

MURDERS ON THE NEUTRAL GROUND.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

IN REPLY

*To a resolution of the House of Representatives, of the 22d ultimo, calling for a report of the names of American citizens lately murdered by the Indians on the Neutral Ground, in the Territory of Iowa, &c.*

MAY 12, 1842.

Read, and laid upon the table.

WAR DEPARTMENT, May 2, 1842.

SIR: In answer to the resolution of the 22d ultimo, requiring the Secretary of War "to send to the House of Representatives the names of the American citizens lately murdered by the Indians on the neutral ground, in the Territory of Iowa; the names, also, of the tribe or tribes of Indians who committed the murders, and whether any steps have been taken by the United States Government to punish the perpetrators of this outrage; and, also, whether the United States troops stationed at Fort Atkinson have been removed, and what military protection, if any, is afforded to the western frontier of Iowa; and all the facts connected with the transaction;" I have respectfully to transmit, herewith, a report from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, from which it will be seen that no official information has reached the Department of the outrage mentioned in the resolution. Sufficient time having elapsed for a communication to reach this city, the inference is, that the rumor upon which the resolution is founded is untrue or greatly exaggerated. The Indian agents and the military commanders on the frontiers have instructions for their guidance upon the happening of such events; and the usual measures will doubtless be taken by them to arrest offenders, without any specific instructions from the Department.

It will be seen, from the report of the adjutant general, also transmitted herewith, that the United States troops stationed at Fort Atkinson have not been removed, and what military protection is afforded to the western frontier of Iowa. The residue of the resolution, requiring "all the facts connected with the transaction," is supposed to refer to the alleged Indian murders, and can be no further complied with than by the report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs herewith.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
J. C. SPENCER.

Hon. JOHN WHITE, *Speaker House of Reps.*

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
Office Indian Affairs, April 27, 1842.

SIR: I have the honor to report, upon that part of the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 22d instant which calls for the facts connected with murders said to have been recently perpetrated by the Indians upon American citizens on the neutral ground, in the Territory of Iowa, that this office is not in possession of any official information on the subject: consequently, I am unable to furnish the names of the individuals murdered, or the tribe by whom the murders were committed; and, as a further consequence, no steps have been taken by the United States Government to punish the perpetrators of the said outrage.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

T. HARTLEY CRAWFORD.

Hon. JOHN C. SPENCER, *Secretary of War.*

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
Washington, April 29, 1842.

SIR: In answer to the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 22d instant, inquiring "whether the United States troops stationed at Fort Atkinson, Iowa, have been removed, and what military protection, if any, is afforded to the western frontier of Iowa," I have the honor to report that two posts are now maintained in that Territory—*Fort Snelling*, at the mouth of St. Peter's, garrisoned by three companies of infantry, about 250 strong, and *Fort Atkinson*, on Turkey river, some fifty miles west of Prairie du Chien, with a garrison of one company of infantry, and one of dragoons, 160 strong, including recruits, sent to these posts in March, that have doubtless arrived before this.

One company of dragoons is now in route for the agency at the Council Bluffs, high up the Missouri, being on the line of the western boundary of Iowa. This company has recently been withdrawn from *Fort Leavenworth*, which, from its relative position, may also be regarded as calculated to afford protection to a portion of the frontiers of the Territory, as evinced by the late instructions to send a part of its garrison to the Bluffs.

The like remark is also applicable to the post of *Fort Crawford*, on the left bank of the Mississippi; for its garrison, consisting of four companies, being in position, is always available, whenever the exigencies of the service, within the Territory of Iowa, may require a protecting force.

With regard to so much of the resolution as refers to "the names of the American citizens lately murdered by the Indians on the neutral ground," &c., I respectfully state that no report relative thereto has been received at this office.

Respectfully submitted.

R. JONES, *Adjutant General.*

Hon. J. C. SPENCER, *Secretary of War.*