

Missouri State Archives: Finding Aid 5.1

Mormon War Papers, 1837-1841

[Full-text transcription of: Letter from the Honorable Austin A. King, Richmond, MO to Governor Boggs, Jefferson City, MO]

Richmond . Oct. 24th. 1838.

Dear Sir.

As Mr. Williams will be to see you, in reference to our mormon difficultiez I will be able to say all to you perhapz that can be said-I deem it a duty notwithstanding to give you such information as I have sought and obtained, and it is such that I assure you may be relied on-Our relationz with the mormonz are such that I am perfectly satisfied that the arm of the civil authority is too weak to give peace to the Country. Until lately I thought the mormons were disposed to act only on the defensive but their recent conduct shows that they are the aggressorz & that they intend to take the law into their own hands-of their recent outrages in Daviesz you have doubtlessly heard much already-of their course of Conduct in Daviesz, I will give you the general facts-for to give particulars would far transcend the limits of a letter- On sunday before they marched to Daviesz, Jo Smith made known his views to the people, and declared the time had come when they would avenge their own wrongz, & that all who was not for them, & take up armz with them, should be considered as against them-that their property should be confiscated

and their lives also be forfeited-with this declaration, & much else said by Smith, calculated to excite the people present, the next day waz set to meet & see who was for them, & who against them- and under such severe penaltiez, there waz none, that I learn, who did not turn out, & about 3 or 400 men, with Smith at their head, marched to Daviesz-this was on tuesday, the next day waz the Snow Storm, and on thursday the commenced their ravages upon the Citizenz, driving them from their housez and taking their property- Between 80 and 100 men went to Gallatin , pillaged housez and the store of Mr. Stollingz, and the post office and then burnt the housez- they carried off the spoils on

horse back and in waggonz and now have them, I un:
:derstand in a store house near their camp-Housez
have been robbed of their contents, beds, clothing, fur:
:niture &c & all deposited, and they term it a con:
:secration to the Lord- At this time there is not
a Citizen in Daviesz except mormonz- many have
been driven without warning-others have been all:
:owed a few hours to start- The stock of the Citizenz
have been seized upon, killed and salted up by hundreds-
From 50 to 100 waggonz are now employed in
hauling hauling in the corn from the surrounding
Country- They look for a force against them, and
are consequently preparing for a siege, building block..
:housez &c. They have lately organized themselves

into a band, of what they call Danitez- and
sworn to support their leading men in all
they say & do, right or wrong, & further to put to in:
:stant death those who will betray them- There is another
band of twelve, call the destructivetz, whose duty
it is to watch the movements of men and of commu:
:nitez, & to avenge themselves for supposed wrongful
movements against them by privately burning housez
property, & even laying in ashes townz &c. I find I am
running out my letter too much in details-I do
not deem it necessary to give you a minute detail
of all the facts of which I am possessed, but I give you
the above in order that you may form some idea of
the disposition of these people-The Mormonz expect
to settle the affair at the point of the sword, & I am well
warranted in saying to you, that the people in this
quarter of the State look to you for that protection
which they believe you will afford when you have learned
the facts-I do not pretend to advise your course, nor make
any suggestionz other than what I have stated. that
it is utterly useless for the Civil authoritiez to pre:
:tend to interpose-The country is in great commotions
and I can't assure you that either with or without
authority, something will shortly have to be done-
I hope you will let me hear from you by the
return of Mr. Williams, and if you should come up
the Country shortly, it will give me pleasure to take
the trouble to see you-I am very respectfully
Austin A. King

Judge King
to
Govrnor
Oct 24th 1838
Copied

