

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

IN RELATION

To the works at Black Rock ; in compliance with a resolution of the Senate of the 2d March, 1837.

SEPTEMBER 23, 1837.

Read, and ordered to be printed.

WASHINGTON, *Sept.* 19, 1837.

SIR: I have the honor to enclose a report of the Secretary of War, on the subject of the resolution of the Senate of the 2d of March, 1837.

Very respectfully,

Your most obedient servant,

M. VAN BUREN.

Hon. R. M. JOHNSON,

President of the Senate.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
September 19, 1837.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit, herewith, the report of the Chief Engineer on the subject of the resolution of the Senate passed the 2d day of March, 1837, "requesting the President to ascertain whether the works at Black Rock raise the waters of Lake Erie, to the injury of property on its southern and western shores, &c." The report contains the causes of the delay in carrying out the views indicated by the resolution and in obtaining the required information.

Very respectfully,

Your most obedient servant,

J. R. POINSETT.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Blair & Rives, printers.

IN SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MARCH 2, 1837.

Resolved, That the President be requested to ascertain, during the recess of Congress, whether the works at Black Rock raise the waters of Lake Erie, to the injury of property on its southern and western shores, and to communicate to Congress, at their next session, the result of the examination.

ENGINEER DEPARTMENT,
Washington, September 15, 1837.

SIR: In reference to the resolution of the Senate of March 2, 1837, calling for information in regard to the waters of Lake Erie being raised by the works near Buffalo, I have the honor to report:

That no funds having been appropriated for the survey, Capt. A. Talcott, and Messrs. Courtenay and Brown, formerly of the corps of engineers, were requested, on the 14th of April, 1837, to make the necessary examination on their own responsibility, to be reimbursed from an appropriation to be asked afterward of Congress. These gentlemen accepted the offer; but two of them being obliged afterwards to withdraw, the examination could not be made.

For the same reason, of a want of funds, the request made by Mr. Brown, United States' Agent at Dunkirk, N. Y. that Col. Totten and Major Douglass should be appointed, could not be complied with.

A proposition was also afterwards made by Mr. Brown, after Messrs. Talcott and Courtenay had left the lake, that those gentlemen should make the examination, and the expense be defrayed from an unexpended balance of appropriation for other objects then in his hands. To this proposition Capt. Talcott acceded; but this department, having no authority to make the transfer of funds, Mr. Brown was informed that the application of them to this purpose would be on his individual responsibility. Since then, the department is in receipt of no further information.

Unless, therefore, Mr. Brown has concluded to make the survey on his own responsibility, the information required cannot be communicated, there being no funds for that purpose.

I have the honor to return herewith the resolution referred to.

Very respectfully, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

C. GRATIOT.

Hon. J. R. POINSETT,
Secretary of War.

ENGINEER DEPARTMENT,
Washington, September 18, 1837.

SIR: In compliance with your verbal instructions, given in pursuance of a resolution of the Senate of March 2, 1837, "That the President be requested to ascertain, during the recess of Congress, whether the works at

Black Rock raise the waters of Lake Erie, to the injury of property on its southern and western shores, &c.," I have the honor to submit herewith an approximate estimate of the cost of an examination of the lake with that view, namely :

Three commissioners, one month, at \$5 per day	-	-	\$450
Transportation of baggage at 10 cents per mile	-	-	290
Surveyor, including all expenses	-	-	300
Contingencies	-	-	160
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			\$1200

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

C. GRATIOT.

Hon. J. R. POINSETT,

Secretary of War.

