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Letter from the Secretary of War, transmitting a copy of a communication from Capt. J. B. Campbell, in relation to the illicit traffic in liquor in Alaska.

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LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

TRANSMITTING

A copy of a communication from Capt. J. B. Campbell, in relation to the illicit traffic in liquor in Alaska.

FEBRUARY 17, 1875.—Ordered to lie on the table and be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT, *February 15, 1875.*

The Secretary of War has the honor to transmit to the United States Senate copy of communication from Capt. J. B. Campbell, commanding, Sitka, Alaska, in regard to the illicit traffic in liquor in Alaska, for consideration, in connection with letters of the 3d ultimo and 4th instant, relative to the arrest of John A. Carr, and the sale of liquor in Alaska. (See Senate Ex. Docs. 15 and 24.)

WM. W. BELKNAP,
Secretary of War.

HEADQUARTERS SITKA, ALASKA,
November 11, 1874.

SIR: Capt. B. Phillips, of the schooner Nelly Eads, reports to me that he was in Behring's Bay in May last, for trading purposes. That on the shore of the bay he found a whale-boat, covered with boughs and brush; the Indians claimed it as theirs. Says he learned from an Indian and his squaw that it came there with six white men in it; that four of them were murdered, and two got away from them. That while he was there the surveying schooner Youcon, Captain Harrandale, came in; that Captain H. told him he lost from a whaling brig he commanded in 1872, on this coast, a whale-boat and six men; that Captain H. was anxious the Indians should not know he had heard of this, for fear they would molest him; that Indians tried to prevent him (Captain P.) from communications with the Youcon. The tribal name of these Indians is Yacotats; thinks all are not badly disposed, but a few of the leading men. Says that captain of the Youcon told him he saw three canoes of Sitka Indians at Altona Bay; canoes full of liquor. Says the temper of Indians all along the upper coast is independent, bordering on hostile. At Chilcat, the chief, Clock-Work, said he did not want any "Boston men" (their name for Americans) there, but "King George men" (English); that they were the best, and that their goods were cheapest. Told the captain to tell the Yyee so at Sitka. At this place a renegade

white, named Sullivan, who has married a squaw, lives. He is smart and unprincipled; makes a great deal of Hou-che-non, (liquor.)

Chilcat is the outlet of a large interior Indian population. The Chilcats go to Fort Simpson and Met-la-ca-ta with furs, and bring back blankets, woolens, cottons, fire-arms, and hardware in large quantities; they pay no duties, and the trade of Americans is stopped by the underselling of smuggled goods. The captain of the Eads says, as near as he can ascertain, about \$15,000 worth of goods were taken up there from Fort Simpson and Missionary Duncan's post this season; also many canoe-loads last year. I have seen many British goods myself among the Sitkas that must have been smuggled in, for they cannot be had in this market, and there is nowhere else they could come from. It seems to me a cutter, or some other efficient police, should be established and maintained to prevent these frauds, and to keep the control of the valuable trade of the Indians in our own territory, and to make these people look to our Government as their authority and their rulers. I am now satisfied, the longer I am here, that Wrangel has been the center of much fraud and corruption and official inertness within the last year.

Captain Phillips has also been to Tongass and Clauook, [Klawac,] on Prince of Wales Island. Says most of the Sitkas are there this season; took cargoes of liquor, that they sold for \$15 a gallon in some cases. Says they were teaching the Hydas and Clauooks how to distill.

The embargo I placed upon molasses traffic here has stopped the manufacture in this vicinity to a great extent; but at Fort Simpson and Metlacata they buy all the molasses they want and smuggle it to their country. This man Sullivan, at Chilcat, I hear, has had many hundred gallons brought him from the above-named places this year. I know the Sitka Indians bring liquor to their town, in canoes, daily. They occasionally sell it, in the woods, to soldiers.

I would like to be informed explicitly whether the Department Commander wishes me to search for and destroy liquor in the Indian town. They will resist such an operation, I am satisfied, and a state of hostility will ensue. I am abundantly able, with my force, to manage the Sitkas of this town and vicinity, but those Indians with their canoes could concentrate, in a very short time, all their outlying villages, and, by force of numbers, cut us off from our water-supply. The presence of a steam-cutter, to move from town to town, and to take and destroy canoes engaged in the liquor business, would do more good than all the troops that could be sent here. All Indian transportation, travel, and communication is done upon the sea and channels; their villages are all upon the shores, and an ability to reach their canoes gives a more powerful lever to influence them than any other method I can imagine.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. B. CAMPBELL,

Captain Fourth Artillery, Commanding.

To the ASSISTANT ADJUTANT-GENERAL,
Headquarters Department of the Columbia.

[Indorsement.]

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE COLUMBIA,
Portland, Oreg., January 9, 1875.

Official copy. Respectfully forwarded to the Assistant Adjutant-General, Headquarters Military Division of the Pacific.

In this connection attention is respectfully invited to the several recommendations made by my predecessor in command of this department, dated February 24, April 10, and September 1, (annual report,) 1874; particularly that of February 24, 1874, for an armed steam-vessel in the waters of Alaska. The presence of such a small vessel there I deem a necessity, and I renew the recommendation.

I also invite attention to my remarks of November 19, 1874, in reference to the smuggling of liquors, &c., from British Columbia.

O. O. HOWARD,
Brigadier-General, Commanding.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, February 13, 1875.

Official copy:

E. D. TOWNSEND,
Adjutant-General.

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