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wild bands, with the order to them to come to the reservation, or be considered as enemies, returned on the 11th of February, 1876. His messengers reported that the "hostile" Indians received the invitation and warning in good spirit, and without any exhibition of ill feeling. They answered that as they were then engaged in hunting buffalo, they could not conveniently come, but that early in the spring they would visit the agency to dispose of their robes and skins, when the question as to their future movements could be thoroughly discussed. He stated that the Indians referred to were encamped on the Yellowstone, peaceably inclined, and they deny all statements "so extensively circulated," that they intend to make war on the frontier in the spring. In a former communication to the department, of the date of January 26, 1876, agent Bingham said that from such facts as he could obtain from runners, he had no reason to apprehend trouble from the Indians named; that so far as he had information the Indians had not been so quiet and friendly disposed for a³⁰⁷/long time, as they were at that period, and the intimation of a renewal of hostilities was a surprise not only to him, but to all the Indians under his charge, who disclaimed all knowledge of any intention on the part of themselves or their less civilized friends, called, he said, for the sake of distinction, "hostile." He said "they blame the newspapers for publishing sensational reports for which there is no foundation, but simply calculated to prejudice the government and its officers against the Indians, who have no means of contradicting such statements, unless through their agents."

The commissioner of Indian affairs having resigned, John