

Oakland Agency

Ind. Territory, ^{June} ~~January~~ 30, 1880

Gen. O. O. Howard.

My friend you know I have been in Washington: I got to Washington. I found many friends there. All the Headmen in Washington were glad to meet me. I had a talk with the Com of Ind Affairs. I understood their talk with my heart and kept it. I write to you this day. You are my friend have been and I think you are today You are always feeling kind towards the Indians. You know about me and so do I about you. I am trying to do what's right. I want for my people to join me in the way am going to take. I am not thinking about better things for my people. I never before expressed myself this way or in this manner. So it may be understood by you and others. I know religion is good. It makes all feel kind toward each other. I want you to know now I am going to be Christian man. So I want you to make known my wishes to all ministers in the West especially to Dr. Lindsley of Portland Oregon. I wish you all remember me in your prayers etc. I wish you would help ^{me} all you can in my undertakings. What I say now I say it in truth and it comes from my heart. My people have been suffering great deal since I have been moved to this country my ^{people} dying off all the time. I hope you will feel for me and sympathize with me and my people etc.

I have lost 153 of my people since I was brought to Fort Leavenworth up to present time I and people living in a country where climate is very hot.

I want you to know just how I am satuated (sic) I remeber the councils we had at Lapuai Idaho You and I could have ^{it} agreed if ^{me} had not been for other Indians.

I regret those days. I now see that you was talking to me right. I am now trying to do better hereafter. I know I got to do better and I hope all you Government Officers would do justices to me and treat me as you aught to. I know you feel kind towards me where ever you are. I have had same feelings towards you all the time, let us put away all the wrongs done to each other during the past. You know we are now at peace to each other as friends. I hope we will remain so as friends. We can and all people get along as friends to each other.

We all love friendship so we hope the past offences may be forgotten, etc. then let us be friendly true friends to each other Whites and Indians. I feel now towards you as my brother and will remain so to you. I take you as my true and best friend, this I say out of my heart, your body is like mine and your soul is like mine, your heart is like my heart, you are just the same under our Great Father of all nations. So let us feel to each other as such. I think this is the best thing you and I can do. I hope you take all this into your heart what I have said. You can let me know how you feel. So I desire your assistances, give me best advice that you know in regard to me satuation (sic) I know you will ^{do} this for me as my friend you know more than I do so you can tell me what is best for me to do. I would do as you tell me to. You told me at the time of surrender that I could go back to my country Idaho). So I say as you have disappointed me do something for me now. It will be satisfaction to me to know that if you can do something for me for I know you think of ^{the} promises made to me by you as I have said above. I am trying to take good advices hereafter I will walk in the way of right. I think I can be happy in doing so. So as I am now trying to take hold of civilization I hope ^{you help} me in it.- I want your asistances as I have said. You can do this I hope etc.

As I say I and my people are dying in this country and the number I have [going ?]. I hope you explain to ^{me} if I can at any time be in the better condition than I am in now. You know about these things You can tell me also what you think since we parted. I have now expressed myself to you. I hope you will say something to me. You will express yourself to me freely as to your own friend.

This I say to you as my friend

Yours Truly

Nez Perce

Chief Joseph

writer

James Reuben