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Daniel Holmes Mitchell

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AN INDIAN TRADER'S PLEA FOR JUSTICE, 1906

DANIEL HOLMES MITCHELL

edited by CLIFFORD E. TRAFZER

THERE IS NO CONCEPTION of the Indian trader in the American mind to match that of the Indian-fighting cavalry, the trail-driving cowboys, or the sod-busting farmers. When traders are dealt with at all they are usually portrayed as shadowy capitalistic frontier businessmen who merely took advantage of the ignorant savages. To view the traders in this light is to overlook the fact that some were genuine defenders of Indian rights. Such a trader was Daniel Holmes Mitchell.

A native of Cincinnati, Ohio, graduated from Harvard, Mitchell went west to seek adventure. Arriving in Gallup, New Mexico Territory, in 1905, the eastern greenhorn formed a partnership with Charles L. Day, an Indian trader from St. Michaels, Arizona. Together they developed the Malpais Ranch and Trading Company of Navajo, Arizona, dealing in cattle, sheep, and Indian trade goods. Thus began Mitchell's close relationship with the Navajo and Hopi Indians of the American Southwest.

In the years 1905 and 1906 Mitchell became convinced that the Hopi agent, Theodore G. Lemmon, and the Navajo agent, Reuben Perry, were working together to deny the Indians' legal rights and to punish them for alleged crimes. He took it upon himself to inform President Theodore Roosevelt and to argue the case of the Indians. Evidently public demands such as Mitchell's were heeded. The Bureau of Indian Affairs ordered the release of the imprisoned Navajos. In August 1906 they were taken from Alcatraz Island to Fort Huachuca in southeastern Arizona; by June 1907 all had been freed from custody.

It is doubtful President Roosevelt ever saw Mitchell's letter. Such communications often were lost in the bureaucratic maze of the federal government. Elting Morison, renowned editor of the Roosevelt letters, had never seen the Mitchell letter. The Library of Congress, repository of Roosevelt's papers, has no record of it. The present editor found Mitchell's letter among the papers of Charles L. Day in the Special Collections of the Northern Arizona University Library, Flagstaff.

AN OPEN LETTER

Saint Michaels, Arizona, December 1, 1906.

To the President of the United States.

Your Excellency:—

That I should come before you to plead the cause of others, when the only credential in my pocket is my American citizenship, may seem to you a delicate conceit; so I hasten to lay a greater claim on your indulgence, and one, I take it, to which you will not turn an inattentive ear. The acts of which this letter contains a short account, were done by men of your appointment, at present in the Government employ, and hence, in so far as they are wrong and criminal, they taint your Excellency's honor, and the justice of your administration. Understand, however, at the start, that I do not hold you personally responsible for their perpetration, nor do I believe they have ever reached your Excellency's knowledge. But, though I free you from all blame, I cannot excuse the injustice of them, and I look to you for a reparation of all the misery they have brought upon two peoples, themselves unable for many reasons to lighten the pressure of your hand. So I beg that you will read this poor epistle with an open mind, and after assuring yourself that it tells you but the truth, bring the weight of your authority to the removal of the injuries which the Navaho and Hopi Indians have suffered from the officers of your Excellency's government; or, at the

very least, grant me the courtesy of making public your reasons for supporting actions which are so at variance with your love of liberty and the kernel of our Constitution.

About a year ago, a Navaho Indian, Linny by name, living in Canyon de Chelly, some fifty miles from the Government Agency at Fort Defiance, Arizona, was accused by a neighbor of having made an assault upon his daughter. He denied the charge, and going at once to the neighbor's house, was there, in the presence of witnesses, completely exonerated by the girl herself. The girl's father, however, contended that since the young man's conduct had been rude enough to be misleading, some slight amends were certainly his due. So Linny gave him a white horse, and the affair was, to all intents and purposes, most amicably settled. Hence, it would seem to have been unnecessary for the agent, Mr. Perry, to have taken cognizance of the matter, when it came to his notice some weeks later; but he decided otherwise, and sent a native policeman to Canyon de Chelly to arrest Linny, and bring him to the agency. Now, this policeman was unfortunately too conscious of the honors your Government had thrust upon him, and carried his mission to a lamentable finish. Coming upon Linny with three companions in a sweat house, he announced that he had been sent to arrest them all, ordered them to abandon their ablutions on the instant, and come with him to Fort Defiance. Moreover, he did not deem it necessary to enlighten them as to the whys and wherefores of the case, but refused to answer any and all questions they put to him. I need not tell you that the policeman returned alone. Linny and his three companions, asserting that they had done nothing worthy of arrest, and presuming that the policeman had mistaken the men he had been sent to fetch, refused to accompany him, and after his departure went quietly about their own concerns. Whereat, the agent was exceeding wroth, not with the policeman, as might be supposed, but with Linny and his three companions. Nor was he at any pains to hide his anger, so that when he had occasion to journey to Chin Lee, a settlement at the mouth of Canyon de Chelly, shortly after the policeman's return, it was naturally thought among the Indians of that region he was coming to punish

in person so flagrant a violation of his authority. I might at this point question whether his authority legally extends to the lengths to which he had tried to carry it, whether, in fact, he or any deputy of his has the right to arrest any individual of whom he is nominal control; but the answer is so patent, that the query is not needed.

I must now turn to the character of Mr. Perry for a moment, and speak of the esteem in which he is and was held among the Navahos, that your Excellency may have a proper understanding of the ensuing matters. As a private gentleman, I have nothing but respect for Mr. Perry. If he conducted the affairs of others as well as he conducts his own, those under his executive could not complain. But this he does not do, and hence, though I would not make light of his many virtues, I cannot endorse him for any position within your Excellency's gift. Especially does he lack the qualities most essential to an Indian Agent. He is neither a diplomat, nor a man of even mind, but being unable to separate his own dignity from the dignity of his office, and holding the first much greater than the last, he is prone to meddle with things which, if not beyond his jurisdiction, are at least beyond the bounds of common sense. He looks at everything from the mountain of his egotism, thus making the affairs of office matters of personal compliment or pique, and would have all men pay him an homage which he would gain more freely were he not at such trouble to exact it. Yet his official sins are often not his own, but have their source in the heads of his petty superiors in Washington, few of whom have ever seen an Indian, and none of whom have ever tried to comprehend an Indian's attitude of mind, an attitude much broader than their own.

At the time of his departure of Chin Lee, the Navahos had against Mr. Perry many grievances, chief among which was his annoying habit of calling them to the agency at the slightest provocation, preferring charges against them when there of his own or an enemy's concoction, and throwing them into the guard-house upon this biased evidence until such time as they should show themselves subservient to his commands. Nothing was too trivial

to escape his notice; he even presumed to order their most intimate affairs; the grazing of their flocks, the branding of their cattle, the marriage of their daughters, never realizing that privacy is the common privilege of all men, and should be respected with the greatest caution. He seems never to have taken into consideration that, in their eyes, their customs and manner of life are quite as good as his; seems never to have understood that the society they have builded for themselves is eminently fitted to their needs and environment, and that while their code of morals and of law are crude to the white man, they are much more suitable than any which he in his higher intelligence can foist upon them. Were the Navahos a troublesome tribe, the attempt of the Indian office to tumble the whole structure of civilization about their ears might be excusable, for it would exterminate them within a decade; but since they are a quiet, pastoral people, such a policy is an impertinence, and they rightly resent it as such. They see with unerring instinct the evil it portends for their children and their children's children, by setting before these habits of life and ideals of existence which in no wise have they been brought to comprehend.

Hence, you see, when the news of Mr. Perry's approach was brought to the Indians dwelling in and around Canyon de Chelly, it was natural for them to feel serious misgivings, even alarm. To deliberate upon the event, they banded together in a council, not of war, your Excellency, but of peace, and decided upon a course of action befitting with their native dignity; a course which to a just man, could have given no offense. It was this: Upon the Agent's arrival at Chin Lee, Linny and his three companions, who had refused arrest, together with the head men of the district, were to go to him and ask an audience. If this were given, which in courtesy it should have been, they would state their side of the controversy, and request that the matter be settled on the spot. Surely, there was nothing rebellious in such a request! The next morning was to show them how far they had mistaken the mettle of their man.

Mr. Perry, indeed, granted them an audience, but opened the discussion by announcing that he could not discuss the matter

there, and that they must come to the Agency to put forward any claims. Linny pleaded that at least his three companions, who were guilty of no crime, might be exempted from the journey. Mr. Perry paid no heed. Linny then went on to say that he, himself, had done no wrong, and that what little trouble he had had was settled long ago. Mr. Perry told him that from all he had heard, *he believed this*, but, nevertheless, they must all come to the Agency. When he was asked for what cause, Mr. Perry replied that they must come to the Agency to find out. Thereupon, the meeting broke up. The Indians retired, and Mr. Perry prepared to continue his journey to the Cotton-woods, to transact the real business which had brought him hither. To the Indians, however, the hitching of his team was a signal for his return to Fort Defiance, and they held another hasty council to devise means of bringing him to terms. This is what they decided upon: When Mr. Perry should get into his buggy, one of their number was to stand at his horses' heads and hold them, until Linny should tell him to let go. In case Mr. Perry should attempt to gain possession of his policeman's revolver, another man was appointed to be in readiness to frustrate this design by catching hold of Mr. Perry's coat sleeves at the proper moment. At all costs, violence was to be avoided, except in self-defense. I doubt whether any body of white men would have shown so much concern for law and order in a like predicament.

Everything fell out as the Indians had presumed. Mr. Perry stepped into his buggy, took the reins, and motioned to the Indian to release the horses, next he spoke to him, and then, receiving no answer, scented trouble, jumped double-quick from the buggy and dashed for his attendant policeman. He even reached for the pistol in his policeman's belt, but was caught as planned, struggled for a moment, and then made the best of a bad bargain. He asked them what they wished. They replied that he surely knew. Mr. Perry reiterated his refusal to discuss the matter away from the Agency. Thereupon, Linny took a bolder stand. He told Mr. Perry that he must discuss it, and that he would not be allowed to proceed upon his journey until he had discussed it, and adjudged the entire difficulty, and he gave his reasons for thus defying the Agent's author-

ity. He reminded Mr. Perry that he had never found the Navahos an unruly tribe, but that on the contrary, whenever there had been an offender among them, the tribe had always loaned him their aid in bringing such a man to punishment. But in this instance, he said, it seemed to him that Mr. Perry was wrong, because neither he nor his companions were offenders against the Great White Father. It was true, of course, that he, Linny, had had a misunderstanding with a neighbor some little time ago, but among them this had been amicably settled, and was already quite forgotten. Then he suggested to Mr. Perry that in trivial affairs like his had been, the Indians were far better qualified to act as judges than Mr. Perry himself, a man who did not understand their customs, a man who could not even speak their language. Then he called attention to the difference in their positions. It was a long, tedious journey to Fort Defiance, and to make it was to them a large expense. The Government did not shoe their horses for the road, nor feed them upon the way, nor house them while they were at the agency, nor give them a buggy to ride about the country in. He also mentioned the inconvenience such a trip would cause. It was the harvest time, the most important season of the year. They were busily engaged in garnering their crops, upon which depended their livelihood for the coming Winter. Their families, too, he reminded Mr. Perry, would suffer should they be locked in the guard-house, and their flocks and herds be scattered while they were doing sentence for an uncommitted crime. On account of all these things, and since Mr. Perry was already at Chin Lee, Linny begged that he would settle the matter between them at once, and he announced himself willing to make what further reparation Mr. Perry should think right to the father of the girl. This, Mr. Perry refused point-blank to do. Then, Linny informed him, since he had refused to adjust the matter, he would be kept exactly where he was until such time as he should promise to drop the matter entirely. This last threat, if threat it may be called, gave Mr. Perry an opportunity which, were he of a larger mind, he would have been ashamed to take. Knowing that in a white man's tribunal such a promise did not bind, and ignoring the fact that among the

Navahos a word passed is always sacred, he gave his word of honor to meddle no further in the affair, and proceeded hastily upon his way.

Once more at Fort Defiance, he bent every energy to punish the men who had dared to strip him of his self esteem. His first act was to telegraph for a squad of cavalry "to protect the Agent and the settlers." The squad arrived, stayed for a night at the Agency, and returned to their post at Fort Wingate, Lieutenant Cooley reporting that no protection was needed. Ten days later, however, an entire troop came unexpectedly upon the scene. Captain Willard, the commanding officer of this second body, had the same orders as the officer of the first detachment. He was to "protect the agent and the settlers," and had no authority to combine with Mr. Perry in bringing the Navaho offenders to terms. This is important in the light of later events. A conference of all the head men of the tribe was immediately convened under the presidency of Mr. Perry. At this gathering, the words of Manuelito, an old chief, dead these many years, must have been in the minds of all, though they were not repeated—words to the effect that when the Great White Father in Washington wished to choose an agent for the Navahos, it seemed that he got on his horse and rode north and south, east and west, until he found the very worst man in all the land. At this conclave, Captain Willard explained that if the offenders were not at the agency within a certain time, the troops would be ordered to go and fetch them, and it was quite likely that many innocent persons would suffer during the course of this arrest. He then asked the chiefs how long it would take them to get the men to the Agency. They replied forty days. He gave them fifty. Long before the expiration of this time, the men, Linny, his three companions who had refused arrest, and the three most prominent in detaining Mr. Perry at Chin Lee, all came in of their own accord, without an escort, and without any guarantee of personal safety, preferring to suffer what punishment might be decreed rather than cause misery to the entire tribe. The military showed they had no authority to proceed further in the matter by returning to Fort Wingate the following morning, and leaving the Indians to Mr. Perry for

disposal. Mr. Perry proceeded as follows: They were brought before him in his office, and *privately* examined; and upon the evidence of misconduct he produced, ordered by him into the guard-house. There they stayed for a month or more. Then, another squad of cavalry came to the Agency, escorted them to Fort Wingate, and later accompanied them to Alcatraz Island, the military prison in San Francisco harbor. This was last December. Mr. Perry announced to the settlers whom he had so kindly protected from the imaginary danger of having these men at large, that they were under sentences of from one to three years. A month or two ago, I understand, they were all transferred to Fort Huachuca in southern Arizona to finish out their time. About a week ago, three of them were returned under guard to Fort Defiance and set at large. The rest are still in durance at Fort Huachuca. There the matter rests at present, if such a flagrant injustice can be said to rest at all.

Now, your Excellency is no doubt conversant with the terms of the treaty made between the Navaho Indians and the Government of the United States in the year 1868, and knows the rights and properties guaranteed to this people in the same; but if not, a copy of the treaty is presumably on file in the proper department, and you can readily refresh your memory. But, allowing the violations of that treaty to pass unnoticed, I would ask the status of these men, and by what right you presume to keep them in captivity? As to whether they should have been punished, is beside the point, for if punished, they should have been punished according to the law.

If you call these Navahos prisoners of war, and every shred of evidence goes to prove them the contrary, I question your right to hold them as such. Was war declared upon this tribe of Indians last November? I can find no record of such a declaration in the books of the Senate last convened. But, perhaps, your Excellency holds them as rebels against the Government of the United States. If so, may I ask what acts of theirs you can bring forward to support so poor a plea. They never took up arms against your Government, they never fired a single shot against any officer of the same. If I

did not choose to order my intimate affairs in accordance with the wishes of your subordinates, would I be liable to imprisonment in a military prison? Are not all men living in this land under the protection of the same laws, are they not all equal before the bar of justice? Or does the measure of protection you bestow upon your wards correspond with their ability to circumvent the abuses practiced upon them by those you have so graciously put into authority? Nay, I have too high an appreciation of your Excellency's intelligence to suppose you capable of holding them as military prisoners. Then, let us consider them for what they are, offenders against the civil code. In this light, the injustice done them is of a far, far deeper dye. By rights they should have been tried *publicly* before a legally constituted court of the Territory in which they reside; and that court could have preferred no graver charge against them than the offence of petty assault, for which the highest penalty at present standing upon the statute books is *sixty days imprisonment*. Instead of receiving such a trial, consider what was done them. They were examined privately before the Agent, a man prejudiced against them from the start, who by no stretch of his lawful authority can pretend to the powers of a judicial officer; they were kept in confinement for over *thirty days*, awaiting the pleasure of his superiors in the Indian office, and were finally arbitrarily sentenced by that department upon the recommendation of Mr. Perry to terms of imprisonment ranging from *one to three years*. There can be no excuse for the man or body of men guilty of so mean an abuse of their authority. They may plead ignorance of the true facts; to plead innocence of misconduct argues them unfit to hold the smallest position under your Government and mine.

The other matter to which I would call your Excellency's attention concerns the Hopi Indians, the next door neighbors of the Navahos, and is at present in process of enactment.

The Hopi are a Pueblo tribe, orderly, industrious and civilized. Since before the settlement of Jamestown, they have had a body of excellent laws, of their own promulgation, which they enforce with excellent probity. A crime among them is the exception; they manage their fields without the need of fences; they conduct their

affairs with respect for the rights of others. They have always been, like the Navahos, self-supporting, and have never received aid from the Government, except against their will; their houses are neat and orderly; the commandments of their religion are quite as good as the ten of ours; and their city governments are models of incorruptibility.

The benign Bureau which watches over their affairs has built at Keams Canyon, a place ten miles east of their most eastern village, a large commodious school, and provided for their benefit a curriculum which includes such studies as arithmetic, spelling, history, and geography, for which the scholars have no need, and excludes everything which could possibly be of service to them upon graduation, such as farming, the breeding of cattle and the building of homes. In short, this school, like all the other institutions of the Indian Department, serves only to increase the wants of its pupils, without aiding them to attain to them, and leaves them at the end less able to cope with the difficulties of their existence. Under these circumstances, it is not strange that the Hopi, who are no fools, object to having their children attend this academy. They have, time and again, voiced an orderly displeasure against it, but to no purpose, for the authorities in control have called in the assistance of Navaho policemen in filling the benches and urging the patient Hopi to submit. The Navahos being the hereditary enemies of the Hopi, this course is to be commended for its delicacy. Moreover, in the absence of any law in the Territory of Arizona making education compulsory, and since no such law has ever been passed by Congress for the nation's wards, such persuasion is at the best illegal. However—

This Fall, when school opened, an unusual number of parents refused to bring their children to its doors. The two chief offenders among these, were a couple whose children the agent had refused to return last Spring until they promised to fetch them back again this Fall. I trust your Excellency will notice how, when the tables are turned, and it is an agent who extracts a promise, the fulfillment of that promise is required, even at the point of the bayonet. It chanced that these refractory parents belonged to a re-

ligious sect among the Hopi, and I must now tell you something of these schisms in the Hopi church, in order to show your Excellency how the fact that these people have been fighting for religious liberty has been turned against them for a sin.



There resides at Hopi, as in all other weak and defenseless communities, a parcel of men too lazy to earn an honest living, who are paid fat salaries by people of mis-shapen consciences for spreading the gospel according to Saint Baptist, Saint Methodist, or good Saint Presbyter—they never even by accident spread the gospel according to Christ. I know of no class so zealous as these missionaries to stir up strife in a community and turn the moral peccadilloes of their neighbors into current coin. Indeed, upon the success of such endeavors depends their sustenance, for the more evil they can find the field, the more munificent will be their salary. In short, their worth increases with the amount of spiritual carrion

they exhume. I speak, your Excellency, of what I have seen, and from a neutral vantage-ground. Being the member of no sect, but merely a man who worships God in His out-of-doors, and tries to do as little harm as may be to his neighbors, I am quite unbiased in my judgment, and I solemnly affirm that among the Indians, where they fore-gather in the greatest numbers, I have never seen a single missionary, excepting the Catholic Fathers—who are, to be sure, educators, and not missionaries—for whom I would dishonor the name of gentleman. At Hopi, these missionaries have been unutterably obnoxious. That one of their parishioners, as they are pleased to call these honest, upright people, is a moral man, of honor and integrity, just, kind, courteous, charitable and without spleen, seems as nothing in their eyes. If he is not a professing Christian of the creed which they expound, he is to them worse than his own offal. Could the Hopi forbid them their doors, these missionaries might be bearable, but they are immune from a tithe of the persecution they inflict, for they live under the protection of your Excellency's Government, and some of them are even in your Excellency's employ. They are thus in a position to work incalculable harm. The people, one and all, detest them. Their abuse of hospitality—for they enter a house only to spy upon its inmates—their tale-bearing to the authorities—and they do not scruple to lie to gain their ends—and their double dealings generally, have disgusted all classes of society. They welcome any discord among the Hopi, and do all in their power to bring discord about, knowing full well that if they can only bring matters to a crisis, repressory measures will follow, and they can thus cow this patient people more than ever. In the present instance, it is these missionaries your Excellency must thank for the garbled and untruthful account of affairs which has governed the actions of the authorities. The breach which they have turned to their own aggrandizement, is briefly this:

There have been for some time two parties among the Hopi, divided on matters of their own religion. During the past Summer, these disagreements reached a head, and culminated in the formation of two factions, bitterly opposed to one another. To these

factions, the missionaries have given rather misleading names. One, the Friendlies, so-called, stand for a change in their own ritual, a change not incorporating any of the tenets of Christianity. The other, the Unfriendlies, demand that the ritual be left as it now is, and refuse to accept the smallest alteration. Now, the Friendlies, realizing the value of Government support, and the prestige to be gained by good behavior, have sent their children dutifully to school, and been docile under all the commands the authorities and the missionaries have laid upon them. The Unfriendlies, on the other hand, have been forced by the truckling attitude of their opponents and the favoritism showered upon these by the authorities to take a bold stand against American control of their affairs, and refuse to send their children to school. Your Excellency must understand, however, that the trouble lies deeper than any expressed loyalty to your Government. The Friendlies would not hesitate to disown their subservience did it not serve their ends, and the Unfriendlies at the worst only ask the right to pursue their old customs without interference from the missionaries and the officials.

As I have said, this Fall, an unusual number of parents refused to bring their children to the Government school. There upon the Agent proceeded to the village of Shimopavi with a few policemen, to take the children by force. Arriving at the village, he entered the house of the parents who had not fulfilled the promise he had exacted from them the preceding Spring, and took them prisoners. The children he did not capture, as they had been hidden. When the news of this arrest spread through the village, friends came to the couples' assistance, and forced Mr. Lemmon, the Agent, to release them. Thereupon, Mr. Lemmon sent back to Keams Canyon for a force of fifty Navahos. This armed contingent came, but the villagers having meanwhile procured support from Oraibi and Mishongovi, Mr. Lemmon was persuaded not to put the matter to a test, and returned to the school. Of course, the next move was to call in the troops.

In the interval before their arrival, however, events moved rapidly. The Friendlies, at the instigation of the missionaries, and

with the connivance of the agent, drove their opponents from the different villages, out of their houses, away from their fields, seemingly in a delirium of religious frenzy, and forced them as outcasts to choose a site for a village of their own.

When the troops did arrive, one would think they would have aided these refugees to regain their property, but no, they marched to their temporary camp—for the village is not yet built,—and proceeded to bully them still more. Mr. Perry, appointed to be supervisor, presumably for his excellent administration of Navaho affairs, personally conducted the military, two troops, to Hopiland, and the ensuing measures were taken by his orders, acting under authority from the Indian Department. I must here say that I count it to the honor of the American Army that not a man of this detachment but expressed his detestation of the task set them, and considered that in helping to perform it he had soiled his manhood and his flag. This is what was done.

Upon the refusal of the Unfriendlyes to send their children to the Government school, the entire male population of the camp were arrested at the point of the bayonet, and disposed of as follows. Seventy-two men and boys were put in chains, thirty to a chain, a guard of Navaho policemen placed over them (fifteen of these policemen were enlisted for this especial purpose), and set to work repairing the roads between Keams Canyon and the railroad, for terms varying from one to three months, the length of their punishment proportioned to the magnitude of their offences in Mr. Perry's eyes. The remaining prisoners, twenty-eight in number, were taken to Fort Wingate. Of these, the chief and his assistant are sentenced to imprisonment for life, the chief's two sons are to have two years at Carlisle, and the rest go to Alcatraz Island for terms of one to five years.

Oh, your Excellency, I cry you shame. That you should have appointed men into our country's service capable of such crimes against humanity, is a blot upon the record of your administration which only the most drastic measures can remove. I could tell you, too, of many acts of the most open cruelty on the part of those in authority—how the men were left without food for forty-eight

hours because they would not sign for having received a tin-cup and pie-plate, fearing in the absence of a good interpreter that they would be binding themselves to things of vaster import; how the children were herded like cattle to the school; how the women, left defenseless by the withdrawal of their husbands and brothers, whom they were not allowed to accompany, nor even hold communication with, were returned to their several villages, to be brow-beaten by their adversaries; how they have been deprived of the fruit of their fields, on which their sustenance depends, by their opponents, and with the direct connivance of your Excellency's Government, and how they are now destitute of the barest necessities; how the prisoners taken to Fort Wingate, young and old, were compelled to run through snow and sleet beside the horses of your Excellency's cavalry all the way, a distance of a hundred and some odd miles; and how the Friendlies are now in high favor with the missionaries and the school marms, are living upon the fat of the land, and being awarded all the contracts at the Agent's disposal, regardless of their fitness for the same—but in pity I forbear.

The inhumanity of your conduct needs no elucidation, but I should like to ask a few questions concerning the legal methods you employed. To begin with, for what offense did you presume to arrest these men? For refusing to send their children to your school? Then, how do you account for the taking of one man whose eldest child is scarcely more than four? And, moreover, since there is no law in the Territory of Arizona making education compulsory, and since no legislation has ever been passed by Congress for the nation's wards to this effect, if you have arrested them upon this charge, what was your authority? Again, since these Pueblo Indians have been adjudged in the courts to be citizens of the United States, in full possession of all the powers and privileges guaranteed by the Constitution to citizens of the United States, why were they not arrested by the officers elected in their county to fulfill such duties, upon warrants sworn out against them in the proper form? And when arrested, I should like to know by what court they were tried, and by what authority this court exists? And finally, since when did the American Government become a party to the sup-

pression of religious liberty, and presume to dictate the God a man shall worship?

Now, your Excellency, I have already corralled your attention for far too long a time, but I cannot bring this letter to a close without saying a word concerning the Bureau of Indian Affairs. This Bureau seems to me to be one of the most prominent under your jurisdiction, for it holds the rights and welfare of a weaker people within the hollow of its hand. Its officials should be chosen with the greatest caution. Their task is a delicate one, involving the constant decision between right and wrong. With them lies the initiation of policies upon which the very life of a race depends. The White Man's Burden is a heavy load; I have noticed that when given into the charge of careless and unskillful hands, it always weighs upon the wrong shoulders. The greatest caution should be in the choice of the various agents. Every agent is of necessity much in the same position as was The Little Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe, and should be chosen chiefly upon their ability to fulfill the duties of a parent. Your Excellency, how many of us are big enough, and broad enough, and good enough, to be the father of another man's children? I am sure that I, for one, am not. Then, too, when it is remembered that many of an agent's children are themselves men of families, eminently fitted both by property and experience to manage their own affairs, it can well be seen that the difficulties of such a post are multiplied a thousand fold. Now, I would respectfully suggest a few reforms. Make the officials of this department Civil Service men, thus removing one of its foremost faults; raise the dignity of an agent's position by making his salary worthy of the best brains; remove the yards of red tape which hamper him, and change the curriculum of the schools until it embraces only those things which will really aid the Indian in his journey along the road which he must travel. But above all else, since it is your aim to instill into the Indian's mind a respect for law and order, and give him an understanding and appreciation of the same, follow with the most scrupulous attention the letter and tenets of the law in all your dealings with him, and call in the assistance of your military only after all other means have failed,

for surely the only way to teach the right is to do the right yourself. And choose your Agent with the most searching and unbiased care.

And now, your Excellency, I would repeat that I hold you personally guiltless of any participation in these wrongs, and my belief that they have never been brought to your attention, and allow me to assure you of my hearty support in any reforms you may be pleased to undertake, so long as such reforms do not tend to abuse the Indian's right to freedom of conscience, and his right to administer his own private and intimate concerns. Finally, I make a formal demand, though I know it is unnecessary, that you right the wrongs herein set forth with the utmost dispatch, that the prisoners now held illegally in prison be set at liberty at once, that if further punishment be thought their due, they be turned over to the mercy of the properly constituted tribunals for disposition, that all possible amends be made them for the wrongs and losses they have suffered at your Excellency's hands, and that those responsible for their persecution be ignominiously dismissed from your administration and our country's service.

Your sincere servant and fellow citizen,
Daniel Holmes Mitchell