

REPORT
OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,

IN ANSWER TO

A resolution of the Senate, requesting information as to the measures taken for the establishment of a naval depot on Blythe island, Georgia.

MAY 14, 1858.— Read, ordered to lie on the table, and be printed.

NAVY DEPARTMENT,
May 13, 1858.

SIR: In reply to the resolution of the Senate of the 6th instant, requesting the Secretary of the Navy to inform the Senate "what measures have been taken by the department to execute the act of the 28th January, 1857, 'authorizing the establishment of a naval depot on Blythe island, at Brunswick, Georgia,' what steps, if any, the department proposes to adopt in the prosecution of said work, and at what time it is intended to commence and go on with the same, and the reasons why the commencement of the necessary works has not been made," I have the honor to state that, in the execution of the act mentioned, the department, under instructions from the President, on the 19th of February, 1857, directed a commission composed of Captain McIntosh, Commander Hartstene, and Lieutenant Brooke, of the navy, and Civil Engineer Calvin Brown, to proceed to Blythe island and make the necessary examinations, and report a suitable site for the depot authorized. The report of the commission, accompanied with charts and sketches of the island, was made March 13, 1857. A proposition was then made by the owners for the sale of the whole island, and in June an executory contract for the purchase by the government of about eleven hundred acres was entered into. The legislature of the State of Georgia having, on the 14th of November, 1857, ceded jurisdiction to the United States over the lands, and the title to them declared by the Attorney General of the United States good and sufficient, the purchase was concluded and the money paid November 24, 1857.

On the 7th of February last the department ordered Mr. Sanger, the civil engineer attached to the Bureau of Yards and Docks, to proceed to Blythe island, and make the necessary surveys and take the

levels, with a view of submitting a plan for the naval depot and estimates adequate to its completion. The levels have been taken and the surveys made; but business of the department requiring the presence of Mr. Sanger at Pensacola, the plans have not been matured.

In reply to the inquiry why the commencement of the necessary works has not been made, I would state that there is no money in the treasury which can be applied for that purpose without diverting it from other indispensable objects. They fall within the class of public works authorized by Congress, which not having been commenced, it is not deemed expedient or proper to commence during the present condition of the treasury.

I am, sir, with great respect, your obedient servant,

ISAAC TOUCEY.

Hon. JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE,
President of the Senate.