
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Sacramento City, April 9, 1852.

SIR: Your letter, dated "San Francisco, April 5, 1852," communicating the intelligence that serious collisions have occurred between white citizens and Indians in the counties of Trinity, Klamath, and Shasta, was received yesterday.

I assure you, sir, that I deplore the unsettled condition of affairs in the North; but the settlement of new countries, and the progress of civilization, have always been attended with perils. The career of civilization, under the auspices of the American people, has heretofore been interrupted by no dangers, and daunted by no perils. Its progress has been an ovation—steady, august, and resistless. Govern-

ments are instituted for the protection, as well as for the control, of the governed; and this government, while it is under my administration, shall not fail to perform its duties. I am admonished, too, by the intelligence communicated, of the necessity of taking steps to protect the people of California, and I concur with you in the opinion that prompt action is indispensable. I have therefore determined to exercise the prerogative reposed in me by the constitution, to solicit, and, if necessary, enforce a peace. I have also made a demand upon the military commander of the United States forces in California for troops, and requested him to unite with me in an effort to terminate these unfortunate disturbances. I trust that you, too, will unite with me in an appeal to the military authorities of the United States stationed in California, to take the initiative in this business, and by placing troops in the northern counties, with orders to act, relieve this State from the necessity of assuming a new military debt. A desire to preserve the credit of the State, and to place her integrity beyond the reach of suspicion, will not permit me to sanction any act to increase the public liabilities, unless necessity shall dictate it.

In detailing to me the troubles which have recently occurred with the Indians in the counties of Trinity and Klamath, I deem it proper to apprise you of the fact that you place yourself at issue with the respectable gentlemen representing those counties in the Senate and Assembly of this State; and in ascribing the guilt of these proceedings to our own citizens, your declarations are not corroborated by statements which they have submitted to me. You assume that our citizens have perpetrated these crimes, and profess to entertain "no doubt but the Indian department at Washington will authorize you to refund whatever sum may be necessary to secure the conviction of the guilty." Should you solicit an appropriation of money to be applied to that object, I trust you will add a separate appeal to the President to direct that such additions be made to the troops detailed for duty in California as the exigencies of the service imperatively demand.

I have remarked that there are discrepancies between your statement of the facts connected with this outbreak and the statements laid before me by the members of the legislature representing the northern counties in which hostilities have occurred. They represent that the Indians are daily guilty of committing outrages upon unoffending citizens; that "the number of white men murdered by Indians in the counties of Klamath, Trinity, Shasta, and Siskiyou, within a few months past, is one hundred and thirty; and that the aggregate value of property destroyed by them, during the same period, is \$240,000."

You, inclining to the other side, detail a series of atrocious outrages committed by the whites against the "naked and defenceless Indians;" and you assert that "this wanton sacrifice of human life has, at all events, brought lasting disgrace upon the American name." You, however, preface these details in your communication with an admission that, before the whites proceeded to take any aggressive steps, two of their number had been murdered by the Indians. You also add a remark, that citizens resident in Klamath, Trinity, and Shasta, "attempt to justify their disregard of certain treaty arrangements made by yourself with the Indians in November last—among other things, by the

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opposition which they have understood the legislature has been making to the confirmation of the treaties by the Senate of the United States.”

These reflections imply an imputation upon the character of American citizens, and I assent neither to its justice nor its propriety. As a private intercessor between American citizens and their savage enemies, consanguinity, and the sentiments which it inspires, would incline me to favor the cause of my countrymen; and as a public magistrate, chosen by American citizens, I cannot yield my approbation to any imputations upon their intelligence or patriotism. Nor can I refrain from expressing the opinion that an investigation of the circumstances, such as I design to make, will fully acquit the citizens residing in the northern counties of the charge of “murdering naked and defenceless Indians in cold blood.”

Whatever may be the results of such an investigation, I renew to you the assurances which I have already given—that I will omit no effort to punish offenders against the laws, and to secure to the citizens of the State the blessings of peace and good government.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN BIGLER.

Hon. REDICK MCKEE,
Indian Agent, &c.
