

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

1862.

AUGUSTA:
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1862.

FORTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

No. 2.

COMMUNICATION OF THE GOVERNOR,

*Transmitting Report of Commissioners on the Coast Defences of Maine,
and other Documents relating thereto.*

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

I lay before you, for your consideration, the report of the Commissioners appointed by me to confer with the authorities at Washington, on the proper system of defence to be adopted by the federal government for the State of Maine, and as to the manner of its execution, together with a copy of a special message to the Congress of the United States, sent by the President on the 17th of December, 1861, transmitting to that body copies of a correspondence which had taken place between the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, and the Executive of this State, on the subject of the fortification of the seacoast and lakes.

Also a copy of a bill pending in Congress to refund to the several States moneys advanced for the public defence. Also, a copy of a letter from the Secretary of War, of date 26th December, 1861, transmitting a copy of a Report of the Chief Engineer U. S. A., in reference to the defences of the city of Portland.

ISRAEL WASHBURN, JR.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, }
Council Chamber, Jan'y 2, 1862. }

REPORT.

To His Excellency, Israel Washburn, Jr.,

Governor of Maine :

SIR :—The undersigned Commissioners, appointed by your note under date of October 23d, 1861, to confer with the authorities at Washington, on the proper system of defence to be adopted by the Federal Government, for the State of Maine, and as to the manner of its execution, have the honor to report,—that entering at once upon the discharge of the duties assigned them, they reached the city of Washington on the 1st of November last,—were favored by an interview with the President on the morning of the 2d ult., and were received with all that cordiality and courtesy that distinguishes him in his official position. Referring us more particularly to the Secretary of State for the views of the administration in reference to the subject matter of our mission, he entered, fully and frankly, into such explanations of public matters as suited the dignity of his office.

The absence of the Secretary of State, on the day after our arrival, and for some days following,—the still longer absence from the city, on official business, of the Secretary of War, and the Secretary of the Treasury, prevented us, for many days, from obtaining explanations from the Cabinet of the design and scope of the official note of the Secretary of State, of the 14th of October last. And although the President was pleased to accompany us in person, to the war office, and submit your communication, in person, with a suggestion of its appropriate reference, after a careful examination on his part—the long absence from the city of the Chief of the Engineer and Ordnance Bureau, delayed action for many days thereafter.

On the return of the Secretary of War, on the 12th of November, and at the time of our request for an early interview, made to the Secretary of State, we were informed of the action of the Cabinet referring the question of the public defences, to the approval of the Commanding General. Obtaining an interview with General McClellan, in communication with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of War—the arrangement was made, which was subsequently set forth in the official note of the Secretary of War, under date of November 16th, which note, with other papers, were transmitted to Congress by the President, and printed by order of the House, which are herewith submitted as a part of our report.

The policy thus indicated, of allowing the Federal Government to accept the loan of money from Loyal States to be expended on works of public defence lying within such State as had been, or may be authorized by

Congress, will, it is believed, facilitate the construction of works of indispensable necessity, in times of threatened danger, without, in any way, impairing the credit of the State, advancing, for the time being, the money. The Bill drawn for this purpose, and submitted by the President, showing the manner of the execution of this policy, will, if adopted by Congress, enable the National and State Governments, to mutually aid and support each other, as the State, by endorsing and putting into circulation the Bonds of the United States, may raise the money at the most favorable rates, without adding any direct liability to themselves. In time of public trial, like that induced by recent rebellion, any loyal State will cheerfully tender its credit, in case it could thereby add to the strength of the national resources.

The opinion above expressed, has had repeated assurances of its correctness, when considered by the authorities of other States, and the policy examined, in reference to other sections of the Union.

This policy having been announced in the official note of the Secretary of War, as the decision of the President, at our request, copies of this note were transmitted to the Engineer and Ordnance Bureaus, and other officers of the Government, it became our duty to urge on them, the necessity of immediate measures, to protect the Coast and the Frontiers of Maine from foreign invasion. The armament of the Forts in Maine had been neglected, and for many years, requisitions for guns, and other armament had been on file, unanswered by the Ordnance Department. Offers to make guns and supply munitions, were placed on file in the War Office and referred to the Ordnance Bureau, signed by some of the leading iron-workers in Maine, and their ability and fidelity are certified by such of the undersigned as remained in Washington, and through these efforts, Gen. Ripley, the Chief of Ordnance, was induced to advise Mr. Sparrow, of the Portland Company, of his intention to give him an order for the making of guns, as soon as the calibre of the guns was fixed.

On the 23d of November, the following Report was transmitted to the War Office, viz :

"To Hon. Simon Cameron, Secretary of War.

ENGINEER DEPARTMENT,
Washington, Nov. 23d, 1861. }

SIR:—Reporting in part, on the subject of the defence of the coast of Maine, in reference to your late correspondence with the Governor of that State, I have the honor to represent that existing fortifications, at the following important places: Portsmouth and Portland Harbors, and the Narrows of the Penobscot—are prepared for their respective armaments, to the extent specified below,—the nature of the armaments being fixed, in the tables, of an Armament Board, assembled in 1854, by order of the Secretary of War, viz :

PORTSMOUTH HARBOR,
FORT McCLARY, KITTERY, MAINE.

- 9 8-inch Columbiads *in barbette*.
4 12-pounders Block House Howitzers.

PORTLAND HARBOR,

FORT PREBLE.

- 16 8-inch Columbiads *in barbette*.
17 32-pounders do. *in barbette*.
3 24 do. do. *in barbette*.
4 Coshorn Mortars.
4 6-pound Guns, } for field purposes.
2 12-pound Howitzers, }

FORT SCAMMEL.

- 14 8-inch Columbiads *in barbette*.
14 8-inch Sea Coast Howitzers *in barbette*.
23 32-pounders do. *in barbette*.
8 24 do. do. *in barbette*.
4 12 do. Block House Howitzers.
2 6 do. Howitzers, } for field purposes.
1 12 do. do., }

NARROWS OF THE PENOBSCOT,

FORT KNOX.

- 12 8-inch Columbiads *in barbette*.
22 8-inch Sea Coast Howitzers, *in barbette*.
21 32-pounders do. *in barbette*.
A recapitulation of this readiness gives
51 8-inch Columbiads *in barbette*.
36 8-inch Sea Coast Howitzers *in barbette*.
61 32-pounders do. *in barbette*.
11 24-pounders do. *in barbette*.

—
159

- 8 12-pounders Block Howitzers.
4 Coshorn Mortars.

I must add that it seems to me, that it is of the utmost consequence, that all this armament be forthwith mounted in place.

I must also add, that since the table of armament was fixed by the Armament Board, above mentioned, the means resorted to for the protection of ships' sides, are of a nature to nullify, nearly, the effects of all guns, except those of large calibre,—consequently in the defence of places

so important as those now considered, no small guns, including^r in^r that term even 32-pounders, should be relied on.

As it is understood that 42-pounders have been dropped, wisely, I think, from the list of heavy guns now made at the founderies, the above recapitulation should be corrected as follows :

123 8-inch Columbiads *in barbette*.

36 8-inch Sea Coast Howitzers.

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and 8 12-pounders Block House Howitzers.

4 Coshorn Mortars.

In a more full report on this subject, I shall specify additions to the armament of these places, that the operations now in hand, will, I trust, afford, early next year.

I am very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

JOS. G. TOTTEN,

Bt. Brig. Gen. and Col. of Engineers.

This Report was forthwith, at our request, transmitted to the Ordnance Bureau, with an endorsement thereon, was made as follows : " Respectfully referred to the Chief of Ordnance, to be considered, upon the arrival of the Ordnance Officers, as directed by the Secretary of War."

A day or two after, it was publicly announced that an Armament Board had^r been appointed to regulate the number and calibre of all guns to be mounted in *casemate* and *barbette* in the Forts of the United States, composed of the following officers :

Brig. Gen. J. G. Totten, of Engineers.

Brig. Gen. J. W. Ripley, of Ordnance.

Brig. Gen. W. F. Barry, of U. S. Volunteers.

Brig. Gen. J. G. Barnard, of do.

Col. H. J. Hunt, U. S. Army.

Capt. Thos. J. Rodman, of Ordnance.

This Board assembled Dec. 2d, 1861, at noon, at the same time as the annual meeting of Congress, but its labors are not yet concluded. All orders for guns were of course suspended till the final action of this Board is submitted and approved by the Secretary of War.

It is understood, however, that no change is proposed in the number of guns required for Maine, but that guns of larger calibre, are substituted for those originally proposed in the Report of Gen. Totten above quoted.

The news of the seizure of the rebel commissioners, Slidell and Mason, reached Washington the 16th of November, the same date as the letter of the Secretary of War, assuring you of the determination of the President,

and promising the needed plans, estimates and specifications for the defences of Maine. The excitement consequent on that arrest, and the pressure of the claims of other parties, for similar purposes, on the Engineer Department, has caused delay to this time, of the promised Report on the defences of Maine.

We have felt it our duty to remind the Secretary of War of the urgency of our necessities and of your request. We have also advised the Commanding General of the extreme urgency of the case, and to ask him to cause earth-works to be erected at the entrance of the harbor so as to cut off the approach of ships of war into the main ship channel. In case it cannot, both may be done under your direction.

The urgency of your appeals for immediate action, under dates of the 16th and 17th inst., moved Gen. Ripley to put forth extraordinary efforts for the temporary defence of Maine, and 100 guns of 32-pound calibre were ordered from Fortress Monroe to New York, for your State, 240 guns of 42-pound calibre, lying at Boston, was assigned for the defence of Portland, of which you were promptly advised, and Capt. Rodman, of the Ordnance, despatched to Maine, to arrange for the Armament of its Forts.

The estimates for fortifications submitted by the Engineer Office on the 31st of October last, were subsequently amended, by Gen. Totten, by adding \$50,000 for Fort Knox, \$50,000 for Fort Gorges, to be expended in the current financial year, ending June 30, 1862. A Bill reported from the Committee of Ways and Means proposes these sums, and \$100,000 additional, for each fort, in the following year, 1863.

The guns just made at Portland, for the War Department are to be mounted in place, on the forts in Maine, as fast as ready for service.

An unexpended appropriation of \$100,000, for the commencement of a Fort at the mouth of the Kennebec, withheld by a former Secretary of War, has been made available by the prompt action of the present Secretary and the construction of Fort Popham,—appropriately named for the distinguished man, who, as Governor, led the first colony into New England and laid his bones within the limits of Fort St. George, on the site of the new Fort proposed, in 1607,—is to be pushed vigorously forward.

That a profound interest is awakened to the importance of the defence of Maine, is fully shown by the earnestness of the delegation in Congress, and the zeal shown by the citizens of Portland, whose Mayor has officially visited Washington to urge upon the Administration and upon Congress the plans of defence you have had the honor to propose.

It is to be hoped that the zeal and diligence of our delegation in Congress will enable them to secure all the important ends, proposed in your official note to the President.

It may be doubted if the federal government will need to avail itself of the offer of aid from the States, towards perfecting the public defences;

such is now the earnestness of all parties to preserve and protect the loyal States in this time of anxiety and fear. But we earnestly recommend, that in view of her past history and her present commanding position, that Maine promptly respond to the invitation of the President, and by the passage of the necessary acts of legislation, place at his service such moneys as may be required, to make each work of defence in Maine perfect, upon the conditions by him proposed in the official note of the Secretary of War.

With assurances of highest respect,

We have the honor to be

Your obedient servants,

H. HAMLIN,
REUEL WILLIAMS,
JOHN A. POOR.

DECEMBER, 28th, 1861.

MESSAGE

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

To the Senate and House of Representatives :

I transmit to the Senate and House of Representatives copies of the correspondence between the Secretary of State, Secretary of War, and the Governor of the State of Maine, on the subject of the fortification of the sea-coast and lakes.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

WASHINGTON, December 17, 1861.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

Washington, October 14, 1861.

SIR : The present insurrection had not even revealed itself in arms when disloyal citizens hastened to foreign countries to invoke their intervention for the overthrow of the government, and the destruction of the federal Union. These agents are known to have made their appeals to some of the more important States without success. It is not likely, however, that they will remain content with such refusals; indeed, it is understood that they are industriously endeavoring to accomplish their disloyal purpose by degrees, and by indirection. Taking advantage of the embarrassments of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce in foreign countries, resulting from the insurrection they have inaugurated at home, they seek to involve our common country in controversies with States with which every public interest and every interest require that it shall remain in relations of peace, amity, and friendship. I am able to state for your satisfaction that the prospect of any such disturbance is now less serious than it has been at any previous period during the course of the insurrection. It is, nevertheless, necessary now, as it has hitherto been, to take every precaution that is possible to avoid the evils of a foreign war, to be superinduced upon those of civil commotion which we are endeavoring to cure. One of the most obvious of such precautions is that our ports and harbors in the seas and lakes should be put in a condition of complete defence; for any nation may be said to voluntarily incur danger in tempestuous seasons when it fails to show that it has sheltered itself on every side from which the storm might possibly come. The measures which the Executive can adopt in

this emergency are such only as Congress has sanctioned, and for which it has provided. The President is putting forth the most diligent efforts to execute these measures, and we have the great satisfaction of seeing that these efforts, seconded by the favor, aid, and support of a loyal, patriotic, and self-sacrificing people, are rapidly bringing the military and naval forces of the United States into the highest state of efficiency ; but Congress was chiefly absorbed during the recent session with those measures, and did not provide as amply as could be wished for the fortification of our sea and lake coasts. In previous wars the loyal States have applied themselves by independent and separate activity to support and aid the federal government in its arduous responsibilities. The same disposition has been manifested in a degree eminently honorable by all the loyal States during the present insurrection.

In view of this fact, and relying upon the increase and continuance of the same disposition on the part of the loyal States, the President has directed me to invite your consideration to the subject of the improvement and fortifications of the defences of the State over which you preside, and ask you to submit the subject to the consideration of the Legislature when it shall have assembled. Such proceedings by the State would require only the temporary use of its means ; the expenditures ought to be made the subject of conference with the federal government.

Being thus made with the concurrence of the government, for general defence, there is every reason to believe that Congress would sanction what the State should and would provide for its reimbursement. Should these suggestions be accepted, the President will direct proper agents of the federal government to confer with you and superintend, direct, and conduct the prosecution of the system of defence of your State.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

WM. H. SEWARD.

His Excellency the GOVERNOR of the State of Maine.

The same, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Governors of all the States on the seaboard and lakes.

AUGUSTA, October 23, 1861.

The undersigned, Governor of Maine, acknowledges the receipt of the official note of the Secretary of State, under date of the 14th instant, inviting the attention of the executive of this State to the important matter of the public defence of its coast, in view of a possibility of an interruption of the present friendly relations of the government of the United States with those of foreign powers. Fully sensible of the watchfulness and fidelity of the President, and of those in charge of the various departments of the

government, in guarding against any possible danger, whether arising from domestic insurrection or foreign invasion, the authorities and people of Maine cannot have failed to feel the deepest solicitude in reference to the subject-matter of that communication, from the very great extent of her undefended sea-coast, and the remembrance of the sufferings of the people of this State in former wars; and in her behalf I desire to tender my most cordial thanks for this wise and thoughtful recognition by the general government of what her position and circumstances demand.

Without recounting the facts of the early history of that portion of the continent now included within the limits of the present State of Maine, the contests between France and England for its possession, and the Indian cruelties that follow in the train of war, by which its villages and towns were devastated, I need only to remind your excellency of the events of the wars of the revolution, and of 1812 with England, to impress on the government the vast importance of Maine in a military and naval point of view as a means of power and strength to the national government.

Its shores are indented with many excellent harbors, and its geographical position for military, naval, and commercial purposes commands the finest portion of the continent of North America.

The failure of the French to hold the shores of the Atlantic ocean between Piscataqua and Sagadahoc, and maintain their communication between Montreal and the sea, lost to them the noblest colonial empire the world has ever seen.

Though settled by the French as early as 1604, and by the English in 1608, under separate grants covering the entire territory—that from the French king dated in 1603, and that from the British crown in 1606—it was not until the conquest of Canada, by the capture of Quebec in 1759, that Maine enjoyed peace and repose under the dominion of Great Britain. During the war of the revolution the bulk of her territory was in the possession of the English, and the war of 1812 found her coast defenceless, and all her eastern harbors, from Castine to the St. Croix river, occupied by the enemy.

Should war again occur with any leading European power, Maine must fall at once into the hands of the enemy, unless means of defence are provided.

From the State line at Kittery to West Quoddy Head, in a coast line of three hundred miles, there are over one hundred good harbors at which ships are built and manned, with an actual shore line of more than three thousand miles, following the line of tide water into navigable bays, inlets, and deep river estuaries. Not one harbor is properly defended, and in only three have attempts at defence been made.

A slight breastwork battery at Eastport, called Fort Sullivan, Fort Knox, partially constructed at Bucksport Narrows on the Penobscot, and

the forts at Portland harbor, are all the fortifications on the coast of Maine.

Castine, the British naval station on the Atlantic ocean in the war of 1812, could again be occupied in the same way, for all the defences of former times have fallen to ruin and decay. Belfast, Rockland, George's river, Wiscasset, and the Kennebec river, are all without any sign of defence. The important shipping port of Bath, the city of Augusta, the State capital, and the larger towns on the Kennebec, are all at the mercy of a single sloop-of-war.

The highest military authorities would undoubtedly concur in the opinion that Portland should be made the great naval depot of the United States on the Atlantic ocean. Its geographical position commands Canada on the north, and the lower provinces on the east, if properly fortified, as lines of railway, completed or in process of construction, radiate from it to Quebec and Montreal, and to St. John and Halifax.

The harbor is one of the finest on the Atlantic ocean, or in the world, and can easily be so fortified as to be as impregnable as Gibraltar, and far stronger than Quebec, Sebastopol, or Cherbourg.

Halifax harbor, the great British naval depot on the American continent, now occupied by the combined fleets of England and France, closes the outlet of the great gulf lying between Cape Cod and Cape Sable, and unless Portland is defended the whole peninsula east of Lake Champlain is easily subjected to foreign control.

If Great Britain held the harbor of Portland and the line of railway to Montreal and Quebec, she would drive American commerce from the ocean and the great lakes.

The strategic importance of Portland is shown by reference to any general map of the whole country, and its capabilities for defence are exhibited by the charts of the United States coast survey of 1859.

Portland harbor is an arm of the sea, formed by five outlying islands, that shut out the swell of the ocean.

The main or great ship channel is only one hundred and seventy rods in width, carrying from eight to ten fathoms at low water, inside Bangs island.

This island is the natural fortress that defends the approach to the harbor ; its outside shore line, extending over one mile in a nearly straight line, rises about eighty feet above the level of the sea.

The distance from this outer shore wall of the island is less than *three miles* from the densely populated portion of the peninsula on which the city is built.

Behind this natural fortress, ships of war may lie in deep water and shell the city, entirely protected from the guns of Fort Preble, Fort Scammel, or Fort Gorges.

In point of fact, the present forts are of very little, if any, value in defending the city from guns of long range used in modern warfare.

Bangs island contains two hundred and twenty acres. By fortifying this island all possible approach to Portland by water with large ships is cut off.

In that event, no holding ground or place of anchorage can be found where gunboats can reach the city without coming within range of the guns of its fort, or those of Fort Gorges.

By making Bangs island a fortress, Fort Gorges may be advantageously changed into a water-battery, with only one tier of guns, and the expense of the proposed casemate battery saved, and thereby Portland would become impregnable by water.

The town itself is situated on a high peninsula, once an island two and a half miles in length and averaging three-fourths of a mile in width, around which still sweep the tide waters of Casco bay, approaching within a few rods from opposite sides.

A ditch of a few rods length will change this peninsula into an island, and secure a flow of the tide completely around the city. The land rises more or less abruptly on all sides from the water, reaching an elevation of 176 feet at the western end, and 161 feet at the eastern end of the peninsula, so that a redoubt at each end of the city overlooking this moat or ditch, and commanding the approaches by land, or across Back Bay, will prevent all approach to the city. No land rises so high as that of the peninsula of Portland, within ten miles. One tenth of the expense of fortifying Sebastopol or Cherbourg would make Portland one of the strongest fortresses of the world.

As a harbor of refuge that of Portland is unrivalled, and the approach of a storm is foreshadowed by a movement of vessels in that direction.

Between five and six hundred sail have been known to enter Portland harbor for shelter in a single night, and six hundred sail can be often counted, on a clear morning, standing out to sea after an easterly storm.

The first intimation of trouble with any leading foreign power would be the entrance of a hostile fleet into Portland harbor.

The embarkation of the Prince of Wales, on the 20th October, 1860, illustrated the facility with which five men-of-war, some of them ships of the largest size, may enter or depart from this secure anchorage. The whole British navy can lie as easily in Portland harbor as in a dock at Woolwich.

An enemy in possession of Portland would find it to be the terminus of the longest line of railroad in the world. The Grand Trunk railway of Canada embraces a line of 1,131 miles, of which 1,096 mile are in actual operation.

It extends from the Atlantic ocean at Portland to Lake Huron, a dis-

tance of 794 miles, with a branch to Detroit of 59 miles, a branch to Quebec of 96 miles, and to the River du Loup of 118 miles ; making with all its branches, 1,096 miles.

This line has the capacity to move 10,000 troops between Portland and Quebec or Toronto and Detroit, in a single day.

At Portland commences the line of the European and North American railway, to extend through the cities of Bangor and St. John to Halifax, a distance of 576 miles, of which 300 miles are in actual operation, with 63½ miles ; more of branch lines, viz : In Maine, 138 miles ; in branches, 26½ miles ; in New Brunswick, 101 miles ; in branches, 7 miles ; in Nova Scotia, 61 ; in branches, 30.

Arrangements, it is understood, can now be made by which this railway may be opened to Halifax at an early day. Without it the complete defence of our coast would be impossible, for the British fleet, holding command of the ocean, would prevent any attack on the lower provinces by water. Holding Halifax, the line to Quebec, by the St. John valley, would be kept open, and an overwhelming force could be thrown into New Brunswick, Canada or Maine at any moment.

Navy yards, dock yards, repair shops, and naval schools, should be located inside of defensible harbors. By the proposed fortification of Portland, making Bangs island a fortress, the most ample space is afforded for all possible naval purposes, on the main land or on the other islands of the harbor, without interfering with the legitimate business of the city.

Many other places in Maine, among which may be mentioned the navy yard at Kittery, the mouth of the Saco river, Mount Desert harbor, and Machias, will deserve the attention of the agents of the government who may be appointed to superintend and conduct the prosecution of the defences of this State.

Before making the expenditures proposed, to put "our ports and harbors in a condition of complete defence," I shall wait the instructions your excellency may be pleased to give ; and for the purpose of that conference with the federal government which the letter of the Secretary of State suggests, I have appointed Hannibal Hamlin, Reuel Williams, and John A. Poor, distinguished citizens of this State, whose intimate knowledge of the matters in question will entitle their opinions to great weight with the Executive, commissioners to confer, on the part of the State, with the authorities at Washington, in respect to the system of defence to be adopted and the manner of its execution.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, your excellency's obedient servant,

ISRAEL WASHBURN, JR.

To the PRESIDENT.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War, with the suggestion that it be laid before the Engineer and Ordnance bureaus, respectively, for examination and report.

A. LINCOLN.

NOVEMBER 4, 1861.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, November 4, 1861.

Respectfully referred to chief of engineer department, with request to make a copy and forward to chief of ordnance. Chief of each bureau will report promptly and fully.

THOMAS A. SCOTT,
Acting Secretary of War.

STATE OF MAINE,

Executive Department, Augusta, October 23, 1861.

SIR: The importance to the country of extending and strengthening the coast defences of Maine has persuaded me to request three of our most eminent citizens, the Vice-President, Hon. Reuel Williams, and John A. Poor, Esq., to visit Washington for the purpose of communicating to the administration the views entertained in this State in reference to the extent and character of the fortifications needed upon its coast; and of obtaining such instructions and suggestions as it may be pleased to give.

These views are embodied, to some extent, in a letter which I have had the honor to address to the President, and will be more fully explained and elaborated by the very able commissioners by whom the letter will be presented, and who, by the magnitude of the interests they represent, and their own high character, will, I trust, be commended to the most favorable consideration of the federal authorities.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

ISRAEL WASHBURN, JR.

HON. W. H. SEWARD,
Secretary of State.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

Washington, November 14, 1861.

SIR: Your communication of the 23d of October was duly received. The distinguished commissioners which you appointed with so just a discretion have arrived here, and had free, and I trust satisfactory, interviews with the President, the Secretary of War, and the commanding general. It was agreed that a reply should be made to you by the War Department,

to whose care the subject belongs. I send you this unofficial and private note lest you should doubt my interest in the matter, and the earnestness with which I am faithfully yours,

WM. H. SEWARD.

His Excellency the GOVERNOR
of the State of Maine.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
November 13, 1861.

SIR: Your letter of the 23d ultimo, relative to the coast defences of Maine, has been referred to this department by the Secretary of State, and the engineer department has been directed to send at once a competent officer to examine and report upon the subject.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

SIMON CAMERON,
Secretary of War.

His Excellency Governor ISRAEL WASHBURN, JR.,
Augusta, Maine.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, November 16, 1861.

SIR: Your communication to the President, in reply to the official note of the Secretary of State of the 14th of October, in reference to the improvement of the fortifications and erection of other defences of the loyal States, having been submitted to this department for examination and report, I had the honor to advise you, under date of the 13th instant, that this department would appoint a competent engineer to examine and report on the defences required within the State of Maine, as the first practical step towards the attainment of the important ends in view.

In view of the importance this matter seems likely to assume, and in response to the prompt and liberal conduct of the authorities of the State of Maine, I am directed by the President to assure your excellency of his readiness to avail himself of the means placed at his disposal by the loyal States for the purpose of having the ports and harbors on the seas and lakes put in a condition of complete defence.

The extent and character of such expenditures can only be determined by the proper officers of the government, to whom these matters must be confided.

Calls will only be made for such sums of money from the State government as may be required to perfect such works as may be authorized.

The obligation of the State to furnish all the means required to make each work of defence perfect will greatly facilitate the speedy completion of the several defensive works undertaken.

The improvements or fortifications being made by the money of the State in the first instance, advanced to the general government in the nature of a loan for the general defence of the country at large, there is every reason to believe that Congress would sanction what the State shall do in the premises, and provide evidence of indebtedness on the part of the general government, and for the reimbursement of the money within a reasonable period.

The prompt acceptance of the suggestions of the President, as contained in the official note of the Secretary of State, by the Governor of Maine, has given new proof of the loyalty and patriotism of its people, whose liberal contributions of patriotic men and of money has already afforded much satisfaction to the President and to this department.

The necessary plans, estimates, and specifications will be seasonably laid before your excellency, in time for such legislative action as may be required; and on the receipt of official information that means are provided, on the terms above indicated, to carry into execution the object stated, the prosecution of the system of defence for your State will be vigorously carried forward by the proper agents or officers of the government.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

SIMON CAMERON,
Secretary of War.

His Excellency the GOVERNOR
of the State of Maine.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
December 26, 1861.

SIR: For your information I herewith transmit a copy of the Report of the Chief Engineer U. S. A., addressed to this Department, in reply to the inquiry made by it, in reference to the defences of the city of Portland.

With much respect, your obedient servant,

SIMON CAMERON,
Secretary of War.

To His Excellency ISRAEL WASHBURN, Governor
of the State of Maine.

[COPY]

Hon. Simon Cameron, Secretary of War :

ENGINEER DEPARTMENT,

Washington, 24th December, 1861.

SIR: In reply to your inquiry of this date, I have the honor to state :

Under orders given to Capt. T. L. Casey, Corps of Engineers at Portland, that officer is now pressing, so far as the winter season admits, operations on the fort on Hog Island Ledge—his force of stonecutters has been increased, and his expenditure enlarged. Additional machinery and materials are being provided for enlarged labors in the spring.

Captain Casey has also been directed to consider the subject of outlying defences, whereby gun-boats and other vessels may be prevented from finding cover among the islands about the city of Portland, and by which they may be kept at a safe distance from the people and buildings. He has also been called upon to examine the ground and furnish projects for defences to prevent the city being approached by forces that might effect a landing on the neighboring coast ; and he has further been instructed to devise plans for batteries to be established at the eastern end of the town, whose fire may reach all the water channels in rear, to the side, and in front of the town.

Capt. Casey has been urged to respond to these several instructions, as speedily as possible.

I am now engaged in preparing a communication for the Governor of the State of Maine, on the subject of the defences of the coast of the State.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

JOS. G. TOTTEN,

Bt. Brig. Gen. and Col. Eng.

AN ACT to refund to the several States moneys advanced for the public defence.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Treasury be, and is hereby, authorized and directed to receive from the several States, or any one or more of them, moneys lawfully appropriated thereby for the public defence, to be expended by the federal government upon such works of defence as have been or may be authorized by Congress, lying within such State or States, issuing in return for such moneys so drawn bonds of the United States, payable twenty years after date, bearing six per cent. interest, payable semi-annually, for which the credit

of the United States is hereby pledged. And on the receipt of official information that moneys are provided by any State to carry into execution the objects aforesaid, the prosecution of the system of defence within such State shall be carried forward by the proper agents or officers of the federal government, on condition that the State shall be under obligations to furnish all the means required to make each work of defence perfect, within the requirements of the proper officers of the federal government, upon proper estimates by them furnished.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, January 3, 1862.

Ordered, That the special message of the Governor, with the documents accompanying, relating to Coast Defences, be printed for the use of the Legislature.

JAMES M. LINCOLN, *Secretary*.