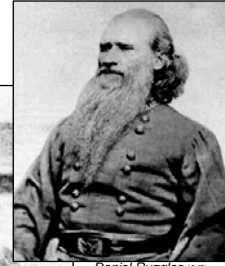


WILD INDIANS



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Daniel Ruggles (L.C.)

for the Southern Confederacy

Letter from DANIEL RUGGLES, Brigadier-General, Provisional Army, C. S. to Adjutant and Inspector General SAMUEL COOPER, February 18, 1865.

GENERAL :

The existing crisis seems to invite the expression of our opinion touching the combination of those elements of strength which remain in a measure undeveloped in our Trans-Mississippi domains. I have therefore the honor to propose :

First. That prompt and energetic measures be taken to bring into the field such warriors as the civilized and semi-barbarous Indian nations, viz, the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles, may be still enabled to furnish us the complements of their effective strength, thus adding a probable contingent of between 15,000 and 20,000 warriors to our armies.

Second. That measures be promptly taken to employ the Comanche Nation and other cognate tribes, viz, the Sioux, Blackfeet, Pawnees, &c., now hostile to the Federal power, as an appropriate and energetic contingent, numbering probably some 20,000 warriors, who, when stimulated by adroit emissaries, would carry terror throughout the western border as far as the Canadian frontier.

Third. That measures be promptly taken to induce the Mormons (ever strong adherents to States' rights doctrines) to initiate predatory warfare along the Pacific border, stimulating the trans-mountain Indians to active co-operation, thus neutralizing the military resources of those distant States known to be lukewarm in the present aggressive warfare, and thereby gaining time, which is to us an important element of defense.

Fourth. That encouragement be given by prompt and efficient diplomacy to emigration from the neighboring Mexican States for enrollment as an active contingent for field service. This should embrace the valley of the Rio Grande, including New Mexico. The present condition of Mexico favors this important object, enabling us, probably, to draw largely from those disaffected political elements hostile to the present

dominant power, especially if we pursue some well-considered and systematic policy on the question of the Monroe doctrine.

Fifth. That measures be immediately taken to organize and take into the field one-fifth of the effective slave population of that department, changing the tenure of their service from slavery to peonage, thus protecting the slave and industrial interests and meeting the existing military necessities of the country.

The troublesome question of eventualities in the minds of many is readily met by the impending necessity of retaining a mercenary army in time of peace, which would absorb the remnants of the servile element whenever peace shall dawn upon the nation. Thus may we combine the reserve corps of those States, the slave force, the Indian force (semi-civilized and savage), the Mexicans and Mormons, in strength sufficient to retain complete military possession of that department, enabling General Smith's army to move promptly into Tennessee, and thus co-operate with the armies of the east to meet and roll back the bloody tide of fanaticism now threatening to engulf us.

With such armies wielded under the inspiration of a magnanimous will, there is much reason to believe that the impending abolition crusade may be stayed, or else, indeed, that we may define and mark our boundaries of eternal hatred as high as heaven and as deep as hell, as a memorial in the annals of mankind of a grand effort by a proud and gallant people to defend their firesides and their civil liberties as they inherited them from their revolutionary fathers.

The deep interest felt by me in the success of our arms constitutes my excuse for thus tendering observations on the military resources of that distant though important field, founded on a long period of military service along that extensive Western frontier, rendering me in some measure familiar with those elements of strength, as well as geographical outlines noticed in this memorandum.

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A dash for timber (Frederic Remington)