

MILITARY FORCES IN KANSAS.

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

COMMUNICATING

*Information in reference to the employment of government military forces
in the Territory of Kansas.*

MAY 23, 1856.—Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and ordered to be printed.

To the House of Representatives:

I communicate herewith a report from the Secretary of War, in response to a resolution of the House of Representatives of the 12th instant, requesting me to inform the House "whether United States soldiers have been employed in the Territory of Kansas to arrest persons charged with a violation of certain supposed laws enacted by a supposed legislature assembled at Shawnee Mission."

FRANKLIN PIERCE.

WASHINGTON, May 22, 1856.

WAR DEPARTMENT, Washington, May 21, 1856.

SIR: I have to acknowledge the reference to this department of a resolution of the House of Representatives, dated the 12th instant, requesting the President to inform the House "whether United States soldiers have been employed in the Territory of Kansas, to arrest persons charged with a violation of certain supposed laws, enacted by a supposed legislature assembled at Shawnee Mission, in said Territory," &c.

In reply, I have to state, that by instructions from this department, dated the 15th of February last, Colonel E. V. Sumner and Lieutenant Colonel P. S. G. Cooke were directed to aid by a military force the constituted authorities of the Territory of Kansas, in suppressing insurrection or invasive aggression against the organized government of the Territory, or armed resistance to the execution of the laws, in case the governor, finding the ordinary course of judicial proceedings

and the powers vested in the United States marshal inadequate for the purpose, should make requisition upon them for a military force to aid him in the performance of that official duty.

Under these instructions, and upon the requisition of Governor Shannon, a detachment of troops, under a lieutenant, was ordered to report to the governor to sustain the constituted authorities in the enforcement of the laws. The proceedings in the case are specifically set forth in the enclosed copies of the correspondence, which contain the only information the department has upon the subject.

The instructions from this department being directed exclusively to the support of the organized government, and constituted authorities of the Territory, convey no authority to employ soldiers to aid, by making arrests or otherwise, in the enforcement of "supposed laws, enacted by a supposed legislature." The department, therefore, presumes, and believes, that United States soldiers have not been employed to make arrests under the circumstances stated in the resolution.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JEFFERSON DAVIS,
Secretary of War.

To the PRESIDENT.

HEADQUARTERS, FORT LEAVENWORTH,
May 7th, 1856.

SIR: I have the honor to forward herewith further correspondence in relation to Kansas difficulties.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. V. SUMNER,
Col. 1st Cavalry, Com'g.

Col. S. COOPER, *Adjutant General*
United States Army, Washington, D. C.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, LECOMPTON, K. T.,
April 24, 1856.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st, and also of the 22d instant. Lieutenant McIntosh reported his command to me at this place agreeably to instructions. His report to you will put you in possession of all that has transpired while aiding the sheriff of this county in the execution of the process in his hands.

It is due to Lieutenant McIntosh that I should say that his prompt and efficient action, and the important services which he has rendered the sheriff in executing the laws, entitle him to my warmest commendations and most sincere thanks.

Hoping to see you soon, when I will be able to explain matters further, I have the honor to be, your obedient servant,

WILSON SHANNON.

Col. SUMNER.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, LECOMPTON, K. T.,
April 25, 1856.

SIR: I am satisfied that the persons against whom writs have been issued and placed in the hands of the sheriff of this county, and who have not been taken, have secreted themselves or fled, so that for the present no further arrests can be made; nevertheless I deem it prudent to have a military posse or guard of thirty men stationed at this place, and subject to my orders, to act in case of an emergency. I would therefore request you to furnish me with such a guard from your command, to be used as a sheriffs' posse, and to preserve the peace, as occasion may require. I have no further requisition to make on you at present, but would respectfully request you to hold your command in readiness to act at a moment's warning, if required by me, to enforce the laws or preserve the peace.

Yours, with great respect,

WILSON SHANNON.

Col. SUMNER.

FRANKLIN, *April 28, 1856.*

COLONEL: Under the direction of the governor, I started from Le-compton early this morning with the intention of assisting the deputy sheriff in serving writs left by Mr. Jones. We arrived at Lawrence about half-past six o'clock a. m.; and although we remained in town nearly two hours, the sheriff was unsuccessful in his search; apparently those for whom he had writs had left the town. I shall remain near here for two or three days in order to be nearer the sheriff, and to attend to the serving of the writs.

The governor has not yet issued any writs against Mr. Reeder or Robinson, and I do not think he will at present. As I passed through Lawrence this morning, everything seemed to be quiet and orderly, and I hear very little at present of the Missourians.

The person who takes this is in haste to leave. If anything important occurs, I shall let you know of it by express.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES McINTOSH,

1st Lt. 1st Cavalry, Com'g Detachment.

Col. SUMNER, *1st Cavalry, Commanding.*

