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Allotments in the
Coconino Basin...

Hon. Charles Curtis,
United States Senate.

Sir:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of March 26, 1910, regarding allotments to Navajo Indians on the public domain in the Coconino Basin, Arizona, made by Special Allotting Agent George A. Keepers.

As you are probably aware, Mr. Keepers made allotments to some 115 Navajo Indians living in the vicinity of Coconino Basin, filing the applications of these Indians with the Register and Receiver of the local Land Office at Phoenix, Arizona. The applications were transmitted, in due course, by the local Land Office to the General Land Office, and by that Office to the Indian Office for recommendation. The allotments have not yet been approved.

Shortly after Mr. Keepers completed his work in this locality so many protests against the validity of the allotments were received by the Indian Office and this

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Department that, by letter dated June 11, 1909, United States Indian Inspector Will M. Tipton was directed to proceed to Flagstaff, Arizona, and investigate the validity of the allotments made by Special Allotting Agent Keepers, especially with a view of ascertaining if sufficient settlement by the Indians had been made to meet the requirements of the Fourth Section of the Act of February 28, 1887 (24 Stat. L., 388), as amended by the Act of February 8, 1891 (26 Stat. L., 794).

Inspector Tipton, after a thorough investigation, submitted, on January 27, 1910, quite an exhaustive report on the conditions surrounding the allotments made by the Special Allotting Agent in the Coconino Basin. From this report it appears that the Indians have not made sufficient settlement as required by the acts mentioned herein to entitle them to allotments on the public domain. The Navajos living in this and other vicinities of Arizona and New Mexico depend mainly on stock-raising for a livelihood and, owing to the peculiar conditions of the country, must necessarily drift from place to place at different seasons of the year in search of pasturage for their stock. This, of itself, would apparently eliminate the probability of sufficient settlement having been made on specific 80 or 160-acre tracts to entitle the applicants to allotments under the Fourth Section of the acts mentioned herein.

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Final action has not been taken, however, on this matter, and the Indian Office advises me that it has transmitted a copy of the Inspector's report to the Special Allotting Agent who made these allotments, with the view of acquiring additional information thereon, when definite recommendations by that Office will be made to this Department with regard to these allotments.

The Department wishes to assure you that every effort will be made to protect both the interests of the Indians in the Coconino Basin and the white settlers there.

Very respectfully,


Secretary.

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