A Major Seward called on the morning of March 31, desiring to know when it would be convenient for me to receive a committee from the mass meeting of the preceding evening, which desired to present the resolutions adopted. It was quite clear that in the mind of that assemblage, there were apprehensions that I was here vested with power to reinstate Queen Liliuokalani.

The reception of a committee so avowedly hostile to the existing Government raised a question as to whether this would consist with a recognition of existing authority and the policy of noninterference. The messenger was informed that the subject would be taken into consideration and that he might call at 2 o'clock of the same day for my reply.

Very soon after his departure I called on President Dole, and called his attention to the meeting and resolutions. I said that, under existing circumstances, I deemed it proper at once to say to him that I should cause the ensign of the United States to be hauled down, and the troops ordered on board their respective vessels. I informed him further that they would be used only to protect the persons and property of American citizens, and that our Government would not acquiesce in the interference by any other Government in the establishment or maintenance of any form of Government on the islands. He desired to know when the troops would be removed and the ensign hauled down. I replied, to-day or to-morrow. He expressed a preference that it should be done on the morning of the following day, April 1. To this I agreed. I asked if he was satisfied he could preserve order when our troops were withdrawn. To this he replied that he had no doubt of it. He added that when the troops were first furnished they could not have gotten along without their aid. He was given to understand that this question was not intended as a guide to me in the removal of the troops, but simply to ascertain whether disorders were likely to occur.

Soon afterwards the following order was issued to Admiral Skerrett:

Honolulu, March 31, 1893.

SIR: You are directed to haul down the United States ensign from the Government Building, and to embark the troops now on shore to the ships to which they belong.

This will be executed at 11 o'clock on the 1st day of April.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES H. BLOUNT,
Special Commissioner of the United States.

Rear Admiral J. S. Skerrett,
Commanding Pacific Squadron.

On the afternoon of this day (March 31) I informed the messenger of the mass meeting that I would receive them at 4 o'clock on the following day. This was done in order that when the committee called, the ensign would have been hauled down and the troops ordered aboard of their vessels, and I could state freely to the committee that it was not my purpose to interfere in their domestic concerns; that the United States troops would not be used to maintain or restore any form of government, but simply to protect the persons and property of American citizens. This reply I hoped would allay any action on the part of the people based on erroneous impressions as to my future conduct.

On the night before the flag was taken down, the American minister came to me with a Mr. Smith, correspondent of the San Francisco Chronicle, whom he introduced as a gentleman of intelligence and high character desiring to make an important communication to me. This gentleman claimed to know that it was the purpose of the Japanese commissioner, who had learned that the American flag was to be hauled