

Major General John B. Clark

On November 5, 1838, General John B. Clark, Commander of the Missouri Militia, ordered all the Mormon men at Far West to assemble on the public square. He then read the names of fifty-six men and ordered them to step forward. These men were then placed under arrest. The following day Clark ordered all Mormons to assemble on the public square and read the following address:

Gentlemen, you whose names are not attached to this list of names, will now have the privilege of going to your fields and providing corn, wood, etc., for your families. Those who are now taken will go from this to prison, be tried, and receive the due demerit of their crimes. But you (except such as charges may hereafter be preferred against) are now at liberty, as soon as the troops are removed that now guard the place, which I shall cause to be done immediately. It now devolves upon you to fulfill the treaty that you have entered into, the leading items of which I shall now lay before you:

The first requires that your leading men be given up to be tried according to law; this you have already complied with.

The second is, that you deliver up your arms; this has been attended to.

The third stipulation is, that you sign over your properties to defray the expenses of the war; this you have also done.

Another article yet remains for you to comply with, and that is, that you leave the state forthwith; and whatever may be your feelings concerning this, or whatever your innocence, it is nothing to me; General Lucas, who is equal in authority with me, has made this treaty with you—I approve of it—I should have done the same had I been here—I am therefore determined to see it fulfilled. The character of this state has suffered almost beyond redemption, from the character, conduct and influence that you have exerted, and we deem it an act of justice to restore her character to its former standing among the states, by every proper means.

The orders of the governor to me were, that you should be exterminated, and not allowed to remain in the state, and had your leaders not been given up, and the terms of the treaty complied with, before this, you and your families would have been destroyed and your houses in ashes.

There is a discretionary power vested in my hands which I shall exercise in your favor for a season; for this lenity you are indebted to my clemency. I do not say that you shall go now, but you must not think of staying here another season, or of putting in crops, for the moment you do this the citizens will be upon you. If I am called here again, in case of a non-compliance of a treaty made, do not think that I shall act any more as I have done—you need not expect any mercy, but extermination, for I am determined the governor's order shall be executed. As for your leaders, do not once think—do



October 27, 1838, Missouri Governor Lilburn Boggs ordered Major General John B. Clark to “exterminate or drive from the state” all Mormons.

not imagine for a moment—do not let it enter your mind that they will be delivered, or that you will see their faces again, for their fate is fixed—their die is cast—their doom is sealed.

I am sorry, gentlemen, to see so great a number of apparently intelligent men found in the situation that you are; and oh! that I could invoke that Great Spirit, the unknown God, to rest upon you, and make you sufficiently intelligent to break that chain of superstition, and liberate you from those fetters of fanaticism with which you are bound—that you no longer worship a man.

I would advise you to scatter abroad, and never again organize yourselves with Bishops, Presidents, etc., lest you excite the jealousies of the people, and subject yourselves to the same calamities that have now come upon you.

You have always been the aggressors—you have brought upon yourselves these difficulties by being disaffected and not being subject to rule—and my advice is, that you become as other citizens, lest by a recurrence of these events you bring upon yourselves irretrievable ruin.

Source: History of the Church, 3:203-4