

It appears that the prompt action of the Washington branch of the executive committee, who hastened to Washington immediately on being informed of the previous telegram, had opportunities with the proper officers there, and labored to show up the probable results arising from the conditional release of Satanta and Big Tree, after a full and perfect release had been promised, — the still further aggravation upon the south-western tribes by the renewal of this demand, after, as they supposed, a compromise had been effected with which they had complied, — has been instrumental in causing this present change.

This course, by continuing a state of suspense, though preferable to the prospect of immediate war, is far from pleasant.

After reconsidering the situation, government ordered the continuation of rations to the Comanches, and three fourths of their annuities, upon condition that they bring in all the stolen stock — almost the precise conditions of the offer made by them to the commissioner at the time of the council, and by him utterly refused.

This vacillating on the part of the government cannot have a very salutary effect on the minds of the Indians. Making a positive demand, refusing any other consideration, and then retreating from it, after threats of extreme measures, when it is seen they will not comply, is construed by them into an act of fear or weakness on the part of government. It is, however, undoubtedly better to retreat from a bad position, even though it have not

the best effect, than to adhere to it; yet it would have been far better not to have taken it at all.

Had the commissioner — who evidently has the welfare of the Indian at heart, and is very desirous of promoting it — but seen it right at the time to have modified the proposition of the Comanches to the present form, I have no doubt but it would have prevented much raiding in Texas the incoming winter, and perhaps saved the nation the expense of an "Indian war."

It may have been a correct view and motive to endeavor to exalt the authority and power of the state of Texas in the eyes of the Indian, but to do this at the expense of the dignity and authority of the general government is weakening the hands of all who are laboring in the work of civilizing this people, by destroying their respect for the government, and rendering its efforts and influence almost, if not wholly, nugatory.

*The next day after our return sixteen of the Kiowa Chiefs with their people came in, leaving only one sixth to one eighth of the entire tribe out. The Agent entered in his Diary, "A wide spread war <sup>is</sup> averted." But war was not wholly averted, two Kiowa chiefs <sup>secretly</sup> accepted the Comanche pipe. The Arapahoes & Apaches having followed the example of the main body of the Kiowas, the hostile element was shorn of its strength, & had it not been for White Eagle — a young Comanche Medicine Man, or Prophet as they considered him, war might have been wholly avoided.*