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N. B. Euford, Colonel E. S. Parker, and Messrs. J. F. Kinney and G. P. Beauvais) have finished the duty assigned them, and submitted several reports, which not only communicate facts in regard to the special matters they were directed to examine into, but ably present their different views as to the policy that should be adopted /³ in regard to hostile Indians. Some of the reports, with other papers from different government officers pertinent to the matter, were furnished to Congress on call of a resolution of the Senate of 8th of July last, and will be found embraced in Senate executive documents, fortieth Congress, first session. Reports since received will, no doubt, with the proceedings of the commission subsequently appointed to arrange for peace with all the hostile tribes, be hereafter also communicated on a similar call and published. For that reason, and, further, because the including these papers with the documents accompanying this report would render the volume entirely too bulky, I have deemed it proper not to submit copies of the same herewith.

In the opinion of this office the statements and fact presented in the report of the commissioners referred to, show the origin of the hostilities in the Platte country to have been principally, if not altogether, the opening of a road for travel by emigrants, miners, and others, from Fort Laramie to Montana, through the hunting grounds of the Indians; the march of troops in July, 1866, towards that country, which was regarded by some of the chiefs as a declaration of war, and the manner in which the treaty at Fort Laramie in 1866 (one of its chief objects being to secure that road) was negotiated, some of the most influential chiefs refusing to sign it and in displeasure leaving the council. The making that treaty impressed the military and citizens with the belief that the road in question was safe, and parties unprepared to defend themselves sought to pass over it, but were resisited and driven back with the loss of a number of lives and much property. It has been conclusively ascertained that the Indians engaged in the several acts of hostility committed north of the Platte belong to the Minneconjou, Brule and Ogallalla bands of Sioux, northern Arapahoes and Cheyennes, aided by young men from other bands, whose impelling motive, doubtless,