

**LETTER OF DECEMBER 27, 1906
TO COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
FROM SPECIAL AGENT C.E. KELSEY**

REFER IN REPLY TO THE FOLLOWING:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
WASHINGTON.

San Jose, Calif., Dec. 27, 1906.

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

Sir:-

I am in receipt of your letter of Dec. 8, 1906, Land 102935-1906, enclosing a letter and plat from E. S. Curtis at Needles, Calif., in regard to the Indians of the Chimehuevi Valley, and also you instruct me to visit the said Indians and report as to means of saving the Indians their lands. I shall be glad to investigate this matter and will do as soon as I am able. I am able, however, to make a partial report, although as is based upon information gained second hand, I am not assured of its entire correctness. As Congressional action may be required I feel I should make report at the present time as far as I can as otherwise I may not be able to get a report in in time.

This same band of Indians is mentioned in my letter to you of Dec. 10th, 1906, in regard to the Indians of the 29 Palms reservation. I believe it was the intention of the officials who laid out the Colorado River reservation that these Indians should be removed to that reservation. But as the Chimehuevis are of Shoshonean stock and at enmity with the Indians lower down the river, who are of Yuman stock, nothing but the military power of the Government could make them go to the reservation

(2. Ind. Commr.)

or stay there when moved. I understand that all the available land upon the Colorado River reservation has already been apportioned and that this band would find there not only no welcome, but no land. It seems best therefore to take care of them where they already are and have been for centuries. On the Colorado river are several low valleys, usually overflowed by the river each season. When the water goes down the Indians plant crops and this is about their only means of subsistence. The Chimehuevi Valley is one of these low valleys. It is, as Mr. Curtis states, mostly upon the California side of the river. I think there is sufficient land upon the California side to answer for the whole band. These Indians have lived remote from civilization in a very primitive way. I doubt if they are ready for allotments. That is one of the things I expect to report upon hereafter. I think it better to add the entire tract occupied by the Chimehuevis to the Colorado river reservation or create a new reserve, if that is allowable. Then, if the land should be allotted it can be done with time enough available to avoid errors. Action to preserve the land for these Indians should certainly be taken at once or we are likely to have another very expensive Indian trouble on our hands and for which there is not a shadow of an excuse.

I enclose a map showing the location of the Indians. The only townships that have been surveyed are Tys 4 N. R. 25 and 26 E. The Indians are scattered along the river from the upper end of the valley in T. 6 N. R. 24 E. to the lower end in T. 4 N. R. 26 E., the greater number being in T. 5 N. R. 25 E., which contains most of the bottom land.

(S. Ind. Commr.)

Most of the bottom land properly so called is flooded when the river is high . To cultivate this in civilized fashion would require a system of levees. There is also a considerable quantity of land above the flood line, partly mesa land cut up by washes and partly the slope from the valley up to the hills, which lies finely for irrigation and can be irrigated at comparatively small expense by means of a ditch heading opposite the Blankenship Valley. Most of the slope lies in T. 5 N. R. 24 E. . I do not think it wise or feasible even, to attempt to allot the land until an irrigation system has been planned. I would therefore recommend the setting aside in some manner, for Indian use, of fractional township 4 N. ~~Rs. 25 and 26 E., T. 5 N. R. 25 E., 6 N. R. 25 E.,~~ the east one half of T. 5 N. 24 E., and sections 25, 26, 35 and 36 of T. 6 N. R. 24 E and a right of way for an irrigation ditch along the river through the last named township and through 7 N. R. 24 E. if that should prove necessary. *Possibly also 1, 2, 11-12 of T. 4 N. R. 24 E. should be included.* I should expect that the land so reserved would be more than actually required by the Chimehuevis, but that can not be determined in advance of investigation. There are a few Indians of this band at Topock and some out in the Mohave desert. The Indians at the Needles are Mohaves of Yuman stock and would not be included in this scheme. A few Chimehuevis are also at Fort Mohave in Arizona. The entire band probably does not number more than 250. I expect to mention this matter again in a report to be submitted within a few days in regard to proposed additions to several of the Southern California Indian reservations.

Very respectfully,

C. E. Kelley
and act for the Calif. Indians.