

45. California Supp. Regs
Geny: of War

Jan'y 7, 1853,

Transmits communication from
Genl Hitchcock and Lieut Heltz
W.S. Army in relation to Indian
affairs in California

Respy referred to the Comm.
of Indian Affairs.

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War Department
Washington Jan. 7. 1853

Hon. A. N. N. Stewart
Secretary of the Interior,
Sir,

For the information of the Department of the Interior, I have the honor to transmit herewith, communications from General Hitchcock, and Lieut. Ketchum, U. S. Army in relation to Indian Affairs in California, and on the Santa Fe route.

Very Respectfully
Your Obedt. Servant
G. B. Seward
Secretary of War

Head Quarters Pacific Division
San Francisco, Nov 29. 1852 -

Sir,

I deem it necessary for such use as the Hon. Secretary of War may think proper to express an opinion, carefully formed, in favor of the plan proposed recently by Mr. Beale, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs in this Division, for adjusting and placing on a permanent basis our relations with the Indians in this country. Mr. Beale has fully explained to me his views on this subject, as communicated a few weeks since by letter to the Chief of his Department at Washington, and it appears to me that the choice of the Government lies necessarily between accepting that plan, and giving the Indians over to rapine extermination or expulsion from the State. The objection to the plan is the apparently new policy of assuming direct control over the Indian lands, and providing for the Indians, giving them the alternative of accepting such arrangements as the Government may make, or of being treated (or maltreated) at the pleasure of the white settlers.

In answer to this, it should be considered that these Indians have never been recognised by the Spanish or Mexican Government, as having independent rights in the country, and therefore, as far as they are concerned, the proposed policy would introduce no decided change, but on the contrary

in respect to dominion would be such as they have been accustomed to. In regard to the settlers it is not to be denied, that there is serious difficulty, but the real question is, whether they shall, in an unregulated manner, determine our intercourse with the Indians including expensive wars with other tribes, or whether the Government shall establish some limits and rules for this intercourse.

By the plan proposed, a small portion of land is to be set apart within which there is to be a military post, and some provision made for the subsistence of the Indians, to be supplied as far as possible from their own labor. Within this reserve the Indians are to be protected, but not beyond it.

This reserve would naturally be selected near the mountains leaving the latter for the range of the Indians, extending interior without limit.

The system might be commenced with one or two posts at first, where most needed, as on the head waters of the San Joaquin at the base of the Sierra Nevada, and at some point on the upper waters of the Sacramento; and the system could be extended as the requirements of the country and experience might indicate the necessity for it.

The present course tends to exterminate a large body of Indians, a remnant of which

in a very few years, will be driven beyond the Sierra Nevada, where they will spread a leaven of bitterness among extensive tribes, with which we have had as yet no intercourse. They would carry with them some knowledge of fire arms, and an instructed spirit of war hitherto unknown on this coast, and the result could not fail to be the most savage and desperate warfare for an indefinite period, making a Pacific transit over the continent next to impossible for a great many years.

It is a mistake, in my judgment, to suppose that the Indians on this coast, except perhaps a few "digger bands", differ materially from those found by the Pilgrims at Plymouth, from whose descendants, their offspring up in time, a Philip and a Tecumseh. It is by no means certain that the seeds of dreadful massacre and barbarities are not already abundantly sown.

In introducing the proposed policy a considerable discretion should be allowed to the Superintendent, as it will be impossible to decide at Washington upon minute details, and the Military should be clothed with a suitable authority to give effect to the plan.

It is of manifest importance that there should be a harmony of action between the Superintendent of Indian Affairs and the Military Commander on this coast, and if I am to be retained on duty here, I desire to express a wish that Mr. Beale may be

continued in the Superintendance of Indian
Affairs. He has a more extensive acquain-
-tance with the Indians than any other man
in the country, and brings to the performance
of his duties an earnest zeal, a humane
spirit, an untiring perseverance and an
honest independence.

I am, Sir very respectfully
Your obt. Servt.
E. Hitchcock
Col 2^d Infy B. B. Genl
Unclg

Col. S. Cooper
Adjutant General
U. S. Army
City of Washington
D. C.

[Call's, 1853]

W 142