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United States. Congress. House

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REPORT

Of the Committee to which was referred, on the 9th instant, the memorial of the legislature of the Mississippi Territory, praying for the admission of said territory into the Union, as an independent State.

Made December 23, 1816.

The committee, to whom was referred, on the 9th instant, the memorial of the Legislative Council and House of Representatives, of the Mississippi Territory, praying for the admission of said Territory into the Union, as an independent State, with its present limits, respectfully submit the following

REPORT.....

The Mississippi Territory contains, according to a census lately taken under an act of the legislature, and furnished by the secretary, of said Territory, 75,512 souls; of whom 45,085 are free white persons; 366 free people of colour; and 30,061 slaves. By the articles of agreement between the United States, and the State of Georgia, it is stipulated that this Territory shall be admitted into the Union, as a State, when it shall contain sixty thousand free inhabitants, or at an earlier period, if Congress shall deem it expe-

dient. Hence it appears, that its admission at this time depends, not upon the claim derived from the above-mentioned agreement with Georgia, but upon a liberal policy, on the part of the United States. It would seem to be superfluous in your committee to recommend, that considerations of a deficiency of numbers be waved in this case; seeing that the House of Representatives have passed three bills, at different periods, for the admission of this Territory, when its population was much smaller than it is at this time.

But it becomes a question whether the object of the memorialists can be ultimately attained, or ought to be attained, in the way in which it is asked. It will be readily perceived that your committee allude to the objection to the extent of the territory in question, which the memorialists pray may be embraced within the limits of a single State. Whether such a measure might, in any possible contingency, affect the general interest of the Union, it is possible that a difference of sentiment may exist. Your committee presume, that it is not required of them to discuss this question; as it is one on which every member of the House will form an opinion for himself. They will, however, beg leave barely to remark, that they cannot believe a State of such unprecedented magnitude, as the one contemplated by the memorialists, can be desirable to any section of the United States. In relation to the interest of the Territory itself, it may be more within the province of your committee to give their opinion, with the facts upon which it is formed.

It is deemed unnecessary to calculate how many square miles, or how many millions of acres, the Mississippi Territory contains; as its size is sufficiently apparent from a mere glance at the map.

But there are other circumstances of a local nature, which are not so obvious to the House, and which, therefore, the committee will proceed to state.

There are in this Territory, three principal settlements, which lie, as to their relative positions, somewhat in a triangular form: viz. one, immediately below the 35th degree of latitude, on the Tennessee river; another, immediately above the 31st degree, on the Mississippi; and the other, also immediately above the 31st, on the Mobile. From the settlement on the Tennessee to that on the Mississippi, the distance is about four hundred miles; all of which is a wilderness, excepting so far as it is settled by the Chickasaw and Chactaw Indians, by whom these immense regions are claimed. From the settlement on the Mississippi to that on the Mobile, the distance is nearly three hundred miles. Here the Indian claim is extinguished; but the intermediate settlements, from Pearl river eastwardly, are insulative and of small extent. From the settlement on the Mobile to that on the Tennessee, the distance is about three hundred miles also; and here, too, the Indian claims are now extinguished to the whole of this extensive and interesting tract of country; which will, no doubt, soon exhibit a flourishing settlement, extending from the Tennessee river to the Gulf of Mexico. Between the Tennessee and the Mississippi settlements, and between the Mississippi and the Mobile settlements, there is not, and probably never will be, any commercial intercourse whatever; but between the Mobile and the Tennessee settlements, such an intercourse cannot fail to take place when the intervening country shall be settled, and its fine navigable streams explored and improved.

The whole Mississippi Territory formed into a

single State, would not only be very inconvenient to a vast majority of those of its inhabitants whose duty or interest might call them to the seat of government; but would also prove, in the opinion of your committee, too extensive for its executive to suppress internal disorders in all parts, and repel external invasion at all points, with necessary promptness, energy, and effect.

But another objection to an entire admission of the Territory, arises from the want of a continuity of settlement, and a reciprocity of interest between its distant parts. The former of these defects might, perhaps, be merely inconvenient; but the latter could not fail to be a permanent source of real evil to the legislative councils of the country, and, of consequence, to the community at large. Your committee need not express their apprehensions in detail, as the House will readily conceive how naturally jealousies would arise, and collisions ensue, amongst the representatives of a people inhabiting different regions, having distinct local interests, and entertaining opposite views. There is much cause to fear, that in such a state of things, sectional feelings would prevail over principles of justice, and local policy over the general good.

From the above view of the subject, your committee are of opinion, that the Mississippi Territory should be divided by a north and south line, for the purpose of erecting the same into two separate and independent States. In proposing this measure, they feel no little reluctance in doing it in opposition to the wishes of a great portion of the people of the Territory; and this reluctance would be more difficult to overcome, but for the consideration that there is, on the other hand, a great portion, also, of the same people, who are in favour of

the measure proposed. This is, probably, a question on which these people would never agree amongst themselves; and hence the necessity of the parental interposition of the general government to decide it for them, in such a way as may be best adapted to their local interests, and not incompatible with the interest of the United States. But, in recommending a division of this Territory, your committee beg leave to suggest such a plan of division as will not probably retard the admission of either part, beyond the period at which its inhabitants would be entitled to a State government, in virtue of the agreement between the United States and the State of Georgia.

As there is already west of the line of division which will be proposed, a population that would be entitled to one representative in Congress, on the federal principle of representation, and according to the present apportionment, your committee respectfully recommend the immediate admission of this western part of the territory, and the establishment of a separate territorial government for the eastern part, until it also may be entitled, on the same principle, to the rights of a State.

With respect to the line of division, it is natural that the citizens of the Territory should, according to their respective local situations, entertain a variety of conflicting opinions, and cherish a diversity of opposite hopes. It was a question of some difficulty with your committee; and their decision is the result of a disposition to do equal justice to the present inhabitants, to provide for the convenience of future settlers, and to promote the interest of the whole.

The line which the committee propose for the consideration of the House, is designated in the two bills which they have prepared for the purposes herein recommended, and which they ask leave to report.

CENSUS.

Counties.	Free White Persons.	Free Peo- ple of co- lour.	Slaves.
Adams, . . .	3,608	129	6,394
Wilkinson, . . .	3,218	2	4,057
Amite, . . .	3,365	19	1,694
Jefferson, . . .	2,531		2,377
Claiborne, . . .	1,716	23	1,790
Warren, . . .	801	14	768
Franklin, . . .	1,701	4	1,013
Pike, . . .	2,078	1	539
Lawrence, . . .	1,367		417
Marion, . . .	1,015		686
Green, . . .	1,357		388
Wayne, . . .	1,566	1	517
Hancock, (supposed)	666		334
Jackson, . . .	714	42	255
Madison, . . .	10,000		4,200
Clarke, . . .	2,767	16	1,334
Washington, . . .	1,888		671
Monroe, . . .	3,625	72	1,609
Baldwin, . . .	436	43	684
Mobile, (supposed)	666		334
	45,085	366	30,061

	1872	1873	1874
Всего (общая)	900		237
Бумага	512	41	107
Книжки	253	25	100
Другие	135		30
Среды	202	10	114
Другие	100		50
Итого	112	77	237
Всего (общая)	900		237
Другие	120	1	21
Среды	120		88
Другие	100		90
Другие	120		11
Бумага	200	1	33
Книжки	100	4	101
Другие	80	11	10
Среды	110	31	110
Другие	100		100
Другие	200	12	100
Другие	100	2	100
Итого	100	150	100

Итого

1874

