

Letter to Charles H. Darling, 29 September 1852

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Kuruman 29th Sep^r
1852

The Lieut. Governor Darling.
May it please your Honor.

In reference to the treaty entered into Her Majesty[']s Commissioners with Emigrant Boers the 16th of January last, I have the honour to inform Government that the provision therein made for the accep of Brittish travellers to the Lake and countries have lately been violated by a Commando of the named Boers. It was accompanied by some hun- of natives, but the Commando was composed of six mounted Boers, and as I know from repeated in- of the entire district of Magaliesberg that the population is under four thousand souls, the of treaty, to which in the following particulars I call the attention of your Honor, is not the act a small and unauthorized portion of the Community, that of the body whose independence the treaty of the 16th was meant to recognize.

The above mentioned Commando made its appear- in the Bakwanian Country on the 27th (Ult.) A party with waggons was detached from the main body, in order to any house which is situated eight miles north from town of Secheli. They destroyed books, medicines and instruments worth upwards of £150 - and carried off destroyed furniture and other property of more than £185. making my personal losses amount to £335.

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They also took away or destroyed the stores and cattle of some English travellers, (viz.) (Messrs) Webb, Codrington

Green &c &c. who are now exploring the Country of Sebitoane; the from the Colony to that country renders relays of cat- absolutely necessary. It has therefore, become customary for to leave a portion of their stores at my house and half of Cattle in charge of Secheli the Chief of the Bakwaiaans. goods and cattle have always been held sacred by the inha- of the country; and when the town was removed eight from the house they of their own accord placed a guard on the , and every article remained in as much security during my ab- for the last two years, as when present in the house. have always been frankly furnished by Engl Secheli to travellers, and except in the case of M^r Moyle who did return the people given by the Chief to take him to the Colony, unpleasantness has ever occurred.

With the plundering of my house was associated the of the town of Secheli, and considerable property de- there by M^r Macabe. The Boers were allowed to form Camp unmolested before the town. Some of them even divine Service held in the Middle of it on Sunday 29th; and they informed Secheli, that they had come to fight the Queen had given over the country and people to them they would ~~accomplish~~ abolish Chieftainship. stress was [^][also] laid on the refusal of Secheli to obey orders to prevent Englishmen from going to the Lake Coun- . (That these orders have been given, I can testify having the documents sent by the Boers containing them.) Monday the 30th the Boers commenced their attack means of swivels, which soon set the town on fire. smoke and heat caused much confusion, many of the running away were captured and shot. The men their position on a small conical hill in the center of the town during the whole day, and there being no water , both Boers and Natives retired when it became dark.

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The numbers of natives killed is upward of sixty; of the Boers five; several of both parties have since died of their , but these are not reckoned in the above numbers shooting of women was probably accidental, but not so capture of children; they reduce them to a state of slavery. have seen numerous instances of this in cases of children from other tribes; and have ascertained the facts from children themselves in their own language. Among those from the Bakwaian are a former wife and two chil[-] of Secheli. In the division of Spoil the Mother and chil- were given to different Boers. The possession of horses the Commando to carry off the cattle belonging to the travellers before the Bakwaian could secure them by . Those of two Native Teachers and my own on which I for assistance in my Northern Journey shared the same . Three[Three] cattle stations belonging to Secheli were also , and the Bakhatla and Bangwaketse lost all their . The corn in the country is entirely consumed and the have only stealing or starvation in prospect. There is a of a struggle altogether different from any which yet taken place in the Interior. I have made careful in- among eight different tribes who have been attacked the Boers during the last ten years, and also among the Boers ; But never could discover the loss of a single man the side of the latter. In only one instance was a wound in- . The above mentioned engagements is therefore peculiar from the known determination of Secheli's character evinced the late skirmish, even after two bullets had pierced his hat a third his coat sleeve; makes me fear that the work of for a most wanton and unprovoked attack will carried on with vigour. The loss of thirty five men will be galling to the Boers, inasmuch as while professing to to prevent the trade in guns and gunpowder by Englishmen

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They are fully aware that much of this slaughter has been in- by weapons which members of their own community sold. It is highly probable that those parties of Boers have gone to the Lake in order to trade in arms and will be cut off on their return. Secheli has the English travellers to keep apart from them, I believe they are quite safe, as the difference between and Englishmen is recognized throughout the Interior.

The above facts showing that a[the first] blow has been ~~and~~ struck by the Boers, and that too on a tribe which has ne- given them the smallest provocation, not for the last eight at least, the slightest trouble to any of its neighbours I conceive worthy, of the observation of the government; for the policy of the Boers takes its usual course; the natives exasperated and reckless; gradually learn to fight , and then when the Boers perceive their real danger back out on such contemptible pleas as that of not paid by the English government.

I have the honour to be
your Honor's
obedient Servant.

(Signed) David Livingstone.