

Brigham Young, February 4, 1852, CR 100 912, Church History Department Pitman Shorthand transcriptions, 2013-2021, Addresses and sermons, 1851-1874, Miscellaneous transcriptions, 1869, 1872, 1889, 1848, 1851-1854, 1859-1863, Utah Territorial Legislature, 1852 January-February, CHL.

1. Brigham Young defends his right to “dictate” to the legislature and he encourages them to cooperate in order to get bills passed, February 4, 1852.¹

Document

Young

I am accused by our honorable judges who left here last fall of entering into the legislative hall and there dictating and that is an objection and will be raised as [a] great objection to President Fillmore, that I enter into [the] halls of [the] legislature and there dictate [to] them.² I do do it. I never expect to see the day [while I am] governor in [the] midst of this people that I don't do it. I want it published [abroad, for] it is what I believe [in] and what you believe in. But the principle that I do want these gentlemen to sense and to fully [realize] is simply this: [that] when they meet here in [a] legislative capacity they meet and there are elders in Israel [here and] Apostles of Jesus Christ. They are saints [of the] Most High God and I hope and pray that the feeling to [the] contrary may never rise in [the] bosom of these men. . . .

If their noses³ was clean enough to smell a stink⁴ you would be a stink in their nostrils.

But when men come here I want to see them act just as we said we would act, in the name of

¹ Brigham Young, February 4, 1852, CR 100 912, Church History Department Pitman Shorthand transcriptions, 2013-2021, Addresses and sermons, 1851-1874, Miscellaneous transcriptions, 1869, 1872, 1889, 1848, 1851-1854, 1859-1863, Utah Territorial Legislature, 1852 January-February, CHL.

² Young here refers to what historians call the “first runaway officials,” or the federally appointed territorial officers who abandoned Utah Territory in the fall of 1851 with complaints about Mormon theocracy and anti-American sentiment. For scholarly assessments of the runaway officials see, Ronald W. Walker, “The Affairs of the “Runaways”: Utah’s First Encounter with the Federal Officers, Part 1,” *Journal of Mormon History* 39 (Fall 2013), 1-43; Ronald W. Walker and Matthew J. Grow, “The People Are “Hogaffed or Humbugged”: The 1851–52 National Reaction to Utah’s “Runaway” Officers, Part 2,” *Journal of Mormon History* 40 (Winter 2014), 1-52; and Bruce W. Worthen, ““Zachary Taylor is Dead and in Hell and I am Glad of it!”: The Political Intrigues of Almon Babbitt,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 84 (Spring 2015): 84-97.

³ Young is referring to federal officials here.

⁴ Watt repeated the phrase “to smell a stink” twice here.

Israel's God. I want senators, governors, representatives, [and] kings of [the] earth to know that we legislate⁵ in [the] name of Israel's God for the benefit of Israel and we want all creation to know [it]. And what is disgusting to me is to see a <technical> gentile spirit arise here. I, when I scold [you] I want you to forgive me, scores and scores of times. . . .

There is a spirit [of contention here that seems to suggest that] I [can] find fault with you, with your bill, and with your doing[s]. There is a defect in your acts and [so we disagree over] who can amend it and when men arise⁶ and do the best they can and act with all [the] integrity of their [heart, we should respect it.] They present their doing[s] [before you] and have it found fault with, and fault with, [again and again] without making it any better; [that represents a] gentile spirit to me.

I make also, with an apology, my amendments to my exhortation and the Lord being my helper I will come in [here] and preach to you. [It is] not [for anyone] to call it in[to] question what we do here. We are legislating for the people here and not for the people in Washington. [We are] legislating for our own advancement in [the] religion we profess. [It is] for the benefit of Israel [that] we legislate. It is our right to come here [and if we have a mind] to give time to [any of the] brethren [to] preach a sermon [it is] nobody's business and [if] we say "brethren let's try to get the spirit," [it is] nobody's business [and we are] not to be called in[to] question upon the subject.

[We] legislate for all the world [so] that every man or woman in all the world shall have a shelter here, [even] if they worship [a] dog.⁷ That is what this legislative council is for, [to] protect [them] in their rights. That is what the government have erred with [in] regard to the

⁵ Watt wrote "legislative."

⁶ Watt wrote "arises."

⁷ Brigham Young stated elsewhere that all may worship whom or what they please, even if it is a red dog.

Mormons. [They have tried to] make us act as they act. That is not according to the Constitution; it says [that] the Jew have the right of worshipping according to the dictates [of] their conscience. [It is the same for the] Catholics, Hottentot, Hindu and every class on earth with their various religions. The constitution of [the] United States, they [have] trample[d] that under their feet. [It is thus] for us to legislate, to see that these rights [will] be held sacred to them.

I hope [if] the brethren can't⁸ pray enough at home [that they can] come here and pray and fast [and it is] nobody's business. [We will] have our clerk put [it] on . . . [the] docket if you please that this legislature fasted and prayed. I would like it to be published in that book [that is] going to be published into all the world by and by. I am not ashamed that I believe in [the] Lord Jesus Christ [and] that I pray to him over righteous acts. I want all the world to know it. [They] may send another governor here [but] I shall [still] govern the people.

If I was president of [the] United States [and could] have my way, the Almighty God [would] be honored [and] his ways and works [would] be honored [by] calling to him for wisdom; that is my exhortation. I would like to have it written right down that the governor came in here and preached to you that you might have the spirit of wisdom and legislate wisely in all matters.

No man got up until I got up to talk; then Brother Pratt⁹ got up and motioned that the bill be put right through.¹⁰ Why [did he do this?] [It was] to stick his thumb into me. I am willing

⁸ *Can't* written over ~~could~~

⁹ Orson Pratt.

¹⁰ It is not clear to which bill Young refers here. Young goes on to seemingly reference "An Act to Provide for the Further Organization of the Militia of the Territory of Utah," when he speaks of the Nauvoo Legion, but the legislative minutes do not record who spoke or when. After Wells introduced the militia bill it was read the first time and passed. On its second reading Pratt moved to amend a few words. The bill then passed its second reading and was read a third time and "on motion of Councilor Pratt, the bill passed." Legislators considered the election bill in the afternoon of February 4 and a variety of lawmakers introduced amendments, but there is no indication that Pratt or anyone else delivered speeches. In fact, the legislative minutes do not even indicate that Young spoke that day. Were it not for Watt's shorthand minutes we would not know about Young's speech, let alone those of Pratt, Woolley, and Rockwood, the three men Young singled out for their oppositional stances. Unfortunately, their

[for] all men [to] serve God more than I, if I can serve God with the best ability I can. I don't like such things. I like to see the brethren sound [out] every thing [that] should be [sounded out]. I like to see them [technical] when they should be [technical] but I don't want to see them get up here to talk for the sake of talking. Some men here got [the] idea [that they can] make a smart speech [while other] members sit still here and say nothing. Edwin D. Woolley, [for example, is] smart to talk, [but what does he] bring forth? A mouse or an ox? Rockwood [is] like a hornet. "We will gouge it," [he said].¹¹ [Who does not know that the] Nauvoo Legion was been here?¹² A man can argue himself to know nothing; [other people] read the Bible until they don't know what is in the Bible. You [know what I mean]. Are you not my witnesses [to the truth of this]?

speeches do not survive. For the bills discussed and passed on February 4 see *Journals of the House of Representatives, Council, and Joint Sessions of the First Annual and Special Sessions of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah. Held at Great Salt Lake City, 1851 and 1852* (Great Salt Lake City, Utah: Brigham H. Young, printer, 1852), 125-127 and Stout, *On the Mormon Frontier*, 2: 422-423.

¹¹ Watt's longhand transcription here reads, "Bro. Rockwood, he is just like an hornet; 'we'll gouge it, we'll gouge it, he just acts so.'"

¹² Young seems to refer here to a point which Rockwood must have made regarding the Nauvoo Legion being in Utah Territory.