

Burdick

Winooski Jan. 6. 1858.

Dear Brother, Oscar:

As the horizon of Kansas is thick set with gloom at the present, and your affairs have assumed a very complicated form, I feel it incumbent to write you and ask what is most in my power to do for you?

That a crisis is approaching, yea is near at hand, no rational man can doubt. That each moment is fraught with consequences the most portentous is beyond cavil. The anxious inquiry, then, should be on every patriot's lips, "What can I do, most to advance the cause of liberty and justice. I see the Pro-slavery element in your Territory, regards the Presidents message as a license for them to again light the fires of civil discord. On reading it, I could scarcely withhold public cursing and may the bitterest curses of an outraged & wronged people fall upon his dastard and craven soul. . . . I have ever been of opinion that the Lecompton Convention would complicate your affairs and thus it has proved.

But I cannot enlarge. The yesterday's Tribune brings intelligence of the Fort Scott difficulty--of the fighting & concentration of forces under Phillips--of the moving of Dragoon towards that point. I can scarcely conceive how the Dragoons can attack you as long as you act upon the defensive. So far however as you find a Missouri Ruffian in your borders under arms against you, give him an Eternal leave of absence.

But more I have not time to say now

My purpose is to ask you to briefly state your position & the position of affairs in general to ask if I can be of any service to you--if so to state it. If we are to have a general fight--if the fact of Constitutional freedom is to have another resort to arms--if men of a Territory are to be organized under an act which guarantees to them the right to form their own "domestic institutions in their own way" are to be cheated out of the