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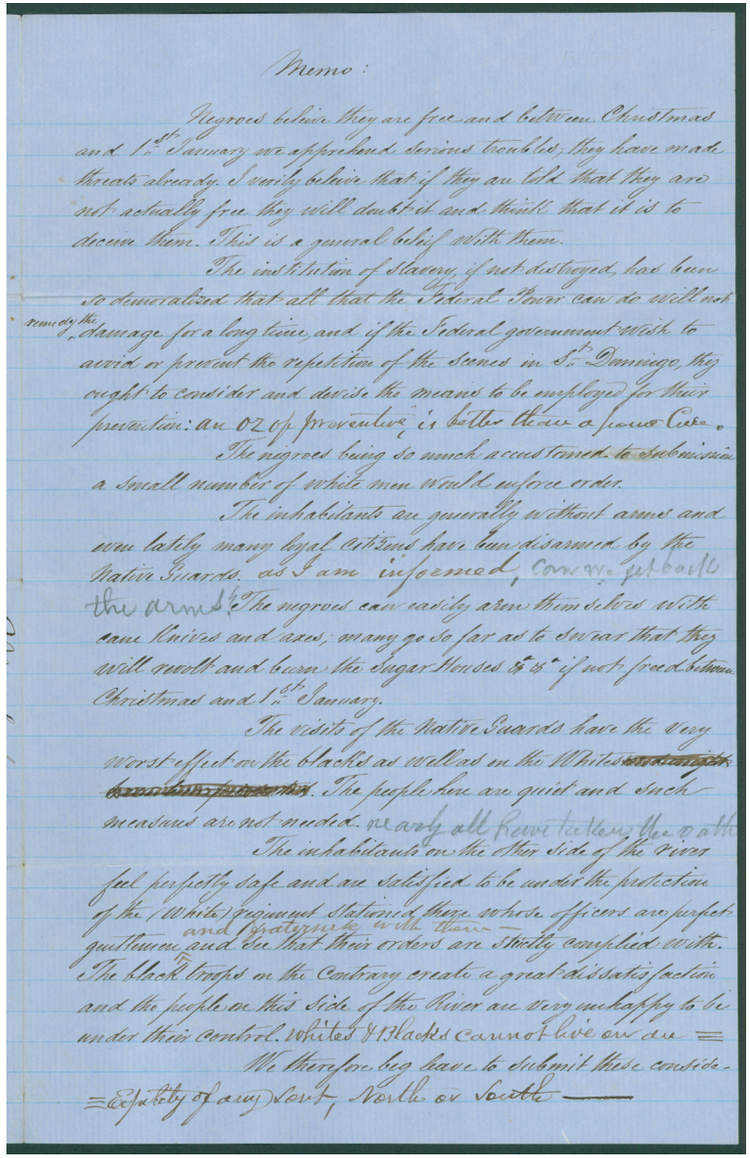


Memo:

Negroes beleive they are free and between Christmas and 1st January we apprehend serious troubles; they have made threats already. I I verily beleive that if they are told that they are not actually free they will doubt it and think that it is to deceive them. This is a general beleif with them.

The institution of slavery if not destroyed, has been so demoralised that all the Federal Power can do will not remedy the ^ damage for a long time, and if the Federal government wish to avoid or prevent the repetition of the scenes in St Domingo, they ought to consider and devise the means to be employed for their prevention: an oz of preventive is better than a pound Cure.

The negroes being so much accustomed to submission a small number of a small number of white men would enforce order.

The inhabitants are generally without arms and were lately many loyal citizens have been disarmed by the Native Guards, as I am informed, Can we get back the arms? The negroes can easily arm them selves with cane knives and axes; many go so far as to swear that they will revolt and burn the Sugar Houses et[a] et[a] if not freed between Christmas and 1st January.

The visits of the Native Guards have the very worst effects on the blacks as well as the Whites [crossed out] [crossed out]. The people here are quiet and such measures are not needed. nearly all have taken the oath

The inhabitants on the other side of the river feel perfectly safe and are satisfied to be under the protection of the (white) regiment stationed there whose officers are perfect and fraternize with them gentlemen ^ and see that their orders are strictly complied with. The black troops on the contrary create a great dissatisfaction and the people on this side of the river are very unhappy to be under their control. Whites and Blacks cannot live on dis=

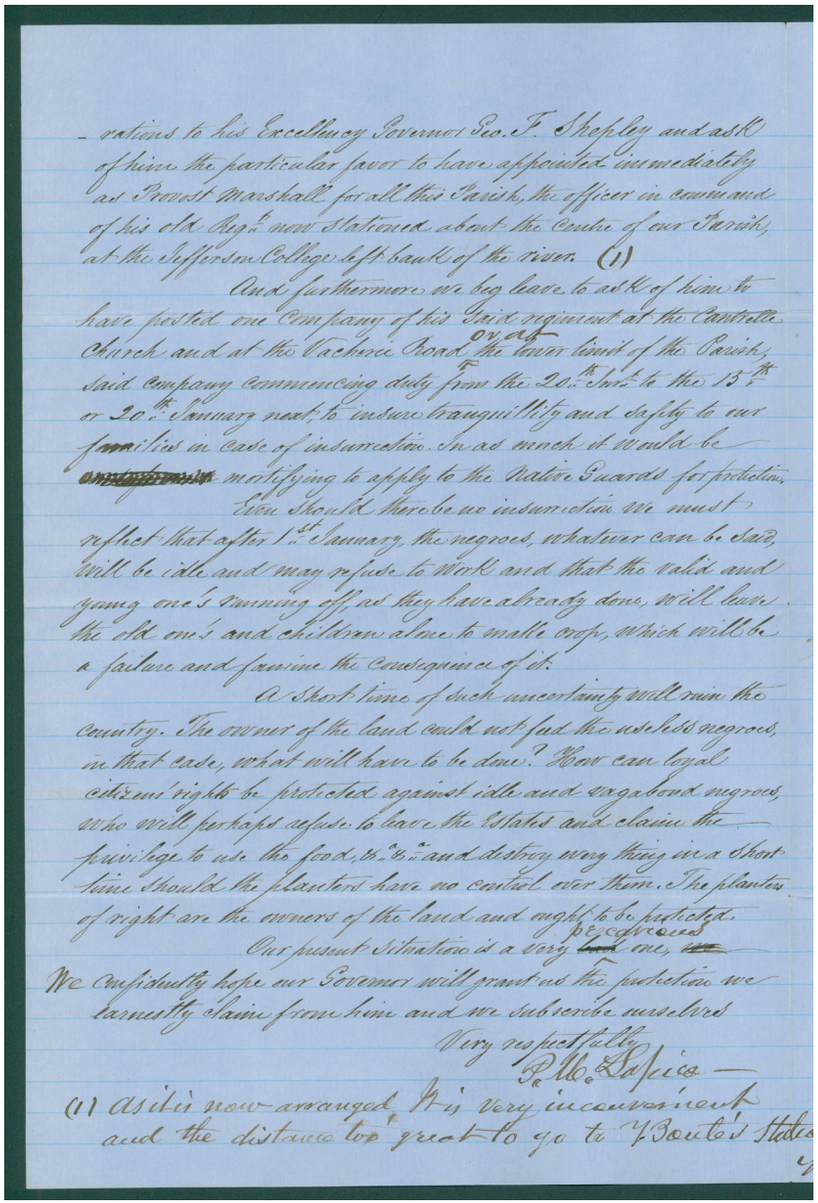
We therefore beg leave to submit these conside-=explicitly of any sort, North or South ————

Contributed to Maine Memory Network by Maine Historical Society

MMN # 74541

Date: 1862

Description: P. M. Lapice of St. James Parish in Louisiana wrote to George F. Shepley warning him that “Negroes believe they are free.”



-rations to his Excellency Governor Geo. F, Shepley and ask
of him the particular favor to have appointed immediately
as Provost Marshall for all this Parish, the officer in command
of his old Reg[t] now stationed about the centre of our Parish,
at the Jefferson College left bank of the river. (1)

And furthermore we beg leave to ask of him to
have posted one company of his said regiment at the Cantrelle
or at
church and at the Vachorie Road ^ the lower limit of the Parish,
said company commencing duty from the 20[th] Ins[t] to the 13[th]
or 20[th] January next, to insure tranquillity and safety to our
families in case of insurrection. In as much it would be
[crossed out] notifying to apply to the Native Guards for protection.

Even should there be no insurrection we must
reflect that after 1[st] January, the negroes, whatever can be said,
will be idle and may refuse to work and that the valid and
young one's running off, as they have already done, will leave
the old one's and children alone to make crop, which will be
a failure and famine the consequence of it.

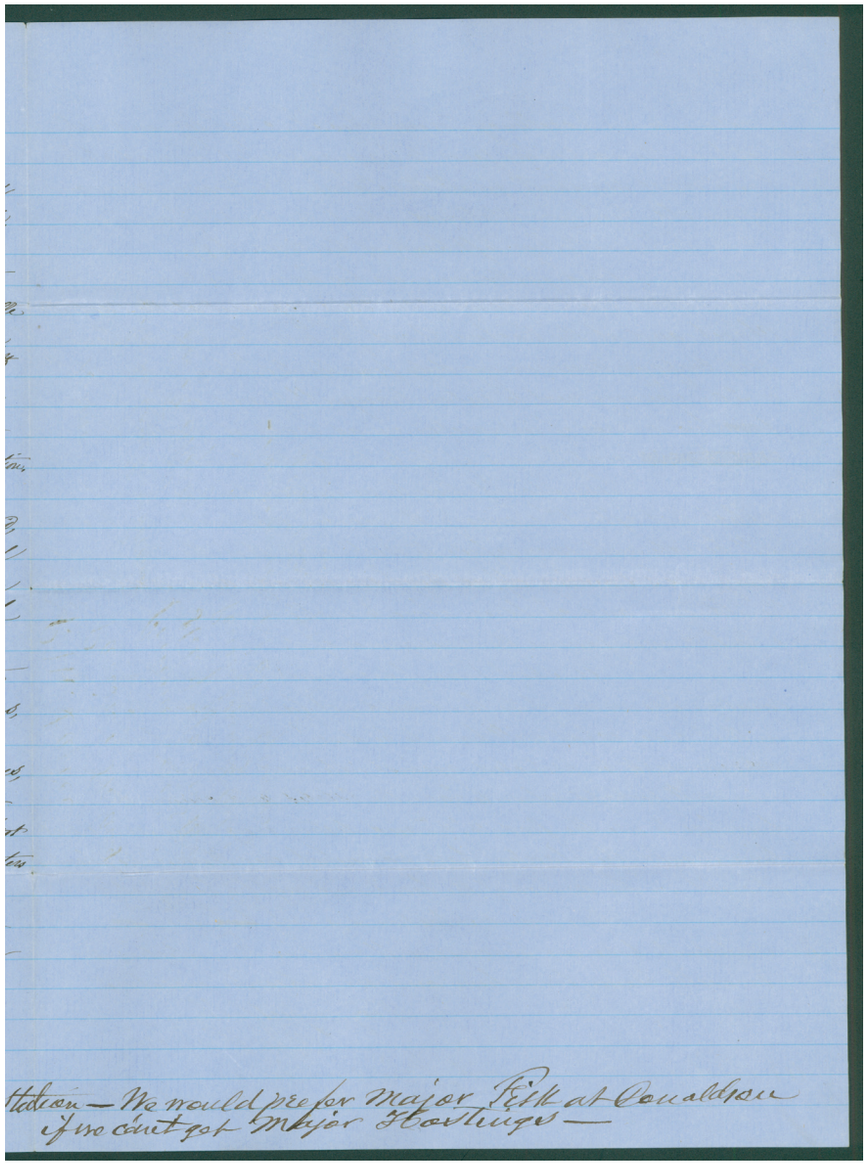
A short time of such uncertainty will ruin the
country. The owner of the land could not feed the useless negroes,
in that case, what will have to be done? How can loyal
citizens' rights be protected against idle and vagabond negroes,
who will perhaps refuse to leave the Estates and claim the
privilege to use the food, et[a] et[a] and destroy every thing in a short
time should the planters have no control over them. The planters
of right are the owners of the land and ought to be protected.

precarious
Our present situation is a very ~~bad~~ one, ~~we~~
We confidently hope our Governor will grant us the protection we
earnestly claim from him and we subscribe ourselves

Very respectfully

P.M. Lapice

(1) As it is now arranged It is very inconvenient
and the distance too great to go to Y. Boute's Station



We would prefer Major Pelk at Donaldson
if we can't get Major Hastings