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DEPARTMENT  
OF THE  
INTERIOR.  
INDIAN DIV.

RECEIVED  
JU 18 1887

Carlisle Pa. 23/49

July 16/87

Carlisle School  
(Frank Supt)

In reply to Dept letter  
of 8<sup>th</sup> inst. requesting views  
as to period of time to be  
fixed to govern stay of Indian  
pupils at Industrial Training  
Schools.

Sincerely  
No inc (OO)

See 3535/87

File

G.

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Dept. of the Interior,

Nov 9/87

Respectfully referred to the  
Com's'r of Indian Affairs,

*A. J. Jones*  
Chief Clerk.

*[Handwritten initials]*

*[Handwritten scribble]*

U. S.

Indian Industrial School,

2 Incl.

Carlisle, Pa., July 16th, 1887.

Hon. L. Q. C. Lamar,

Secretary of the Interior,

Washington, D.C.

Sir:

In reply to yours of the 8th instant, marked "R V B," which was not received by me until the 13th, I have to respectfully inform you that the two Nez Perce boys named, came to Carlisle, February 20th, 1880, for three years. In 1883, on the expiration of their period, Luke Phillips went home, and made a short visit, and then returned to Carlisle, for five years, which was the new time established by the Department, at my suggestion. Samuel Johns preferred to remain at Carlisle another period, and not to go home. This made their new lease extend to 1888. It is only recently that Samuel Johns has given evidence of severe bronchial phthisis. Luke Phillips has recently had several hemorrhages, and my School Physician thinks a few months or a year at home may re-establish him, possibly for years. Since my letter asking his return, he has improved steadily.

Our experience with cases of this kind, indicates the reverse of what you apprehend, and instead, that the Government as a wise guardian ought not to give way to appeals of the Indian parents and

and friends for the return of sick students. Their methods of treatment soon make an end of many who would rally and even recover if left in our care. The acclimating back to Indian life is a far more severe ordeal than that of acclimating to civilized life. It is wholly impossible for a few mere youth to establish foundations in the mire of savage life, and Moses their parents and the masses out of that life. They are rather seized upon and dragged back. That has been the case always and always will be. Moses had forty years in the best schools of the Egyptians, and that was followed by forty more years of hard wilderness life. Then he was mature in years and ability. We are eternally "sending boys to mill," not only in our sending back with high expectations the youth, who have gained a smatter of education and skill by three or five years at school, but also in our incessant rounds of changes in the service from head to foot. The rules and customs compel the youth to go home and make the best of it. Last year I saw one of the homes to which one of our very best boys had to go. The filth and odors were sickening; and after his return, I asked him how he stood it through his short visit. He said, his first meals would not stay with him, and to save offence <sup>he</sup> retired to where his mother could not see him, to vomit; but after he became very hungry

he got on better. I believe it is much wiser for us to continue the children steadily in school year after year until they have reached the point of ability and training we desire them to possess, than it is to send them to their miserable homes for any reason, or under any pretence whatsoever. They are forced by necessity into their vile homes, and no one, except they have had experience in an Indian camp, can begin to conceive of the strain it is to go back to the hard life there.

You suggest that the children taken to our training schools are usually those who have received some training at the reservation schools. Carlisle has had a singular history in that respect. Of the first students, 9-10 were raw material. Examining my records today I find that of the 528 now at the school, 277 never attended school before coming to Carlisle, and 144 of the remainder when they came were in the first reader grade, and most of these entitled to be classed in that grade, by having attended school not more than two or three months. The disposition has never been to favor us in the matter of giving us the best children. It has been a steady fight against us. Others schools away from the tribes, not Government, but having contract, by a system of pandering to and complimenting Agents and Missionary folks secure advanced pupils. The Indian Office today exercises a very great

opposition to me in the securing of children, as I could explain to you thoroughly, but the enclosed, which is a copy of a recent letter in regard to getting children this year will be sufficient to show you my grounds for making the statement.

If you will go back to the Indian Office report for 1879, which was the year we began this school, you will see by the statistics that there were no schools, nor children reported in schools, at Pine Ridge. I broke the ground there. There is a report of a school at Rosebud at that time, but the facts of that school are not as reported. I examined it. It was not entitled to the name of a school. The teacher attempted to get up a special exhibition for my benefit. She succeeded in having four boys in the school. They were in blankets, and paint. She brought one whom she esteemed especially bright before the blackboard to recite. The others looked on for a few minutes, and then deliberately got up and stepped upon the tops of the school desks and walked on them to the rear of the room, gave a whoop, jumped down, and ran out, and that was the end of the session. Things are better now, but there is a deal of straining to make reports.

You will see by the Commissioner's letter that I am rather warned away from these Agencies where I broke the ice and enabled their schools to live. By referring to the last Indian Office re-

port, pages XC and XC1, you will see that at Pine Ridge the school population numbers 1800. The claimed capacity of the schools amounts to 560. On the same page, the school population of Rosebud is stated to be 1700, and the school<sup>ac</sup>commodation 393, leaving in the one case 1240 children out of school, and in the other case, 1307; and yet I am virtually warned away from both these Agencies, because they have "good schools," and advised to secure pupils from Agencies where the Agents and forces of the Indian Department<sup>on the ground</sup> are unable to even fill the very limited school accommodations; and of course, from those Agencies to take into this school additional raw material, which seems to be exactly contrary to your ideas on the subject. In going personally to secure children last year, I found at every point the pressure of the Indian Office was against Carlisle, just as the enclosed letter indicates. By a letter to the Indian Office dated April 27, 1885, (a copy is forwarded herewith,) I urged that pupils should be forwarded to the different training schools from the Agency schools, and that only those who are bright and healthy and advanced be selected. I suggested a plan for accomplishing this purpose. The plan inaugurated is exactly the opposite. An examination will show that Agency schools, and schools among the Indians, have generally made so little progress with their pupils, that they will not admit any having reached a degree of graduation

from them, and will desire to keep their best pupils. It is a very simple matter to guide Indian students and their parents into this or that direction in regard to themselves. If the Agency teacher desires a bright pupil to go to Carlisle or elsewhere, there is no difficulty in bringing about not only the consent, but the application on the part of the student, and willingness of the parents. On the contrary, if the Agency teacher desires to hold on to the pupil, there are plenty of reasons that may be advanced and prove effective in accomplishing that purpose. Therefore I recommended to the Indian Office in my letter of April 27th, 1885, above referred to, a system of quarterly reports from all schools. By asking the Educational Branch of the Indian Office for the last quarterly report from Carlisle, you will see what I suggested. I would require no less careful reports from every school, even Agency day schools; and students who once appear on the reports should be kept there, and followed up, at least for the year they enter; and if the pupil had been sent to camp sick, it should appear "In camp sick," or "died;" and if the pupil had ran away, it should appear "Absent without leave" to the end of the school year,-- so that correct statistics and facts might be had of all schools, and a guide for the action of the Indian Office in transferring students



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to remote schools secured.

Unquestionably your statement of the general design and purpose of our industrial schools is the one which should prevail. As you will see by the foregoing it has not prevailed. You say you are not fully advised as to what has heretofore been our practice for advancing the pupils committed to our care, etc.. I reply we have not been so situated as to establish any sort of a curriculum. Beginning with raw Sioux, and Cheyennes in 1879, we have included almost everything up to the recently arrived raw Apaches, and are now desired to go forward and take in raw Utes, Navajos and Blackfeet.

My notion has been that Carlisle should graduate its pupils from about the ordinary town grammar school grade; and that in every case there should be an equipment of industrial training, either in trades or agriculture, for the boys; and for the girls, a round of ability in their own lines of life as ordinary house wives. They should be able to cut and make garments, and do all kinds of ordinary sewing, and cook, wash, and iron, and take care of a house. We have found these things perfectly practicable and comparatively easy of accomplishment. During the course of their education, if there should appear especially bright pupils, ambitious

(S) to proceed farther in their education, the public and private schools, academies and colleges of the country are all open to them, with prejudice or restraint. In general, students should go to the Training Schools for five years. Then if they arrive qualified in the second or third reader grade, they would graduate from the fifth reader grade with a pretty fair knowledge of arithmetic, geography, history, book-keeping, physiology, ect., But if they go to the Training Schools without previous schooling, the five years' term or a part of it will need to be repeated to give them an education equal to the grammar grade. The course to graduate from this grade in the town of Carlisle takes eight years provided the pupil is of average intelligence. Many take nine and some ten years. To graduate from the High School grade takes eleven years. This grade gives Arithmetic completed, Algebra, Natural Philosophy, Geometry, Grammar, Geography, Physiology, Book-keeping and drawing.

Availing myself of your invitation to communicate further on this general subject, I desire to state that prior to your administration I had authority and the means provided without stint to bring in children, and made my own railroad arrangements. Then I could go ahead. Soon after Mr. Atkins came in, the railroad trans-

portation was taken out of my hands, and authority previously granted to make arrangements, withdrawn, and without, as far as I know, any reason or cause whatever. Since then I have had several times to write the second time and then telegraph, before securing what was necessary. You will see that the letter afore mentioned, and enclosed, from the Commissioner, only promises to ask authority. I shall probably have to write again and then telegraph once or twice to the Office and perhaps to the railroad authorities. The Indian Office makes up one account, and I make up another account covering the necessary incidentals, outside of transportation, for the same business. After arranging for pupils they are sometimes lost by their being compelled to wait for the transportation and getting tired of it. Only a few days ago the Vice Principal of Hampton, Mr. Frissell, was compelled to wait for days at Bancroft, Neb. for transportation after a party of pupils were gathered and were ready to start. Finding that his children were getting impatient and he was likely to lose some of them he moved them to Blair at his own cost. I invite the closest scrutiny and comparison of my accounts with these later accounts for our transportation, Claiming that I managed the business more economically and with far greater confort and success to the service. Had there been any complaints against my management I certainly had a right

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to know what they were and to make answer. It would be very simple to arrange a system which would cover my use of certificates over subsidized roads. To deprive a commanding officer, carrying on a campaign against the Indians in the West, of the control of his transportation and rest that control in Washington, would be no more inconsistent than the present bungling arrangement. My letters and telegrams in these matters will show that I have rather under than over stated the situation.

When the Agency and the Missionary school systems shall be placed upon trial and tested even as imperfectly as the Training Schools have been recently placed upon trial and tested, it will be found that their cost is much greater in proportion to the gains, and that the fruits of their work are more against than for the interests of the general Government. Judged by the past they only elevate an Indian tribe into an Indian nation. I believe the only and legitimate purpose of all Indian School work is to bring about a capacity for it, and then the assimilation of the Indians as a part of the people of the country. Now that we have the "Land in severalty bill" as a foundation and a principle, the work of the schools along proper lines to accomplish the assimilation of the Indians is made hopeful. Properly directed, the schools will

[be]

a factor in speedily closing out our difficult Indian relations. Improperly managed, the schools will make war upon the principles of the severalty act and delay and even prevent a consumation of what that act is designed to accomplish. Tribal schools will strengthen tribal relations, and render tribes more difficult to handle than before being educated. See the five civilized tribes-- see the New York tribes! The New York tribes although in the heart of the great Empire State are a weak, Wintergreen berry, and sassafras root selling lot. Agricultural and Industrial schools on their reservations have been carried on for 70 or 80 years, and yet the Senecas are Senecas still, simply because they are educated only to be Senecas. In their schools today if you talk to the children some Missionary or other teacher who has learned their language will readily air his accomplishment in translating to them what you say. It is discreditable to us as a people that any Indian in the whole lot should not have learned English and forgotten his own language 50 years ago. They have never been encouraged to compete with the whites about them and consequently have no aspirations or ambition to anything but Seneca. The same is true of the Cherokees, Creeks and others. A "Cherokee nation", "Creek nation" and "Seneca nation" with weak governments repelling all fraternity with us and designed and desiring only to perpetuate themselves, is the natural fruit of the system.

In the management of schools, neither tribal relations nor race origin should be recognized. At Darlington, the Cheyennes have one school, the Arapahoes another. At Anadarko, the Comanches one school, the Kiowas another and the affiliated bands another.

Whatever the Indians may desire, this is <sup>a</sup> whimsical arrangement, hindering greatly their advancement, and should not be allowed. Just as soon as Indian youth can be fitted and sent into the common and others schools of the country it would be far better it should be done, in order that as youth, they may contend with our own youth mentally and physically. Our best results at Carlisle are outside of Carlisle. Last Winter we had over 100 of our best pupils out from us in the district and other schools of this state. Of course this disparaged our show of standing at Carlisle, but it was the thing to do for our pupils, and if I could use Carlisle according to my own judgment it would be simply as a preparatory school from which to turn into the regularly organized schools of the country Indian youth by the hundreds and thousands, and just as rapidly as they could be prepared for it. There is a more substantial gain in association, competition and example than there is in school, for association and competition will rouse them into self-supporting, industrious men, capable and <sup>u</sup>corageous enough to

meet the issues of civilized life. All our American experience shows that schools alone will not do that. When the association and example is so easily to be had, it is a shame not to use it, and a crime to cry out against it. It is the only thing that smooths away the virulence of past differences and ends the desire for tribal relations. The Indians will be accepted and respected when they are seen and known and show themselves entitled to respect, and they will not show themselves entitled to respect until they have a chance. Indian youth in English schools make greater progress than they can in Indian Schools, because there is so much above them to reach up to.

We have now out in families and on farms for vacation 275 pupils. They gain more that is practical and helpful to them in the two months vacation than even all our Carlisle advantages will give them theoretically in the other ten months of the year. Their understandings are quickened; their tongues are loosened, and they respond to the multitudes of examples and incentives which surround them. They hear English constantly until they become used to it, and <sup>strive</sup> to speak English until they do it; whereas, even in Carlisle, they hear more that is patois, than English, because they are necessarily associated mostly with one another.

Our Indian Schools are not well looked after. The treatment of the children and the accommodations provided for them are not a subject of as much interest as they ought to be. The boarding school at Pine Ridge is reported to have capacity for 225 pupils. If you will ask for the cubic contents of the sleeping accommodations at that school and divide the number of cubic feet by 225, you will cut down its alleged capacity more than one half. The utmost healthful capacity of the day schools is represented to be at least one third more than it ought to be, as I have seen them. I have been in an Indian boarding school at nine o'clock at night and found 74 Indian boys in 23 double wooden beds in one room close up under the roof. Size of the room 40 by 30 feet, with 9 feet ceiling in the centre, sloping sides down to 5 feet on each side, with only two dormer windows on each of the two roof sides as a means of ventilation. Every bed contained three and five of the beds four each. The boys were mostly naked, and as they lay there sweating, the odors were quite as sickening as the under-ground sleeping apartment of a San Francisco Chinese boarding house I visited some time after.

At another Agency boarding school with small rooms for sleeping, I found two double wooden beds in a room, with only a space of three feet between and about two feet to spare at the foot of



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each bed, and into these eight children were crowded.

Numbers of our students coming from Agency boarding schools show the effects of this treatment. The bullet of the soldier is not to be condemned as more barbarous and deadly in comparison. Certainly the great United States Government in caring for wards ought not to fall out one whit behind its cities. Any city providing for its paupers in this manner would be condemned, published and prosecuted by a righteously indignant public. There are many details of all our Indian Schools that need far better looking after, unless we intend a sarcasm by having them at all.

I am left here more than two years without inspection or personal observation and supervision of my superiors. Contracts for schools are entered into with religious and other organizations and children by the hundreds placed in such schools; and then from years end to years end, the schools go on in their own lines without any looking after by the Government Officials.

I don't mean to do anything but help, and hope my long letter will not be taken otherwise than that as a part of the Governments Indian School Service, I am anxious that that service be made as effective as practicable.

With great respect,  
Your obd't. servant,

*R. H. Pratt*  
Capt. & Supt.