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Dear Mr. Attorney General:

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of December 16, 1920 ("G" CSE 183230-33), submitting photostat copies of notes prepared by Mr. George A. H. Fraser, Special Assistant, on the power of the Government to condemn land within the Tejon Ranch as a place of residence for the Indian occupants, the recommendation of Mr. Fraser being that an item be inserted in the Indian appropriation bill to provide for the "procurement of lands for Indians in California by purchase or condemnation, at the discretion of the Secretary of the Interior." I have also received your letter of January 4, 1920 ("G" CSE 183230-35) to the effect that suit has been instituted against the Ranch owners and others.

Regarding Mr. Fraser's recommendation, it may be said that we now have an appropriation of \$10,000 in the present Indian Act to purchase land for homeless Indians in California, and that the Indian bill for the

JAN 15 1921

next fiscal year contains an item appropriating \$20,000 for the same purpose. This Department has never attempted to enforce a condemnation right in behalf of Indian occupants in cases like this, and its opinion in this particular instance is that it is extremely doubtful whether the legislation suggested by Mr. Fraser could be obtained. Mr. Fraser's correspondence seems to indicate some possibility of a compromise that would be satisfactory to the Government and the Ranch owners; at least he has made that suggestion to Mr. Harry Chandler. Such a course would be in a measure acceptable to this Department, and in furtherance thereof it may be said that we would be willing to pay a reasonable price for sufficient land to provide comfortably for the Tejon Indians. The details could safely be left to Mr. Fraser to work out with such instructions as your Department may give him, but it would seem that this Department should be given opportunity to say finally whether the terms of the compromise are satisfactory. But if an acceptable compromise cannot be agreed upon, this Department believes that the rights of the Indians should be fully tested in the courts, and it appears from your later letter,

referred to above, that such course has actually been
entered upon.

Cordially yours,

Assistant Secretary.

The Honorable

The Attorney General.