

No. 10.

The Secretary of War to Gen. Hitchcock.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, May 3, 1851.

SIR: You will, immediately on assuming the command of the Pacific division, revise the whole system both of defence and of administration.

It has been suggested by persons whose opinion is entitled to some weight, that the posts now occupied by the troops, being for the most part on or near the seacoast, are not the most eligible, with reference to the

protection of the country against the Indians; if such should be your opinion, you will make such changes therein as you may deem proper.

In the selection of posts, you will be governed mainly by the following considerations, viz :

1. The protection of the inhabitants of California.
2. The defence of the Mexican territory, which we are bound by treaty to protect against the Indians within our border.
3. Economy and facility in supporting the troops, particularly in regard to forage, fuel and adaptation of the surrounding country to cultivation.

In all negotiations and pacific arrangements with the Indians, you will act in concert with the commissioners now in California for the purpose of negotiating treaties with them, and also with the superintendent and agents of Indian affairs in California and Oregon, and will afford them every facility for fulfilling the object of their mission.

Instructions will be given them by the Department of the Interior to act in concert with the military commander in all transactions with the Indians.

You will bear in mind that the Mexican territory is as much entitled as our own to the protection of our troops against the Indian tribes within our limits. Complaints have already been made that adequate protection is not afforded, and that great losses have been sustained by Mexican citizens in consequence of Indian hostilities.

Whether these complaints be well founded or not, the Department has not the information necessary to enable it to determine. Your attention is particularly called to this subject, and you are directed to report as soon as practicable what posts have been selected, and what other steps have been taken in reference to it. Would it not be advisable to establish one or more posts on the Gila, beyond its junction with the Colorado ?

You will also report whether the force under your command is considered by you sufficient to protect California and the adjacent Mexican territory against Indian hostilities and depredations. If it be not sufficient, what additional force you deem necessary, and of what description.

You will use every effort to reduce the enormous expenditures of the army in California and Oregon, particularly in the Quartermaster's and Subsistence Departments. You will scrutinize the administration of these departments, and will rigidly enforce all regulations having reference to the economy of the service.

It is believed that the number of employees may be diminished without inconvenience to the service, and that material changes may be made in the ration, whereby its cost may be reduced without interfering with the health or comfort of the soldier. You are authorized to make all such changes as you may deem advisable.

For the purpose of enabling you to execute the general order, No. 1, (current series,) you will be supplied with such seed, agricultural implements &c. as you may require.

In carrying out these measures, and such others as your own judgment may hereafter suggest, you will exercise a larger discretion than would be allowed where the communication between the commander and the Department is more frequent and more rapid.

Very respectfully, your obedient serv't,

C. M. CONRAD,
Secretary of War

Brevet Brig. Gen. E. A. HITCHCOCK,
Commanding Pacific Division,