledged by some of the worst characters, such as Big Road, Little Wound, and No Water, that as soon as the military leaves they can then do as they please again. The result is likely to be serious should the military leave the reservation without arresting and punishing by imprisonment the leaders in this trouble.

"In my opinion these people who have defied law and order should be put in prison, and the remainder of the Indians on this reservation should be disarmed. A list of the names were forwarded you yesterday, 27th instant.

"Very respectfully,

"D. F. ROYER,  
"United States Indian Agent.

"HON. R. V. BELT,

"Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C."

Which is respectfully submitted for your information.

I desire, in this connection, to invite your attention to office letter of the 27th ultimo, and the recommendations therein contained relative to the arrest and confinement of the leaders in excitement, and the disarming of all the Indians on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
Acting Commissioner.

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, December 3, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit for your information the following copy of a telegram received by me last night at 9 o'clock at my residence, viz:

"ROSEBUD AGENCY, S. DAK., December 2, 1890.

"The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,

"Washington, D. C.:

"I assumed charge yesterday. I find what Indians remain at agency all well disposed and attending to work. Immediately on arrival of troops here a large body headed by Crow Dog, Two Strike, and Short Bull, left the agency and are near Pine Ridge. They have demolished property in schools west of the agency and defied authority. (See letter of February 12 in regard to Crow Dog.) Two Strike is opposed to all progress; did not sign treaty. If these parties are arrested and removed trouble will end. To increase rations to all as per telegram before this is done will result disastrously. It will serve as a reward for present action and elevate these men in the estimation of their followers. Their highest ambition will be realized, and others will be encouraged to do likewise hereafter when dissatisfied. Supplies can and should be increased after order is restored, but careful discrimination in distribution should be allowed between good and bad Indians.

"Special Agent Reynolds and military authorities here concur in my views. Please answer.

"WRIGHT, Agent."

Agent Wright has heretofore recommended that Crow Dog be arrested and confined in some place off the reservation. He, with Two Strike and Short Bull, the other two leaders of the disorderly or turbulent Indians of the Rosebud Agency, are those who, in his opinion, should be arrested and imprisoned.

I think their arrest by the military and confinement as prisoners in such place as the military authorities may find most suitable for the purpose, should be accomplished as soon as it can be most prudently accomplished, all things considered.

I think that the remarks of Agent Wright, taken in connection with the report of Special Agent Lea, concerning the condition of the Pine Ridge Indians as to subsist-

ence (believed by me to be almost as fully applicable to the Rosebud Indians), are deserving of most careful consideration, and indicate that there exists little, if any, actual or serious distress among the Sioux Indians, except such as is caused by their own improvident habits.

I telegraphed your order to increase rations to the agents at Pine Ridge, Rosebud, Standing Rock, Cheyenne River, and Crow Creek, and Lower Brulé Agencies. I also communicated the order to those agents by letter, in which I took occasion to say:

"This order by the Secretary, while not qualified by conditions, except that the increased issues 'shall be for the present,' is not intended to authorize or direct any wasteful or unnecessary issue of rations to the Indians under your charge.

"He does, however, intend that all actual distress by reason of hunger amongst the Indians of your agency, shall be relieved by your issuing, if necessary, to the full extent, the ration prescribed by article 5, of the agreement of February 28, 1877 (19 Stats. 254.)

"In carrying out the Department instructions, you will issue from the supplies already on hand at your agency or to be delivered under existing contracts."

I shall proceed with the execution of your instructions for issuing the rations of these Indians until otherwise directed.

I hope that the punishment which will finally be meted out to the leaders of the disturbance and disorderly conduct on the Sioux reservations will more than counteract whatever ultimate evil effects may result from the issue, under existing circumstances, of increased rations to the Sioux Indians.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C., December 3, 1890.*

SIR: I transmit herewith for your information, and with the recommendation that the honorable Secretary of War be furnished a copy thereof for his information, copies of a letter dated November 28, 1890, from John H. Waugh, esq., agent at Devil's Lake Agency, N. Dak., in response to a circular letter of the 27th ultimo, calling for information as to the condition and temper of his Indians in connection with the "ghost dance," in which he reports that the present condition of his Indians is peaceable in the extreme, but that he does not feel very sanguine as to what temper they will be in next spring, and that the withdrawal of the troops from the post there is so recent that it is impossible to tell what effect it may have on the Indians after they fully realize the condition things are left in, etc.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

[Telegram.]

Agent WRIGHT,

*Rosebud Agency, S. Dak. (via Valentine, Nebr.):*

Your telegram of 2d instant submitted to Secretary with my recommendation for arrest of leaders of the disorderly element. Any modification by Department of instructions to increase rations will be wired to you.

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

[Telegram.]

INDIAN OFFICE, *December 3, 1890.*

DIXON,

*Agent Crow Creek and Lower Brulé Agency, S. Dak.:*

Authority granted as requested in your telegram to ration eight police and feed their horses during the excitement. Office asked on 29th ultimo that War Department send military to take prisoners you have jailed. Have not yet heard what action was taken. Will wire you when informed.

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Office of Indian Affairs, December 3, 1890.*

SIR: For your information and with the recommendation that the War Department be furnished with a copy thereof for its information, I transmit herewith copies of a letter from the Cheyenne River Agency, S. Dak., dated November 26, 1890, written by the agency clerk, in response to a circular letter from this office dated the 22d ultimo, calling for information as to the temper and condition of his Indians in connection with the "ghost dance," in which the agent is reported as being out at the dancing camps with a view to discourage the dance and adopt precautionary measures to prevent an outbreak, etc.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Office of Indian Affairs, December 5, 1890.*

SIR: I have the honor to communicate for your information the following copy of a telegram just received by me:

"FORT YATES, N. DAK., VIA BISMARCK, December 5, 1890.

"COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
"Washington, D. C.:

"Everything quiet at present. Weather cold and snowing. Am I authorized to arrest Sitting Bull and other fomenters of mischief when I think best?

"McLAUGHLIN, *Indian Agent.*"

This is the plan proposed by Agent McLaughlin for dealing with the leaders of the disorderly element on his reservation as set out in his letter of November 19 last, and communicated to you with my letter of November 25. Subsequently, however, it appears that General Miles dispatched W. F. Cody on some mission concerning Sitting Bull which is said to have contemplated his arrest. Agent McLaughlin thought such action at the time and under the circumstances and in the manner proposed would be likely to create unnecessary disturbance among the Indians.

I am inclined to believe that the wisest course to pursue in this matter is to allow the agents to make the arrests of the leaders of the disorderly element among the Indians upon the respective reservations, especially where no military movements have been in active operations. This has been and is being pursued by the agent at the Crow Creek Agency successfully, who has already arrested eighteen of the leaders of the disorder on his reservation without the aid of the military.

But in order that no confusion or conflict of authority may arise, especially in view of what has already been done regarding the arrest of Sitting Bull by the military, I will not instruct Agent McLaughlin in reply to his telegram until I shall receive your instructions upon the subject, which I will thank you to communicate to me at your earliest convenience.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. V. BELL,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

[Telegram.]

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C., December 6, 1890.*

Agent PALMER,  
*Fort Sully, S. Dak.:*

Secretary directs that you make no arrests except under orders of the military or upon order of Secretary Interior.

R. V. BELT,  
*Acting Commissioner.*

(Sent to all Sioux agents.—5.)