

What is more curious than all the rest; it frequently occurs in all governments that corruption arises among the people; the people become corrupt, and to a great extent, it must affect the government also; no matter how good its form may be, the corruptions that arise among the body of the people, must in a great measure paralyze the head of the government. The Roman Catholics in Philadelphia were attacked by a lawless mob, and thousands turned out to demolish their churches and dwellings, and murder their people, and the perpetrators of such deeds are suffered to go unpunished—this fills the Nauvoo Legion with burning indignation. The legacy bequeathed to us by our forefathers was a constitution which will protect every man in his civil and religious rights; and where this Legion is, woe to him that infringes upon these constitutional liberties. Being called upon without reflection, or time to prepare a speech; and not possessing the requisite talents for preparing notes, I must give you what I have to say in an offhand style.

Men will rise up in distant countries; and say that the inhabitants of these mountains are rebellious. Rebellious! Against what? Against the power of mobs, lawless robbery, and the infringement and violation of the constitution of the United States—against the lawless destruction of property and life—against the deprivation of human beings of religious liberty—that is what we are rebellious against; and the Nauvoo Legion are ready to rebel against every aggression of this kind, as long as there is one drop of blood left in their veins.

These bayonets now before me have been carried upon the shoulders of these men to extend “the area of the American Liberty,” over 4,000 miles, suffering almost every kind of distress and fatigue; sometimes traveling on foot ever a hundred miles of desert,

from water to water. Such a march has not been equaled by any body of infantry in the world; and General Kearney said, that there was no other set of troops in his army that could endure such service.

Talk of rebellion! Or want of loyalty! Men might as well say the sun does not shine, as to argue that this people are enemies to their country’s freedom. There is a spirit of religious intolerance that has arisen in the minds of a great many men against this people in the present age; they say, “you shall think as I think, or damn you, we’ll destroy you.” General Joseph Smith, the commander of our Legion, was treacherously murdered, and his noble brother by his side also, while under the pledge of safety of Governor Thomas Ford. The grandfather of that murdered general (murdered while under the sacred pledge of the State of Illinois), his paternal grandfather; I say, was at the elbow of Colonel Ethan Allen, at Ticonderoga, and with Stark at Bennington; and his maternal grandfather was in the first naval battle, and at the elbow of the first Commodore of the American navy, when the first naval battle was fought by Americans against Great Britain, and served during the entire war. Why was he murdered? Because he thought different from his neighbors. Religious toleration was not in accordance with the feelings of narrow minded men; he must be butchered—basely murdered—and to accomplish it the faith of a sovereign state had to be pledged. We love the constitution of the United States in its organization; but we detest southern secession, and northern disunion, or anything that would be calculated to destroy our glorious Union, and the institutions which have been sealed by the blood of our fathers.

Gentlemen, appearing as I appear in your midst, lean though I may be (Mr. Smith now weighing 230 lbs.), I