

6-19-1856

Letter from William C. Kibbe, Quartermaster and adjutant General of State of California, enclosing a copy of the resolution of the Legislature of California, relative to the procurement of arms and munitions of war from the general government for the defence of that state.

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Recommended Citation

S. Misc. Doc. No. 67, 34th Cong., 1st Sess. (1856)

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LETTER

FROM

WILLIAM C. KIBBE,

QUARTERMASTER AND ADJUTANT GENERAL OF STATE OF CALIFORNIA,

ENCLOSING

A copy of the resolution of the legislature of California, relative to the procurement of arms and munitions of war from the general government for the defence of that State.

—————
JUNE 19, 1856.—Ordered to lie on the table and be printed.
—————

HEADQUARTERS CALIFORNIA MILITIA,
OFFICE QUARTERMASTER AND ADJUTANT GENERAL,
Sacramento, May 3, 1856.

GENTLEMEN: I have the honor to transmit herewith a joint resolution, unanimously passed by the legislature of this State on the 21st ultimo, to which I beg leave to call your especial attention. The object sought to be accomplished by the resolution is one of imminent importance to the people of this State, and one which is earnestly demanded at this time. It is unnecessary for me to descant upon the exposed and unprotected condition of California, this you all are familiar with. Suffice it to say, that our northern frontier is infested with a large and hostile Indian foe, who are continually depredating upon our citizens, and who, notwithstanding the efforts of the United States troops now stationed in the Indian country for the purpose of affording that protection to our citizens which it is the duty of the general government to supply, are daily cutting off small bodies of miners, intercepting and plundering pack trains, and scattering ruin and devastation broadcast upon and throughout that important and valuable portion of our State.

If the general government will give us arms and munitions of war, we can, with little expense, protect our citizens in the enjoyment of their property and personal safety. The Indians are generally well armed, bold and daring warriors, pursuing a system of warfare which is little understood by our regular troops, and which can only be successfully combated by our frontier volunteers, who are familiar with the country, the character, and policy of the Indians. These volunteers are entirely under the control of the State, and will, under all circumstances, subject themselves to it. Now, gentlemen, what claims

has the State upon the general government for arms? 1st. For the years 1850, 1851, and 1852, California had a military organization and was equitably entitled to a quota for each of those years. Why did she not get it? Because her adjutant general failed to make a return of the enrolled militia. Now, Delaware, Vermont, North Carolina, and also several other States failed to make their return for those same years, yet they received their quota of arms. Why should not California? We are clearly entitled in equity, under the law appropriating arms for the several States, to quotas for the three years referred to. What we want, however, what we need and can make good use of, is an advanced issue of thirty to fifty thousand stand of improved arms and equipments, and a law to this effect should be passed by Congress during the present session.

This course would save to the general government at least \$100,000 per annum, now expended in keeping the Indians in subjection in our territory. Our volunteers have done more successful Indian fighting during the past eighteen months in California than all the regular troops upon this coast, and the expense will not exceed \$10,000. But we need arms. Our people are organizing military companies (and those which will become effective) in every county in the State, and if we can obtain the proper supply of munitions of war for our use, the State will build up a force unequalled in our military history, one which will protect the soil of this coast from any and every invading foe who may seek to obtain a foothold upon the Pacific. We will establish a military seminary similar to the United States academy at West Point, and make it the best policy for the general government to give us the aid sought for. Gentlemen, the whole State, from Yiskigon to San Diego, are looking to this Congress and to your efforts for a supply of arms. The press of the State universally are asking for it, and the measure is looked upon as one of vital importance to this State. Our quota under the present law is less than two hundred stand of muskets per annum, and we have two hundred thousand men who could be brought into the field. We must have the means to put them in preparation. A nucleus of well drilled military men must at once be formed in California. This the State will do if she can get the appliances.

I sincerely trust that a special act will be immediately introduced and passed by this Congress making the appropriation sought for.

I have the honor, gentlemen, to be your most obedient servant,

WILLIAM C. KIBBE,

Quartermaster and Adjutant General, State of California.

Hon. MESSRS. WELLER, DENVER, and HERBERT,

Delegates in Congress from the State of California.

N. B. We have received from the general government the value of 2,560 muskets, 2,377 of which were due for 1853 and 1854, and only 183 for 1855. At the present rate of issue it would take us three years to obtain arms sufficient to arm a regiment. Our back issue for the years referred to would amount to 3,000 muskets.

W. C. KIBBE,

Quartermaster and Adjutant General.

RESOLUTION OF THE LEGISLATURE OF CALIFORNIA.

Whereas the isolated, exposed, and unprotected condition of California renders it the imperative duty of this legislature to take immediate and earnest action in relation to the procurement from the general government of arms and munitions of war for the protection of our own citizens and the defence of our State. Therefore,

Resolved by the assembly (the senate concurring) that our senator in Congress be instructed, and our representatives be requested, to take prompt and energetic action to secure the passage of a special law by Congress, during the present session, appropriating an advance issue of thirty thousand stand of arms, with ammunition, for the immediate use and protection of this State; and the quartermaster and adjutant-general of this State is hereby requested to lay such facts before our members in regard to the number of arms heretofore received from the general government, the number now due the State, and the number and kind now required.

[Endorsed.]

“Joint resolution relative to procuring arms and ammunition from the general government for the use of this State.”

“April 19, 1856, rules suspended and resolution passed.

“ALEXANDER M. HAYDEN,

“*Assistant Clerk Assembly.*”

“In senate, April 21, passed.

“W. BAUSMAN,

“*Sec. Senate.*”

OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE,
Sacramento, California, May 3, 1856.

I, David F. Douglass, secretary of state of the State of California, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of the original resolution, as the same appears on file in my office.

[L. s.] Witness my hand and the seal of state at Sacramento, California, the day and date above written.

DAVID F. DOUGLASS,
Secretary of State.