

Miller, Joaquin. "My New Republic." Unwritten History: Life amongst the Modocs. Hartford, Conn. : American Publishing Company, 1874, pp. 298-300. Below is an excerpt from a longer chapter. Although not strictly a "national park" proposal, Miller's plan has the elements of preserving the natural state and beauty of the forests surrounding Mount Shasta, coupled with preserving the rapidly vanishing Native Americans and their culture.

My New Republic.

Here for the first time a plan which had been forming in my mind ever since I first found myself among these people began to take definite shape.

It was a bold and ambitious enterprise, and was no less a project than the establishment of a sort of Indian Republic--"a wheel within a wheel," with the grand old cone Mount Shasta for the head or centre.

To the south, reaching from far up on Mount Shasta to far down in the Sacramento valley, lay the lands of the Shastas, with almost every variety of country and climate; to the south-east the Pit River Indians, with a land rich with pastures and plains teeming with game; to the north-east lay the Modocs, with lakes and pasture-lands enough to make a State. My plan was to unite these three tribes in a confederacy under the name of the United Tribes, and by making a claim and showing a bold front to the Government, secure by treaty all the lands near the mountain, even if we had to surrender all the other lands in doing so.

It might have been called a kind of Indian reservation, but it was to be a reservation in its fullest and most original sense, such as those first allotted to the Indians. Definite lines were to be drawn, and these lines were to be kept sacred. No white man was to come there without permission. The Indians were to remain on the land of their fathers. They were to receive no pay, no perquisites or assistance whatever from the Government. They were simply to be let alone in their possessions, with their rites, customs, religion, and all, unmolested. They were to adopt civilization by degrees and as they saw fit, and such parts of it as they chose to adopt. They were to send a representative to the State and the national capitals if they chose, and so on through a long catalogue of details that would have left them in possession of that liberty which is as dear to the Indian as to any being on earth.

Filled with plans for my little Republic I now went among the Modocs, whom I had always half feared since they had killed and plundered the old trader, and boldly laid the case before them, They were very enthusiastic, and some of the old councilmen named me chief; yet I never had any authority to speak of till too late to use it to advantage.

I drew maps and wrote out my plans, and sent them to the commanding officer of the Pacific Coast, the Governor of the State, and the President of the Republic. Full of enthusiasm and splendid plans were the letters I sent, and no doubt full of bad spelling and worse grammar; but they were honest, sincere, and well meant, and deserved something better than the contemptuous silence they received.