

*Missouri Democrat*  
October 23, 1867

*The Peace Commission*

*Indian "Talks"*

*Another Council—Four Tribes Represented—Distribution of Clothing—Incidents of the Council—Wynkoop's Testimony—The Cause of the War—More About Hancock's Expedition—Comments*

Medicine Lodge, October 17.

*The Council*

A council was held this morning at which the commissioners, Col. Leavenworth, Col. Wynkoop, Dr. Root, A.S.H. White, and the porters were present, with twenty-five chiefs of the Kiowas, Arapahoes, Cheyennes, Apaches and Camanches. In the front row sat Kicking Bird, Little Raven, Spotted Wolf, Fishermore, Heap of Birds, Black Kettle, Elk Poor Bear, Satanta, Satauk and Mrs. Adams, interpreter for the Arapahoes.

*The Interpreter*

This woman came in dressed in crimson petticoat, black cloth cloak, and a small coquettish velvet hat, decorated with a white ostrich feather. She appears intelligent and rather refined. She speaks fluently the English, Kiowa and Arapahoe language.

*Exhortation*

Before the council commenced the village crier, in a loud voice, gave command to the nations sitting around "to be good, and behave themselves."

At this period

*Fishermore*

The Kiowa's council orator, stepped up, his dirty face beaming with joy, and loudly shouting out "a-how, a-how," insisted upon shaking hands with all. Fishermore is a stout Indian of ponderous proportions, and speaks five languages. He is a favorite with all the tribes. When the calumet came to him he directed the stem north, south, east and west, and then took three deliberate whiffs and passed it to his neighbor.

### *Suiting the Indian*

When all were ready, Commissioner Taylor said that he had distributed twenty suits of clothes to the Arapahoe runners; he was ready to distribute twenty suits to each of the different tribes, and if they could agree upon terms of peace at the general council, he had many more presents to give away.

The clothes were immediately brought in the center and distributed around.

### *Council Proceedings*

The commissioners were called to order, and the meeting was organized. Commissioner Taylor said:

#### *Mr. Taylor's Talk*

“We understand that you are tired of staying here, and in the talk yesterday you requested us to defer the council for eight sleeps. To that proposition we assented, supposing that you would all be willing to wait. We have found, however, that delay does not please some, the Arapahoes, Apaches, Camanches and Kiowas having waited here so long; therefore we have agreed to hold the general council at your village, when the council circle is prepared.”

#### *M'Closkey*

At this juncture McCloskey said that if the commission excused him, he would go and bring the Camanches to the council, that they might also hear the proposition of the commission.

#### *Arrivals*

Ten Bears, head chief of the Camanches, Iron Mountain, Little Horn, son of Ten Bears, were introduced to the commission. Powerful warriors! I thought of the wonderful stories of Mayne Reid, and other authors, and the various battles said to have taken place between this warlike nation and the invincible Texan Rangers. When they were seated, McCloskey, their interpreter, related the late talk to them. They were all well pleased.

#### *Mr. Taylor*

again spoke: “My friends, these commissioners have come from Washington to make peace with all of you. We desire to make treaties with you all together. Now, we are anxious, therefore, that all of you chiefs should agree together upon what day the grand council takes place. We are also anxious to have it over as soon as possible, that we may do justice to the northern Indians. If you can agree among yourselves upon what day you will hold the council, we will be willing to treat with you, but if not, we must treat with each tribe as they are ready. We are done, and we hope the chiefs will let us know upon what they agree.”

#### *Black Eagle*

rose and said: I know Generals Sanborn and Harney of old—when there was no blood on the path; when the whole country was all white. I speak for the Kiowas now. We would like to stop until four sleeps have passed before we speak.

*The Camanche Chief, Ten Bears*

A good natured old warrior, who had the honor of once being introduced to President Lincoln, said: “I had a talk with the Great Father himself when I was at Washington. I am willing to repeat it here. Since I have made peace with the white men I have received many presents, and my heart has been made glad. My young men look upon you with gladness. I have not much to say, except it be to say that we are willing to travel any road you lay out for us.” Then the

*Kiowa Chief*

said: “We would like to hold the council tomorrow, and then wait four days before receiving the goods.

*Satanta*

said: “I don’t want to say anything at this talk. I will say what I have to say at the grand council.”

*Ten Bears*

angry at this vacillation of the Kiowas, here made the remark, “What I say is law for the Camanches, but it takes half a dozen to speak for the Kiowas.”

*Agreement*

After a few more retorts of this kind, it was finally agreed that the Camanches and Kiowas should meet in grand council after the night.

*Poor Bear,*

An Apache chief, stepped up and after a long pause said: “When the grass was green I was on the Ouachita, and I heard that the commissioners wanted to see me. I am glad. I would like to get my annuity goods as soon as possible, as I understood they were here. I will wait four days for the talk. I have spoken.”

After this speech

*Satanta*

Stood up before the warriors who had gathered together to witness the ceremony of the pow-wow. There were fully five hundred of them splendidly dressed in the most gorgeous Indian costume. His remarks were universally applauded, if one might judge by the frequent bursts of gratified ugh, ugh.

Satanta's style of delivery is well calculated to please a savage multitude. Presenting a formidable appearance himself, and gifted with native eloquence, he commands all attention. His name is a thing to swear by. His many acts of prowess the young Indian maidens sing, while the young braves endeavor to emulate.

A portion of his remarks I took down in shorthand, of which the following is a true copy:  
"Anitate y ben antema, usebah ghis eiek men a yu tah durpus cabeleh inst ma den y cat ah damht ahu echan arabeuyshtabelunyau"—( loud "ugh! "ugh!")

### *Black Kettle, Chief of the Cheyennes*

Got up now, and addressed the multitude of Indians present as follows:

"We were once friends with the whites, but you nudged us out of the way by your intrigues, and now when we are in council you keep nudging each other. Why don't you talk, and go straight, and let all be well? I am pleased with all that has been said."

### *Little Raven*

Followed in the same vein, appealing to them "to behave themselves and be good."

### *Adjournment*

The council was then adjourned to meet again on the morning of the fifth day in grand and solemn council at the council place specially prepared for the occasion.

### *Incidental*

Senator Henderson is remarkable for his business like faculties. He urged upon Taylor to make the "talks" as short as possible, while Taylor, out of pure habit alone, enlarged and explained, thus making the pow-wow tediously and unnecessarily long.

While we talk was being interpreted, the honorable gentlemen were engaged in different things. Harney, with head erect, watched with interest each dusky and painted face of the Indians around the tent. Sanborn picked his teeth, and tried to break forth into one of his usual horse laughs. Tappan read Indian reports about the destruction of the Indian village.

Henderson, with eye-glass in hand, seemed buried in deep study.

Terry busied himself in printing alphabetical letters, and Augur whittled away with energy.

Leavenworth examined his children, and made by signals to old Satank, the oldest chief of the Kiowa nation. Under the table sat Commissioner Taylor's papoose, making wry faces at some pretty squaws sitting astride, behind some aspiring youths on ponies, in the background. The correspondents sat *a la Turque* on the ground, their pencils flying with lightning speed over the paper.

### *Gray-Head*

At dusk Gray-Head came to camp from the war path with fifty Dog Soldiers. His band looked ferocious enough, and just the kind that a person might expect to see on the war path.

*Curious*

Gray-Head presented the following letter to General Harney.

HEADQUARTERS, COTTONWOOD SPRINGS,  
July 15, 1858

This is to show that the bearer, Gray-Head, a chief of the Cheyennes, has voluntarily visited my camp and made promises of peace toward the whites. And believing that these promises are made in good faith, I commend him to the friendship of our people and the troops.

W.S. HARNEY  
Brigadier General U.S.A.

*Black Kettle*

Lately received a message from Medicine Arrows' band that if he did not make his appearance at their camp on a certain day, they would come in and kill all his horses.

*The Cause of the Indian War*

Towards night colonel Wynkoop was called up before the commission to testify as to the cause of this Indian war, which he gave in the following manner:

*Col. Wynkoop's Testimony About the Sand Creek Massacre*

Wynkoop said that Governor Evans blamed him for bringing the Indians to sand Creek, but Wynkoop insisted that he should see them, as the Cheyennes were desirous for peace, and he had brought them to Sand Creek for that purpose. The massacre took place two days after he had left Fort Lyon, of which he was in command. Directly after the massacre two hundred Sioux Indians went on the war path, attacked Mexican trains, killing every one they came across, and since that massacre the Indians have been on the war-path.

(In answer to a question which Henderson asked, Wynkoop said Chivington's reply at the council in Denver was, that his business was to kill Indians, and not to make peace with them.)

After Sand creek the Indians were at war everywhere, mostly on the Platte. Property was destroyed, horses were stolen, and emigrants were killed, &c., &c.

Some annuity goods which Commissioner Goodall bought in New York, three-point blankets, which are used as wrappers, and which were charged in the bill at \$13 per pair, were the most worthless things I ever saw. The Indians told me that they would not have taken those goods from anybody else but myself. It was a most shameless affair. They were not only killed, but the friendliest were cheated, &c., &c.

Concerning the disposition of the Sioux, I will state that they were under the impression, previous to the destruction of that Cheyenne village by Hancock, that as the Cheyenne had made peace, they will also. I asked Pawnee-killer, a Sioux chief, and he said they said the same thing.

The Mexican killed at Fort Zarah was killed by an Indian, who was under the influence of liquor. But the Indians generally were satisfied with keeping the peace, and save that murder at

Zarah, they had kept it. They had certainly done nothing after the treaty was made in '65, until Hancock made his appearance with his army. There was a report that the Indians had run off stock near Fort Wallace. General Hancock has various statements from his officers of several depredations, but these could not be fixed upon any particular band. I know of one affair, viz., a young chief attempted to run off some stage horses, but he did not succeed.

### *Concerning Hancock's Expedition*

The first I knew of the expedition, I received a communication from him dated Leavenworth, stating that he was coming with a large body of troops. He intended to make peace, but at the same time was prepared for war. He also wished me to accompany him on his expedition. He stated that he was going to make a demand for the parties who committed the depredations on the Smoky Hill, and also for the Indian who killed the New Mexicans at Zarah. I received another letter, stating that his orders from Sherman were not to make the demands.

As soon as I received this communication I sent out runners to gather in the chiefs. When Hancock arrived at Larned, they had not reached there. But two days afterward seven arrived. Amongst them were Tall Bull, White Horse and Bull Bear, chiefs of the Dog band. The night of their arrival a council was held and Gen. Hancock made a speech. [You have already received and published it.] After him Tall Bull spoke, and said that his tribe were at peace, and he wished to remain so, they hoped he would not go to their villages, as he could not have any more to say to them there than where he was. General Hancock answered that he was going to see them at their village on the morrow.

The next day he started for the village. That night we camped twenty-three miles from the fort. The day after we met a body of Indians on the Plains. As soon as they saw us they started to run away but Edward Guerrier made signs with his horse that he wished to see them at the village that night and talk with them, to which they agreed.

Roman Nose and his party started back towards their village. The troops took up the line of march for it. Bull Bear remained behind with the column, and he then told me that it would produce no good to march up to the village, that the women and children would be afraid. This I communicated to General Hancock, but he did not agree with that view of it.

They still marched on, and at last camped within three hundred yards east of the village. About five PM Hancock sent interpreters to fetch the chiefs to the council. They returned immediately, and informed Hancock that the women and children had fled. He then sent them back, and ordered them to send the head men to him. Bull Bear and Tall Bull came accordingly. General Hancock appeared very angry, and asked them why they had acted so mean towards him.

About eleven o'clock that night Guerrier returned from the camp, and stated that the chiefs had come back from the pursuit of their women.

Hancock sent for me, and told me when I reached his tent that he had ordered General Custer to surround the camp and retain all that were found in it. He asked me my opinion upon the order. I told him that if there were only ten men found there, when they saw the cavalry they would have a fight. Hancock said it mattered not. The cavalry marched up and surrounded the camp. A little while after that, Gen. Hancock ordered Gen. Custer to pursue the Indians and bring them back. Custer immediately started in pursuit.

About two AM Hancock stated in my presence that he intended to burn the village next morning, as he considered that they had acted treacherously towards him, and they deserved

punishment. Upon hearing this, I wrote him a letter urging him to do nothing rash, but to ponder well on what he was about to do. Hancock did not burn that village however, next morning, as he promised. I also urged General Smith to endeavor to show the general that it would be wrong to burn the village. General Smith did so.

The night of the 16<sup>th</sup> [of April], a courier came from General Custer, bearing a letter stating that two men had been killed and burned and Lookout Station destroyed, on the Smoky Hill. That same night General Hancock gave orders to General Smith to burn the village next morning.

The next day as the troops were leaving Pawnee Fork, the order of General Hancock was obeyed. The village was set on fire, and everything in it was burned.

A courier was dispatched to the commandants of Forts Larned and Dodge, ordering them to prevent the Indians from crossing the Arkansas River. Two days after that a party of Indians were intercepted at Cimmarron crossing, and killed.

The old Indian and young girl who had been in the deserted village, and who had been taken to Fort Dodge by General Hancock, died a few days after the expedition left, at that post.

In answer to a question by General Sanborn, as to whether he (Wynkoop) had any idea who had committed the outrage upon her, Wynkoop said: I firmly believe that the soldiers ravished the child. It was the conclusion I arrived at when I heard that she was ravished. It is my belief now.

The Cheyennes I have seen lately gave me to understand that the war this summer was in retaliation for the destruction of their village by General Hancock.

#### *Comments*

There are several little inaccuracies in Col. Wynkoop's testimony, as I was with Hancock and I know whereof I speak.

First. War was already declared when Hancock appeared with his army.

Second. He did not burn the village until the 19<sup>th</sup>, four days after his arrival at Pawnee Fork, and not until he had received positive proofs that the Indians were at war. Nor did he then burn it until he had counseled with his officers.

Third. The soldiers were not the persons who violated the young girl found at the Cheyenne village.

The readers of the *Democrat* cannot have forgotten how graphically and distinctly "Hancock's expedition on the warpath" was described by the special correspondent.