

RESOLUTIONS

OF THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, TERRITORY OF NEBRASKA,

IN FAVOR OF

The payment of the Nebraska militia while actually employed in the service of the government in repelling hostile Indians and guarding the United States mail and Pacific telegraph and protecting the border settlers.

FEBRUARY 13, 1865.—Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs and the Militia and ordered to be printed.

MEMORIAL AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS for the relief of the Nebraska militia.

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled :

Your memorialists, the council and house of representatives of the Territory of Nebraska, respectfully represent : That, in August last, portions of the Sioux, Cheyennes, Kiowas, Camanches, and Arapahoes confederated for the purpose of attacking the frontier settlements of Nebraska and the emigrant trains en route to Colorado and the gold mines. Suddenly, and without the slightest warning, they attacked the settlements along the Little Blue river, in Nebraska, killing men, women, and children without mercy, save in a few instances, where they carried the women away captives, to undergo a fate more terrible than death itself; and, at the same time, attacking the emigrant trains along the aforesaid route, and from forty miles eastward of Fort Kearney to the extreme western border of the Territory, killing settlers and emigrants, and driving off stock to the number of several thousand. This attack extended along a line of settlements comparatively remote from each other, and more than three hundred miles in extent, driving emigration from the road and settlers from their homes.

At the time of this attack, and indeed ever since, the number of government troops on duty in this district of country was found entirely insufficient and inadequate to hold the hostile savages in check, protect the emigrant, and save the settlements from massacre and devastation. What government troops were here did nobly and well, but the number was too small to protect the extensive lines of travel, and the settlements so remote from each other. In this emergency his excellency the governor, with a promptness and patriotism which has characterized all his official acts, called upon the militia of the Territory of Nebraska to save from the tomakawk and scalping knife the settlers upon our border, and drive back the savage foe, and in protecting the United States mail in its transportation across the plains, and also the Pacific telegraph line, running, as it does, through a hostile Indian country. Four companies promptly responded to the call of the governor and marched to the frontier, furnishing

their own horses and serving as mounted infantry. One of the companies accompanied Major General Curtis throughout the Indian campaign, while others rendered not less important service in guarding emigrant trains, and the great overland mail, the Pacific telegraph, and in protecting the frontier settlements. All were under the immediate command of the commandant of the United States troops in this department.

The militia served faithfully, and it is believed rendered important aid in the Indian campaign, and in protecting the frontier settlements.

These militiamen were in most cases poor men, who left their wives and children at home, dependent to a great extent upon their daily labor for support; but with that patriotic devotion to country which has characterized our people in the past, they promptly sacrificed interest and home to the call of humanity, to save from a fate more terrible than death itself, the helpless women and children upon our unprotected borders.

Your memorialists would further represent, that three of these four companies have served for the period of four months, and one for the period of sixty days. Two of said companies have been mustered out of service by reason of the expiration of their term of enlistment, and two are still continued in the service; and none of said militia have received any pay for their services, or the services of their horses, and no compensation has been allowed as yet to those who lost their horses in the service, and we are aware of no provision of law by which they can be paid out of the federal treasury.

And your memorialists would further represent into your honorable body, that it is a fact to which we cannot shut our eyes, if we would, that most of the Indian tribes in Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Colorado, Nevada, Utah, Idaho, Montana, and Dakota, incited by the emissaries of secession, have suddenly, and by concert of action, resumed a hostile attitude against the government, and commenced a system of wholesale pillage and murder upon the commerce and travel of the plains, which have grown, within the past eight years, into gigantic proportions; and it is equally true that unless prompt and energetic measures be employed by the general government to punish the guilty offenders, and afford adequate protection to this commerce and travel, all communication by the great overland route between the Atlantic and Pacific will be suspended.

No single State or section is exclusively interested in this matter. It is emphatically a *national* concern, and should therefore challenge the earnest consideration of the national legislature. The evil to which we refer is by far too general and widespread to come within the scope of State or territorial action. Should Kansas undertake the work of expelling the hostile tribes from her borders, and succeed in the undertaking, it would only have the effect to hurl them upon the comparatively defenceless settlers of Colorado and Nebraska, and intensify the dangers to which they are now exposed, and the same would be true of the separate action of either of the States or Territories we have named.

The disaffection covers an area greater than that of the original thirteen States, and no remedy will be adequate which does not extend in its operations and influences over the entire region we have indicated.

Not less than one million of people inhabit the great west between the Missouri and the Pacific, a large proportion of whom are engaged or interested in the business of mining. Millions of treasure are annually produced by the energy and industry of this hardy and adventurous population, and the great bulk of it finds its way to the eastern and middle, and western States by the great overland route.

The overland mail, bearing its messages of business and affection between the people of the east and the west, passes over this route, and claims alike the protection of New England, New York, Ohio, Illinois and the Territories west of the Mis-

souri. So, too, of the Pacific telegraph: New York city, Boston, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Chicago, and St. Louis employ its wires as auxiliary to their already extensive and rapidly growing commerce with the States and Territories of the Pacific and the Rocky mountains. The one hundred thousand emigrants who annually pass over this route are confined to no particular State or section of the country; they come from all—Maine alike with Iowa—and the savage arm that strikes down the interests of California, and Oregon, and Nevada, by interrupting the flow of commerce and travel between the Atlantic and Pacific, inflicts a blow equally fatal upon the interests of New England and all the intermediate States.

We grant that the suppression of the slaveholders' rebellion is a task of Herculean proportions; but we suggest that the power which sustains the general government in its mighty struggle with treason—next to the loyal hearts and strong arms of our patriotic soldiers and people—is the millions of treasure annually exhumed from the great mining regions of the west and transported to the east over the great overland route.

We trust, therefore, that adequate means may be provided, before the close of the present session of Congress, to afford the protection to this vast travel and commerce which the interests of the people of the whole Union so imperiously demand. Therefore,

Resolved, That the council and house of representatives of the Territory of Nebraska earnestly pray your honorable body to adopt such legislation as your wisdom shall devise, or as may be necessary, to provide for the prompt payment of the Nebraska militia while actually employed in the service of the government in repelling hostile Indians and guarding the United States mail and Pacific telegraph, and protecting the border settlers from the tomahawk and scalping knife.

2. *Resolved*, That as your memorialists believe the protection of the overland mail route and highway across the plains is a matter of great national concern, we respectfully urge the careful and candid consideration of this memorial and joint resolution by each individual member of your honorable bodies, and that provision be made for the ample protection of our border and the great national thoroughfare to the gold mines of the Pacific coast.

3. *Resolved*, That the secretary of this Territory be requested to forward copies of this memorial and joint resolution to the delegates in Congress from Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Dakota, and that they be respectfully requested to urge the consideration of the subject-matter of this memorial upon the attention of the Congress of the United States, believing, as we do, that every section of the country is alike interested in securing ample protection to the trains across the plains.

4. *Resolved*, That a copy of this memorial and joint resolution be forwarded by the secretary of the Territory to our delegate in Congress, and that he be, and is hereby, requested to present this memorial and use his best efforts to procure the adoption of such legislation on the part of the federal government as shall provide for the prompt payment of the Nebraska militia for their services rendered to the United States, as set forth in this memorial, and secure protection in the future to the emigration and trains across the plains.

5. *Resolved*. That his excellency Governor Saunders is hereby urgently requested to act in conjunction with our delegate in laying this matter before Congress at the earliest possible moment.

Approved January 24, 1865.

TERRITORY OF NEBRASKA, *Secretary's Office, ss:*

I, Algernon S. Paddock, secretary of the Territory of Nebraska, do hereby certify that I have carefully compared the foregoing copy of a memorial and

joint resolutions for the relief of the Nebraska militia passed by the legislative assembly of this Territory during the tenth session thereof and approved by the governor the 24th day of January, 1865, with the original rolls on file in this office, and that the same is a true and perfect copy of said law.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the great seal of the Territory of Nebraska. Done at Omaha this the 30th day [SEAL.] of January, A. D. 1865.

ALGERNON S. PADDOCK,
Secretary of Nebraska Territory.