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The Governor of Washington to the Secretary of War.

Executive Office, Territory of Washington  
Olympia, March 21, 1856.

Sir: In my two reports of February 19 and 9 I laid before the department the circumstances of my return from the Blackfeet country, the condition of the Territory and the measure taken by me to call out volunteers and to apply them to the prosecution of the war.

I now propose to lay before the department a full view of the whole matter and to indicate the measures which, in my judgment are still necessary to protect these distant settlements, and to inflict that summary chastisement upon the Indians demanded both by their unprovoked atrocities and the permanent peace of the country.

I have caused two maps to be prepared; one of the country west of the Cascades showing the points now occupied by that portion of the friendly Indians, who for five months have been under the charge of local agents; the lines occupied by the regular troops now in the field under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Casey; the point occupied by the naval forces; the lines occupied by the volunteer forces now in the field; the block houses occupied by our citizens; the lines of supplies; the depots for their protection; the country occupied by the hostiles; the lines over which reinforcements can come to them from east of the Cascades and one of the country east of the Cascades showing the tribes, the lines of communications and the points at the latest advices occupied by the hostiles. The number of souls and of warriors will be shown on this map.

A glance at the first map will show that the citizens of the Territory have for the protection of their families and to get in and harvest their crops and in connection with the military service of the Territory, built some thirty-three block houses and depots.

Fort Henniss, in Mound prairie, is a large stockade with block houses at the alternate corners, with buildings inside affording shelter to all the families of the flourishing settlement. At Nathan Eaton's the defences consist of sixteen log buildings in a square facing inwards, the object being not only to collect the families for protection but to send out a scouting party of some 15 men when marauders are in the vicinity.

This point is within four miles of the Nisqually bottom, which was the headquarters for four weeks of a band of hostiles and is central to many Indian trails.

On Skocham bay there is an establishment of the same character and nearly as large as Fort Henniss. This latter was built by one of the volunteer companies of the new levies, but the former entirely by the citizens, without any aid from the territorial authorities.

The settlements are now so secured by block houses that the citizens will hold them, even should every Indian in the Sound become hostile and be reinforced by large bands from the north.

The whole country on the eastern shore of the Sound from the Skookum creek to Snow-how-mish is a war ground. No friendly Indian is allowed there except he has a pass from an authorized agent stating his specific business, or he be connected with the military and naval service. Two parties of Indian auxiliaries are now in the field besides which quite a number of Indians are employed as spies, guides and in canoe service.

I will now give you a condensed view of the present conditions of the military operations on the sound.

1- The regular troops now occupy the Muckleshoot prairie as their central position. The line of communication to Steilacoom is secured by a block house and ferry at the crossing of the Puyallup. A ~~communication with the front position~~ company has been sent to Seattle to move up the Duamish and



open a communication with the central position. A block house will be established at the mouth of Cedar creek and probably one at John Thomas'. The force under lieutenant Coloney Casey has been very active and this gallant officer has made the most favorable impression upon our people .

2-The naval forces occupy Seattle. This place is also held by a company of volunteers, who, for some days, have been under orders to occupy the line of the Dunamish and who, in that duty, will operate with the company sent there by Lieutenant Coloney Casey.

3-The Northern battalion have their headquarters at Fort Tilton, near the falls of the Snoqualmie. They number about ninety white men and about the same number of Indians (friendly) under Pat Kannim. They will establish block houses in the prairie above the falls and on Cedar Creek and will extend their scouts to the Muckleshoot and Dunamish.

4- To circumscribe the field occupied by the enemy I have suggested to Captain Swartwout, in command of the naval forces a joint operation upon the lake back of Seattle, a block house to be built on the lake at the nearest point to Seattle, a good road opened with Seattle and boats from the navy, with one hundred men to be placed on the lake. Captain Swartwout does not, however, by his instructions, feel authorized either to cooperate with the military authorities of the Territory or to take part in any operation carrying his force away from the immediate shore of the Sound. I enclose a copy of my letter to Captain Swartwout and of his reply thereto.

5-The central battalion have their headquarters at Cornell's prairie and at Porter's. The communication with the rear is received by a block house and ferry, at the crossing of the Puyallup and block houses at Montgomerys at the Yellem Prairie, at Nathan Eaton's and Jones'. This battalion numbers in the field, including the garrison of Yellem and Montgomery's and the

crossing of the Puyallup, about 150 men.

6-Our supplies are drawn mainly from the country between this point and the Cowlitz landing. The route is well secured by block houses.

7-Lone Tree Point is also held by a volunteer force of ten men. It guards several important trails.

8-Bellingham Bay has its block house defended by fifteen men of Captain Peabody's company.

9-The southern battalion, on its arrival on the Sound, will be for the most part dismounted, and sent to reinforce the central battalion. The two battalions will then operate up White River towards the Naches pass, cooperating with Lieutenant Colonel Casey.

The map of the country east of the Cascades will show the large number of Indians already hostile, or who may be incited to hostility, in the ease with which they may communicate with each other, the great number of excellent trails, the large extent of country embraced in the theatre of operations, and the facility with which reinforcements can be sent over the Cascades.

Hence the importance of the most vigorous and decisive blows to get possession of the whole country east of the Sound, now invested with the savages and to hold in our hands the routes over the Cascades, most vigorous measures east of the Cascades, in order that the Indians may be simultaneously struck in the Yakima country.

It is probable that the hostile Indians rather exceed the minimum estimate of two hundred men as stated in my memoir to General Wool, a copy of which has been sent to the department, but I do not think they will be found to exceed three hundred men.

Their headquarters have been on the Nuckleshoot prairie, now occupied by Lieutenant Colonel Casey and now they have moved



up either White or Green river. But there are bands also on the lake back of Seattle and probably of Cedar creek.

The map will show that the hostiles are only within a few hours distance of every reservation. There are many trails known only to the Indians and it will not be possible, in any contingency entirely to prevent communication.

From the hostile camps marauding parties can steal out and turning the heads of the Puget Sound and Nisqually they can, in from six to twelve hours, strike any settlement from Steilacoom to the Cowlitz landing. More than this, there are places where they can on this line of settlements, establish themselves, and for many days defy all our efforts to drive them out.

Consider the face of the country prairies, and heavy timber and many streams, almost impenetrable brushwood on the banks, and heavy drift along either shore, there is not a road or trail of twenty miles in the whole Sound country which does not afford one or even more excellent ambuscades.

Between this place and Cowlitz landing are two Indian reservations. The Chehalis and Cowlitz. The former can easily be incited to hostility and they number a little more than one hundred warriors. We know of some three or four men who are endeavoring to stir up the tribe to war. My plan has been to get up a small auxiliary force of some fifteen of the best men of the tribe who make scouts every few days toward the head of the Skookumchuck. It has been found to work well. The difficulty is that if the men of the tribe believed in alliance with Leschi were summarily disposed of, the whole tribe would break out. We have no positive evidence, except the impression of their commander, Captain Ford, who is of opinion that in his last trip ten of the men tried to kill him. He has great daring and presence of mind and believed he can prevent an outbreak.

So of the reservation opposite Olympia Lieutenant Gosnell

has made one scout in the Nisqually bottom of ten days with fourteen Indians. Yesterday morning he started out on a scout of three days with thirty Indians. The effect of the first scout was salutary. Such will, I doubt not, be the effect of the second.

Yet on the first scout Lieutenant Gosnell went with his life in his hands. Some of his Indians were more than suspected, and he went with them alone.

The most melancholy feature of this war is that the Indians who have taken the lead in murdering our men, our women and our children were those who have received the most favors from the whites and were held by them in the most consideration. Many cases have occurred of Indians killing their friends and benefactors. Are you surprised that a general distrust of the Indians pervades the public mind? Therefore consider the task which has been imposed upon the territorial authorities to see to it that the Indians not taking part with the hostiles are treated as friends.

In short, the whole country is a frontier, within a few hours of the camp of the hostile Indians, and with four thousand friendly Indians in our midst, of whose faith we cannot be certain.

Our safety lies in two things; first to carry the war against the hostiles with the whole force of the Territory, and to bring them to unconditional submission; and second to give no cause

of offence to the friendly Indians, even in the cases of persons more than suspected.

You have served in an Indian country and know something of Indian modes of thinking and can appreciate that when in a contest like this with troops, have once entered the field they must not be withdrawn until they have accomplished the object for which they were sent into the field. There must be no changes of plan. We must push into the field. There must be no changes of plan. We must push forward (note dupe in typing)



and do the work we have undertaken, else the Indian will say that he has driven us from the field and thereby get large accessions from tribes who otherwise would continue friendly.

General Wool has recently visited this Sound, and with a full knowledge of the course taken by me is calling out the volunteers of the Territory, of the cordial spirit of cooperation between Lieutenant Colonel Casey and myself and of the fact that the volunteers were actually in the field engaging the enemy has ignored effectually the necessity of this, but has practically admitted it in directing Colonel Casey to make a requisition upon me for two companies of volunteers. This requisition I have refused to comply with, for reasons which will be found in my letter to Colonel Casey and Major General Wool, herewith enclosed.

Those reasons, it seems to me, are conclusive and they show the necessity of removing from the command of the department of the Pacific a man who has by his acts, so far as this Territory is concerned, shown an utter incapability.

I will most respectfully call your attention to my letter to General Wool and to his letter to which mine was an answer, and I simply ask that justice may be done between us.

So long as I am the governor of Washington and till I receive instructions from my superiors, I shall pass on in the path indicated in that letter to General Wool.

I beg leave respectfully to recapitulate, briefly, the points of difference.

1- General Wool states that the movement of the Oregon volunteers was entirely unnecessary and precipitated the Walla Walla and other tribes into hostility.

I assert that this movement probably saved my party from destruction and that the Indians then hostile had been so even before the Oregon volunteers moved against them.

2-General Wool states that Governor Curry had no~~x~~ right to move his troops into the Territory of Washington.

I assert and have shown that the Oregon volunteers fought the Indians mainly of Oregon and that near the confines of the two Territories.

3-General Wool states that if the Oregon volunteers are withdrawn he will have no trouble in managing affairs and keeping the Nez Perce friendly.

I state officially, to General Wool and to the department that the Nez Perce are in my hands and that without an armed man I will undertake to keep the Nez Perce friendly, if General Wool does not ~~interfere~~ interfere with me in the management of these Indians. But I also state that General Wool, in addition to his regular force will require the best efforts of the Oregon volunteers to strike such blows this spring and summer as will protect the settlements. He can do nothing more.

He must wait till next winter to strike blows to end the war east of the Cascades. I refer to my memoir.

The department will thus see that I consider the war east of the Cascades of great magnitude and that it would have been vastly greater were it not for the concurrence of two things 1st. The movement of the Oregon volunteers to the Walla Walla valley and 2d, My return by the direct route and not by the way of New York.

It is simply an exigency to be met and met by all the authorities in the spirit of cordial cooperation, looking to the public good alone without any reference to personal considerations.

I have therefore suggested to General Wool the necessity of recognizing the services of the Oregon volunteers; but I expect nothing from him; and I shall therefore take my own course with the determination that if disasters shall occur, not a little of the responsibility shall be attached to me.



The war here must be ended as rapidly as possible, and all the disposable force kept in the field till the enemy's country is occupied and his force be scattered.

All our horsemen must then be ready to cross the Cascades to move against the hostiles, who may then, with greatly superior numbers be encountering the troops.

I have therefore ordered all the troops from the Columbia valley to to (copy) Sound and have directed a train of 100 pack animals and 40 wagons to be ready to cross the Naches the last of May.

I have ordered that supplies and transportation be engaged to place a depot at Walla Walla 75 days provisions for 250 men.

The Oregon volunteers have crossed Snake river and have already probably struck the enemy. Should they succeed in striking on their return, the enemy in the Yakima country, and should the movement be followed up by the regular troops, I trust that my operations will be confined to the country on the Sound.

Should, however, nothing decisive be done in the Yakima country till the passes are open, our situation here will be critical and the defence of the Sound, as regards the Indians east of the Cascades, may be best accomplished by waging war against them in their own country.

I have looked to this exigency from the beginning, hence volunteers were raised for six months; have supplies and transportation for for the same period. But we will be prepared for the worst and hope for the best.

The following papers accompany this report:

1-Copy of General Wool's reply of February 12, 1856 to my memoir to him of the 24th December and 29th January. This memoir has already been transmitted to the War Department.

2-Copy of my answer to this reply, dated March.

3-Copy of my letter to General Wool, on his arrival at Steilacoom introducing Adjutant General Tilton and expressing my desire to cooperate with the regular service.

4-Copy of Lieutenant Colonel Casey's letter calling on me for two companies of volunteers.

5-Copy of my answer to the same, declining to call out the companies.

6-A copy of my letter to Captain Swartwout, commanding naval forces in the Sound, proposing a combined movement of the military and naval forces.

7-Copy of Captain Swartwout's letter declining to cooperate.

I have thus endeavored to lay before the department the condition of affairs, and the measures of preparation and precaution taken by me to protect our suffering people and I have the honor, sir, to be, very respectfully, your most obedient,

Isaac I Stevens

Governor Territory of Wash.

Hon. Jefferson Davis, Secretary of War, Washington City

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No 1

Headquarters, Department of the Pacific,

Benicia, Calif, February 12, 1856.

Sir: I received your communication on the 23rd of December, and 29th January, 1856, on the 6th instant, but too late to reply to it by the return steamer. For the information which it imparts you have my thanks. When you know my instructions to Colonel Wright, of the 9th Infantry at Vancouver, you will discover that many of your suggestions have been anticipated. In presenting, however, your plan of campaign, which is a very extended one, you should have recollected that I have neither the resources of a Territory, nor the Treasury of the United States at my command. Still you may be assured that the war against the Indians will be prosecuted with all the vigor.



promptness and efficiency I am master of, at the same time without wasting unnecessarily the means and resources at my disposal by untimely and unproductive ~~expeditions~~. With the additional force which recently arrived at Vancouver and at the Dalles, I think I shall be able to bring the war to a close in a few months, provided the extermination of the Indians, which I do not approve of, is not determined on, and private war prevented, and the volunteers withdrawn from the Walla-Walla country.

Whilst I was in Oregon it was reported to me that many citizens with a due proportion of volunteers and two newspapers advocated the extermination of the Indians. This principle has been acted on in several instances without discrimination between enemies and friends, which has been the cause in southern Oregon of sacrificing many innocent and worthy citizens. As in the case of Major Lupton and his party (volunteers) who killed 25 Indians, 18 of whom were women and children. These were friendly Indians, on their way to the Indian reservation, where they expected protection from the whites.

This barbarous act is the cause of the present contest in the Rogue River country and as Captain Judah, U.S.A. reports is retaliatory of the conduct of Major Lupton.

By the same mail which brought me your communication I received one-- now before me, from a person who I think incapable of misrepresentation--which informs me that the friendly Cayuses are every day menaced with death by Governor Curry's volunteers. The writer says they have despoiled these Indians--who have so nobly followed the advice of Mr. Palmer to remain faithful friends to the Americans--of their provisions. To-day he says these same volunteers without discipline and without orders are not yet satisfied with rapine and injustice and wish to take away the small remnant of animals and provisions left. Every day they run off the horses and cattle of the friendly Indians. These have become indignant and will not be

much longer restrained from resisting conduct so unworthy of the white who have made them so many promises to respect and protect them if they remained faithful friends. The writer further says if the volunteers are not arrested in their brigand actions the Indians will save themselves by flying to the homes of their relations, the Nez Perces, who have promised them help, and then all the Indians of Oregon and Washington would join in the common defence. This information is in a great measure confirmed by a person who, I am assured, enjoys your respect and confidence.

I need not say, although I had previously instructed Colonel Wright to take possession of the Walla-Walla country, at the earliest moment practicable, that I directed him to give protection as soon as he could to the friendly Cayuses from the depredations of the volunteers. It is such conduct as here complained of that irritates and greatly increases the ranks of the hostile tribes; and if the Nez Perces join in the war ~~the ranks of the hostile tribes, and~~ against us which I hope to prevent, we shall require a much larger force than we now have in Washington and Oregon Territories to resist savage barbarities and to protect the whites.

I have recently sent to Puget Sound two companies of the 9th Infantry. These, with the three companies there will give a force of nearly or quite four hundred regulars, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Casey. This force, with several ships of war in the Sound, to which will be added, in a few days, the United States steamer Massachusetts, it seems to me, if rightly directed, ought to be sufficient to bring to terms two hundred Indians warriors. Captain Keyes, in his last report received, says there are not quite two hundred in arms in that region. Lieutenant Casey has been directed to prosecute the war with the greatest vigilance and activity. The gallant captain Swartwout who goes in the Massachusetts, commander in chief of naval forces in the Sound, will, I am assured



zealously , efficiently and I trust, successfully, co-operate with Colonel Casey to bring the war to a close.

In regard to the operations east of the Cascade mountains , If Governor Curry's volunteers have not driven the friendly Cayuses and the Nez Perces into the ranks of the hostile tribes (I have great hopes that I shall be able to bring the Indians in that region to terms notwithstanding the volunteers killed the chief, Pee-pee-mox-mox, scalped him, cut off his ears and hands as reported by volunteers and sent them to their friends in Oregon, All this, too after he met them under a flag of truce, declaring he "was for peace that he did not wish to fight, that his people did not wish to fight," and that if any of his young men had done wrong he would make restitution, while he at the same time offered the volunteers cattle for food. Such conduct may have caused feelings difficult to overcome. I trust however I will be able to do it.

As soon as the war is terminated east of the Cascade mountains I will be able to send all my disposable forces against the Indians in Rogue river and Puget Sound. It, is however, due to truth to say at no time were volunteers required, or in any sense of the term necessary for the defence of the inhabitants of Oregon, from the depredations or barbarities of Indians occupying the country east of the Cascade mountains. Nor was there any circumstance to justify Governor Curry in sending his troops from Oregon to Washington Territory to make war on the Walla-Wallas, from whom the Oregonians had no danger whatever to apprehend. On this subject I will refer you to the report of the Secretary of War, dated the 3d of December, relative to the affairs of the army, in which he says "the department at this distance and in the absence of more definite information especially in regard to the extent of the combination among the

hostile tribes , cannot judge what volunteer reinforcements to the regular troops may be necessary. This is a matter which must necessarily be left to the military commander in the department of the Pacific.

"At the conclusion of your communication you say: "It is due to frankness that I should state that I have determined to submit to the department the course taken by the military authorities in disbanding the troops raised in the Territory of Washington for my relief. No effort was made, although the facts were presented both to Major General Wool and Major Raines to send me assistance. The regular troops were all withdrawn into garrison and I was left to make my way the best I could through tribes known to be hostile. It remains to be seen whether the commissioner, selected by the president to make treaties with Indians in the interior of the continent, is to be ignored and his safety left to chance.

In your frankness and determination to represent me to the department I trust you will be governed by truth and truth only, Perhaps it is equally due to frankness on my part to say that your communication is the first that I have received in relation to yourself or on any subject whatever touching the Indian war from any civil functionary either in Washington or Oregon Territories and I have received but one from the military and that was from Colonel Nesmith, who requested me to furnish him with two howitzers which I refused. I have only to add that I disbanded no troops raised for your relief; and your communication gave me the first intelligence that any were raised for such a purpose . I am very respectfully, your obedient servant, John E. Wool, Major General  
To his Excellency, Isaac I. Stevens, Governor of Washington Territory



No. 2. Executive office, Washington Territory, Olympia March 20,  
1856.

Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 12th February and to state generally in answer thereto, that the events of the past four weeks in connexion with your official course affords satisfactory evidence that the most objectionable positions of your letter have been abandoned and that you have finally become awakened to the true condition of the Indian war and are seeking to make some amends for the unfortunate blunders of the past.

You have probably learned how much you have been misled in your views of the operations of the Oregon volunteers, and how much unnecessary sympathy you have wasted upon the infamous Pee-pee-mox-mox. For your own reputation have I felt pain at the statements made in your letter to me, for I am the authoritative witness to the case and in the letter which submitted your own action, in refusing to send me succor, I have presented briefly the facts showing the unmitigated hostility of that chief. I assert that I can prove by the incontestible evidence, that pee-pee-mox-mox had been hostile for months; that he exerted his influence to effect a general combination of the tribes; that he plundered Walla-Walla and the settlers of the valley, distributing the spoils to his men and the neighboring tribes as war trophies; that he rejected the intercession of the friendly Nez Percés to continue peaceful; that he had sworn to take my life and cut off my party; and that he and the adjoining tribes of Oregon and Washington had taken up their military position as warriors at the proper points of the Walla-Walla valley and all this before the volunteers of Oregon moved upon him.

Pee-pee-mox-mox was slain fairly. I have investigated that matter on the ground, having not only the testimony of the officers of the Oregon volunteers and the eye-witnesses of his death but the

testimony of the friendly Indians, both Cayuses and Nez Perces.

He was not entrapped by a flag of truce. I, of course, reprobate the indignities subsequently committed upon his person.

Are you aware, sir, that the great victory achieved by the gallant volunteers of Oregon in the Walla-Walla valley was fought near the line separating the two Territories and that more of the Indians of Oregon were engaged in it than the Indians of Washington? Your letter would seem to show that you were ignorant of this fact. Where, sir, did you derive your information?

Half the Walla-Wallas live permanently in Oregon, all the Umatillas; over one-half of the Cayuses; all the John Days, Des Chutes and High Indians.

These were the Indians that met the volunteers of Oregon and all these Indians were, by arrangement made General Palmer and myself under the charge of the Oregon agents.

These Indians were reinforced after the first three days fight by one hundred Palouses, detached from the force under Kam-ai-a-kin.

That some turbulent men of the Oregon volunteers have done injury to the friendly Cayuses is unquestionable and it is reprobated by the authorities and the citizens of both territories. It has however been grossly exaggerated. Had, sir, the regulars moved up to Walla-Walla valley, as I most earnestly urged both Major Gaines and Colonel Wright, both by letter and person, these Indians would have been protected. They could not act because they had no authority from you.

The presence of a single company would have been sufficient. The responsibility, if evil follows, will attach, sir, to you as well as to the volunteers of Oregon.

The Nez Perces, though a portion live in Oregon, are by the arrangement before referred to between General Palmer and myself, all under the administrative charge, and if left alone will



continue friendly.

I have heard from them long since the friend to whom you allude. I have a staff officer in their country. They are organized for self protection, and if your operations are conducted with ordinary judgment, there will not a man of them join in the war.

I have to refer you sir to my memoir for my views, which will be found to bear the test of experience and I would advise you sir, in considering that memoir, to bear in mind that as regards the opinion of men, who with perhaps not very inferior abilities to your own, bring greater special experience and a knowledge of the country and the Indians to which you cannot pretend it will be prudent not to despise them.

In your letter of the 12th January you state: "I have recently sent to Puget's Sound two companies of the 9th infantry. These, with the three companies there, will give a force of nearly or quite four hundred regulars, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Casey. This force with several ships of war in the Sound, to which will be added in a few days, the United States steamer Massachusetts, it seems to be, if rightly directed, ought to be sufficient to bring to terms two hundred Indian warriors. Captain Keyes, in his last report received says there are not quite two hundred in arms in that region."

Here you have expressed a confident opinion; you thought proper to quote Captain Keyes as to the number of Indians. But you found it did not suit your purpose to refer to the requisitions he had made upon you for six additional companies, two of which only had been sent forward. Nor could you find time to refer to the fact that Colonel Casey had recommended, after the war was over, that eight companies should be permanently stationed for the protection of the Sound. You think volunteers entirely unnecessary. All this after having received from the executives of the Territory information as to the condition of the country.

It is now March, a month later, and you send two additional companies of regulars and direct Colonel Casey to call upon me for two companies of volunteers. Thus have you practically acknowledged that you were wrong and that I was right, and thus have I your testimony as against yourself in vindication of the necessity of my calling out volunteers.

As regards this call for volunteers, it is to be presumed that Colonel Casey informed you that the whole available force of Sound Territory was bearing arms, and that the great proportion of them were actively engaging the enemy; that organized in two battalions the northern battalion occupied the line of the Sno-how-m sh, where they are establishing block houses and closing the passes of the Sno-qual-mie; that the central battalion was occupying the military road on the Naches, in relation to which road and its military bearings your aid-de camp, Lieutenant Arnold will be able to give you full information; and that on both lines decisive blows had been struck; and also that it was beyond the ability of our citizens to raise an additional company of even fifty men to honor your ~~representation~~ requisition.

I have a right to hold you to a full knowledge of our conditions here. If you say you were uninformed then you are not fit for your position and should give place to a better man. If you were informed then your measures as a military man, manifest an incapacity beyond example.

Therefore the call upon me for two companies of volunteers is a call upon me to withdraw the troops now in the field with sixty to eighty days provisions, after decisive blows had been struck and when everything is ready to strike a and perhaps the decisive blow to end the war.

I am too old a soldier ever to abandon a well considered plan of campaign, or to do otherwise than to push forward with all my



energies, in the path marked out, promising as it does the speedy termination of the war; and sir, I am too wary a man not to detect the snare which has been laid for me.

You never expected, sir, that the requisition would be complied with; you know it was a practical impossibility. But not having the courage to acknowledge your error, it was resorted to, in the hope that my refusing your requisition might enable you to occupy my vantage ground and throw me on the defensive. I hold you, sir, to the facts of the case, clearly demonstrating and by your own confession, too, the ~~opponent~~ propriety of my course and the necessity on my part of a steady adherence to it.

I enclose a copy of my letter to Lieutenant Colonel Casey, in which my views in regard to this scheme of yours is given in full.

You have referred to the atrocities committed upon the friendly Indians by the whites. I know nothing of what has occurred in southern Oregon but I have to state that no man to my knowledge in the Territory of Washington, advocates extermination of the Indians. The authorities here have not only used every exertion to protect them but their exertions have been completely successful. Did you learn, sir, in your brief visit to the Sound, that nearly four ~~two~~ thousand friendly Indians have been moved from the war ground on the eastern shore of the Sound and its vicinity to the adjacent islands and have for nearly five months been living in charge of local agents? That not an Indian in the whole course of this war has been killed by the whites except in battle? That when a military commission composed of a majority of volunteer officers tried some months since eight Indians, only one was convicted, and that the sentence of death ~~was~~ passed upon him has not yet been executed? It is the good conduct of our people, sir, that has so strengthened the hands of the authorities, as to enable them to control these friendly Indians and prevent any considerable accession to the ranks

of the hostile.

And yet we have daily rumors and have had for the last five months, that this tribe and that would break out. For at times great uneasiness has prevailed amongst them; and they are Indians and as such they sympathized with their brethren. But the course of the authorities has been firm, energetic and decisive, commanding the confidence of the community and the affections of the Indians.

Besides these four thousand on reservation in charge of local agents we have three thousand more on the western shore of the Sound and on the Straits of Fuca.

I have recently heard from the Nez Perces, the Coeur d'Alenes and the Spokanes. The former are firm in their allegiance. But the Spokanes urge to have a military force in the great prairie between them and the hostile Indians so these latter may not be driven to their country and thus incite their young men to war.

The letter of Garry, the chief of the Spokanes, is a most plaintive and earnest call for help so his hands may be strengthened in keeping his people to their plighted faith; and the coincidence is remarkable that this Indian chief, a white man in education and views of life, should ask me to do the very thing I have urged upon you; for you will remember, in my memoir, I urge that the troops in operating against the Indians should be interposed between the friendly and hostile tribes to prevent those now friendly from joining in the war. I have, sir, studied the character of these Indians and my views as to the influence upon the friendly Indians of the mode of carrying on the war against the hostiles are confirmed by the only highly educated Indian of either Oregon or Washington and the head chief of the very tribe in reference to which I made the recommendations and felt the most solicitude.

Not a word has ever passed between us in reference to the subject. You are doubtless informed that the Indians have commenced



offensive operations east of the Cascades and have attacked the steamers plying between the Cascades and The Valles, and the trains moving towards Walla-Walla.

This bold course will enable them to operate upon the Spokane, the Colvilles, the Okinekanes, the Lower Pend d'Oreilles, the Coeur d'Alenes, who have five hundred warriors and the tribes north of the line who had three to five hundred more, unless struck east of the Cascades before the close of May, you will soon have to meet a combination of from 1,800 to 2,000 warriors. Their families and stock will be in secure retreats in the mountains and unless before that time the Indians here are completely subdued the passes over the mountains secured by block houses, it will be within the range of probabilities that a large portion of the friendly Indians on the Sound can be incited to hostilities. The Clivatats and Yakimas know all the passes of the Cascades and can readily cross over the month of May. Hence the necessity of the most vigorous blows now, of no change of plan, of having troops in the settlements to guard against any sudden outbreak of the friendly Indians.

Two men have recently been killed within sixteen miles of the capital of the territory by a band of marauders who have only been driven out within the last few days.

It seems to me that the present condition of things imposes upon you the necessity of recognizing the services of the volunteers of the two Territories now in the field, and of your doing everything to facilitate their operations. But if you waste your exertions in the fruitless effort to induce either the authorities to withdraw their troops, to abandon their plan of campaign, in order to comply with your requisitions or to meet ~~the~~ your peculiar notions, I warn you now, sir, that I, as the Governor of Washington, will cast upon you the whole responsibility of any difficulty which may arise in consequence, and that by my firm, steady and energetic course

and by my determination to cooperate with the regular service, whatever may be the provocation to the contrary, I will vindicate the justice of my course and maintain my reputation as a faithful public servant. I warn you, sir, that unless your own course is changed, you will have difficulties in relation to which your own salvation will be the firm and decided policy of the two Territories, whose services you have ignored, whose people you have calumniated and whose respect you have long ceased to possess.

You have erred in your judgment as to volunteers being needed at all here, and as I have before observed, in calling for volunteers after increasing a force deemed by you sufficient, two companies, you have vindicated the justice and necessity of my acts in organizing the people of the Territory as its executive.

I have thus practically your own endorsement that I have judged rightly when you were in error, and my judgment having thus been sanctioned in calling out volunteers, I prefer to rely upon it in the matter both of the number ~~2000~~ required and the organization which will give them the most efficiency.

Can you presume, sir, to be able to correct your opinions by a hasty visit to the Sound for a few hours, and do you expect that having taken my deliberate course, that I shall change my plans on a single intimation from you, without even a conference between us? Were you desirous, sir, to harmonize and unite the elements of strength on the Sound, you would have seen that it was your duty, at least to have informed me of your presence and to have invited me to a conference. There was ample time for it. For it was less difficult for me to reach you on receiving notice than Colonel Casey, and I have shown throughout the most anxious desire to cooperate with the regular service.

Whilst in the country in the fall and winter you complained that the authorities of the two Territories did not communicate with you



why did you not inform me of your presence in the Sound on your arrival at Steilacoom?

I learned of your probable arrival by simply learning on Saturday morning by my express, of your having left Vancouver, and I immediately dispatched the chief of staff to wait upon you with a letter. But you were gone, and whether you did not know the courtesy due to the civil authorities of this Territory, who had taken the proper course to place themselves in relations with you, or whether you were unwilling to meet a man whose safety you had criminally neglected, and whose general views you had been compelled to adopt, is a matter entirely immaterial to me.

I enclose a copy of the letter transmitted by the hands of the Adjutant General James Tilton seq., the surveyor general of the Territory of Washington.

After the defeat of the Indians in the Walla-Walla valley, they were completely cowed, and for weeks spies only crossed the Snake river to examine the country. Gradually becoming emboldened, they have since come over in small parties and got some small success in running off horses and now they have more than recovered from the prestige of that defeat. They are making attacks on the whole line of communication and now are firm and united, more hopeful and have more strength than when the war was commenced.

What sir, would have been the effect if Governor Curry had not made the movement which you condemn, and my party with the friendly Nez Percés had been cut off. Sir, there would have been a hurricane of war between the Cascade and Bitter Root and three thousand warriors would now be in arms. Every tribe would have spread east of the Bitter Root to the Upper Pend d'Oreilles.

I believe, sir, I would have forced my way through the five or six hundred hostiles in the Walla-Walla valley with fifty odd white men and one hundred and fifty Nez Percés. Would you have expected it?

Could the country expect it? And what was the duty of those having forces at command? Governor Curry sent his volunteers, and defeated the enemy. You disbanded the company of Washington Territory volunteers raised especially to be sent to my aid.

I have reported your refusal to send me succor to the Department of War and have given some of the circumstances attending that refusal. The company was under the command of Captain William McKay. Before your arrival there was a pledge that it should be mustered into the regular service and sent to my assistance. Major Gaines informed me that he did everything in his power to induce you to send it on. William McKay informs me that he called on you personally and that you would do nothing. I am informed that your own aid-de-camp, Lieutenant Arnold, endeavored to get you to change your determination. What was your answer? "Governor Stevens can take care of himself." "If Governor Stevens will go down the Missouri," "Governor Stevens wants aid he will send for it." These were your answers according to the changing humor of the moment.

And now, sir, in view of your assertion that you disbanded no troops raised for my relief and that my communication gave you the first intelligence that any were raised for such a purpose, I commend the chalice to your own lips, "that I trust you will be governed hereafter by the truth and the truth only."

Isaac T. Stevens

Governor of Washington Territory

Major General John E. Wool  
commanding Pacific division



No 3

Executive Office, Territory of Washington,  
Olympia, March 15, 1856

Sir: I have this morning heard of your a rival in the Territory of Washington, of your having left Vancouver in a steamer for the Sound and that you are now probably at Steilacoom.

In the discharge of my responsibilities as the highest federal officer of the Territory of Washington and in view of my oath of office, I have called out a large force of volunteers and a band of Indians auxiliaries, who are now actively engaging the enemy in the field.

Actuated by no motive than the public good, I have endeavored to cooperate with the military and naval forces in the Sound, with the object that all and every available means of carrying on the war should be applied as a unit to its prosecution.

I therefore send the adjutant general of the volunteer forces James Tilton, esq. to confer with you. He is instructed to advise you of the plan of operations which I have adopted, the force in the field, and the condition of the country.

I have to assure you of my desire to cooperate with you in my plans which you may think proper to adopt and I shall be pleased to hear from you in reference to the prosecution of the campaign.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant.

Isaac I. Stevens

Governor and Commander in chief

Major General John E. Wool,  
Commanding Pacific Division

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No. 4

Headquarters Puget Sound  
District Fort Steilacoom, Washington Territory, March 15, 1856

Sir: I respectfully request that you will at once issue your proclamation calling into service of the United States two companies

of volunteers to serve on foot for the period of four months, unless sooner discharged. Each company to consist of one captain one first and one second lieutenant, four sergeants, four corporals and seventy privates.

I wish both companies to be mustered into service at Fort Steilacoom. The authority for calling for the above named troops has been given to the general commanding the department of the Pacific.

I received, yesterday, an accession of ~~regulars~~ ~~and the~~ two companies of ~~regulars~~ the ninth infantry. With this accession of force, and the two companies of volunteers called for, I am of the opinion that I shall have sufficient number of troops to protect this frontier without the aid of those now in the service of the Territory.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant.

Silas Casey

Lieutenant Colonel 9th Infantry

commanding, Puget Sound district.

His Excellency I. I. Stevens

Governor Washington Territory  
Olympia, Washington Territory.

No. 5

Executive Office, Washington Terr.  
Olympia, March 16, 1856

Sir: I have received your letter of the 15th instant advising me of the accession to your command of two companies of regulars and requesting me to issue my proclamation calling into service of the United States two companies of volunteers to serve on foot for the period of four months, unless sooner discharged. These companies you wish to be mustered into the service at Fort Steilacoom

You also express the opinion that if this requisition be complied with you will have a sufficient number of troops to protect this frontier without the aid of those now in the service of the Territory.



I am also advised that you have been authorized to make this requisition for troops by the general commanding the department of the Pacific.

You have been informed by me not only of the volunteer force which has been called out to protect the settlements and to wage war upon the Indians, but of the plan of the campaign which I have adopted, of the position which these troops occupy and of the blows already struck by them against the enemy.

I take it for granted that this information has been communicated to General Wool, and has been considered by him in his official action.

In the two visits which I have made to Steilacoom to confer with you one of them made at great personal inconvenience, I have waived etiquette in my anxious desire to cooperate with the regular service. I have communicated unreservedly my plans and views and have endeavored so far as my sphere was concerned to conduct affairs in a way to insure the whole force operating as a unit in the prosecution of the war.

I am happy to say that in our several intercourses and communications you have met me in the same spirit of cooperation, to the extent that the impression has been made upon my mind, that such disposition had been made of the volunteers, in your opinion, as to make them an efficient element in the general combination.

Now your requisition on me to issue my proclamation to call into the United States service two companies of volunteers, in connexion with the expression of your opinion, that if the call be complied with the service of the troops now in the service of the Territory may be dispensed with, is in fact a call on me to withdraw all the troops now in the field with their sixty to eighty days provisions to abandon the block houses to leave the settlements both north and south open to the attacks of the marauding Indians, and at the very

moment when our troops were prepared to strike a, and ,perhaps the decisive blow, to abandon the campaign and reorganize anew.

Are you aware that in the patriot response of the citizens of the Territory to the call of the executive, over one-half of our able bodied men are bearing arms; that the people are almost entirely living in block houses, and that it is entirely beyond the ability of our citizens to organize an additional company of even fifty men.

The two companies you call for can, therefore, not be raised except by the withdrawal of the troops and abandoning the campaign at the very moment the prospects are flattering to end the war.

For these reasons alone it will be impossible to comply with your requisition, now can I suppose in making the requisition either Major General Wool, or yourself, believed for a moment that the requisition would be seriously entertained by me.

But I am of opinion that even were the requisition complied with your force would not be adequate to the protection of this frontier and the settlements. Having the highest respect for your opinions knowing how conscientiously and carefully you approach any field of labor and how thoroughly you investigate it, and reach your conclusions, I am constrained to express my judgment and that you would soon be obliged to call for an additional force, fully equal in all to the force which has been called out by my proclamation.

In such a case I have no alternative than to act according to my own deliberate judgment, for if, waiving my own judgment to yours injury should result, the responsibility would attach to me not less than to yourself.

Otherwise why is the militia organized and the executive made its commander-in-chief? It is to meet emergencies like the present.

But were it practicable to comply with your requisitions and were those requisitions for a force, in my judgment, competent, I ~~do~~



should not deem it expedient to place the force thus raised under the command of the officers of the regular service.

The war has now gone on five months. It is a war emphatically for the defence of the settlements, so much so that I have ordered to the Sound ~~the~~ four companies from the Columbia river, and at this critical period it is important that there should be no changes in the command or in the plan.

In view of this and also in view of the changes of opinion and of plan on the part of the officer in chief command on this coast, growing out of a want of understanding of the difficulties to be encountered, I am of opinion that the whole force will be more efficient and that there will be a better spirit of cooperation, if the regular and volunteer services are kept distinct.

Be this as it may, the campaign is, I trust, approaching its consummation and changes of plan can only be fraught with mischief.

The citizens of this Territory have very great confidence in the officers of the regular service and especially in this the case with the people of the Sound. Their relations have been more than cordial. They are the witnesses of the efficiency of the troops stationed here. And their gratitude has been announced on several occasions since the organization of the Territory.

The force now in the field has not been mustered into the service of the Territory but into the service of the United States. My authority as the highest federal officer of the Territory is derived from the same source as that of the Major General commanding the Pacific division. I am commissioned by the President and I act under the laws of congress and the responsibility of my oath of office.

For these reasons your requisitions cannot be complied with. At the same time you may rest assured of my doing everything in my power to cooperate with you, and I hope that through the action of us all

the war may soon be closed, and the suffering inhabitants of the Territory be rescued from their present unhappy condition.

Isaac I. Stevens

Governor and Commander in Chief

Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey  
Ninth Infantry, Commanding Puget Sound Division  
Fort Steilacoom, Washington Territory

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No 6

Executive Office,  
Territory of Washington  
Olympia, March 15, 1856

Sir: I have dispatched my aid-de camp, Lieutenant Colonel Crosbie to confer with you in relation to a combined movement of the naval and military forces from Seattle.

I have selected Colonel Crosbie for this duty in consequence of his great familiarity with all portions of the country, its geography, its Indian tribes and its people.

If an operation could go on from Seattle, say a boat expedition to the lake, the establishment of a block house on the lake and a good wagon road opened therefrom with Seattle, it would combine admirably with the operations now going on from this quarter and from the Sno-ho-mish, would much circumscribe the country now occupied by the hostiles would promise opportunities of striking immediate blows and would probably pave the way for the final blow to end the war.

I am, very respectfully, your most obedient

Isaac I. Stevens

Governor Territory Washington

Captain Samuel Swartwout  
Commanding Naval Forces, Puget Sound, Seattle.

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No 7



(Garnett)  
 United States Steamer Massachusetts  
 Harbor of Seattle, Washington Territory, March 16, 1856

Sir: Your letter of the 15 th instant was handed to me today by  
 Lieutenant Colonel Crosbie.

In reply I would state that my instructions upon assuming the  
 command of the United States naval forces in Puget Sound, direct  
 the act in concert with the military forces under Major General  
 Wool where the same can be done within the immediate vicinity of  
 the Sound, but not to permit any portion of my command to go into  
 the interior. If, however, I were at liberty to cooperate with your  
 volunteers in prosecuting the expedition you have projected, it  
 would be impracticable. I understand that the river from here to  
 the lakes is not navigable for our boats and besides, when the vol-  
 unteers ~~in prosecuting the expedition you have projected, it would~~  
 leave this place the inhabitants will be entirely dependant upon  
 the naval forces herein the event of an attack by the hostile Indians.

Samuel Swartwout, commander  
 Commanding United States Naval Forces, Puget Sound  
 To his Excellency Isaac I. Stevens, Governor and Commander-in-chief  
 W.T. Volunteer forces

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 General Wool to the Commanding General  
 Benicia, Headquarters Department of the Pacific  
 San Francisco, March 20, 1856

Colonel: Last evening I returned from visiting the several military  
 posts of Crescent City, Fort Orford and Vancouver and in Puget  
 Sound, Fort Steilacoom. To each commandant of posts and districts  
 I gave such instructions as appeared necessary for an active,  
 vigilant and successful prosecution of the war against the Indians.  
 From Vancouver I took with me two companies of the 9th infantry  
 commanded by Major Garnett and landed them at Steilacoom on the  
 14th March. The same day I inspected the post and supplies. The  
 latter were abundant and of good quality.

Lieutenant Colonel Casey appears to have conducted the operations of his command with great skill and judgment. With the additional companies under Major Garnett he will soon bring the war to a close on Puget Sound, unless prevented by Governor Stevens' determination to carry on the war independent of the United States troops. This remark is equally applicable to the conduct of Governor Curry of Oregon who is still carrying on the war against the Indians east of the Cascade mountains. These two governors appear to be running a race to see who can dip the deepest into the treasury of the United States. In the dense forests of Puget Sound another Florida war can easily be carried on, and at an expense of twenty or more millions. The same remarks will apply to the mountain region of Rogue river valley. It is only necessary to carry out the intentions of many citizens of Oregon and Washington as practiced in several instances to exterminate the Indians, friends as well as enemies. This can be done but it would cost the United States from fifty to one hundred millions, all which can be avoided by a just and judicious course pursued towards the Indians. I have no doubt that in a very short time I could settle all difficulties with the Indians if the governors (Stevens and Curry) and their volunteers withdraw from the contest. Their object is war and not peace. I have on Puget Sound seven companies of regulars, in the Rogue river valley seven companies and one near by at Humboldt. Brevet Major Weyer with his company has been ordered to Fort Lane. This force, I am confident, will be all sufficient to bring the war to a close in southern Oregon. It certainly will be sufficient if Governor Curry's volunteers will cease their practice of indiscriminately killing the Indians, friends as well as foes.

In a former communication I mentioned the conduct of Major Lupton and his party in killing twenty-five Indians of whom eighteen were women and children. This occurred in October. Captain



Smith commanding at Fort Lane reports that "on the 23rd December last a party of volunteers, unarmed, belonging to a company then stationed on or near Butte Creek, made a visit to a camp of friendly Indians on the north side of Rogue river some fifteen miles from this post and assured the Indians of the friendly disposition of the whites towards them and their desire to live in peace. The object of this visit, on the part of the whites, was to ascertain the strength, position etc. of this Indian camp and finding them unarmed with the exception of a few bows and arrows, marched there on the following night, surrounded the camp and killed nineteen men, burned their houses and stores and left the women and children exposed to the severe cold weather.

"The squaws and children are now at this post, suffering severely from frozen limbs. Old Jake (chief of the same band) with his immediate family was ~~enamped~~ ~~off~~ near Butte creek, on the south side of Rogue river. A party from another company of volunteers paid a similar visit to his camp for the same dastardly purpose and at night surrounded his camp and massacred all the men. The squaws and children from this camp are also here, suffering with frozen limbs.

Herewith I enclose a copy of a letter from Captain H.M. Judah, ~~620~~ relating to the Indian affairs. It deserves attention. Certainly the Indians referred to have been greatly neglected. They ought to have been treated differently by the superintendent of Indian affairs for California.

I am, very respectfully your obedient servant,

John E. Wool  
Major General

Lieutenant Colonel L. Thomas

Assistant adjutant general,

Headquarters of the army, New York.

Fort Jones, California

March 8, 1856

Sir: I have the honor to make the following statement in reference to the ~~Scott~~ Scott's valley Indians collected at this post.

About three weeks ~~ago~~ since, I was called upon by William Steele, esq. a prominent citizen of this valley, who exhibited to me a letter of authorization from Colonel Henly, superintendent of Indian affairs in this State, to take with him two of the most prominent of the Indians to the Nome Lackee reservation, in order that they might, if possible, become favorably impressed with its advantages as a future home for the tribe.

Mr. Steele was accompanied by a gentleman named Weeks, who is conversant with the Shasta language and who ~~returned~~ returned a few days since with the two Indians (John and Jack)

Mr. Weeks informed me that both Mr. Steele and himself were very coldly and impolitely (if not rudely) treated by the residing agent, a Mr. Stevens, who informed them that Colonel Henly had gone to Washington and that he had not been informed of their intended visit. Mr. Stevens offered no facilities for carrying out the purposes of the visit and fully evinced his utter ignorance or intentional display of the most ordinary politeness, by leaving his office with his friends for a social purpose, expressed in the presence of Messrs Steele and Weeks, who were left to carry out the purposes of their visit as they best could.

They shortly after left the office and walked with the Indians for a couple of hours upon the reservation returning to Tehama without further notice from Mr. Stevens.

Enough information was gleaned during their short visit to warrant the conclusion that the Indians upon the reserve are grossly neglected and that the government is imposed upon the reserve and that the government is imposed upon in the conduction of the affairs of the



affairs of the reservation. This information with the exception of one item, afforded me by Mr. Weeks, was obtained by Tye John from conversation with the Indians themselves. The item referred to is the following: "Some few days before their affival a man living in the vicinity of ~~the~~ reservation came upon the same, and deliberately killed twelve of the Indians from one rancheria for killing, ~~and~~ OR suspicion of having killed some hogs belonging to him." Mr. Weeks states that the occurrence seemed to excite little comment, and was not adverted to by Mr. Stevens. If such acts are really permitted upon that reservation, Indians had better take their chances as outlaws in the mountains.

The Indian, Tye John informs me that the Indian with whom he conversed assured him that they were uncomfortably unhappy, and that their numbers were being rapidly reduced by death; that they had no fires in the winter, were not supplied with clothing and received neither flour nor beef, their sole food being wheat. John also informed me that both he and his tribe preferred to be killed and buried upon the soil of their fathers to being removed to Nome Lackee.

Although the officers upon the reserve would probably deny ~~that~~ the existence of such a state of affairs as above mentioned, I am convinced it exists, and that no arrangements pertaining to Indian affairs in this state bears investigation. I am led to this belief through personal observations made during the past two years.

In view of the facts that the visit of the Indians to Nome Lackee was reduced to a trace and that no further action in reference to the Scott's Valley Indians may be expected from the Indian department in this state, I respectfully request more specific instructions in reference to them than any I am acting under. They are entirely disarmed as far as fire-arms are concerned

and cannot possibly subsist themselves with their bows and arrows. They are daily supplied with beef and flour by the acting assistant commissary of subsistence at this post and have been since collected upon the military reserve for protection against the whites, which is still necessary. As a continual source of annoyance to the post, as well as to the people of Scott's valley, in view of the probability of a descent by hostile Indians upon some of the sparsely settled portions of the state during the summer in which case the Scott's valley Indians would, ~~they should~~ though innocent, suffer through revenge; of their uniformly good conduct and through consideration of humanity, they should be removed as soon as possible. I would therefore recommend that ~~Deer~~ Lieutenant Crook, or some other officer, be permitted to take two of the most prominent of their number to the reservation upon the Lower Klamath for purposes of inspection and that upon their return I be authorized to remove them to that place.

The Indians have within the past two days assumed their bows and arrows, which they constantly wear upon their persons, undoubtedly with a view to escape in the event of a forcible attempt to remove them to ~~the isolated~~ the Nomo Lackee reservation.

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Apologizing for the length of this communication, into which from the interest I feel upon the subject I have unintentionally been drawn, I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant

H. M. Judah

Captain 4th in antry commanding

Captain B.R. Jones, U.S.A.

Asst. Adj. Gen. Department Pacific Benicia California

1000 2000 4000

Upon a perusal of the above communication I respectfully beg leave to withdraw the paragraph which unfavorably characterizes administration of Indian affairs in this State, as irrelevant



The major not only went to Fort Boise but 150 miles beyond. He remained in that section of the country until near the close of September, 1855, when he returned to his post at the Dalles, having previously captured and executed a number of the Indians concerned in the murders above alluded to.

Shortly after his return and early in October he was called on by Major Rains to execute a similar mission ~~against the Indians~~ against the Yakima Indians, occupying a portion of the country east of the Cascade range of mountains. It is said that the Yakimas, having become dissatisfied with the treaty ~~made~~ made with them the summer before, by General Stevens, determined on war.

This was hastened, as it would seem, by some miners forcibly carrying away and ill-treating some Yakima squaws. The Yakimas according to their own story, complained of this wrong to A.J. Bolon, sub-Indian agent, who was at the time in the Yakima country and demanded redress. An altercation took place when the Indians threatened revenge. The agent in turn, threatened if they executed their intentions to send against them the troops of the United States. It was under such circumstances that the agent and the Indians separated.

The former, however, was followed and overtaken by the Yakimas when they demanded to know if he intended to send the troops of the United States against them. On answering them in the affirmative as the Indians say, they killed him and afterwards, as reported, some miners on their way to the Colville mines.

On this information being conveyed to Major Rains, Brevet Major Haller was directed to proceed against the Yakimas to chastise them and demand the murderers of the agent Bolon.

Accordingly, with one hundred and four rank and file, he proceeded on his mission, but without the precautions ~~made~~ necessary against savage warfare.

About sixty miles from the Dalles, on emerging from a deep ravine,

he found himself, as he reports, confronted by 1,500 Indians. After losing two men killed and some thirteen or fourteen wounded one mortally, he escaped from his perilous condition to an eminence on which was neither wood, water or grass. He reported that he was surrounded by Indians and asked for a thousand men to relieve him.

This was communicated to the Dalles by a person who succeeded in passing the Indians without being observed. Relief was immediately ordered. In the meantime, after remaining on the hill 36 or forty hours, water being indispensable, both to men and animals, the major determined to force his way to water. He broke up his encampment and commenced his march for the stream in his front.

He met with no resistance and after allaying the thirst of his men, horses and mules, he commenced his march towards the Dalles.

In his effort to make good his retreat he became separated from his ~~original~~ rear guard, the front and rear taking different trails. The guard supposing that it was following the front of the column continued its march towards the Dalles without interference or molestation from the Indians. This left the major with only forty effective men and the wounded and baggage.

With this small force he succeeded in making good his retreat followed two days and nights by 1,500 Indians.

I think the number greatly exaggerated. However this may be, under the circumstances, I did not consider such an enemy greatly to be dreaded. The repulse of Major Haller created great excitement and alarm throughout Oregon and Washington, lest all the Indian tribes in the Territories should at once combine and come down upon the settlements. As soon as I was informed of Major Haller's defeat I ordered all the disposable troops at my command to the seat of war, and I followed. At the same time I called upon the United States government for at least an additional regiment. This was promptly



responded to, and the 9th regiment of infantry arrived early in January, but owing to the unusually severe winter, could not enter upon a winter campaign. In the meantime Major Rains who had authority for such purposes, made preparation for a second expedition against the Yakimas.

He mustered, with the reinforcements which I sent him, five hundred regulars, with three mountain howitzers, besides other artillery--an ample force if properly directed to have defeated all the Indians in the country. The major, however, partaking somewhat of the alarm pervading the country increased and stimulated by political demagogues, called on Acting Governor Mason for two companies of volunteers, which was promptly and favorably responded to; and upon Governor Curry of Oregon for four companies which he refused because as he said, the Oregonians would not serve under United States officers. At the same time he called into the territorial service two mounted regiments, one to serve against the Indians in Washington Territory and the other to serve against the Indians in southern Oregon. Of the former no part of it, in any sense of the term, was necessary to defend the inhabitants of Oregon against the Indians in Washington Territory east of the Cascade mountains, from whom they had no danger whatever to apprehend. Major Rains having completed his preparations with 350 regulars and three mountain howitzers set out about the 1st of November for the Yakima country followed by six companies of Governor Curry's troops commanded by Colonel Nesmith. No doubt a very capable and enterprising officer, and about seventy miles from the Dalles met the Yakimas, who after several skirmishes without any loss on either side, excepting one Indian killed and scalped by an Indian who accompanied the troops of Major Rains, fled over the mountains to the Yakima river about forty miles distant. But in consequence of the snow then fast falling, being several feet deep on the intervening mountains,

major could not follow, at least he so reported. He therefore commenced his return having lost fifty-four animals captured by the Indians, but not until the volunteers unfortunately had destroyed the Ahtanum mission, an important position and one which ought to have been occupied by the major. On his return he crossed mountains which he had previously passed, which were covered with deep snow from two to five feet deep. His command was ordered to the Dalles and he reported to me in person on the 24th of November.

I arrived on the 17th having been detained on the passage from San Francisco eleven days owing to gales and a fire which crippled the steamer on board of which I was a passenger, by which she came very near being lost.

Anxious to establish a post at Walla Walla in order to prevent what followed, a war against the Walla-Wallas by the troops of Governor Curry, I ordered a critical inspection of all the troops and animals when it was discovered that many of the soldiers were without proper shoes and proper clothing for the season and that all the animals with very few exceptions, owing to constant service during the summer and fall and especially in the last two expeditions of Major Vains and Haller, were rendered unfit for service. I had determined, however if it was possible to take possession of the Walla-Walla country before winter had fairly commenced. Not because I considered it in any respect necessary for defence or protection of the inhabitants of Oregon or Washington Territory.

The Indians in that region, two hundred miles distant could not pass the Cascade range of mountains then covered with several feet of snow.

The only route by which they could reach the settlements of Oregon was by the Dalles where we had a sufficient regular force to repel all the Indians in Washington Territory.



My object was simply to overawe these tribes and to prevent them from uniting with the Yakimas--the authors of the war. They had not yet taken part in the war; at least they had not then killed a white man. To accomplish my purpose no time was to be lost. Accordingly I directed Major Cross, chief quartermaster in my staff, to procure, if practicable, the means of transportation. This could not be obtained in Oregon or Washington without great delay and at an enormous expense which the state of war did not call for, owing to the resources of the country being very much exhausted by the large requisitions of General Curry to fit out his several expeditions.

This compelled me to seek elsewhere for means of transportation. Hence I directed Major Cross to have wagons, horses and mules sent from Benicia and boats and forage from San Francisco to Vancouver.

Before the animals, etc. arrived on the river Columbia froze over. This cut off all communications with the Dalles and the Indian country east of the Cascade mountains. For three weeks I was ice bound not ~~being~~ being able to communicate with the Dalles or San Francisco.

Governor Curry, however, had brought two regiments of mounted men in the field at an enormous expense. Nothing had been accomplished by them and certainly not by the regiment intended to operate against the Indians in Washington Territory.

Something had to be done. A fight with the Indians, no matter whether friends or enemies, was indispensable to excite the sympathy of the nation, and especially Congress, or the propriety of paying contributions so profusely levied on the people of Oregon, might be questioned. Accordingly Colonel Nesmith was ordered by Governor Curry with his command to march against the Walla-Wallas, where Major Chinn with five companies, had previously been ordered.

On an inspection of the horses of colonel's command, although but twenty days in the field, they were pronounced unfit for that service.

Several companies, however, were prepared and under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Kelly, a member of the legislature of Oregon, joined Major Chinn, who instead of going to Fort Walla Walla where he was ordered by Governor Curry, took post on the Umatilla, thirty miles distant, because as he reported, there were one thousand Indians in and about the fort.

Although in this position for several weeks, and frequently sending scouts within a mile or two of the Indians, he was neither molested nor interfered with. Lieutenant Colonel Kelly, on joining Major Chinn, moved against Fort Walla Walla but found no Indians there. He then moved up the river Touchet, where he was met by the chief "piu-piu-mox-mox" with a flag of truce. He said he was for peace; that he did not wish to fight; that his people did not wish to fight; and that if any of his young men had done wrong he was prepared to make restitution. If he could not return the goods wrongfully taken, he would pay for them, being abundantly able to do so. When the volunteers said they were in want of provisions he offered them cattle. He was rich in money, horses and cattle.

The volunteers replied he had better go back and fight. He refused, and with his companions, four (Lieutenant Kelly says six) in number was taken prisoner and sent guarded to the volunteer camp. The volunteers then commenced the attack upon his people, which was continued for four days without any great loss on either side when the Wallas-Wallas, having secured their women and children crossed the Snake river. The second or third day of the engagement, the volunteers barbarously killed "piu-piu-mox-mox" and his companions. They took from the chief's head some twenty scalps, cut off his ears and hands and sent them as trophies to their friends in Oregon.

As the volunteers having no boats, could not cross the Snake river the retreat of the Indians closed their winter campaign, except to



plunder the friendly Cayuses of their horses and cattle --(see my letter dated the 12th February, 1856 to Governor I.I. Stevens)

Owing to the severity of the winter, except those captured by the Indians, most of the volunteers' horses died of fatigue and the want of forage or grass. Major Chinn said that about two hundred and twenty-five of their best horses were captured by the Indians.

It is reported that Governor Curry has in part replaced them with a fresh relay.

In February, thirteen wagons loaded with supplies, including ammunition for the volunteers, guarded by only four men, were captured by the Indians between the Umatilla and Fort Walla-Walla.

Such have been the results of one of the most unwise, unnecessary and extravagant expeditions ever fitted out in the United States and for no other reason than to plunder the treasury of the United States and to make political capital for somebody.

It could not have been projected for the defence of the inhabitants of Oregon nor for the protection of Oregonians in Washington Territory, for none resided there. "What then could have been the object? Nothing but a crusade against the Indians and a long war ~~for~~ to enrich the country.

If such was not the object General Curry, instead of sending troops against the Indians in Washington territory and beyond his jurisdiction, would have sent all of them to southern Oregon, where the war raged, and nowhere else in his Territory. The Oregonians say that the war "is a God send to the country."

It would appear, however, from the governor's proclamation, that he did send a regiment to southern Oregon, but from all the information I have received from that section of the country, they have been of little or no service, so far as giving protection to the inhabitants is concerned, and yet the war has been carried on between the volunteers and the Indians in a most singularly

barbarous and savage manner. My information is derived from citizens and regular officers under my command, and not from any of the civil or military functionaries of the Territory of Oregon.

I have never been informed by any one, not even by the governor of the military wants of the Territory. He has never called on me for troops to defend it, or to protect the inhabitants from savage barbarity. Although he has, as it would appear, purposely avoided all communication with me on the subject. I have not been unmindful of the condition and wants of the Territory. I have not failed, as far as it was in my power to, defend and protect such parts as were exposed and assailed by the Indians, and I have no doubt but for the indiscriminate warfare carried on against them, and the massacre of several parties of friendly Indians by the troops of Governor Curry, the war would have long since been brought to a close in Oregon.

Although the Indians are retaliating with a fearful vengeance on innocent citizens for the murder in October last by Major Lupton and his party of 25 friendly Indians, 18 of whom were women and children, all going to the military reservation at Fort Lane, for protection, and notwithstanding the massacres on 23d and 24th December last when volunteers murdered about forty unarmed friendly Indians belonging to the band of the lake chief, Jake, who was among the killed, I think if the volunteers, who expect to be paid largely for their services were withdrawn and private war prevented, I could soon end the war in Rogue river valley, and indeed throughout Oregon and Washington.

But the determination of the Oregonians to exterminate the Indians which I am wholly opposed to, if not discountenanced by the United States government, may prolong the war almost indefinitely.

Another Florida war can be had in Rogue River valley, owing to the mountainous character of the country. The same remark will



apply to Puget Sound, where it is exceedingly difficult to follow the Indians in the dense forests of that region. Yet, by a proper and judicious course, the war may be brought to a close; when by establishing posts at proper points, a recurrence of the past might be prevented. But to do this, I repeat, the extermination of the Indians should be abandoned. No doubt they could be exterminated but it would cost from fifty to one hundred millions, besides thousands of innocent and valuable lives.

Still, with all the difficulties presented and staring us in the face, I do not despair. With eight companies of regular troops in Rogue River valley and another on the way, with not to exceed two hundred warriors in arms, increased to that number by the barbarous conduct of the volunteers towards the friendly Indians and seven companies in Puget Sound, where there are not one hundred and fifty in arms against the whites commanded by active, vigilant and intelligent officers, I cannot but hope that the war in those two sections will soon be brought to a close, when we will meet with no difficulty in bringing the Indians to terms, east of the Cascade range of mountains.

To show how determined the people of Oregon are to exterminate the Indians it is only necessary to represent their conduct towards four hundred friendly Indians waiting, on the military reserve at Fort Lane, to be conducted to the coast range reservation. Captain Smith commanding at that post, with two companies of regulars, reported to me that it took a large part of his command to prevent the citizens from murdering those four hundred Indians.

I have been informed, by those whose character for truth and veracity is not to be questioned, that meetings of the citizens of Oregon had been held when it was resolved, if the attempt was made to conduct those Indians to the coast reserve, they would not only kill them, but all who might accompany them.

After the Indians recently started for the reserve, although escorted by one hundred soldiers, they were followed by a citizen who shot one of the Indians, declaring at the same time he intended to follow them and kill all he could. I regret that I am compelled to say that such conduct is too much encouraged by persons holding high office under the government of the United States. And because I have opposed this inhuman and barbarous practice, and the wholesale plundering of the treasury of the United States which there is no circumstance to justify, I have been denounced by the governors of both Territories and the legislature of Oregon.

The latter has demanded of the President of the United States my removal from the command of the Pacific department. To discover how much truth is contained in the charges presented against me in the memorial to the president, it will only be necessary to read this communication.

I am, however, much surprised to find that the legislature does not know the boundaries of its own Territory. Walla-Walla is in Washington and not in Oregon Territory. No citizens were there except two or three besides those who were, or had been attached to the Hudson's Bay company and these were mostly half-breeds and Canadians.

It is well known that they are in no danger of being killed by the Indians. All not Americans or "Bostonians" as the Indians call them not found in arms against them are respected, at least they are in no danger of being killed by them.

In conclusion it only remains for me to notice a letter, lest it should create false impressions and mislead the public, of I. I. Stevens, governor of Washington Territory, dated the 8th of March, 1856 and published in San Francisco.

The governor in his letter of appeal to the citizens of San Francisco would induce them to believe that there were not to exceed 900



regulars in Washington and Oregon that there were but four companies of regulars at one point on Puget Sound.

At the date of his letter there were five companies of regulars actively operating against less than two hundred warriors in arms against the whites and six days after seven companies, 500 strong under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel Casey and Major Garnett

At the date of his letter instead of 900, as he asserts, there were 1,900 regulars and at this time 2,000. Of the 33 companies in the Pacific department 27 are operating in Oregon and Washington, distributed as follows, viz: nine in southern Oregon 700 strong, actively operating against certainly not to exceed 200 warriors in arms against whites; seven companies, as before mentioned in Puget Sound, with less than 200 warriors in arms against them; one company at Vancouver and ten companies at the Dalles under command of Colonel George Wright, of the 9th infantry. The latter will be efficiently and I trust successfully employed against the Indians east of the Cascade range of mountains as soon as the season will permit that is, as soon as grass can be had to support animals.

A force amply sufficient to terminate the war in all parts of the two Territories and afterwards to prevent past occurrences if the volunteers could be withdrawn and private war prevented. But as long as governors of Territories make war and exercise powers as I believe, unknown to the President of the United States and individuals raise volunteers and make war on the Indians whenever they please and Congress will pay the expense so long will we have war in Oregon and Washington Territories.

It is said by intelligent men that the expense of Governor Curry's army will amount, in script, from two to four millions. If Congress should foot the bill, some governor of another territory will make a bill of ten millions

I do not know how the question will be considered. One thing

however, is certain, that it is an example which, if countenanced by the United States government, may, when least expected, lead to no less embarrassing than disastrous results.

Herewith I forward copies of instructions, marked 1, 2 and 3 to Colonel George Wright and Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey in regard to the employment of volunteers, and the course they should pursue in conducting the war against the Indians, and the protection of the inhabitants of Oregon and Washington Territories.

I also send copies, marked 4 and 5 of a correspondence between Lieutenant Colonel Casey and Governor Stevens on the subject of calling into service two companies of volunteers.

Governor Stevens, like Governor Curry, refuses to place volunteers under the command of United States officers. Colonel Wright, March 1, on this subject says that "from the best information I can obtain the presence of the volunteers in the Walla-Walla country during the last two months has been highly injurious and tended to increase the number of our enemies."

Similar reports are made from most of the regular officers, of the volunteers acting under their observation.

I also send a copy of a report from Lieutenant Colonel George Nauman, marked 6, ~~on~~ who was ordered to southern California to examine into the condition of affairs in that region, and to ascertain the feelings and disposition of the Indians on the Colorado.

His report is highly favorable to peace.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

John E. Wool, Major General

Lieutenant Colonel L. Thomas

Assistant Adjutant General New York.

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Indian affairs. Highly interesting. I have full confidence in General Wool's statement of facts, and fully concur in his views and



sentiments.

Respectfully submitted

Winfield Scott.

Headquarters, New York, May 2, 1856.

No 1

Headquarters Department of the  
Pacific, Benicia, California,  
January 29, 1856

Colonel: ~~No~~ doubt ere this you have received special orders No. 6 and a letter of instruction, dated the 19th instant, assigning you to Oregon which includes Puget Sound, Vancouver and the Dalles, and all the country north and east of the Cascade mountains.

You will exercise supervising control over all and direct such operations as you may deem proper.

As soon as the season will permit, preparatory to operations in the Indian country east and north of the Cascade mountains, you will establish the headquarters of your regiment at the Dalles where all the troops intended for the Indian country will be concentrated. Previous to which every attention will be given to perfecting them in the rifle or light infantry drill, as also in the duties of guards. The latter is an important duty and should receive every attention. I found but few of the younger officers of the 4th infantry acquainted with that duty. Your own headquarters you can establish either at Vancouver or the Dalles. You will of course be most of your time at the latter place during the period of preparation for the field.

The points which I intended as the base of operations are the Selah fisheries, on the Yakima river and some point on or near the Columbia river in the neighborhood of Fort Walla-Walla. It is my intention to establish a permanent post somewhere in this region at the most eligible point for controlling the surrounding Indian tribes and to command the river and its crossings. On account of the

the scarcity of timber it ~~may~~ be necessary to go some distance up the Touchet river before a suitable position for the establishment of a post can be found. Between the Dalles and the Selah fisheries an intermediate post with one company may be necessary, to prevent the Yakimas from taking fish in the streams which empty themselves in the Yakima and Columbia rivers. This intermediate post should be given to some active and energetic officer.

Herewith you will receive a memoir and sketches, by Captain Cram, chief of the topographical engineers of the country in which your command will be required to operate. I would recommend it to your attentive perusal. From this you will perceive that the Selah fisheries are one hundred miles from the Dalles, and from the latter to the Atahmum river mission it is seventy miles, which position may be important as an intermediate post between the Dalles and the Selah fisheries. From the Dalles to Fort-Walla Walla ~~and~~ it is one hundred and forty two miles and from the latter place to Selah fisheries ninety five miles by the road to Steilacoom.

With boats to cross the Columbia river your force at either point could be in four days concentrated; by forced marches, in three days or less. For crossing the Columbia river I ordered four portable boats and a flat to be prepared in pieces to be put together on the arrival of the troops at or near Walla-Walla.

Expeditions should be prepared to leave at the earliest moment that is, as soon as grass can be obtained for animals, for Fort Walla-Walla and the Selah fisheries. It is not probable, however, that you will be able on account of snow on the intervening mountains to go to the Selah-fisheries as soon as three or four weeks, as to the Walla-Walla country. Hence, as soon as the season will permit, you will conduct yourself a force of four or five companies with three mountain howitzers and one six-pounder to Walla-Walla.

It is desirable that you conduct this expedition with reference



to the selection of a proper position for a post and to ascertain the feelings and dispositions of the several tribes in that section of the country. I do not believe that the "alla-"allas, the Cayuses Pelouses and Umatillas, had resolved on war until the attack of the volunteers on the "alla-"allas.

The murder of the chief, Pih-piu-m x-mox, while a prisoner, by the volunteers, has united those tribes against us. I do not believe however that they will continue the war a great while. The occupation of the country between the "alla-"alla, Touche and Snake rivers and the opposite side of the Columbia, will very soon bring those tribes to terms.

The occupation at the proper time of the Yakima country from the Atahmum mission, and the country on the Yakima river extending above and below the Selah fisheries, will compel the Yakimas, I think, to sue for peace or abandon their country. Supplies for the Selah fisheries must be packed unless they should be sent by way of the "alla-"alla and the Steilacoom road.

It is desirable that at least sixty days provisions should be sent with either expedition to "alla-"alla or the Selah fisheries.

After the return of Major Kains I ordered an inspection of all the animals, some 450, when very few were found to be fit for service. Since then, Major Cross, chief quartermaster, has sent about 225 horses and mules to Vancouver.

It is very desirable that all the animals including the dragoon horses should be well taken care of, in order that they may be fit for service as soon as the troops can take the field. I have again and again given orders and instructions on that subject and especially that the dragoon horses should have the best of care and be put under cover.

I ordered, I think, as early as August last, stables to be put up at the Dalles, for the company of dragoons at Vancouver. I

understand they were nearly completed when I left, the 12th January. When this company goes to the Dalles, you will direct Major Fitzgerald to put his horses in the building designed as a stable for him. If the quartermaster occupies any part of it for quartermaster's stores, they will be moved out. The horses of that company must be put in a condition for active service by the time you will be ready to move.

In conclusion I would remark that we have no authority to call for volunteers to employ them, or to furnish them with supplies.

Therefore the less you have to do with them, unless in extreme cases which I do not anticipate, the better it will be for the service.

Many of them as well as most of the Oregonians are for exterminating the Indians and accordingly do not discriminate between friends and foes.

The course thus far pursued by Governor Curry and the volunteers has only tended to increase our Indian enemies whilst it has subjected the regular service to great inconvenience and expense. This, too, by exhausting the resources of Oregon and Washington and without accomplishing the least good.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

John E. Wool

Major general

Colonel George Wright

Commanding at Vancouver

P.S.: Applications are frequently made for clerks in the commissary and quartermaster's departments. I have issued an order prohibiting any clerks being appointed in the disbursing departments except by special instructions from the War Department, without my sanction and approval. If clerks are required by any disbursing officer under your command, the application should be made through you, with your approval or otherwise.



By the memoir of Captain Cram you will perceive that obstacles on the routes to the Solah fisheries and to Walla-Walla will require your attention. On fitting out expeditions, pioneer parties should be organized to go in advance and to remove, as far as possible, all obstacles that would retard your progress

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No 2

Headquarters, Department of the Pacific  
Panicia, February 22, 1856

Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, last evening, of your communication of the 4th instant.

I reply the general commanding directs me to say that you will receive by the steamer Massachusetts, Captain Swartout commanding, his instructions and views in regard to the course you should pursue in prosecuting the war against the Indians. With five companies of regular troops, not less than three hundred and fifty strong with several ships-of-war, including the steamer Massachusetts he had great hopes that you would be able to bring the war to a close without the aid of volunteers cannot be recognized or employed unless received and mustered into the service of the United States. Therefore, if volunteers ~~cannot be recognized or employed~~ should be considered indispensably necessary at any time to aid in defending the inhabitants of Puget Sound and in that vicinity or to bring the war to a close, you will call on the governor of the Territory for the number you might require, not to be mounted and when forwarded to you have them examined and regularly mustered into the service.

This course will be adopted only in case of absolute necessity as the general has no authority to call volunteers into the service, and he will not sanction or tolerate it, unless absolutely necessary for the protection of the inhabitants of the Territory.

He will send you, as soon as practicable, one or two companies of the fourth or ninth infantry. From necessity they will be compelled to go by land. At the present time it is said to be impracticable on account of high water, the streams not being fordable.

Your requisition for quartermasters' stores will be complied with. Neither horses nor mules can be sent from here. They must be obtained by purchase in either Washington or Oregon Territory. Your requisition for ordnance and ordnance stores was anticipated and the articles sent by the Massachusetts, except the expanding rifle cartridges. Twenty thousand have been ordered. Five thousand rifle cartridges were sent on the Massachusetts.

In conclusion the general directs me to say that whilst he approves of your efforts to induce the Indians to come in and give up their arms, under promise of protection, he does not doubt that you will by your energy and activity, as well as by that of all your officers, bring the war to a close without the employment of aid of volunteers. I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant

D.R. Jones

Acting Adjutant General

Lieutenant Colonel S. Casey

Ninth Infantry, commanding, Fort Steilacoom  
Washington Territory.

True copy: Richard Arnold

First Lieutenant Third Artillery and aid-de-camp

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No 3

Benicia, Headquarters, Department of the Pacific

On board of the steamer Columbia, March 14, 1856.

Colonel: I have just arrived and landed at Steilacoom with two companies of the 9th infantry, commanded by Major Garnett. By the enclosed order you will perceive that I have directed the Major



to have his com and prepared for immediate and active operations.

Your communication of the 9th instant was received on my way down the Columbia river. In regard to your co-operating with volunteers ordered out by Governor Stevens I will simply remark that no cooperation should take place on your part unless you received them into the service of the United States subject to your orders. If your position required volunteers to aid you in the protection of the inhabitants of the Territory, you should have called for them, and when received, to have had them mustered into the service of the United States. Any other course is decidedly wrong.

I know of no authority which authorizes governors of Territories to raise troops and direct their operations independent of the officers of the United States and certainly not independent of myself. I have been kept wholly ignorant of the state of the country except through the regular officers of the army and from their communications. I have yet to learn that any essential service has been rendered to the country by volunteers.

I, however, approve of your course as hitherto pursued, with the above exception and cannot doubt but that with the two companies under Major Garnett, you will very soon bring the war to a close.

I will be here until tomorrow, when I leave in the steamer "Columbia" for San Francisco. I hope, in the meantime, to see you. It is important that I should see you before I leave.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant

John E. Wool, major general

Lieutenant Colonel S. Casey

Ninth Regiment Infantry, Commanding at Steilacoom, Washington Territory

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No 4

Headquarters Puget Sound, District. Fort Steilacoom, Washington Territory, March 15, 1856.

57  
Sir: I respectfully request that you will at once issue your proclamation calling into the service of the United States two companies of volunteers to serve on foot for the period of four months, unless sooner discharged.

Each company to consist of one captain, one first and one second lieutenant, four sergeants, four corporals and seventy privates. I wish both companies to be mustered into service at Fort Steilacoom.

The authority for calling for the above named troops has been given by the general commanding the department of the Pacific.

I received, yesterday an accession of two companies of volunteers called for, I am of the opinion that I shall have a sufficient number of troops to protect this frontier, without the aid of those now in the service of the territory.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant

Silas Casey

Lieutenant Colonel Ninth Infantry

Commanding Puget Sound District

His Excellency I. I. Stevens

Governor of Washington Territory, Olympia W.T.

No 5

Executive Office, Washington Territory, Olympia, March 16, 1856

Sir: Your letter calling upon me for two companies of volunteers to be mustered into the regular service has been received and, in anticipation of my full reply, I will state that the requisition will not be complied with. I do not consider it expedient to change the plan of the campaign nor the organization of the troops, so far as the volunteers are concerned.

Truly and respectfully, your most obedient

Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey, Commanding Puget Sound District.  
Isaac I. Stevens



~~Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey, Commanding, Puget Sound District.~~

No. 6

Fort Yuma, California, February 27, 1856

Sir: I have the honor to state that since my last report, dated the 12th instant, nothing whatever has occurred between the Indians and whites to disturb the tranquility of this portion of California and that the former at present manifest towards us and each other the most amicable dispositions. I entertain no apprehension whatever that this desirable condition of things is likely soon to be changed. In all directions are seen unusually vigorous and extensive preparations of the soil and river bottom for cultivation, and there can be no better guarantee of the sincerity of the friendly protestations of the natives than this manifestation of a disposition to provide for themselves so immediately in our vicinity.

The Indian whom I mentioned in my letter of the 28th ultimo as having been dispatched the previous day to endeavor to ransom a white woman from the Mohaves and bring her to the fort, I am extremely happy to say returned on the 22nd instant having entirely succeeded in his mission. The young woman proves to be a Miss Oatman, whose parents were murdered by the Indians somewhere on the Gila about eighty miles from this place, in I think, 1850. Herself and a sister were captured on that occasion and reduced to slavery. The latter is represented to have died some six months ago. Miss Oatman seems to be about sixteen years of age, and has unfortunately almost entirely lost the use of the English language, speaking nothing but that of the rude people among whom she so long resided, and which no one here can interpret well. She, however, retains a recollection of her name and says it is Olive ~~Oatman~~ Oatman.

It is believed she has a brother residing at Los Angeles, the

necessary measures have been taken to ascertain that fact, and if it should turn out to be so, to apprise him of the agreeable intelligence of the recovery of his sister.

Meanwhile every proper care is being taken of her and it will afford us all infinite satisfaction to restore her to her friends and civilization.

It gives me much pleasure to add that the commandant of Fort Yuma, Brevet Lieutenant Burke, has manifested the most commendable zeal and interest in accomplishing the very desirable object I have just detailed.

As my services, in my opinion are no longer required at Fort Goddard Yuma, I shall in accordance with instructions, Headquarters Department of the Pacific, February 12, 1856, set out tomorrow for my post at Benicia barracks.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant

George Nauman

Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Major 3d  
artillery

To Captain D.R. Jones, Assistant adjutant general, department of the Pacific. Benicia, Calif.