

*Geo Smith*

CHIVINGTON MASSACRE  
OF  
THE CHEYENNE INDIANS.

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HON. S. S. POMEROY :

DEAR SIR: I have read with interest the debate in the Senate of January 13th instant, on Mr. Harlan's resolution, and the letter of Governor Evans published in the Chronicle of yesterday. You say in your remarks, that "Governor Evans is a man distinguished for his philanthropy, kindness, and religion, and he not only strongly recommends Colonel Chivington, but has endorsed the act since it has been committed."

Governor Evans, in his letter to you as published, says, "I have declined to express either approval or disapproval, until the facts shall be ascertained." I have no doubt your statement is correct. Governor Evans, this man distinguished for his philanthropy and religion, last summer issued this

PROCLAMATION.

Having sent special messengers to the Indians of the Plains, directing the friendly to rendezvous at Fort Lyon, Fort Larned, Fort Laramie, and Camp Collins, for safety and protection, warning them that all hostile Indians would be pursued and destroyed, and the last of said messengers have now returned, and the evidence being conclusive that most of the Indian tribes of the



Plains are at war and hostile to the whites, and having to the utmost of my ability endeavored to induce all the Indians of the Plains to come to said places of rendezvous, promising them subsistence, which with few exceptions they have refused to do.

Now, therefore, I, John Evans, Governor of Colorado, do issue this, my Proclamation, and authorize all citizens of Colorado, either individually, or in such parties as they may arrange, to go in pursuit of all hostile Indians on the Plains, scrupulously avoiding those who respond to the call to rendezvous at the points indicated; also, to kill and destroy as enemies of the country, wherever they may be found, all such hostile Indians.

And further, as the only reward I am authorized to offer for such services, I hereby empower such citizens to take captive and hold to their own private use and benefit, all the property of such hostile Indians, that they may capture, and to receive for all stolen property recovered from said Indians such reward as may be deemed proper and just therefor.

I further offer to all such parties as will organize under the militia law of the Territory for the purpose, to furnish them arms and ammunition and to present their accounts for pay as regular soldiers for themselves, their horses, their subsistence and transportation, to Congress, under the assurance of the department commander that they will be paid.

The conflict is on us all, and all good citizens are called on to do their duty for the defence of their houses and families.

In testimony whereof, I have hereto set my hand and caused the great seal of the Territory of Colorado to be affixed, this 11th day of August, A. D. 1864.

By the Governor:

JOHN EVANS.

S. H. ELBERT,

*Sec'y of Col. Terr'y.*



I know you well, and in days past we have mourned over the wrongs heaped upon the African. But, my dear sir, when or where did the Southern governor issue such a proclamation? To a few points in it I invite your attention.

1st. What kind of notice was given? How long had these people to move? Did these messengers see the Indians? You know the length and breadth of the Plains, and do you know that one in a thousand of these Indians received the notice or had the ability to remove if they had so done? And does it not strike you as a providential thing that only about one thousand had assembled at Fort Lyon, the place designated as the city of safety? Had more gone there, as directed by the Governor, and been disarmed, no doubt the Colonel, who you say "not only sustains an excellent but an enviable reputation," might have murdered more women and children and stolen more ponies, Mexican dollars, and buffalo robes.

The "Rocky Mountain News" in an article says, that the "Third Colorado" were so loaded down with plunder that they could not travel fast on their return. Buffalo robes, Mexican dollars, &c. "*Bully for them!*" Knowing this, as I do, to be true, I begin to doubt your religion when you endorse men guilty of such acts. Gov. Evans, in his letter to you, endeavors to show that these troops, the Third Colorado, were raised after his proclamation, and that they were regular United States volunteers for one hundred days. This is all true. No one supposed they were raised before the proclamation. They were raised after the proclamation and under an order of the Secretary of War on a telegraphic dispatch from Gov. Evans to the Secretary of the Interior. And a correspondent of the "Rocky Mountain News" now complains that at Washington they are complaining of exterminating the Indians, when it was understood, at the time of raising the regiment, *by all*, that their business was to wipe out the Indians.



But, my friend, how do you justify the order or permission to kill all not found in the four cities of refuge? Might it not be that some had not received the command of your Christian Governor? Might not some one have been sick and unable to move; and might they not have had, as they all have, fine horses, that your Christian brother, Chivington, might desire to possess, and this fact be evidence in his mind that they were hostile Indians? You know the Plains—the distance they would have to travel and the difficulties of the journey. In the Governor's proclamation he says: "The only reward I am authorized to offer for such services is to take captive, and hold for their own private use and benefit all property taken from such hostile Indians." Who gave the Governor this authority? Was it the President, the Secretary of War, or of the Interior, or the Commissioner of Indian Affairs?

No such power was given by either of these officers. No other person had a right to grant it. If it was granted by any individual it was by that "old gentleman" that Christians avoid as much as possible. Again, the Governor directs "to kill and destroy, as enemies of the country, *wherever they may be found*, all such hostile Indians." Was not this a permit to enter the village at Fort Lyon and do as Chivington did? Did he not know that the Mexican dollars, the robes, and the fine horses would be there?—that the warriors were disarmed, and he could easily prove that one hostile Indian was in the village? At the time of the attack of Chivington the village was under the protection of Major Colley, the Indian agent. In the village was John Smith, the interpreter, who came near losing his life. It was charged on by a regiment of troops at the dawn of day without any notice, and totally unexpected, to the Indians, of whom about five hundred are killed, including all the women and children, as stated by Major Colley; six hundred horses, a large amount of Mexican dollars, of buffalo robes, and other



plunder stolen and their lodges burned. When Lawrence was sacked, part of the houses were burnt—some of the men killed—but there were no women and children murdered, and plenty of houses remained to shelter the inhabitants; but in the Cheyenne village all the women and children are killed, the lodges all burnt, after being robbed, and the naked inhabitants driven on the plains covered with two feet of snow.

I know these Indians. I have been in their villages; and as Christians, although they never heard of Christ, I think them superior to the class you dignify with that name. At their hands I have received kindness. I heard them tell the story of Ash Hollow, where the squaws opened their bosoms to show the soldiers they were females, and thereby to avert the destruction that General Harney was bringing on them. I heard them tell how the women and children were cut down by his direct order, and their lodges burnt—a loss of property they have not yet been able to replace—and I saw him afterwards in this city in disgrace, and in my soul I cursed him, and thanked God that justice, although slow, is sure.

I have heard those chiefs, who so nobly fell fighting for their wives and children against a band of desperadoes, speak of Gen. Warren as the good lieutenant. Although I never saw him I have watched his steps in this war with interest, as I believed God would bless him for his kindness to the Indians on the Plains.

I do know justice will be done in this matter. No such crime can go unpunished.

The Governor says he cannot return to Colorado on account of Indian hostilities. His presence is wanted here to run philanthropic machines in Wall street, New York, while he never could find time to visit the Indians on the Arkansas, as his duty required.

An Indian war is on the country. Every effort has been made for two years to produce it, and the Indian has suffered outrage and wrong by the hand of the white



man ; and when the authors of these outrages are held up as accountable for the murders on the frontier by the Indian scalping knife, and for the millions of money squandered, you have to indorse the author of this proclamation and the leader of the Fort Lyon massacre as philanthropists and as distinguished for their religion.

Oh, shame ! where is thy blush ?

Your friend,

J. W. WRIGHT.