



NEWS

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Kansas Troubles: This Week in Territorial History Week of January 11 -17, 1854 (2004)

A dollar mailed by W. Moore of Greenfield, Indiana, arrived at the offices of the *St. Joseph Gazette* with his subscription to the Missouri newspaper. Moore wanted news about the Nebraska Territory, its climate and forests, the status of the Indian treaties and plans for railroads across the Indian lands. "I expect to remove to your city or west of it into Nebraska, the coming spring; hence I only send six month's subscription."

Moore, like many other Westerners, was counting on Congress to create the new territory. Newspapers published in towns along the edge of the Indian lands encouraged the attitude that settlement was inevitable. "Once the embargo [is] removed which now restrains settlement of Nebraska by whites, there will be such a rush to Nebraska, that emigrants will have to be counted by hundreds and thousands."

Earlier attempts to develop the Indian territories were blocked in Congress, but not because of any sense of obligation to the native Indians or those tribes that had been moved there 25 years earlier. Discussion turned to dissension over the question whether the land next to Missouri, a slave state, would also be open to slavery. New territories would become new states, which must be delicately developed to avoid tipping the balance of power between the North and the South.

The balance had been sustained for decades by the Missouri Compromise, written when Missouri became a state in 1820. The compromise permitted Missouri to bring slavery into the western territories acquired in the Louisiana Purchase, but stated that Missouri would be the last such state north of the Arkansas border to welcome a slave economy.

The Missouri Compromise maintained a tentative truce between North and South for only 24 years. On January 16, 1854, Kentucky's Senator Archibald Dixon amended the Nebraska Act to include a repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Any

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area in the new territory, most of which was above the line of compromise, could now be voted a slave economy. [330 words]

Letter from W. Moore, dated Jan 8, printed in the *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan 25, 1854

(Fremont County Iowa Journal, reprinted in the *St. Joseph Gazette* 12, 18, 1853.)