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Letter from William Clark to George Sibley, January 11, 1817

William Clark

St. Louis

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George C. Sibley
U.S. Factor
Fort Osage Missouri

Gov. Clark
Jan. 11, 1817
St. Louis Jany. 11th, 1817

Sir

Your letter of the 30th of December I received last night from the post office where it had been several days, and have not time to answer it as fully as I could wish.

You say that the Osage Interpreter are inviting the Kansas & Osage to a great Council at St. Louis to be held early next Spring.

The duties of the commissioners have closed and no instructions has been given by me to invite those Indians to a grand Council; last fall the Commissioners were anxious that the Osage should meet the Cherokees & Quapaws at this place, and sent two Messages for them, those on the Arkansaw refused, and the others would not come. When I want those tribes I shall call for them through their proper agents.

If those interpreters have exceeded their instructions they must be called to account for their conduct.

The Osage Blacksmith has been ordered to Fort Osage if he does not go there with his tools early in the spring he will be displaced and another appointed.

Noel Mongrain resides with the Osage by my direction, as to Paul Loise the arrangement of him was made by the Secretary when I was not in the executive duties.

If the conduct of those interpreters has been such as to warrant a dismissal, they certainly shall not remain in service if I have the power to dismiss them and be otherwise punished for their conduct. Be so good as to procure such evidence as you can and send to me

I must observe that as Paul Loise is a public interpreter and now with a tribe immediately under your agency if he has conducted himself improperly you are authorized to order him from amongst that tribe.

The Arkansas Osage has been conducted themselves very improperly and some check should be put there career. They listen to nothing that is said to them, Treat the whites with a great deal of brutality and have even killed some on Red River, as I am informed. On those points, you are or can be better informed than I can be and at liberty to act as you think best on the subject of annuities, and should you err let it be on the side of severity to that tribe, who have conducted themselves improperly, perhaps it may be well to reserve a part of the annuities.

I think that Bloody war will take place between the Cherokee aided by other Tribes against the Osage which is not in my power to prevent should I be disposed.

If you have incurred some small expenses in the repairs of the tools & of the Kansas friendly sacks, Little Osage, it will be allowed.

I shall deliver to Mr. Kennedy for you 3 uniform coats (not Chief Coats, as I have non) three hats and a flag such as you request. Mrs. Clarks love to Mrs. Sibley, and my compts. To Mrs. Sibley.

Respectfully

With great respect

Yr. Obt. Servant

WM. Clark

Sibley Mss. V. I
Missouri Historical Society.