

M E S S A G E
OF
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

COMMUNICATING

In compliance with a resolution of the Senate, further correspondence in relation to the hostilities on the Rio Grande.

MARCH 16, 1860.—Read and ordered to lie on the table. Motion to print referred to the Committee on Printing.

MARCH 21, 1860.—Report in favor of printing the usual number submitted, considered, and agreed to.

To the Senate of the United States:

Referring to my communication of the 5th instant to the Senate, in answer to its resolution of the 23d February, calling for any communication which may have been received from the governor of Texas, and the documents accompanying it, concerning alleged hostilities now existing on the Rio Grande, I have the honor herewith to submit for the consideration of that body the following papers:

Dispatch from the Secretary of War to the governor of Texas, dated 28th February, 1860.

Dispatch from the governor of Texas to the Secretary of War, dated 8th March, 1860.

Dispatch from the Acting Secretary of War to the governor of Texas, dated 14th March, 1860.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, *March 15, 1860.*

WAR DEPARTMENT, *February 28, 1860.*

Your dispatch was received and promptly submitted to the President, when action was immediately had to carry out your wishes.

Such measures as the means and the power of this department could command have been taken for the defense of the Texan frontier on the Mexican border. An officer of great discretion and ability has been dispatched to take command of the department of Texas, and has, no doubt, arrived at the scene of action before this date.

Strong additional reinforcements will be sent into Texas as soon as the season of the year will render a movement of troops possible.

JOHN B. FLOYD,
Secretary of War.

Hon. SAMUEL HOUSTON,
Governor of Texas.

AUSTIN, *March 8, 1860.*

SIR: Judging from the tenor of dispatches from your department to me, of the 28th ultimo, that the government has not at its command sufficient troops to afford the immediate protection to Texas desired, I herewith tender the services of five thousand (5,000) Texas volunteers. Texas is ready for the emergency, and will act at a moment's warning. Texas needs, to repel invasions both from the Indians and Mexico, an immediate supply of arms.

In view of the atrocities committed on our people, I hope the department will send, without delay, by steamer or railroad conveyance, to care of Messrs. Perkins & Co., New Orleans, Forbes & McKee, Port Lavacca, and S. M. Sweenson, Austin, Texas, two thousand (2,000) percussion rifles and appendages, one thousand (1,000) Sharp's breech-loading ditto and appendages, three thousand (3,000) Colt's revolvers with appendages, one thousand (1,000) cavalry accoutrements.

Texas has always been deficient in arms, and has drawn but few. Danger is upon her now, and she needs them at once.

Be pleased to reply by telegraph without delay.

SAM HOUSTON.

Hon. JOHN B. FLOYD.

[Original by telegraph.]

WAR DEPARTMENT, *March 14, 1860.*

SIR: Your dispatch of the 8th instant has been received and submitted to the President.

He directs me to say that he declines your tender of volunteers, inasmuch as a dispatch has this day been received by the adjutant general of the army from Brevet Colonel Harvey Brown, second artillery, dated New Orleans, March 13, 1860, in which he says:

"I left Brownsville on the 8th instant. All was quiet on the frontier. The disturbances were believed to be over, and Cortinas to have given up the contest, and to have retired into the interior of Mexico. Major Heintzelman has officially reported the war to be ended."

This information being so much later and more direct from the scene of the late difficulties than you could have received at Austin at the date of your dispatch, leads the President to believe that you are mistaken or have been misinformed.

Besides, there are now in Texas, ready for active service, two thousand six hundred and fifty-one troops, which force will soon be

increased by the addition of ten companies comprising eight hundred and forty-two men, now under orders to proceed thence from New Mexico. Of these last, five companies are to be stationed at Ringgold Barracks and five at Fort Clark.

The quota of arms now due to the State of Texas, under the law, amounts to one hundred and sixty-nine muskets, which, in an emergency, may be doubled by anticipating the quota for the next year, and which will be promptly delivered upon your requisition. As the money value of the arms for the two quotas does not amount to five thousand dollars, you will readily perceive that it is entirely impracticable to meet the requisition for arms, appendages, and accouterments made in your dispatch, the cost of which, at the lowest estimate, is within a fraction of one hundred thousand dollars.

The President further directs me to say, that with a sincere desire in every practicable way to meet the wishes of the governor and people of Texas, he conceives he has already performed his whole duty in the premises under the circumstances.

Very respectfully,

W. R. DRINKARD,

Acting Secretary of War.

His Excellency SAM. HOUSTON,
Governor of Texas, Austin, Texas.

(To be mailed at New Orleans.)