Great Salt Lake City, May 31st 1854.

Hon, John M, Bernhisel

Washington City

 D. C.

Dear Brother,

Yours of March 11th, 13th & 19th of April, 11th, 12th, 14th, 15th & 16th, together with a printed miscellaneous document No. 58. & Do H. R. Bill No 317 came safe to hand, and I have carefully noted their contents.

Were I not thoroughly conversant with the fact, that the majority of the human family ever have been, are, and probably, for some time to come, will be more disposed to beleive lies, even gross lies, than the truth, I might have been somewhat surprized, at the conduct of the would be deemed great men of our nation, but as it is, I simply pity their consummate folly, & ignorance, and their miserable shuffling, & wiggling.

Touching document No 58, did I not presume, that even every intelligent School Boy in Washington, who has had the opportunity to read the history of the acquisition & Settlement of Utah, and the repeated plain, correct, & candid representations of the strictly legitimate & proper expenditure of the $20,000 appropriated for Public buildings in Utah, could understand the whole affair to have been managed in prudence & wisdom, I should consider him a dull scholar. Still, as I am aware that politics, & the scrambling for the place & spoils of Office tend to cloud men's minds, and warp their Judgments. If the Secretary of the Treasury, or the Commissioner of Indian Affairs or any proper officer at Washington, with whom I have Official business, desire any explanations of my Official Accounts & conduct, & will forward me their wishes over their signature, I will promptly & cheerfully respond to any courteous, & proper request of that nature, but I do not feel in the least called upon to condescend to notice the vile, & irresponsible misrepresentations of such corrupt, & low lived characters as James Bridger & J. H. Holeman, for should I feel willing to stoop so low as to undertake it, I should be unable to keep up with their turnings & twistings, especially at this great distance, with only a monthly Mail for a Medium, which often leaves Mail somewhere, and as often fails to make its time.

In case the Department, with whom I have official business continue to prefer lies to the truth, and do not choose to request information at my hands, or yours, please ask the Secretary of the Treasury to draw a draft upon me for the $20,000 in question, and assure him I will pay it upon Sight, & send it to him safely enveloped in a wolf skin with the Claws on, and when he receives it, there will be that much more spoils to divide & Scramble for, which I presume will be satisfactory to all who are howling over, & hugging the calumny & slander of such men as Bridger & Holeman.

You may have thought that it would answer for me to write to the Departments upon Your representations to me of their conduct but if you will reflect a moment, you will understand, that by the time my reply reached them, they could, or might, shift their position, and reply that you entirely misunderstood their views & feelings and then what would you do about it? In case you find it judicious to ask Mr. Guthrie to draw up me for the $20,000 appropriated for our Public buildings, and he does so, please say to the powers that be at Washington, that we wish no further appropriations from them; that Utah can sustain herself, asking no favors of any but the Lord God of Israel who is our backer, so long as we continue to uprightly, and who controls individuals & nations in accordance with the counsels of his wisdom and will over-rule all things for the prosperity & welfare of the righteous; & I hope you will bear this fact in mind when such lines are reported as the 17th 18th & 19th in Sect 3 of H. R. 317, which I rather think were inserted merely to annoy your feelings; and in all apparently untoward circumstances try to avoid becoming nervous, and rest satisfied when you have done the best your faith & judgment

Under date of April 11th you write "he said that he had understood that the money which had been sent to [me] you had been misapplied, that Major Bedell was an Indian Trader under [me] you &c." Now how happens it that the Hon Commissioner prefers to sit in his office growling to you on items of falsehood and slander, in preference to writing direct to me? more especially when I have his own Signature to the statement that he had no fault to find with my Official conduct.

At his departure, Holeman was perfectly rabid against Bedell, for what reason I know not, and tried to stir up my feelings against him; and this may account for Guthrie' s statements, as I presume he got the above quotation, & the matter immediately following from the immaculate Holeman. But enough on this point.

A. W. Babbitt, on the 29th of April, telegraphed from St Louis as follows: "Set now to making adobies for the Penitentiary," this would indicate an alteration in feeling at Washington since your last date.

I left this City on the 3rd inst, and returned <on the 30th> from a trip through our Southern Settlements as far as Harmony, our most Southern Settlement, & about 290 Miles from this city. Indian Walker, Grosepen & Washear joined my Company at Chicken Creek, & traveled with me, & the two latter are here now. As a general thing, the inhabitants in the different Settlements felt, & were doing well; and all the Indians I met with were very friendly, & expressed an intention to continue so, not only towards us but each other.

The Crops looked very well, especially the Wheat, and notwithstanding we have had much Stormy Weather, it has been unusually favorable to their rapid & luxuriant growth, & much more plowing & seeding has been done than heretofore, even in proportion to the number of inhabitants, which I am in hopes will afford us sufficient Surplus to begin Storing for future use.

I enjoyed my trip very much, and feel my health improved by it, and the inhabitants & Indians were pleased to have me visit them, & talk with them. On my return, I found that our public works had progressed with commendable diligence, under the direction of my 2nd Councillor, J. M. Grant, who tarried here to oversee our general business matters.

The foundation of the Wall, around the Temple block is nearly completed, which when done, will enable us to speedily finish the Wall, with the exception of the gates & iron railing.

We continue to enjoy general good health, though death takes some, even in these secluded & healthy Vallies. On the 23rd inst Patriarch John Smith left his aged & feeble body to rest for a season, & his spirit has gone where the works of a long & faithful Stewardship will follow & honor him. Thus, the old members of our Church are dropping now & then, & passing behind the vail, to swell the numbers of the departed, and continue to aid in the cause of truth.

All is peace & prosperity in Utah, for which we feel to rejoice, & give thanks always, not trusting in the arm of flesh, nor taking honor unto ourselves.

At the first opportunity, I wish you to move an amendment to the 3rd Section (viz to add after the word wife, in the 19th line, "or who has had, or may have sexual intercourse with whores, or other men's wives"

Ever praying for your welfare & guidance by the spirit of God, both in public & private duties.

I Remain

Your Brother in the Gospel.

Brigham Young