

Missouri State Archives: Finding Aid 5.1

Mormon War Papers, 1837-1841

[Full-text transcription of: Letter from Thomas C. Burch, Richmond, MO to Governor Boggs, Jefferson City, MO]

Richmond Mo
Oct. 23rd. 1838:

Dr. Sir.

The mormon difficultiez are arrising and have arisen here to an alarming height. It is Said (and I believe truly) that they have recently robbed and burned the Stone house of Mr. I. Stollingz in Gallatin Daviesz County , and that they have burned Several dwelling houses of the Citizens of Daviesz taken their arms from them, and have taken Some provisions. Mormon dissenters are daily flying to this county for refuge from the ferocity of the Prophet Jo. Smith, who they say threatens the lives of all mormons who refuse to take up arms at his bidding, or to do his commands. Those dissenters (and they are numerousz) all confirm the reports Concerning the Danite band of which you have doubtlesz heard much; and Say that Jo. infuses into the minds of his followers a Spirit of insubordination to the laws of the Land, telling them that the Kingdom of the Lord is come, which is Superior to the institutions of the earth, and encourages them to fight and promises them the Spoilz of the battlez.

A respectable Gentleman of my acquaintance from Livingston is here now who informz me that the mormons are robbing the citizens of

Livingston, on the borders of Caldwell of their corn and whatever else they want; that they have taken a cannon from Livingston County , and are prowling about the country, a regularly formed banditti.

That the Prophet Jo. Smith has persuaded his church that they are not, and ought not to be amenable to the laws of the land, and is Still doing it I have no doubt.- The Danite band as I am informed by numbers of the most respectable of the mormons (who are now dissenters) bind them to support the high council of the mormon church, and one, another in all things whether right or wrong, and that even by false swearing. I have taken much pains to be informed correctly about this Danite band, and am well Satisfied that my information as above Stated is correct, I have

no doubt but that Jo. Smith is az lawlesz and consumate a Scoundrel as ever was the veiled Prophet of [Chorassin].- I believe the criminal law in Caldwell county cannot be enforced upon a mormon. Grand Iurys there will not indict. Jo. declarez in his public addressez that he can revolutionize the U.S. and that if provoked, he will do it. This declaration has been heard by Col. Williams of this place and other Gentlemen of equal veracity. I have hoped that the civil authoritez would prove

Sufficient for the exigency of the case; but I am now convinced that it is not, So long as indictmentz have to be found by a Jury of the County in which the Offence may be committed.

I do not pretend to have wisdom enough to make a Suggestion as to what Your Excellency should do. The evil is alarming beyond all doubt. I suggest the foregoing facts for Your consideration.

I am Respectfully
Yr. Obt. Servt.
Th. C. Burch

P. S. Judge King will give you Some information by the next mail

T. C. B.

Th. C. Burch
to
Govr

Oct: 23, 1838
copied