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Report from the Secretary of War, in compliance with a resolution of the Senate, in relation to the number and kind of troops stationed on the western frontier, and the necessity of an additional military post on the same

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REPORT

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

IN COMPLIANCE WITH

A resolution of the Senate, in relation to the number and kind of troops stationed on the western frontier, and the necessity of an additional military post on the same.

JANUARY 22, 1841.

Read, and ordered to be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT,

January 21, 1841.

SIR: In compliance with the resolution of the Senate, dated the 11th instant, requesting the Secretary of War to state "the number and kind of United States troops stationed along the line of the western frontier, from Fort Snelling to Fort Jesup; and whether, in his opinion, a military post between Fort Leavenworth and Fort Wayne, on the borders of Arkansas, be not important to the protection of the State of Missouri from Indian incursions and aggressions," I have the honor to transmit a statement of the Commanding General, and a report of Colonels Totten and Cross; to which I beg leave to add my concurrence in the plans of defence proposed for the western frontier, as contained in the report of the board in 1840, and in the views contained in the aforementioned report of the two officers who were of its members.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

J. R. POINSETT.

Hon. R. M. JOHNSON,
President of the Senate.

Blair & Rives, printers.

Statement showing "the number and kind of United States troops stationed along the line of the western frontier, from Fort Snelling to Fort Jesup," made in conformity to the Senate's resolution of the 11th of January, 1841.

Name of post.	Situation.	Garrison.	
		Strength.	Description.
Fort Snelling -	Upper Mississippi -	182	Two companies 5th infantry.
Fort Crawford -	Wisconsin Ter. -	72	One company 1st dragoons.
Fort Atkinson *	Iowa Territory -	271	Three companies 5th infantry.
Fort Leavenworth -	Missouri -	81	One company 5th infantry.
Fort Wayne *	Arkansas -	379	Five companies 1st dragoons.
Fort Smith -	Arkansas -	50	One company 1st dragoons.
Fort Gibson -	Arkansas -	80	One company 4th infantry.
Fort Towson -	Arkansas -	178	Three companies 1st dragoons.
Fort Jesup -	Louisiana -	364	Seven companies 4th infantry.
		95	One company 4th infantry.
		92	One company 4th infantry.
Aggregate strength -		1,844	Of which 679 are dragoons.

* New stations recently occupied.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, January 12, 1841.

With regard to the establishment of a new post between Forts Leavenworth and Wayne, it is believed that an intermediate post is important to the protection of the western frontiers of Missouri and Arkansas. It is understood that the establishment of a new military station on the western line has, for some time, been in contemplation, with reference to the general plan of defence against Indian incursion and aggression.

Respectfully submitted :

R. JONES,
Adjutant General.

Major General ALEXANDER MACOMB,
Commanding in Chief.

Respectfully laid before the Secretary of War.

ALEX. MACOMB,
Major General commanding.

WASHINGTON, January 18, 1841.

SIR : On the subject of the resolution of the Senate of the 11th instant, which was referred to us this morning for a report, we beg leave to state that, in our judgment, a military post on the western frontier, between Fort Leavenworth and Fort Wayne, is important to the protection of the south-western portion of the State of Missouri against incursions by the neighboring Indian tribes.

This subject was under our consideration last winter, as members of a board on the defences of the country generally, and we then gave it a full share of our attention. The views of the board, in which we fully concurred, will be found in Senate document No. 451 of the last session, page 107, to which we beg leave to refer.

It will be seen that, adopting the recommendation of a commission of experienced officers, who had made a careful examination of the whole line of frontier, under the act of Congress of 2d July, 1836, the board suggested the establishment of *two* small posts on that part of the frontier mentioned in the resolution, viz: one at Marais de Cygne, eighty miles south of Fort Leavenworth; the other at Spring river, eighty-six miles from Marais de Cygne; which, with the post of Fort Wayne, about the same distance still further south, completed the chain of border defences from the Arkansas to the Missouri river, believed to be the most exposed section of our western frontier.

On a recurrence to the subject, we see no reason to change the opinion heretofore expressed; and we may therefore say, with the greater confidence, restricting ourselves to the specific inquiry made by the resolution, that a military post between Fort Leavenworth and Fort Wayne is deemed important to the protection of that part of the frontier against Indian aggressions.

We remain, respectfully, sir, your most obedient servants,

JOS. G. TOTTEN,
Col. and Chief Engineer.

T. CROSS,

Colonel, Assistant Quartermaster General.

To the Hon. J. R. POINSETT,
Secretary of War, Washington.