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Settlers and emigrants between the Mississippi Valley and the Pacific Ocean, &c. Joint resolutions of the legislature of Iowa, concerning the protection of settlers and emigrants between the Mississippi Valley and the Pacific Ocean, including the establishment of postal and telegraphic correspondence across the American continent.

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SETTLERS AND EMIGRANTS BETWEEN THE MISSISSIPPI
VALLEY AND THE PACIFIC OCEAN, &c.

JOINT RESOLUTIONS

OF THE

LEGISLATURE OF IOWA,

CONCERNING

The protection of settlers and emigrants between the Mississippi valley and the Pacific ocean, including the establishment of postal and telegraphic correspondence across the American continent.

FEBRUARY 20, 1855.—Referred to the Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads, and ordered to be printed.

BURLINGTON, IOWA, January 30, 1855.

SIR: In obedience to the instructions of the general assembly of our State, I herewith enclose a copy of their resolutions and memorial to Congress, "concerning the protection of settlers and emigrants between the Mississippi valley and the Pacific ocean," &c.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES W. GRIMES.

HON. B. HENN,

House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

Protection of intercourse between the Atlantic and Pacific States, by an overland route.

JOINT RESOLUTIONS of the General Assembly of the State of Iowa, concerning the protection of settlers and emigrants between the Mississippi valley and the Pacific ocean, including the establishment of postal and telegraphic correspondence across the American continent.

Whereas, The alarming increase of robberies and murders perpetrated on travellers and settlers, by the Indian tribes between the Missouri river and the Pacific ocean, added to the difficulties ordinarily incident to the journey across the vast regions between those points, renders it indispensable that immediate measures should be taken by the federal government to protect at least one line of travel between the Mississippi or Missouri and the Pacific, by proper distribution of troops for guarding against the outrages and horrors to which American citizens are now constantly subjected in travelling across American soil, between widely separated portions of American territory.

And whereas, It is the duty of all governments to furnish adequate protection to the people for whose welfare they were instituted, a duty which all civilized governments, including the American government, recognize in theory, and which the American government practices in reference to persons claiming its protection in foreign lands, whether it be in the rescue of shipwrecked sailors from Japan, or the rescue of persons like Koszta from the fangs of European tyranny ;

And whereas, It is believed that the requisite protection for travellers and settlers can be secured (without additional expense) by a proper distribution of comparatively small numbers of troops in subdivisions, stockaded along any one or more of the routes between the Mississippi or Missouri, and Oregon and California, thus rendering it practicable to accomplish the journey safely, to establish a continuous line of settlements, and to quicken the transmission of the mails between the Atlantic and Pacific, and thus incidentally, by affording adequate protection, rendering practicable the completion of telegraph lines between the Atlantic and Pacific States of this confederacy ;

And whereas, It is particularly due from the federal government that the enterprising settlers between the Missouri and the Pacific shall be protected in their lives and property while entering the toils and dangers of pioneering in the civilization of those immense regions ; and that this protection is the more important from the fact that while thus affording proper protection for settlers as well as travellers, the protection thus afforded would incidentally facilitate correspondence by mail and telegraph between the American people dwelling on opposite sides of the continent, as well as at shorter intervals apart, through the whole extent of the vast line of travel between the Missouri and Pacific, as aforesaid, thus bridging North America by posting and lightning facilities, for quickening the correspondence between Europe and the countries bordering on the Pacific ocean.

Be it therefore resolved, That in the opinion of the general assembly of the State of Iowa the subjects in the foregoing preamble should claim the immediate and favorable action of the Congress of the United States, and that immediate measures should be taken for distributing the troops intended for protecting the western settlements against Indian depredations, so that parties of fifteen or twenty dragoons may be stationed in stockades, (built like trading posts,) twenty or thirty miles apart, requiring only from one to two thousand of the troops intended for the protection of emigrants and settlers along some route across the plains and mountains between the Missouri and the Pacific, as proposed in O'Reilly's memorial to Congress, which was approved by the national railroad convention at St. Louis, in 1849, and on which was founded the bill for effecting the objects in the United States Senate in 1852 ; some of those troops from each stockade to patrol the route daily between the stockades, and to transmit an express letter mail along the whole route between the Mississippi, or Missouri and the Pacific, with greater speed and far less cost than any mail carried off a railroad route in America ; and with this great advantage that, whereas the present mails between the Atlantic and Pacific States touch only at the two ports of New York and San Francisco, the overland mail route here advocated would afford its benefits to the whole country along its

route, each stockade, or the town which would speedily be erected thereat, serving as a postal station, as well as a telegraph depot, for the distribution of intelligence among the people settled and travelling through all those vast regions, as well as for the transmission of governmental dispatches between the Atlantic and Pacific sections of the Union.

Be it resolved, as the opinion of the general assembly of Iowa, That such arrangements for the protection of life and property, if faithfully carried out with military precision by relays or patrols from each stockade, would guarantee the transmission of daily express letter mails between the Missouri and the Pacific, a distance of about two thousand miles, in about half the time now consumed between New York and San Francisco, thus incidentally rendering this line one of the best and quickest mail routes in the world, and also the most economical, if the mounted soldiery should, as they might advantageously, transport light letter mails without extra expense, while performing their daily patrol duty along the route; thus protecting and encouraging travelling and settlement in the most efficient manner, and offering inducements for the immediate cultivation of lands along the route for supplying emigrants and travellers, and at the same time incidentally securing the early construction and efficient protection of telegraph lines, which would "annihilate time and space" by the rapidity of their communications between the Atlantic and Pacific divisions of the United States.

Be it therefore resolved, That the senators and representatives of the State of Iowa in the Congress of the United States be, and they are hereby, requested to use all proper efforts to procure the establishment of the policy herein advocated, a policy which, if it had been adopted when first proposed seven years ago, would ere this have caused the establishment of a continuous line of settlements, whereat emigrants and travellers could readily find sustenance and defence, together with postal and telegraphic facilities for communicating with their distant friends and with the business world, instead of being debarred from comfort, and protection, and correspondence for months, as at present, while travelling between the frontiers of Iowa and Missouri and the Pacific ocean.

And be it further resolved, That the governor of the State of Iowa be, and he is hereby, requested to transmit to each of the senators and representatives of this State in Congress copies of the foregoing preamble and resolutions.

REUBEN NOBLE,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MATURIN L. FISHER,

President of the Senate.

Approved January 25, 1855.

JAMES W. GRIMES.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

Iowa City, January 31, 1855.

I certify the foregoing to be a true copy from the original rolls on file in my office.

GEORGE W. McCLEARY,

Secretary of State.