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Dallam and Hamburg

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H.R. Rep. No. 111, 26th Cong., 2nd Sess. (1841)

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DALLAM AND HAMBURGH.

JANUARY 16, 1841.

Read, and laid upon the table.

Mr. WILLIAMS, of New Hampshire, from the Committee of Claims, submitted the following

REPORT :

The Committee of Claims, to which was referred the memorial of Dallam and Hamburg, report :

That, during the summer of 1839, General Macomb entered into an arrangement with the hostile Indians in Florida, in which it was stipulated that, if the Indians would, in a given time, remove themselves and their effects into a designated portion of the Territory, and remain therein in a quiet and peaceable manner, certain privileges would be granted them. Among other things, it was agreed that a trading-house should be established within the country set apart for them, to supply their wants without visiting the white settlements. In accordance with this arrangement, it appears said memorialists were appointed Indian traders, and repaired to a certain point designated by Lieutenant Colonel Harney, on the Caloosahatchie river, where they erected a trading-house, and supplied themselves with a stock of Indian goods. On or about the 23d of July following, the Indians attacked said house, destroyed and carried the goods off, and killed some of the occupants. The estimated value of the property so taken and destroyed is \$7,467 90. This loss said memorialists claim remuneration for, as they say they were complying with the stipulations of the Government, and redeeming its pledge, when said loss was sustained. While your committee are satisfied that the memorialists have sustained a severe and aggravated loss, which forcibly appeals to their sympathies, they are unable to distinguish this case from other Indian cruelties and depredations which have been repeatedly committed, and for which Congress has never granted relief.

The principle laid down in a report of the Committee of Claims, January 23d, A. D. 1800, made in the Senate, on the petition of David Smith, and which has been recognised by the reports of the Committee of Claims of the House of Representatives ever since, they believe applicable to this case. To grant the request of the memorialists, would, in their judgment, extend that principle to a most dangerous extent; would make the Government responsible for all the ravages of a savage foe upon property of its citizens, and create an inexhaustible claim on its treasury; they therefore recommend to the House, for adoption, the following resolution :

Resolved, That the prayer of the petitioners ought not to be granted.