
SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., *June 23, 1852.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 19th of May, requiring a full and detailed report of all transactions made and incurred by the agents of the department in California. I herewith hasten to comply.

Since May 14, 1851, at which time I commenced the discharge of my separate duties, I have made up and forwarded quarterly statements of all official transactions up to December 31, including eight

treaties, six of which were made within my district and two in the southern district. I have received acknowledgments from the department for a portion of the above-mentioned documents. I should have sent returns for the quarter terminating March 31, 1852, had not illness prevented, up to date of instructions to report to Mr. Beale, superintendent, &c. Consequently you will perceive that there has been no dereliction of duty on my part; and I presume, were the department in possession of all the facts, in addition to the statements from myself which may have miscarried, the closing clause embraced in the letter before me will not be applied to the transactions made by myself.

I commenced my mission, now something more than thirteen months since, with \$150 drawn from the disbursing officer. Some time subsequently I obtained \$1,000 from the collector of the customs by giving the required security. Thus supplied, I set about the responsible and onerous duties intrusted to me, and *endeavored* to fulfil the instructions of the honorable Secretary of the Interior; *i. e.*, to inform myself, and communicate the same to the department, of the manners, habits, customs, and extent of civilization of the California Indians, and make such treaties and compacts with them as may seem just and proper. I presume it was not expected of me, in fulfilling the foregoing instructions, to accomplish them with the limited means then in my possession. The state of affairs here at that time left me no choice, if choice indeed I could have had, under the instructions. The Indians were then in open hostility; the citizens were clamorous for protection, and were unsparing in abusing the administration for seeming neglect. The soldiers were in the field at a heavy expense, and without commensurate success. Under the foregoing existing state of affairs I pushed forward, exerting every means within my power, with a confident expectation of meeting with the approval, if not the commendation, of the department, and, in the event of success, of the gratitude of the citizens of California.

It would appear that I have been over-sanguine in my expectations, and probably over-zealous in compassing the difficult and onerous mission intrusted to me. I may be allowed to credit myself with the feeling common to those who are conscious of having discharged their duty to the best of their ability, and the assurance, given me by the resident population who are unbiassed by political motives, that I have done much good in the cause of humanity—have done much in relieving the State from her greatest enemy—have done much in saving life, property, and treasure. This is truly consoling; but it will be insufficient to remove from my breast the mortification of an official disapprobation of my acts; and I am yet in hopes that a full investigation will be made, confident in the belief that it will result to my credit and that of the department.

I proceeded on my mission, made peace with those hostile Indians, and conciliated those who were assuming a hostile attitude—had consummated five treaties, and completed all the preliminary arrangements for the sixth, when I received instructions from the department to discontinue negotiations when the appropriation of \$25,000 should be exhausted. I completed the sixth treaty, and only learned subse-

quently that the disbursing officer, contrary to your explicit instructions, had consumed the principal amount of the appropriation himself.

I presume the department will not disapprove of my official acts up to the above-mentioned period. If you will be pleased to look over the returns for that period, you will perceive that I practised a most stringent economy, as indeed I have up to the present time.

You were apprized, by communication of October 1, 1851, of the *necessity* of furnishing beef to those Indians near the head of the San Joaquin valley, I having received satisfactory evidence that if they were not provided for, in conformity to treaty stipulations, hostilities would be the result. The supplies were furnished, and peace has thus been perpetuated. That there was a necessity calling upon me to act as I did, is unquestionable. We will allow, if you please, that those Indians possessed a sufficient amount of intelligence to comprehend their new relationship, and the obligations of the compact which they have entered into with us; yet the imperious calls of nature for food can no more be resisted by them than it can by any other animal organization, and, unfortunately for the rancherias of Lower California, the facilities to the Indian for acquiring it are too great to be resisted. I am in hopes the department will not disapprove of my acts in this instance.

You were likewise apprized, by communications of October and January, of the facts, in full and detail, of the then existing war between the whites and Indians in the lower part of California; of the singularly fortuitous results attending my mission among them; that peace was made, in a manner not likely to be broken on their part, inasmuch as some *twelve* of their chiefs and headmen *sealed it with their life's blood*, and it was further confirmed by the assent and signatures of *fifty* chiefs and captains. A full report, accompanied by the two treaties, was forwarded in the steamer of the 15th of January. I waited acknowledgment from the department four months, before issuing the supplies. My *promise* to them was, that by the first of May they should have them. I have so far fulfilled my promise as to commence issuing beef and flour to them. I had likewise authorized the licensed traders, Messrs. Rucket and Henderson, to purchase, on behalf of the government, a sufficient number of horses, without which they could not take care of their beef cattle.

It is to be hoped that the above-mentioned documents and treaties have come to hand, and that the department will approve of my official transactions in this instance. In relation to the prices which I have agreed to pay for beef, I feel satisfied that there can be no reasonable grounds for objection, as I presume you are pretty well posted up in the matter, by the report which you furnished to the Senate. I will not trouble you with statements, further than may be necessary in order to fix and confirm the contract entered into with Mr. Samuel Norris, who has furnished all the cattle required by me in making the five treaties. Our agreement was, that he would deliver beef cattle *immediately* on the reception of my order, at any point between the Mocalumne river south and the headwaters of the Sacramento river north, and that I would allow him the current cash price for which neat beef was sell-

ing at the time and place of delivery, payable on an appropriation of the present Congress.

Enclosed please find two letters stating the price of beef, one from Mr. Belcher, on the Cosumne river south; the other from Mr. P. B. Reading, near the head of the Sacramento. These letters will go to show that I have favored the government, if favor has been shown to either. I am in hopes it will be deemed just to allow him twenty cents per pound. He was put to much trouble and great expense in keeping near me in my travels. Had this not been done, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to have made treaties.

The price agreed on for those delivered by Major S. S. Hensly is fifteen cents per pound; this you will admit is low, when you are informed that beef has advanced one hundred per cent. since Col. Fremont filled his contract. The price agreed on for those now being delivered by Col. George McDougall, in the south, is $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents per pound, payable this present Congress; but in the event of the failure to make an appropriation this session, then he is to have $15\frac{1}{2}$ cents per pound, payable next session. This is a low price; and, as you were informed in a former communication, the first contractor receded from his contract, and it was with some difficulty that I succeeded in making the present one; consequently, there will be no necessity of enforcing the bonds given by the first contractor.

I am informed that beef is selling for as high prices in the extreme south, as it is in the north, on Russian river, which is above Clear lake.

As stated in my communication of August, 1851, I could have bought beef at 8 cents, had I the money wherewith to pay; but as it was, there were but few who were willing to furnish beef cattle, (which are rated as cash here,) and wait for their money one year.

I would here wish to notice a statement made by Colonel R. McKee, published in the report called for by the Senate. He states that "*he understands*" that there are claims held by parties for cattle furnished in the middle and southern districts, *at very high rates*. Permit me to say that this is but a continuation of the course which he has been pursuing for some time past, having commenced here by publishing tirades, in self-justification, as he terms it; but to others it was very apparent that he had other and sinister designs—trying to invalidate all other contracts than those made by himself; and thus has the public censure been evoked on the acts of the commissioners. In his published accounts of debts and liabilities he states—"contracted for at eight cents per pound, or \$40 per head." General Estelle called on me and stated that his contract with R. McKee is at twenty-five cents per pound, or \$125 per head. This being so, Mr. McKee would have done well to make the statement, and thus confine himself to the *truth*, and the duties which more properly belong to his own district. Relative to the discussion alluded to in your letter, as having taken place in Washington, as well as in California, I may say that there has been any amount of discussion here; but so far as the honorable legislators were engaged therein, it resulted, not as the Hon. Dr. Gwin would have it appear, but in a *positive negation* of the condemnatory resolutions embodied in the Doctor's published speech; and we do think that it would have been as well for the Doctor to have given the statement in full.

There was a minority report, which was favorable to our policy, and rather potent—if we may judge by the effect—for I am assured that they have *not passed any condemnatory resolutions*. The gentlemen who made the minority report have had more experience with the Indians of California than any other members of that extinct body, and the only motive which could have actuated them was that of humanity and justice. And so far as relates to the popular opinion here, as well as I am able to judge from statements made to me by intelligent and disinterested people, it is decidedly in favor of the policy which we have been pursuing. A gentleman just down from the mines informs me that, in the event of Congress failing to make provision to secure the faithful fulfilment of the treaties, the people of California would themselves willingly raise the amount required rather than be subject to the evils of Indian wars, as they have heretofore been.

In conclusion, I would state that there has been no violation of treaty obligations on the part of any of the numerous bands of Indians with whom I have treated. There is a band of Indians on the Merced river, high up in the mountains, who are in a hostile attitude. The soldiers from Camp Miller, on the San Joaquin, have gone against them. The captain of this band was the first to come in and *talk*. I was not satisfied with the talk, and told my colleagues that he only came to deceive us, and gain time for the snow to melt, and then he could defy us; but they differed with me. The disbursing officer gave them blankets, shirts, and other presents, under the confident belief that the Indians would be faithful to their promises. They doubtless laughed at the simple credulity of the official, for they never did come in of their own accord. They were brought in twice by the volunteers, and as often escaped or went back, and never did sign or agree to the treaty. I mention this in order to correct any misapprehension which is likely to occur, where information is gained through the public press.

I herewith forward an abstract of disbursements from the time I assumed responsibility up to date, with accompanying vouchers.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

O. M. WOZENCRAFT,
United States Indian Agent, California.

HON. LUKE LEA,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington.
