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Message from the President of the United States, recommending an increase of the Army to provide for contingencies that may arise in the Indian country.

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MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

RECOMMENDING

An increase of the Army to provide for contingencies that may arise in the Indian country.

AUGUST 11, 1876.—Read, referred to the Committee on Military Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

I transmit herewith a telegram of the 5th of August instant from Lieutenant-General Sheridan to General Sherman; a letter of the 11th of the present month from General Sherman to the Secretary of War; and a letter from the latter of the same date to me—all setting forth the possible needs of the Army in consequence of existing hostilities.

I would strongly urge upon Congress the necessity for making some provision for a contingency which may arise during the vacation, for more troops in the Indian country than it is now possible to send.

It would seem to me to be much more economical and better to authorize an increase of the present cavalry force, by twenty-five hundred privates; but, if this is not deemed advisable, then, that the President be authorized to call out not exceeding five regiments, one thousand strong, each, of volunteers, to serve for a period not exceeding six months.

Should this latter authority be given, I would not order out any volunteers unless, in my opinion, based upon reports from the scene of war, I deemed it absolutely necessary, and then only the smallest number considered sufficient to meet the emergency.

U. S. GRANT.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, August 11, 1876.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, D. C., August 11, 1876.

SIR: I have the honor herewith to transmit a copy of the dispatch of General Sheridan, of August 5, and inviting your attention to the fact that, after stripping nearly every post in his military division, except those in Texas and the South, he has only been able to re-enforce General Crook to the extent of 1,774 and General Terry to 1,873 men for offensive operations.

He has also re-enforced the garrisons along the Missouri River, and at the agencies of Spotted Tail and Red Cloud, so as to prevent their lending assistance to the hostile camps.

Inasmuch as Congress may soon adjourn, prudence dictates that we should be prepared for any possible contingency, and if it is not possible to obtain the increase of 2,500 men asked for our cavalry regiments, I would most respectfully advise that the President be requested to ask authority to accept the services of 5,000 volunteers for the period of six months, or during hostilities; these volunteers to be accepted and mustered in from the States and Territories most convenient to the theater of operations.

I have the honor to be, your obedient servant,
W. T. SHERMAN, *General.*

Hon. J. D. CAMERON,
Secretary of War.

A true copy:
C. C. SNIFFEN, *Secretary.*

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington City, August 11, 1876.

To the PRESIDENT:

I have the honor to transmit herewith the copy of a dispatch from Lieut. Gen. P. H. Sheridan, dated the 5th instant, with a letter of this date from General Sherman, transmitting the same.

I desire to renew the expression of my opinion that the best way to re-enforce the troops now operating against the Indians will be to add the 2,500 privates to the regiments already in existence; but if Congress should not do this, then I advise that the President be authorized, in his discretion, to call for volunteers, not to exceed five thousand in number.

I trust that Generals Terry and Crook may be able to deal such a blow to the hostile Indians that even this may not be necessary, yet prudence dictates that measures should be taken to meet all possible contingencies.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
J. D. CAMERON,
Secretary of War.

A true copy:
C. C. SNIFFEN,
Secretary.

[Copy of telegram.]

CHICAGO, *August 5, 1876.*

To General W. T. SHERMAN,
Washington, D. C.:

I have not yet been able to re-enforce the garrison at Red Cloud or Spotted Tail's or at Standing Rock, to be strong enough to attempt to count the Indians or to arrest and disarm those coming in. I beg of you to see the military committee of the House, and urge on it the necessity of increasing the cavalry regiments to one hundred to each company.

General Crook's total strength is seventeen hundred and seventy-four; Terry's, eighteen hundred and seventy-three; and to give this force to them I have stripped every post from the line of Manitoba to Texas. We want more mounted men; we have not exceeded the law in enlist-

ing Indian scouts; in fact, have not as many as the law allows; the whole number in this division is only one hundred and fourteen. The Indians with General Crook are not enlisted, or even paid. They are not worth paying; they are with him only to gratify their desire for a fight and their thirst for revenge on the Sioux.

P. H. SHERIDAN,
Lieutenant-General.

A true copy:

C. C. SNIFFEN,
Secretary.