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OFFICE OF  
INDIAN AFFAIRS  
POST OFFICE 24

1885

U. S. Indian Service,  
Navajo Agency,  
Fort Defiance, Ariz.

JOHN H. BOWMAN,

mora 16<sup>th</sup> 1885

U. S. Indian Agent.

says he dont believe it  
feasible to secure any of  
the Navajo Girls of suitable  
age to attend the Carlisle school  
because they are usually sold  
or married as soon as they  
attain the age of ten or twelve  
years



Letter to Pratt March. 31/85.

16/167

J. H. Cook



Navajo Agency N.M.  
March 10<sup>th</sup> 1885

Hon Commissioner  
of Indian Affairs  
Washington D.C.

Sir

Replying to your letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> instant  
will say that I do not believe it possible to induce any  
of the Girls from this tribe to attend any school especially at  
a distance from here. The reason of this is that according to their  
Custom the Girls are generally married or sold for wives as soon  
as they are ten or twelve years old. This is considered to be the  
great object in life not only by the Girls but by their parents  
Dance with them has a market value and is only prized in  
that way

I believe that a dozen or so of the Navajo Boys of  
suitable age, could be secured to attend Capt. Deatts school  
but have no hopes of the Girls. I have succeeded in securing  
the attendance of eight Girls at the Boarding school here, but  
they are with a few exceptions under the age of twelve and are  
the daughters of Indians who live near the agency

I deeply deplore this state of affairs, and wish?



2<sup>d</sup> Commissioner

could see some way to change it. but in order to do so  
it will be necessary to change many of the ideas and  
customs of the tribe. which being rooted by centuries of past  
observance it will be hard to do

Assuring you however that I will spare no time  
or pains to accomplish the result you desire. I am

Very Respectfully  
John H. Bowman  
U S Indian agent