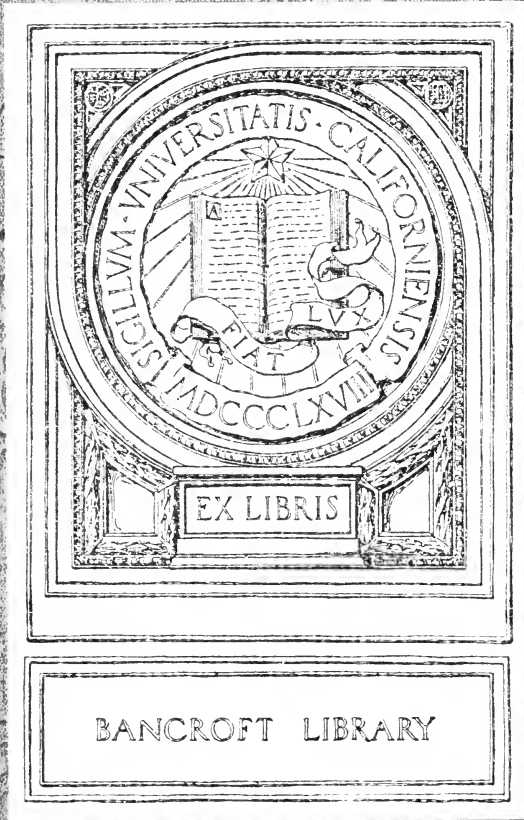


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SPEECH

OF

*1879*  
HON. ISAAC I. STEVENS,

DELEGATE FROM WASHINGTON TERRITORY,

ON THE

WASHINGTON AND OREGON WAR CLAIMS.

DELIVERED IN

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES,

MAY 31, 1858.



WASHINGTON:  
PRINTED BY LEMUEL TOWERS.  
1858.

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## S P E E C H

OF

## HON. ISAAC I. STEVENS,

DELEGATE FROM WASHINGTON TERRITORY,

ON THE

## WASHINGTON AND OREGON WAR CLAIMS.

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DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MAY 31, 1853.

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The House being in committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, Mr. ISAAC I. STEVENS said:

I take this occasion, Mr. Chairman, to present a few observations in regard to the Washington and Oregon war claim. This is a matter certainly of some little consequence, for it involves no less a sum than six millions of dollars. Incident to this, however, is another question of more importance still, namely: the character and honor of the people of those distant Territories, and the honor of our whole country. One question touches the Treasury of the United States, and the other the good name of the people of the United States. I shall dwell upon them both. I shall endeavor to vindicate the character and conduct of the people of those Territories, and the operations undertaken by the authorities of those Territories for the purpose of suppressing Indian hostilities. I shall endeavor to show that those operations were necessary, that they were economical, and that they are entitled to the confidence and sympathy of the country; and finally I shall endeavor to show by precedents, by the course of the Government in regard to other portions of the country, that we have a right to expect prompt and ample justice from the Congress of the United States.

Mr. Chairman, it has been often charged against us, that that war was brought on by outrages upon the rights of the Indians; that it was gotten up for the purpose of speculation: and that it was the treaties which caused the war. Well, sir, suppose the treaties did cause the war; suppose we did have vagabonds in that country who committed outrages upon the Indians; suppose some few citizens were operated upon by the motive of making a speculation out of the war; if these things be true, did they make it any less the duty of the people, and of the authorities of the Territories, a war having come upon them, to protect the settlements? What account would an executive have had to render, who, when he heard that the Indians were devastating the settlements, burning the houses, and massacring the women and children, had declined to protect those settlements on the ground that here and there a white man had outraged the Indians, and had driven them to arms? Suppose the treaties *did* incite the war, was it the fault of the people of those Territories? Was the appointment of commissioners, the calling together of councils, and the forming of treaties their act? Not at all. It was the act of your Government. It was the act of your Congress. It was done under the orders of your President. The people of the Territories certainly were not responsible, nor were the executives of those people responsible. Sir, it does seem to me that it would be trifling with the intelligence and insulting the understandings of gentlemen of this Committee, if I were to undertake to defend the people of those Territories from the charge of having brought about this war for purposes of speculation. Who are the people of those Territories? How did they get there? Were they mere vagabonds and outcasts? Did they go there without

law, and give to the world an example of lawlessness and insubordination? No, sir, they were American citizens, the very choice and flower of your yeomanry. They went there carrying with them the arts and arms, the laws and institutions of their country, and there they planted empire and civilization. How is this Government, and how are the people of these States known upon that coast? It is through the eighty odd thousand people there who have given to the world from their first settlement, an example of a law-abiding, an industrious, a patriotic, a suffering—ay, and a heroic people. You are known there through them, and through the institutions which they have carried there with them. Sir, when men talk about vagabonds in that country, I might with propriety refer them to Baltimore, and to Philadelphia, and to New York, and to all your large cities, and even to this National Capital.

Have you no vagabonds? Have you no courts, no juries, no jails, no penitentiaries? Why, even here, murder stalks at noon-day, and has marched in procession. It has controlled the elections of a neighboring city; and this too, in your densely populated old States—this too, in your cities, where civilization and refinement reign. I say to gentlemen who fling the term *vagabond* into our faces, first pull the beam out of your own eye, and then you can see clearly to pull the mote out of your brother's eye.

But, Mr. Chairman, I most emphatically deny all these charges, and I speak from the most abundant opportunities of personal observation. The good name of that people is dear to me. They have behaved in such a manner as entitles them not to sufferance, not simply to be passed along, but entitles them to your admiration and praise. They have held high advanced, the flag of their country's honor, and have maintained the humanity and beneficence of its institutions.

Mr. Chairman, the Indian tribes of those two Territories number some forty odd thousand souls. In Washington some twenty-two thousand, and in Oregon some twenty thousand. When the war commenced in 1855, we had in Washington only about seventeen hundred able-bodied white men. The Indian tribes were all greatly disaffected, and their friendship could not be depended on. They numbered in the neighborhood of Puget Sound alone, some twenty-five hundred warriors; whilst on that Sound we had not over one thousand able-bodied white men. East of the Cascade the Indian tribes are rich, proud, and brave. They had great chiefs, such chiefs as Kam-i-a-y-kan and Pu-pu-mux-mux. They had shown their prowess in war, at one time requiring the provisional government of Oregon to exert all its strength in order to punish them for the atrocities committed in the robbery and murder of Mr. Whitman and his whole family. In the summer of 1855, just before the war commenced, the general impression in both Territories was, that there was little or no fear of war, for, Mr. Chairman, we had had rumors of this during previous years. The Indians had been more or less disaffected for a long time. There were many rumors of disaffection in the spring of 1855, though they were generally discredited. In the spring of 1855, both Col. Bonneville, in command of the Columbia River District, and Major Rains, in command at the Dalles, came to the conclusion that the Walla-Walla chief Pu-pu-mux-mux ought to be seized and put in confinement on the ground that he was getting up a general Indian war; and he would have been seized and put in confinement, had it not been for the persuasions of the Indian officers, who, equally with myself, discredited the reports, and had confidence in Pu-pu-mux-mux. Previous to my going to the Walla-Walla council, word was sent to me by the good father Ricard, the superior of the missions in the Yakima and Cayuse country, that the Yakimas, Cayuses, and Walla-Wallas would attend that council with a hostile purpose, and that I would go there at the hazard of my life. I had warning from various sources, but the council had been called, and I went there in good faith, in order to attend to the business for which it had been called. We were in council fourteen days, in friendly council and friendly converse with the chiefs and the great body of the people of all these tribes. All these chiefs who afterwards took up arms were in my camp, and sat at my table during these fourteen days. I talked with them morning and evening, besides our formal talks in council; and in regard to that council this House has now in its possession an official record of its proceedings—a record which was taken verbatim by two secretaries separately. It is not a fixed up or patched up concern. It has been

charged that the Indians there were threatened, and that force was brought to bear in order to get their consent to the concessions they made. Mr. Chairman how ridiculous the charge! Gen. Palmer and myself were the commissioners, and with the Indian agents, a few employees, and twenty-five soldiers to preserve order on the council ground, we met there fifteen hundred warriors, brave and proud men; and I say it is ridiculous to talk of our using threats and bringing force to bear to get them to yield to our terms. The record speaks for itself. The commissioners have no reason to be ashamed of it; nor has the Government reason to be ashamed of it.

When the Indians separated, it was with a cordial farewell on all sides. Kam-i-a-y-kan was the last man I saw; and that chief parted from me in the most cordial manner, expressing the utmost satisfaction at the results of the treaty.

I said to him on parting, "The agent Bolon will soon go into your country to select a site for the mills, and schools, and agency; and I wish you to advise him in the matter." And he replied, "I shall be glad to see him, and will point out a good place for the mill."

Pu-pu-mux-mux also parted from me in the same manner; and if ever the face of an Indian expressed joy and satisfaction, it was the face of Pu-pu-mux-mux. Such was the fact in reference to every Indian chief, and every Indian there assembled. I may remark, in regard to Puget Sound, that it is the testimony of the Indian chiefs, without exception, and also the testimony of all, well-informed and disinterested white men there, without exception, and such is my own deliberate judgment, that if we had not made these treaties, the war would have been general. The treaties were the controlling element in maintaining peace. Had it not been for these treaties the field of war would have stretched from the coast to the divide of the Bitter Root mountains.

But, sir, in the observations I submitted a few days ago, I spoke of the conduct of our people, and of the conduct of the volunteers during that war. Their conduct was throughout humane and meritorious. At no time during that war was there any unauthorized killing by the volunteer forces.

The Indians, whether friendly or hostile, were sacred in the camps of the volunteers, and it is this fact that we hold up in the noon-day sun to disprove the accusations made against the people of those territories.

The first act of war was by the Indians. I have referred to Kam-i-y-a-kan, to his cordial farewell when I left him, and to his promise to assist the Indian agent Bolon, when he went into his country. The Yakimas occupy a country from the Cascades to the Columbia, one hundred and fifty miles east and west, and some two hundred north and south. In the month of August we began to hear of our citizens being murdered by the Yakimas. Finally the reports became so well authenticated that a military force under Major Haller was sent there by Major Rains, in command of the troops on the Columbia river to demand the surrender of the murderers, or on the event of refusal, to punish the tribe.

Who were killed by these Indians? The victim of most mark was this Indian agent Bolon. He was killed by the Yakimas, and by the order of Kamiyakan, though he went there as their agent, loving the Yakimas. He went there, and went alone, unwilling to believe that the reports of their having killed our people were true, and hoping that the results of his investigations would show that no such killing had been done. He was much beloved by the Yakimas, was recognized by them to be their friend, but having resolved in war, they said, (referring to Bolon) "we kill our friends as well as our enemies." He was one of our slaughtered citizens on the grounds of the Yakimas. We had some ten or twelve others—there were one or two of my own neighbors; there were two or three from Pierce county, as well as several from the neighboring county of King; men of sobriety, men of character—men who had means at home in the settled portions of the territory, but who had gone, as our adventurous American people will go, into the wilderness to see whether they could not better their fortunes. They were killed on their way to the mines at Colville. I submit it to the gentlemen of this committee—was it right that the military arm of this Government should be stretched out, when a tribe of Indians in violation of the plighted faith of treaties, guaranteeing safe conduct to all whites passing through their

country—slaughtered an officer of the republic, and citizens of the republic, without cause or provocation?

I trust that I have not to pause for a reply. Such has been the general policy of the Government. Such has even been the policy of the British Government upon that coast, although under the control of a simple trading company. The Hudson Bay Company owe their ascendancy over the Indians to this fact more than to all things else; that the life of a Hudson's Bay employé has been held sacred, and the Indians who did violence to it were held to a strict accountability. I could mention many instances when this course was pursued.

It has been alleged that the miners passing through the Yakima, violated the Indian women, and committed other outrages which provoked them to retaliate. I heard nothing of this on the Spokane coming in from the Missouri, though I used every means to ascertain whether the war had been provoked by indiscretion and wrong, conferring not only with the Indians of the Spokane and neighboring tribes, but with the fathers of mission at the Coeur d'Alene and at Colville, and with the officers of the Hudson Bay Company at the latter place.

In consequence of these murders, Major Haller marched into the Yakima country with about one hundred regular troops; was met and attacked by a force of from ten to fifteen hundred warriors, and though, for a time, entirely surrounded and cut off from water, maintained his position, reached water after an obstinate and protracted fight of some twenty-four hours, and finally succeeded in making good his retreat and saving his command with a loss in killed and wounded, of one-third of his entire force. While surrounded, he was fortunate enough to get off a friendly Indian, who made his way to the Dalles and gave information of the condition of Major Haller's command. There was great excitement throughout both Washington and Oregon in consequence. Major Rains immediately made a requisition upon the Governors of Washington and Oregon for volunteers, and that requisition was promptly complied with. The volunteers moved into the field, and thus this war had its origin, so far as the volunteers were concerned. I have here a whole volume of requisitions and orders, and correspondence, demonstrating these facts, but will not read from the volume as it will occupy time needlessly.

The volunteers, Mr. Chairman, came into service in consequence of the attack of an overwhelming force of Indians upon the troops of the regular service, in virtue of a requisition of the officer in command of the military district, and because the regular troops were inadequate to protect the settlements and bring this war to a conclusion.

On Puget Sound we had extraordinary difficulties to contend with. The war first broke out by the murder of a settlement of twelve persons on White river, and under circumstances of great atrocity. The settlers became alarmed in consequence of the floating rumors that the Indians were bent on war, and had fled from their homes to the nearest town, Seattle. The Indians who were their neighbors, went to them at Seattle, and told them that they were needlessly alarmed, asked them to go back to their claims, and assured them that if any danger should threaten them, they would give them timely warning. They returned back; but before the morning's sun had risen, they were all slaughtered in cold blood, and by the Indians who had invited them back. Not men only were murdered, but helpless women and tender children. Two children, with the mangled remains of their mother, were thrown to the bottom of a well. The Indians on that Sound exceeded the whites as five to two. It was time, certainly, that our citizens should take up arms, and by energy and vigor endeavor to reduce to subjection the Indians engaged in this terrible massacre, and prevent the other tribes joining them. It was done, and I have yet to be convinced that it was not done rightly.

Why, Mr. Chairman, on that Sound, so inadequate was the force of regular troops, and in such imminent danger was the whole community, that a volunteer company—raised for the field—was detained for the defense of Fort Steilacoom, in charge of the regular troops. Lieut. Nugen, in command at that post, took ther esponsibility of raising a company of forty men, under Capt. W. H. Wallace, and then wrote the Adjutant General of the volunteers, trusting that the Act-



ing-Governor would approve his action; and he also wrote for cartridges to be sent them, as he was deficient in amunition. I give his letters in full, establishing these facts.

FORT STEILACOOM, W. T., *October 31st, 1855.*

SIR: I have the honor to state that I have called upon the citizens of Pierce county for one company of volunteers, to act against the Indians on White river and vicinity, who have been murdering our citizens, and attacked the company of rangers under Captain Eaton, mustered into the service of the United States.

This call has been promptly responded to, and a company of forty are now ready to take the field, under the command of Captain Wallace, who will report to you for orders.

I wish you would come down to our post, as I think your presence would expedite matters. I trust you will succeed in getting another company in your place, as I am of the opinion that no less than one hundred men should think of taking the field, they to act together, and the work will speedily be finished. I trust that the Acting-Governor will approve of my action, as I could see no other way to maintain the peace of our country.

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

JOHN NUGEN,

*Second Lieutenant 4th Infantry, Com. Post.*

JAMES TILTON,

*Adjutant General W. T. Volunteers.*

HEAD QUARTERS, FORT STEILACOOM,  
*November 1st, 1855.*

SIR: I have detained Captain Wallace's company of volunteers to assist in protecting this post, in case an attack should be made. Dr. Tolmie, just in from Nisqually, informs me that one of his shepherds saw a band of some twenty Klickitats, just in rear of Nisqually, last night.

I have nearly all the women and children in the country at the post, and will, of course, protect them.

I would respectfully request that all the men in this section of the country be called out, as I am firmly of the belief that we are to have a general Indian war in this vicinity.

Send me down cartridges at the earliest moment, as it is reported the Indians are to make an attempt at taking our fort to-night. This is just a report, but I wish to have plenty of amunition, and I am rather short just at this time.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, your most obedient servant,

JOHN NUGEN,

*Second Lieutenant 4th Infantry, Com. Post.*

JAMES TILTON,

*Adjutant General W. T. Volunteers, Olympia.*

These letters show the cordial relations between the regular and volunteer service in the Territory, when the difficulties first occurred. Such had been our relations from the first organization of the Territory. Such they continued to be until the veteran commander of the department of the Pacific pronounced the war the act of unprincipled white men—as having been got up as a matter of speculation; denounced authorities and people as Indian exterminators, refused to recognize the necessity of calling out volunteers, and endeavored entirely to ignore them when in the field.

However, this same commander did finally call upon me in March for two companies of volunteers for the defense of Puget Sound, which I refused to respond to for reasons given in full in the official correspondence.

It is a fact well known on that coast to the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, that the Indians of southern Oregon have always been so hostile that the employees of that Company did not dare to trap there. Parties passing through there to California never ventured to stop there for a day. I have this from the chief factor of the Company, at Vancouver. I need not go over the ground in southern Oregon, for it has been fully occupied by the distinguished delegate from that Territory.

Here, then, was the origin of this war—a war entirely unprovoked—a war caused by no bad conduct of our people, but caused altogether by the feeling of antagonism between the two races. The Indians there had heard of Indian difficulties on this side of the Rocky Mountains, and it was a combination with them to drive the whites out of the country.

Mr. CURTIS. I wish to say to my friend, at this point, that his country, in respect to this charge of the Indian difficulties having been commenced by the whites, is precisely in the same situation that our whole Indian frontier has been for the last ten years. Whenever there have been hostilities, there are traders and others who have carried abroad the idea that the first assaults were made by the whites. Never mind what atrocities have been committed by the Indians, such are the reports circulated. It has been in my experience, and I have no doubt that such is the case in Oregon and Washington, that the Indians are always the aggressors.

And I accord my testimony to that of the gentleman, that these charges against the white people of the frontier are most unjust. I had no opportunity before to reply to the remarks of the gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. GARNETT,) who insinuated that all these Indian wars were got up on speculation. I recollect that many years ago Indian wars were quite as common as on the frontier; and I would like the gentleman to say whether, when John Smith had charge of the Virginia colony, he was not provoked by Indian warfare, and had not his calamities with them as we have at this day?

Mr. SMITH, of Virginia. They were not so expensive.

Mr. CURTIS. But they destroyed your colonies. There was nothing but your bones left. Your soil was red with the blood shed in the Indian wars, and the history of the country shows that that has been the character of this warfare.

Mr. STEVENS, of Washington. I am greatly obliged to my friend from Iowa for the remarks which he has made. I know, myself, that in 1853, I had a strong feeling that there was much of outrage committed by the whites upon the Indians, and that that was the prolific cause of Indian wars. But, as I became acquainted with the frontier population, and as I came to know facts as they were, my mind was changed, and I here declare, on my responsibility, that the charges are utterly unfounded.

Mr. Chairman, in regard to the military operations undertaken in these two Territories, I desire to say a few words. I shall mainly confine my observations to the operations at Walla-Walla, for that is the salient point of the whole business. It is admitted on all sides that there was a war in southern Oregon and on Puget sound, in the Territory of Washington, and that it became absolutely necessary that the white settlers should organize for defense. But it has been said that the advance of the volunteers upon Walla-Walla, drove the Indians into hostility; that the Walla-Walla chief, Pu-pu-mux-mux, was friendly; and that even when the volunteers reached the valley he endeavored to make peace; that he was treacherously slain under the protection of a flag of truce; that the volunteers commenced the attack, and that the Indians resisted simply to get in safety their women and children. The fight of the Walla-Walla was a four days' fight. I was moving at the time from the Spokane to the Nez Perces country. I was in the midst of an Indian council with the Nez Perces, making my arrangements with that tribe to get the services of its warriors, to force my way through the hostile Walla-Wallas, Cayuses, and other tribes under the lead of Pu-pu-mux-mux, to the settlements, when the news came of that fight. The Indian, who had rode one hundred miles the previous eighteen hours, told all the circumstances of that fight, at one end of the council lodge, to the Indians there assembled, and it was interpreted to me, sitting in council, at the other end. I had previously conferred with the chiefs of the Nez Perces tribe and with the chiefs on the Spokane, in order to satisfy myself of the attitude of Pu-pu-mux-mux. I became satisfied it was one of unmitigated hostility. When I reached the Nez Perces country the chief Joseph, the third chief of the tribe, an old man of over seventy years of age, had returned but a short time from a mission of peace to the Walla-Walla. He had endeavored to dissuade Pu-pu-mux-mux from going to war. But Pu-pu-mux-mux

drove him away with scorn and contumely, telling him, "I am the *chief* here; I am like yonder mountain, above other men. I counsel with no man. Go home! Perhaps your own people will listen to you." Joseph then went to the Cayuses, and saw their chiefs—the Young Chief, the Five Crows, and Camespello—and entreated them to continue friendly. They treated him with the same scorn and contumely as did Pu-pu-mux-mux, the more significant as he was allied to them by blood, being a half-Cayuse. And Joseph went home discouraged and heart-broken. These same facts I had, on reaching the Walla-Walla, from the friendly Cayuse and Walla-Walla chiefs, small in number, who persisted in their refusal to join the war-party. Howlishwampo, Tintemitse, and Stickas, of the Cayuses, and Pierre, of the Walla-Wallas, with their followers, had maintained their friendship at the hazard of their lives, having left the main camp of their tribe and encamped with the settlers who remained in the valley. These settlers were not attacked by Pu-pu-mux-mux and the allied chiefs, because it could only be done by passing over the dead bodies of the friendly chiefs. All these facts I learned before any controversy had grown up, and before I imagined any controversy could possibly grow up in regard to the position of Pu-pu-mux-mux and the allied tribes and chiefs.

A gentleman who has made himself conspicuous by his denunciations of the volunteers and his defense of Pu-pu-mux-mux, has admitted that the seizure of Fort Walla-Walla was an act of hostility; that the appropriating of Government property there, and distributing it among the several tribes, was an act of hostility; that the burning of the houses of all the settlers in that valley was an act of hostility. But that there was convincing evidence that all these acts of hostility were not the acts of Pu-pu-mux-mux, but the acts of the Yellow Serpent. Now Pu-pu-mux-mux and the Yellow Serpent are one and the same man. Pu-pu-mux-mux, in the Walla-Walla tongue, Serpent Jaune, in French, and the Yellow Serpent, in English, are the several names of this renowned chief, known to all voyagers and well-informed men in that country, and well known to myself. And this Indian chief, whether he be called Pu-pu-mux-mux, Serpent Jaune, or the Yellow Serpent, was guilty of the acts of hostility above enumerated, and this too by the admission of Pu-pu-mux-mux's defender and apologist.

The record evidence is overwhelming and conclusive of Pu-pu-mux-mux's hostility. It was early reported by the Indian agent on the ground. It was testified to by all the settlers of that valley, and by the factors and employees of the Hudson's Bay Company posted at Walla-Walla. And the record evidence is equally overwhelming and conclusive that all the charges of Pu-pu-mux-mux being entrapped by a flag of truce and treacherously killed, are utterly unfounded. The officers, the Indian agent, and the interpreter, present at the first conference—every eye-witness, and they are men of unimpeachable honor and integrity, present at his death, agree as to the essential facts. Pu-pu-mux-mux did approach the volunteer camp with a flag of truce, and a conference was held. Col. Kelly, in command of the troops, refused to receive him, except as a prisoner. Pu-pu-mux-mux went to his camp as a prisoner, his object being to gain time in order to concentrate the Indian forces; and also by cunning and management to induce the troops to occupy a position where he could attack them with advantage. On his reaching camp Col. Kelly still refused to receive Pu-pu-mux-mux on any other terms except as a prisoner, and offered to let him go home. Pu-pu-mux-mux continued with the volunteers, receiving from them kind treatment, and, as he stated, sent word to his people to keep friendly. The volunteers marched towards the Indian camp, Pu-pu-mux-mux accompanying them, when they were attacked by Pu-pu-mux-mux's people. In this manner the action commenced, and while it was going on the chief endeavored to make his escape, and was killed whilst furiously attacking his guard. He was killed while struggling with his guard and endeavoring to wrest the gun of his guard from his hands. This action lasted four days, resulted in a complete victory over the Indians, and drove every hostile Indian to the northward of Snake river. Its effect on the Indian mind was prodigious, as I personally know from my own intercourse with the Indians of the interior at the very time.

Mr. Chairman, this movement on the Walla-Walla, therefore, did protect

our frontier. It maintained the peace of the interior for the long winter of 1855-56. In this connection I desire to refer to the general order emanating from the conqueror of Mexico, Lieut. Gen. Scott, complimenting the valiant officers and men of the army, who made an expedition of twelve days against the Apaches of New Mexico. It was an expedition of eight companies—four hundred men—moving against one of the nomadic tribes of the far-famed Apaches. In that general order, twelve officers and twenty-six men are mentioned as having particularly distinguished themselves. Here are three reports, (holding up the open volume containing them,) one from Col. Bonneville, a gentleman well known to me; another from Captain Ewell, a friend of my youth, three years with me at the Military Academy, a most gallant and meritorious man; and the third from Col. Miles, giving all the details of this action. It was not a case simply of soldiership, but of conduct. It was not enough that the men were brave, but they must be well managed. It was a case of tactics and strategy, of flanks, and rears, and reserves.

These reports show that eight companies of troops—400 men—pursued, overtook, fought and defeated—how many? Forty warriors. There is your feat of arms! made the subject of a general order; in which twelve officers, and twenty-six men, are reported for distinction. I speak of it with entire respect. The gallant Scott knew full well that the disparity of force did not make the affair ridiculous.

Now, gentlemen, go with me to the distant Territories of Washington and Oregon, and to the plains of the Walla-Walla, where 300 volunteers fought seven hundred Indians, for four days, and defeated them, killing some seventy Indians. Go with me to the Grande Ronde, where the gallant Col. Shaw, with one hundred and sixty volunteers of Washington, fought three hundred Indians, killing some forty, and striking a great blow upon the hostile Indians. Go with me to the battle of Connell's prairie, on the shores of Puget Sound, where one hundred and sixty volunteers fought two hundred Indians, and defeated them, killing thirty of their number.

This movement of Shaw's was something more than a twelve days march. Three columns of troops moved simultaneously from the sound, from the Columbia Valley, and from the Nez Perces country, meeting at the Walla-Walla, within a single day, and then a vigorous movement with a portion of this force was made across the Blue mountains, a forced march, some sixty miles in one night and a day, when the enemy was struck and completely routed. The troops from the sound crossed the Cascades, snow still on the mountains, and marched some three hundred miles to the point of rendezvous. Of all these three columns the arrangements were complete, and the means of transportation ample, the column from the Dalles having in their train forty-five wagons, carrying not only supplies for the troops, but a large quantity of provisions for the friendly Indians.

Sir, I say, all honor to the officers and men who conquered the Indians in New Mexico; but, I ask the Committee, also, to do like honor to the volunteers of Washington and Oregon, who fought the Indians, always being outnumbered, and sometimes more than two to one. I ask, for the people of those Territories, the same measure of justice which has been rendered to the people of New Mexico and the people of Florida. There have been Indian difficulties in Florida, and, within two years, you have had twelve companies of regulars there, and, at least, six companies of volunteers. And, I thank God, that Florida was near enough to the Federal Capital for its governor to come here, post haste, and to procure the recognition of the services of the volunteers of Florida by the General Government. Sir, that force was unquestionably necessary; they fought the Indians, and now, when they have subdued them, it appears that there were about one hundred and sixty-two Indians there, including women and children. You sent that force against less than one hundred warriors, and the expenses incurred by the Florida volunteers have been paid, and paid promptly, by this Federal Government. So with New Mexico: the expenses of the volunteers in New Mexico have been paid by the General Government, and the provision to pay them was put in the army appropriation bill. So in the case of California: Congress made an appropriation to pay the Fremont riflemen, and organized a board of three army officers to inquire into the

balance of the claims. The army officers made an examination; they reported to the Secretary of War, and, at the very next session of Congress, their awards were provided for in the army appropriation bill. The army appropriation bill, of the session of 1853 and 1854, contained an appropriation of nearly one million of dollars, for paying the volunteers of California, for expenses incurred in suppressing Indian hostilities previous to 1854.

We ask the same measure of justice for the people of our Territories that has been already extended to people nearer to you—in Florida, New Mexico, and California.

I desire now to dwell, for a few moments, on another topic. I contend that the expenses were economical; that they were small; that they were much less than any intelligent and disinterested man, after looking into all the facts, would expect them to be. We had in Washington eighteen hundred and ninety-six men enlisted, and their average term of service was one hundred and twelve days. The total expense of each man, exclusive of pay, was but little over \$500—(\$507 32.) What is the expense, per man, in the regular service? It was about \$1,000 a year, last year, and throwing out the pay, it was about \$850. That is the expense of troops in the regular service—a large proportion of whom are stationed at the forts and depots on the Atlantic, the Gulf, the Lakes, and the Mississippi river and its tributaries, at points accessible to steamboat navigation. But, sir, when you come to compare the expenses of the regulars with the volunteers, I shall insist that you compare them in like conditions. It will not do to compare the expenses of the volunteers in Oregon, on the plains of the Walla-Walla, one hundred and fifty miles from our settlements, protecting those settlements by their gallantry and conduct throughout the winter of 1855-'56, with the expenses of the regular troops lying in their rear, at this very time in garrison at the Dalles, the Cascades, and Vancouver. You must compare their expenses in the field with the expenses of the regulars in the field. Compare the expenses of the volunteers, in their campaign of the Walla-Walla, with the expenses of the regular service in its campaign of the Yakima, and, my word for it, you will find that our expenses were the smallest, per man. In this estimate I mean to include transportation from the depots, at home, as a charge upon the regular service. That is my deliberate judgment from a careful examination of the matter. And here, in this comparison, I shall have a charge to make against the regular service. I shall insist that the nineteen dead bodies left on the ground at the Cascades, in consequence of Col. Wright advancing upon the Walla-Walla, and leaving his rear unprotected and insecure, be taken into the account. He did not leave a sufficient garrison at the Cascades. It was attacked by the Indians, held in their possession, (with the exception of one block-house and one house) for twenty-four hours—every house, except these, was burned; nineteen persons were slain, and it compelled a retrograde movement of Wright, already in march for the Walla-Walla, finally caused the abandonment of that movement on the Walla-Walla, and the organization of a new campaign into the Yakima country. Let all these things be taken into the account in a comparison between the services, for, I affirm, no such military blunder was committed in the volunteer service.

Sir, I make no point against the regular service. I was bred in that service, and have given to it fourteen years of faithful service. There I have all my early friends; there many of the warmest friends of my manhood now are, and I thank heaven that through all the controversies we have had there in reference to affairs in those Territories, those men are still my friends. They are ever ready to do their duty; but during the winter of 1855 and 1856 the frontier east of the Cascade Mountains was protected by the volunteers, while the regulars were in garrison. That is a fact which should stand out, and which I have brought out on this occasion.

Mr. Chairman, objection has been made to the allowance, by the commissioners, of two dollars a day for each enlisted man, and two dollars a day for each horse. And yet I have here an official document from the Quartermaster General showing that no laboring man, no packer, no teamster was employed in the regular army in these Territories during that Indian war for less than sixty dollars per month, and that their pay ranged from that up to \$90 per month. I find that for pack mules they have invariably paid three dollars a day. If,

then, the regular service is obliged to go into expenses like these in that country, paying on an average two dollars and fifty cents a day for common hands, and paying it in cash, why should you object to the volunteers being paid two dollars a day, who have already waited two years for payment? If the regular service has paid for pack mules three dollars a day, why should you object to pay two dollars a day for the horses used by the volunteers? Sir, these are pregnant facts.

But there is another topic which I wish to dwell upon for a moment, and that is the employment of troops for short intervals. I desire to correct an erroneous impression made by reports, which have emanated from the Adjutant General's office. In these reports the expenses of volunteers or militia (who served simply for three months or more) are compared with the expenses of the regular establishment, where the expenses of recruiting and discharging are distributed, over the entire period of enlistment of five years. And in these same reports, also, the expenses of our volunteer service in those two Territories are compared with the expenses of a regiment of infantry simply in depot, having no expenses whatever in the way of movements of troops.

Now there are certain large contingent expenses incident to raising troops, bringing them into the field, and discharging them. In militia or volunteer service it is distributed over a period of three or six months. In the regular service, over a period of five years. To institute a comparison, therefore, between the expenses of the regular and volunteer service for a period of three or six months, these expenses should be thrown out altogether, or the whole of it in each case be included for the equal period of comparison; otherwise a very heavy charge will be made upon the volunteer service and held up against them to their disparagement, when the expense is not because the troops are volunteers or militia, but because they are *troops raised for short intervals of time*.

So it is very unjust to compare the expenses of our volunteers with the expenses of infantry in depot. The proper comparison is between the expenses of our foot and horse in the field, in these Territories, with the expenses of the foot and horse of the regular service in the field in those Territories.

But this is not all. If, in an emergency, you do not resort to volunteers, what will you do? You must institute a new military system, increase your army largely, and have in depot surplus troops for any emergency which may arise. And, therefore, the true and only just comparison of expense is a comparison of the expenses which we incur under our military system, relying upon the militia and volunteers of the country in case of emergency, and of the only system that can take its place, viz: that of a large standing army.

Suppose that in our Indian difficulties you had this large standing army, and that there had been a surplus of troops at the depots at home to send out there. When you take the cost of transportation, the cost of recruiting, the cost of getting them to the field of action—you would find in the case supposed that there would have been an expense of two or three hundred dollars a man, at the very point where the expenses of the volunteers commence. And then when the emergency was over you would have the cost of sending them home again. You, gentlemen, can compute the cost for yourselves. I ask again—if you did not have the volunteer service, what would you do? You must have a standing army large enough for any emergency, doing nothing nine years out of ten. But such statements and comparisons as these, the only just and proper ones, are not made in these reports; and yet, the mere statement of it will convince the mind that they are just and sound statements and comparisons. If you take the view I have presented, it will be found that in our territories, the expenses of the volunteers per man is much less than the expenses of regulars, if sent from the States there and sent back, as must necessarily have been the case had you been obliged to rely upon regulars alone. Our means of transportation were more economical. We used ox-trains instead of mule-trains, and we carried fifty per cent. more freight per employee than was carried in the trains of the regular service. That is a fact known of all men there. We made at least as rapid trips as the regular service, and we showed that oxen were the proper animals for wagons in that country.

But every effort was made to reduce expenses, and the effort was a successful one. All allowance of extra pay for fatigue service was prohibited in orders,

and the accounts for such service were disallowed and thrown out. No such accounts were submitted to the commissioners appointed by the Secretary of War under the authority of Congress. This was deemed by many very unjust at the time, as payment for fatigue service was recognised in the army, and the rates established by act of Congress. Our troops did a very large amount of fatigue service, as shown in the block houses built by them and the roads cut out by them; one company was especially raised for fatigue duty, and was called the Pioneer company; most of its members were mechanics, or very experienced axemen, and for many months they were constantly employed at fatigue service. It was emphatically a company of Pioneers as well as a company of fighting men; the Indians making the first attack upon them whilst cutting out a road at the battle of Connel's Prairie.

I refused Mr. Chairman to allow any extra compensation for fatigue service, because I expected the pay of our troops would have some relations to the price of labor in the country; and for a temporary rapid service organized for an emergency, I did not think the idea of extra pay for fatigue service should be countenanced.

In the disposition of public property in the volunteer service of Washington, every exertion was made to guard the rights of the Government. I refused to allow any volunteer to retain one animal even on an appraisal by the officers of the Quartermaster Department, the same to be charged upon the muster-rolls against his pay, but directed every animal to be disposed of at public auction. Everything was sold at public auction for the scrip issued in purchasing. The sales amounted to nearly one hundred and forty thousand dollars, and to this amount was the war debt reduced by these sales. The sales were at a considerable advance on the original cost. Horses which cost from \$250 to \$400 brought from \$200 to \$600. Wagons costing \$200, were readily sold at \$300; and oxen were disposed of at thirty per cent. above cost. This too, after the property had been of course deteriorated by six months active service.

The report of J. Ross Brown, Special Agent of the Interior Department, gives so graphic a picture of the condition of the Territory, in 1857, the year following the war, that I cannot do better than quote from his report, as follows:

"On the road from the Cowlitz Landing to Olympia, a distance of fifty miles, the whole country bears distressing evidences of the disastrous effects of the late war. In 1854, when I first passed through this region, it abounded in fine farms well cultivated, and bearing luxuriant crops of grain. Immigration was rapidly filling up all the vacant lands; and large herds of stock were grazing upon the prairies. From the signs of prosperity then apparent, it was not unreasonable to predict that in the course of three years the products and population would be more than doubled. But, notwithstanding this region was exempt from any actual collision with the Indians, the effects are nearly the same as in other parts of the Territory. All along the road houses are deserted and going to ruin; fences are cast down and in a state of decay; fields, once waving with luxuriant crops of wheat, are desolate; and but little, if any, stock is to be seen on the broad prairies that formerly bore such inspiring evidences of life. The few families that remained, either from necessity or inclination, were forced to erect rude block-houses for their defense, into which they gathered by night during the hostilities, in constant apprehension of attack. These rude defenses still stand at intervals along the road. I mention these facts with a view of showing that, so far, at least, the 'war speculation' charged upon the settlers of Washington Territory presents an unprofitable appearance."

There was erected in the Territory, during the war, thirty-one block-houses by the volunteer troops, twenty-one block-houses by the citizens, without assistance, and some seven block-houses by the troops of the regular service. Some of these block-houses were large establishments, there being space enough inside the pickets for small houses for the families of the neighborhood, the block-houses intended to protect. The name and site of each block-house, as well as the roads and trails cut out by the volunteer service is given in an official document published by order of the Legislature of Washington.

Of the whole number of eighteen hundred and ninety-six enlisted men in the Washington volunteers, two hundred and thirty-six were friendly Indians, and

two hundred and fifteen citizens of Oregon, leaving fourteen hundred and forty-five citizens of Washington in service from October, 1855, to September, 1856. Their average term of service, as I have before observed, was one hundred and twelve days. Thus it will appear that nearly seven-eighths of our citizens served nearly four months during that war—an amount of service that has not certainly its parallel in this, and probably in any other country.

In Washington, the volunteers were nearly equally divided between foot and mounted troops. There were one thousand and seventeen men who served as cavalry, and eight hundred and seventy-nine who served as infantry. The operations on the sound—a large portion of the country being very heavily timbered and there being in the timber dense underbrush and fallen logs—required that the troops should be principally foot troops. The operations in the interior, it being mostly a prairie country, that all the troops should be mounted. The greater vigor and success of the volunteer operations East of the Cascades, over those of the regular service, were due very much to the fact that the volunteers were well mounted, whereas the greater bulk of the regular force was infantry. The volunteers were, however, very superior in all the qualities of service to the regulars. There was scarcely a man in the volunteer service who had not crossed the plains, become inured to all the routine of camp life, and thoroughly accustomed to moving in that country, either on his horse over the prairie, or on foot through the dense forests.

We had no difficulty whatever in raising foot troops, nor in dismounting our horse troops, when, as on the Sound, the operations extended from the prairie region, at the head of the Sound, to the wooded regions eastward, where horses could not be used.

The remarks, Mr. Chairman, of Mr. J. Ross Brown as to the causes of the war, are so pertinent and so just that I will give them at length:

“Kam-i-y-a-kan, the chief of the Yakimas, was bitter in his animosity. As early as 1853 he projected a war of extermination against the whole race of Americans within the country. It was his settled determination to make the war general, and he spared no inducements to affect a coalition with the Nez Percés, Cayuses, Walla-Wallas, and other tribes. For your information on this point, showing that war actually was premeditated in 1853, I send you enclosed a translation of the letter of Father Pandory, priest at the Atahnam Mission, dated ‘April 1853,’ to Father Mesplie, at the Dalles, in which he says: ‘A chief of the upper Nez Percés has killed thirty head of cattle at a feast given to the nation; and this number of animals not being sufficient, seven more were killed. The feast was given *in order to unite the hearts of the Indians* to make declaration of war against the Americans. Though the whole course of the winter I have heard the same thing—that the Cayuses and Nez Percés have united themselves for war. During the course of last spring I was in the Cayuse country after they had given a similar feast. I said nothing because I thought that they had a sub-agent who would speak. \* \* I will recount to you what they say. All the Indians upon the left (north) bank of the Columbia, from the Blackfeet to the Chenook, inclusive, are to assemble at the Cayuse country. All on the right bank, through the same extent of country, are to assemble on the Simcoe, (on the Yakima,) including those from Nisqually and the vicinity. *The cause of this war is, that the Americans are going to seize their lands.*’

“This grave and startling information, so fearfully verified since, was promptly communicated to Major Alvord, who reported it to General Hitchcock, the then commanding officer of the military department on this coast. Major Alvord was censured as an alarmist, and Father Pandory was treated in the same manner by his superior.

“It will be observed that the date of the letter is April, 1853. If the war, therefore, was one of speculation, gotten up by the settlers of Oregon, the scheme should have been frustrated then. Information that a war was actually going to take place—that the Indians had avowed it in council—was in possession of the commanding officer of the military department. Why did he not expose the speculation? Why did not the departments in Washington issue orders to the governors of the Territories, apprising them of their knowledge of this scheme, and cause it to be then arrested? Simply, as I conceive, because



no such scheme was ever contemplated, either then or since. The settlers only asked protection for their lives and property; and after both have been freely sacrificed, the charge is, for the first time, brought against them.

"But to return a moment to the combination. As no change took place in the Hudson's Bay Company's posts after the treaty of 1846, and their possessions and appearance of power remained the same as before, the Indians, up to a very recent date, regarded the Territory of Washington as under the influence of 'King George.'

"The Nisqually's and other tribes of Puget Sound, whose chief intercourse had always been with 'King George' men, naturally shared their animosity against the Americans. When Governor Stevens treated with them, he found them in a very disaffected condition. It was with difficulty the chiefs could be gotten together. Something had to be done with them, and, under the circumstances of difficulty attending the making of these treaties, I am satisfied no public officer could have done better. The treaties were not the cause of the war. I have already shown that the war had been determined upon long before. If Governor Stevens is to blame because he *did not so frame the treaties as to stop the war*, or stop it by not making treaties at all, then that charge should be specifically brought against him.

"Leschi, the celebrated Nisqually chief, was most determined in his hostility. Bold, adventurous, and eloquent, he possessed an unlimited sway over his people, and, by the earnestness of his purpose and the persuasiveness of his arguments, carried all with him who heard him speak. He travelled by day and night, caring neither for hunger nor fatigue; visited the camps of the Yakimas and Klickitats; addressed the councils in terms of eloquence such as they had seldom heard. He crossed the Columbia, penetrated to southern Oregon, appealed to all the disaffected there. He dwelt upon their wrongs; painted to them, in the exuberance of his imagination, the terrible picture of the '*polakly illeha*,' the land of darkness, where no ray from the sun ever penetrated; where there was torture and death for all the races of Indians; where the sting of an insect killed like the stroke of a spear, and the streams were foul and muddy, so that no living thing could drink of the waters. This was the place where the white men wanted to carry them to. He called upon them to resist like braves so terrible a fate. The white men were but a handful now. They could all be killed at once, and then others would fear to come. But if there was no war, they would grow strong and many, and soon put all the Indians in their big ships and send them off to that terrible land, where torture and death awaited them.

"It may readily be supposed that a rude and ignorant people, naturally prone to superstition, were not slow in giving credence to these fearful stories. Each tribe had its grievance from the north to the south. Common interest bound them in their compact against a common enemy.

"The Mormons, at this time, had also sent their emissaries among them to spread the disaffection. In the Simcoe, at a council of the tribes in 1854, a chief from the Monmon country urged them to war. The talk of this chief, as detailed by a friendly Indian who was in the council, was to this effect: That far in the desert there lived the greatest people on earth, who controlled the sun. He had been among them and talked with them, and they had sent him here to say what they were. They could strike dead anybody at any distance; they could make the sun stand still; they could make powder and muskets, and they were the friends of the Indians. The Americans were the enemies of the Indians. They wanted the Indians to kill them all. They would send them powder and muskets, &c.

"That the Mormons did furnish several of the tribes with ammunition is proved by the narrative of Captain Shaw, of the Walla-Walla volunteers. At the last battle fought up there, he found powder, muskets, balls, &c., among the Indians bearing the Mormon brand.

"George B. Simpson, late interpreter and local agent at the Cascades, who originally came to Salt Lake as an agent for the Salt Lake mails, states, from his own knowledge, that the Mormons sent out emissaries among all the tribes of Indians prior to the war, urging them to unite in exterminating the Americans.

"But the plan of operations had not been sufficiently matured. Some of the

tribes were too impatient to wait till the proper time had arrived. In the summer of 1855, after the discovery of the Colville mines, a general rush took place there. The first man murdered was Mattice, a miner, who was on his way there with a considerable amount of money and provisions. He was killed soon after descending the Snoqualimie pass by a party of Indians supposed to be Yakimas. Near the same time, Fantjoy, another miner, was killed. These were both respectable men from the State of Maine. They were proprietors of a coal mine on the Danamish. The murders on the White river occurred some two months after. Agent Bolon, hearing of the Yakima murders, crossed over from the Dalles to see the chief Kamiakin. Ouahi, another prominent chief, was present in camp. Bolon spent the night there, no doubt remonstrating with them for their acts. Next day, as he was riding back, he was overtaken by two or three Indians, who rode along with him in an apparently friendly manner. One lagged behind, and, while the others engaged his attention, shot him in the back. He was then dragged from his horse, scalped and partly burnt. One of the murderers is said to be a son of the chief Ouahi.

"On the 8th or 9th of October the Indians of southern Oregon began the work of extermination. They slaughtered, indiscriminately, men, women, and children. At or about the same date the war had opened in Washington Territory. The movement was simultaneous, and could only have been the result of concert; but the Indians themselves have since freely admitted that their plan embraced all parts of the country from north to south.

"I will not undertake to follow up the history of the war to a later period. Its peculiar features have been represented officially on both sides, and its progress and termination are matters of public record.

"Upon a careful perusal of all the despatches, I find nothing to sustain the charge of speculation. No person can visit the Territories of Oregon and Washington, converse with the people, see them on their farms and at their daily labors, and consider their true interests, without coming to the conclusion that such a charge is absurd and monstrous. What could they hope to gain? Few of them had anything to spare upon which to base a speculation. A farmer is well off who has his fields fenced in, a few head of oxen, and three or four cows. If he got treble price for his stock, the sale, upon an unlimited credit, would have been a sacrifice to him. His farm must go to ruin. The interests of the settlers of nearly every pursuit are nearly identical. Their future prospects depend chiefly upon the prosperity of the country, the increase of emigration, enhancement in the value of property, security of life, opening of new facilities for the transportation of their products. All this was diametrically opposed to a war. No compensation that government could make would atone for the murder of families, the stoppage of labor everywhere, the loss of time, the suspension of emigration, and the numerous evils resulting from this disastrous conflict.

"The commissioners at Vancouver have faithfully and impartially performed their duty. Whatever sum they may have decided upon in estimating this war debt, I hold that amount to be justly due, and trust that Congress will at once provide for its extinguishment."

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I ask for the people of those Territories, prompt and equal justice at the hands of this Congress; I ask, in the name of their patriotism and heroic services and sufferings, for the immediate liquidation of their claims. A commission appointed under its authority—a commission representing this Government, and not the people of these Territories—a commission, who, if they had any bias or prejudice, were biased and prejudiced against us, have investigated the whole question, have made their awards, have submitted their report, and that report with the approval of the War Department, is now before Congress. We ask firmly and emphatically for the endorsement of this report, and the payment of these awards, the present session of Congress.

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