

From Daniel Woodson to William Hutchinson and H. Miles Moore

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Lecompton, Kansas Territory

Executive Office,

Sept 3, 1856

To Messrs. Wm. Hutchinson & H. Miles Moore

"In behalf of the Kansas State Central Committee":

Gentlemen:

Your communication of *[text stricken through]* yesterday, addressed to Col. Cook and myself, was received about 5 o'clock *[text stricken through]* last evening, and I embrace the first opportunity of returning you an answer.

One would suppose from the manner in which you write, that you and those whom you represent, were entirely unacquainted with the existing unhappy State of things in this Territory, and that you were peaceable law-abiding citizens.

You cannot be uninformed of the fact that Genl. Jas. H. Lane has recently marched into the Territory, a large body of armed men, obtained chiefly in the Northern Western States, after canvassing those States for sometime for *[text stricken through]* them, avowedly for the purpose of *[text stricken through]* setting at defiance our Territorial laws and of subverting by force and violence the regularly established Government of the Territory. At the time these men arrived in *[text stricken through]* our midst everything was comparatively peaceable and quiet. As soon as they crossed the Northern boundary of Kansas, they begun the erection of a cordon of block houses or forts extending to *[text stricken through]* Topeka on the Kansas river, a Town recognized for the time being as the capital of the so-

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called "State of Kansas." *[text stricken through]*

Soon after crossing the Kansas river these men, aided by lawless military combinations heretofore existing in the Territory, commenced in pursuance of threats previously made, the bloody work of *[text stricken through]* exterminating or driving from the Territory such of our citizens as had sought to enforce the Territorial laws, by attacking at mid-night, the law-abiding citizens of the Town of Franklin, with an overwhelming force of armed men, abundantly supplied with Sharp's rifles and other deadly weapons, and finally succeeded by the application of the torch, the few citizens of Franklin from the log-hotel into which they had been driven *[text stricken through]* for self-protection, by threats of violence *[text stricken through]* previously made. The hotel *[text stricken through]* and store of Dr. [Philback?] were *[text stricken through]* [MS. illegible] Post office [MS. illegible][.] This attack *[text stricken through]* it is now known, was headed in person by Genl. J.H. Lane, under the assumed cognomen of "Col. Cook." Soon after this a similar attack was made on the [MS. illegible] Georgia Colony, every *[text stricken through]*

*through*] man of whom was compelled to flee the Territory to save his life, whilst their houses were burned to the ground.

The settlement on Washington Creek was next threatened with extermination and the settlers driven by the instincts of self-preservation [*text stricken through*] to take refuge in the log house House of James P. Saunders, Esqr[.], one of our oldest and best citizens, which they [*text stricken through*] sought to fortify, [*text stricken through*] but finding a large army advancing upon them with artillery, they were compelled to flee for their lives, and take refuge in an adjoining State. The house of [*text stricken through*] [MS. illegible] Saunders was [*text stricken through*] then burned to the ground, after being first robbed [*text stricken through*] of every thing in it, including the muskets furnished by the Government to a volunteer company of militia, of which he was the captain.

This army of outlaws next turned their course towards Lecompton, with the intention of attacking it, but were induced by some of their

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leaders to abandon the idea. They then attacked the house of Col. Titus, firing upon it with their Sharps rifles and artillery, killing one man and severely wounding Col. Titus and a gentleman then residing with him, taking and holding as prisoners all persons found in the place and even a gentleman who was intercepted on the road to a camp of U.S. Dragoons, with a dispatch from Gov. Shannon who they robbed of a the horse he rode. They then robbed the premises of every thing valuable, including even the [wearing?] apparel of his negroes, all of which it is believed they took with them to the town of Lawrence. Certain it is the prisoners were taken to Lawrence, and held as such until they were exchanged by the instrumentality of Gov. Shannon for certain persons held in custody [*text stricken through*] were under a legal process [*text stricken through*] for being implicated in the midnight attack and robbery of the citizens of Franklin.

Many other acts scarcely less atrocious committed by Lane's men and the lawless combinations heretofore existing in the Territory might be adverted to, but these will suffice [*text stricken through*] of all which, one would infer from your letter, [*text stricken through*] you were profoundly ignorant.

It [*text stricken through*] has become my duty as the acting Executive of the Territory to take all the measures in my power to [*text stricken through*] suppress all such lawless and insurrectionary [*text stricken through*] combinations against the peace and quiet of the Territory as well as the very existence of the Territorial Government, of which I cannot believe you to be ignorant, nor can I believe you to be ignorant of the fact that such measures have been taken. But as you seem to be, This is a duty from which I could not shrink, [*text stricken through*][.] I herewith enclose you a copy of the Proclamation issued from this office [*text stricken through*] on the 25th ult. and of the General orders previously issued to Genls. Richardson and Coffey. Orders have subsequently been issued positively forbidding

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the burning of houses in any case whatever under the severest penalties, and every exertion will be made to ferret out and punish the perpetrators of such acts.

[*text stricken through*]

No one deplores the existing unhappy state of things more than myself and no one [*text stricken through*] can make more personal sacrifices than I am willing to make to restore peace, quiet and harmony [*text stricken through*] to our at present distracted country. But, this most desirable result, gentlemen, can only be obtained by a due enforcement of our Territorial laws until they are [*text stricken through*] regularly repealed [*text stricken through*] or modified or declared null & void by the judicial tribunals of the country. Forcible resistance to the Territorial laws [*text stricken through*], and or invasions & insurrectionary military combinations [*text stricken through*] to subvert the existing government can never effect that end. If peace and harmony are what you and those whom you represent, want [*text stricken through*] it can be very speedily obtained, giving a sufficient guaranty of implicit obedience on your part to the Territorial laws until they are modified or repealed by competent authority or declared null and void by the [*text stricken through*] Judicial Tribunal of the country.