

Memorial of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Iowa

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Written at the request of the Committee.

MEMORIAL

Of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Iowa.

To His Excellency, Martin Van Buren, President of the United States,

Your Memorialists, the Council and House of Representatives of the Territory of Iowa, respectfully beg leave to submit,

That while they entertain a deep sense of the respect and forbearance due to their parent government and its constituted authorities, whilst they would be the last to interpose obstacles and difficulties to the proper and agreeable discharge of those high duties which devolve upon your Excellency, and whilst they are disposed to endure many of the evils arising from an almost unlimited exercise of Executive power, when exercised with wisdom, moderation, and temper, yet they feel impelled by an irresistible sense of duty to their constituents, to themselves, and to the American people, to call the attention of your Excellency to the present situation of our Territory, and to the officers who have been called to guard her rights, and to cherish her interests.

As the representatives of the people, we are obliged to appeal to your patriotism and wisdom, and to your sense of justice, for the exercise of that salutary power belonging to your office, and which alone can relieve our constituents of their present grievances.

The attitude in which his Excellency, Governor Lucas, has placed himself by his official conduct, in relation both to the Legislative Assembly and the people of this Territory, renders it impracticable and inconsistent with the rights, interest, wishes, and harmony of the people of this Territory, that he should longer continue in the discharge of Executive duties.

No man was ever called to the Executive chair under more favorable auspices than was Robert Lucas. From his former military services, and his experience as a Legislator and as a Governor, the

people were prepared to expect much, and he was received in our Territory cordially and with open arms. They were led to believe that wisdom, moderation, and good temper would characterize all his official acts, as well as his private intercourse; but those agreeable anticipations have been in a great measure un-answered.

The Legislative Assembly will enumerate some of the faults of Governor Lucas's administration, and leave your Excellency to judge whether it can be considered possible for him to remain as the Executive of this Territory, without endangering its present peace and future prosperity.

He has refused to place his signature to laws the most salutary, and essential to the public good, without ever deigning to make known to your memorialists his objections thereto.

That he has withheld others of equal importance without giving your memorialists to understand what, or whether any Executive action has taken place in regard to them, and that too, as your memorialists believe, with a view to subject their entire action to his will.

That he has virtually declared himself paramount to your memorialists, the representatives of the people, by expressly avowing, in an official communication to your memorialists, that independent of his Excellency they have no power.

That he has usurped the judicial authority by assuming to dictate, in notes appended to his approval of many laws, the construction which shall be given to such laws.

That he has refused officially, in a coarse and uncourteous manner, to inform the Legislative Assembly what laws had received his sanction.

He has refused to consider recommendations of applicants for office, from members from the district, or county, in which the applicants reside, and indirectly avowed his determination not to regard such recommendations.

The clippings above are no part of the "Hawkey" matter but are embraced in the same book. They touch an important Iowa subject and identify Judge Rorer's as the mind in the matter.—Editor.

He has refused to converse with or speak to members of the Legislative Assembly, when waiting on his Excellency in relation to public business with which they were charged by the body to which they belonged.

He has, from the commencement of the session of the Legislative Assembly, on various occasions, and to all manner of persons, anticipated the action of the Executive department in regard to public measures, before they were regularly or officially before him; and that, too in a manner indicative of a design to make the Legislative Assembly subservient to his will, regardless of their own conviction of duty, and their responsibility to their constituents. And these declarations have been made, in many instances, to strangers and visitors to our Territory, who have no interest in common with us.

While he has been officiously scrupulous in relation to disbursements of money, for the payment of the usual expenses of the Legislative Assembly, he has at the same time sent his own bills to the Secretary for payment without authority of law.

He has declared to members of the Legislative Assembly his determination to veto all laws for which he would not vote as a member of the Assembly, thereby placing his isolated opinion in opposition to that of the representatives of the people, as well in matters of mere expediency as principle.

He has appointed and nominated to office persons from abroad, who were neither domiciled among, nor had they an interest in common with, the people of Iowa; and some of the persons, thus nominated or appointed, were connected with his Excellency by *intimate ties*.

He has manifested such a total want of abilities, not only to govern in time of peace, but more especially to command in time of war, as is justly calculated to inspire your memorialists and their constituents with alarm for the security of their country, bordering, as it does, on the very confines of savage, warlike, and powerful tribes.

Wherefore, and in consideration of the above recited facts, your memorialists are driven to the unpleasant alternative of appealing to the constitutional guardian of this people, who has, they firmly believe, their best interest at heart, although, in the language of your Excellency, "the appointing power cannot always be well advised in its selections, and the experience of every country has shown that the public officers are not always proof against temptation," and of declaring to your Excellency, in the language of the declaration of independence, their firm conviction

that Robert Lucas, is "unfit to be the ruler of a free people."

They, therefore, impelled by facts alone, and in no wise influenced by party or political motives, most respectfully and earnestly pray that his Excellency be forthwith recalled from the further discharge of the Executive duties of the Territory, under the full conviction that the grievances of the people, whom they have the honor to present, will not be heard and remain unredressed, and that the misrule, which might otherwise terminate in the ruin of the fairest and hitherto most prosperous and quiet portion of our common country, will be peaceably and constitutionally arrested.

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