

**Address of Dr. Wozencraft, delivered at
the Capitol, on Friday evening, Jan. 30.**

Gentlemen and Legislators:

I thank you kindly for the invitation extended to me, in order to address you on a subject which has occupied so much of my time and in which I feel so much interested. I am pleased to know that you deem it of sufficient importance to claim your attention and am in hopes that you likewise may become sufficiently interested to give the subject that thorough investigation which its importance demands at your hands.

Our Indian affairs is a subject of great importance at this particular juncture. As you are well aware, it has been a subject of the greatest moment with all of our sister Atlantic States. Their development and maturity from their colonial infancy much depended on the policy adopted and pursued towards the aborigines of the country. The fruitful history of those times should be garnered up by us that we may select therefrom all that may be productive of good—transplanting it here, that we may be the recipients of the benefits derived from their ripe experience.

I do not propose to go into a detail of historical events, thus taxing you with a recapitulation of occurrences which had filled your minds in childhood, and were then too vivid ever to be eradicated through life's long series of years. It is sufficient for us now to look at the details of the past only in an aggregate form in order to find the safest path and the best policy for their guidance now.

In what way and in what manner did our forefathers succeed best in passing through the trying period of their Indian troubles? Was it by waging a war of extermination? or was it by pursuing a firm, uniform, kind, just and conciliatory policy with those Indians?

I am sure there can be but one answer to this query, by those who are at all familiar with our infantile history, and that is—The humane policy has been the most expeditious as well as the cheapest.

It is true, the exterminating plan has succeeded, and the facts will be handed down to the latest posterity, as one of the darkest pages of our history. At the same time, the vast treasures of life that were then spent, in subduing Indians and carrying out this cruel policy, has implanted within us bitter feelings of vengeance towards this race. This feeling was born with us, their descendants, and has grown with our growth. It is well calculated to misguide us now.

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The policy of repelling and driving the Indians from us has, and ever will prove fruitful of mischief. It but gives a respite, a temporary calm—soon to give birth to the full grown storm, which too frequently terminates in a deluge of blood. The laws of nature are harmonious and attractive. We, her children, would do well to act in conformity thereto. What do we gain, I would ask, by the annihilation of our red brother? Is he in our way? have we not sufficient room? As an inferior creature in the scale of organization, can we not control him and make him subservient to our wishes, and at the same time materially improve his condition?

I must say, that he who would pursue the exterminating policy with these children of the forest and desert shows a want of mental capacity and humane feeling—an animal propensity to destroy, the want of mental and benevolent power to control; and in my humble opinion, a misdirected courage, probably from the want of a proper appreciation of the advantages and benefits of a well spent life.

This language may appear harsh to those who are heroes in Indian warfare, and to those who admire their acts. I would not willingly offend either, yet I may claim sufficient experience in these matters to speak for myself. I was once a hero of this kind, in embryo. Before I became full blown, however, I am happy to say that I shed my laureate leaves, and am now content to live without them, believing that I shall live, die and rest as well without them as with them. I must say that I have about the same opinion of the soundness of the head and the goodness of the heart of the Indian aggressor and killer, as I have of the killer of any other portion of the human family. This does not apply, however, to those who go out against Indians when they are the aggressors and punish them for their aggressions.

With us the humane policy is peculiarly applicable. From it we may justly expect the greatest advantages, aside from feelings of humanity.

The Indians of the Pacific are in many respects a prototype of the great ocean so properly named. They are pacific, mild and easily managed. They, like this great ocean, possess the elements of destruction in their organization, and it only requires that those elements should be roused to action, in order to produce a storm not less fearful, and far more destructive to life and property, than we have to fear from the ocean itself. We have had sufficient experience in this matter, in order to claim your assent to my assertion; and I am in hopes, sufficient to satisfy you that we had better use moderation and oil, to assuage and soothe, rather than fire and wind, to develop the storm. The Indians of this country are brave. They want but the dangerous experience in war to make

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But look for a moment at the influence exercised over the Pacific Indians by the Padres, when thousands and thousands were controlled and made subservient and useful by the humane policy. But look abroad over the State, and view the many remaining evidences of the vast amount of labor performed by them. And all of this was done simply that they might please their rulers. But look at the controlling influence of our American pioneers in this State, where one man has subjugated and controlled thousands by the same salutary policy. And now look and see to what extremity we are driven by the aggressive acts of those claiming to be civilized beings. And this is but a foretaste—a dim foreshadowing—of the future, if the same reckless and inhuman course is to be pursued towards these Indians.

If I speak feelingly, I claim to speak knowingly, and here assert, without fear of successful contradiction, that the true policy which should be pursued towards the Indians of this country is to control, govern, and make them useful among us, and not drive them from us, spending our lives and treasures in pursuing and destroying them. Their nationality must through necessity be destroyed, but we would do well to preserve their individual existence.

To me it is a strange want of judgment and discrimination in those who encourage and protect the foreign paupers and convicts to labour in our placers—who, at best, but enrich themselves, and impoverish the State—and at the same time deny a like privilege to the aborigines of the country—the original possessors. They, gentlemen, would enrich the State with their labor, for they will remain, if you will permit them, and freely spend all the fruits of their toil. This, I say, is a strange incongruity to me, and I can only account for it as before stated that the feeling of vengeance is so deeply fixed in our organization towards this unfortunate and doomed race. It is possible that this feeling, deep as it may be, could be removed with certain politicians, if they were only allowed to vote, for then they would be the "dear people." I wonder if this cannot be brought about? I shall be under particular obligations to you, gentlemen, if you will only do it, for then I may have some Senatorial aspirations.

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In relation to the reservations which have been set apart by me for the occupancy of the Indians in this section of the country, I would refer you to a communication addressed by me to my fellow citizens some months ago, which I will cause to be re-published if it can be done without my paying for it. I am in hopes that the conductors of some paper, who may feel sufficiently and disinterestedly patriotic in the public weal, and Indian affairs particularly, will publish it.

Two reservations have been made by me since that time, however, in the southern part of the State. They are located, I believe, in San Diego county, and not unlike a saddle on a poor, raw-boned horse, being pretty accurately fitted on the back of the Sierra Nevada; the skirt, however, is slightly inclined to the western flank; which, if the Hon. S. T. Warner finds bearable, and not too ticklish, I presume there will be no one else to complain, as I took the precaution to reserve to ourselves all the minerals that may be therein. I do not know how many acres of land I have squandered here, and fear that it never will be known until mountain goats learn surveying.

In connection with this subject, I would state, from facts elicited when on the ground among the Indians in the south, who had assumed a hostile attitude, I am satisfied in the correctness of the policy that we are pursuing towards the Indians of the country, as well as the advantages attending it. I there learned that a combination of Indian forces would have been perfected, in all probability, sufficient to have been successful in carrying out their design of exterminating and driving the Americans out of the country, had not treaties been made with a portion of them. And I learned in addition that one principal cause of the war was, that we had not recognized their rights to live, and had not complied with promises long since made.

In relation to the clamor which has been raised about the reservations in this section of the State, I am satisfied that the persons who were active in propagating it, are either ignorant of the facts and particulars relative to those reservations, or they are biased and governed by ulterior, and other objects than the public good. If the latter be the case, it will be wholly unnecessary for me to attempt to remove their objections. With a hope that this may not be so, and that they are honestly influenced in their convictions, and believe that the policy pursued is erroneous and bad, injurious to the future interest and welfare of the State, I will attempt to place it in a light where it may be seen in full and in perspective.

In as few words as possible, I will explain the course pursued and policy adopted towards our Indians by me. In the first place, to establish and secure amicable relationship between the whites and the Indians. When the Indians were found in a hostile attitude I attempted to chastise before talking to them. Then, to show them the advantages of peace, and their inevitable extinction

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Those Indians in the valleys I permit to remain, where both parties are willing; and have placed the subject before the Indian Bureau, in order to secure to those Indians living on grants of lands the same privilege that was allowed them by the Mexican Government, that is—to remain unmolested where they may be located, for in this way they can be, and are made very useful. In conclusion, I would say, that I never make presents to Indians, paying them only for services rendered, and not rewarding them for having been bad.

If you please, now, I will set out, just for the sake of argument, and subscribe to the repeatedly published assertions, that the land in those reservations are the richest in the country, the flower of the State, for agricultural purposes; and that there is more gold in them than can be worked out. We will suppose that this is so; at the same time, gentlemen, you who are conversant with the matter, you who have passed over these reservations, will admit that it will require an immoderate stretch of the imagination to entertain this supposition for a moment. Well, I would ask, what particular objections are there to the Indians having lands sufficient for their support? Would their producing impoverish us? Is there insufficient, besides these reservations, to support a dense population? Look abroad over the country, and satisfy yourselves in relation to this matter, I think that you will then admit that we will not be seriously impoverish ed by their making enough to support themselves, and that we may probably avoid a famine, as well as war, and yet let them have these reservations. In short, that we may make out to live, and allow the Indians to do the same. True, it may be somewhat of an absurdity to admit that they have any right to live at all; for though this was a privilege allowed them by the Great Father of

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I believe you have some data to guide you in this calculation. Take, for instance, the El Dorado war; divide the sum total expended in that war by the number of Indians killed, or brought in; this, I believe, can be done by an infant in arithmetic. Then multiply the probable

number of Indians in the country by the number supposed to be in that war. All I would ask in addition, then, is that you defer sending instructions to our Representatives at Washington, to use their influence against the ratification of treaties, until you have completed your computation.

Then, suppose that you do finally get through with this calculation, and under a supposition that the enormous amount will be paid by our rich old relation, Uncle Samuel, and that there may be some rich pickings for us in the affair, as it certainly will be an enlarged and improved addition to the Florida war, and you determine to instruct our Representatives to bring it about, which, I should think, could be done, as our sister Atlantic States would be pleased thus to get rid of paying their quota that may be required in fulfilling treaty stipulations; and probably Uncle Samuel would say, "Well, if you refuse the proffered peace and security from these Indians, I am unwilling to pay your Indian war bills." Then, if you think you can retain sufficient gold in the country to pay your war bills, it may be a good speculation, though I would doubt the policy.

But, seriously, gentlemen, the objections that have been raised against the policy pursued towards the Indians of this country, to my mind is so absurd that it does not admit of an argument.

If we would but consider for a moment the great advantages to us of bringing in these Indians, we, without reference to the humane act, would not stop to count the cost, even should it come out of our own treasury.

In connection with this subject, it may be proper to state, though I feel the delicacy, as my humble belief that the treaties which have been made have been the means of saving an amount of money, which otherwise would have been spent up to this time in waging a war with these Indians, equal to the entire amount that may be required for the fulfilment of treaty stipulations with all of the Indians in California, throughout time to come. Then if we take into consideration the lives that would have been sacrificed by us, and the Indians that have been saved for future usefulness, I think the argument is complete in favor of the policy.

Have we a right to force these Indians into a hostile attitude? Certainly not. And has it never occurred to your minds that these simple beings, who by some are deemed unworthy of life, have as clear a conception of right and wrong as we have, and practice fidelity in accordance with that knowledge much more scrupulously than we do? If it has not, permit me to inform you of the fact and give you an instance in evidence. They

your minds that these simple beings, who by some are deemed unworthy of life, have as clear a conception of right and wrong as we have, and practice fidelity in accordance with that knowledge much more scrupulously than we do? If it has not, permit me to inform you of the fact, and give you an instance in evidence. They have heretofore lived under the belief that, as natural children, they had a right to all the seeds and fruits in nature's garden; and accordingly a division of the produce is made among them. Thus every fructifying tree, shrub, plant and patch of grass has its separate owner, and their right and ownership to the same is most scrupulously regarded. We, forsooth, who profess to hold the scales of justice, and must needs have it emblazoned forth as the frontispiece in all our acts and representations, have gone among this primitive people, taken possession of their fields of produce, and driven them forth to want and starvation. Would we be willing to be weighed by such scales, and would we submit to the weighing?

In conclusion, I would ask if there is a probability that any one would sustain a loss or otherwise be harmed by the ratification of those treaties? If there is, I have not been able to see it; on the contrary, I can see that we, the citizens of California, will be the recipients of a great benefit.

Now, gentlemen, allow me one further remark, which is personal, and is, that I have felt somewhat aggrieved by publications made, which, by implication, condemn me as having acted against the interest of my adopted State. I must say that I felt this sorely, as you may judge when I tell you that I am not, nor never have been an active partizan politician, being conservative in feeling and principle, and laboring as I do under the honest conviction that in the discharge of my duty as a Government officer I had acted faithfully towards the Government, and at the same time had rendered a most essential service to my State. And inasmuch as I was a resident of the Territory before her State organization, and took an active part in that organization, and now profess to feel as much interest in her present and future welfare as any man in the State, I consequently could not knowingly act against her interests. Under these feelings and circumstances I have thought that it was unjust and uncalled for. I am in hopes the gentlemen will do me justice, and believe that I am incapable of acting otherwise than for the welfare of my State.

DAILY UNION

SACRAMENTO, MONDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 2, 1852.