

*Thomas Kendall to Samuel Marsden*

Bay of Islands Feby 26. 1822

Abshed. [?]

Dear Sir

I freely agree with you in the opinion that the Evangelization of the New Zealanders will not be accomplished by carnal weapons. War and Bloodshed are also much to be deplored, and will be so by every pious Christian, wherever such evils exist, in every part of the earth. Was I a Quaker, I should also say, that it is an unlawful, or a unchristian profession that of a Gunsmith, and that Bartering for Muskets or selling them any where, is incompatible with the principles of Christian Religion. But we are fallen men, living in a fallen world: and we well know that men, as they are compelled by the Devil, and under this dominion do take delight in tormenting and destroying each other. Thence even Christians are under the necessity of providing themselves with weapons of war, & they pray for <sup>^</sup>victory & endeavour to obtain victory over their enemies, not indeed for their gratification, but for their presentation. Why will you not argue fairly! I confess, I am not a little [f] surprised that you should, as agent for this Mission, take a view only of that side of the question, in debate, in which all good men must agree with you, and at the same time remain perfectly silent on the other side, where the propriety and practice of selling muskets and powder to the natives of New Zealand in preference to savage weapons can only be supported & justified. Namely “weapons of war being almost the only medium of exchange at present between Englishmen and New Zealanders; it therefore

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must be desirable to dispose of such weapons, if any, in our necessary bartering intercourse, if we barter at all amongst the latter, as are of a merciful nature." If those who would, after mature deliberation, allow muskets, are inconsistent; then whose fine feelings would not allow them, are much more so. I will mention a case in point. A person who does not approve of the disposal of muskets amongst the natives, and for whom both you & I, entertain, I am sure the greatest result, immediately on my return to New Zealand enquired if there were no small hatchets [f] amongst the Society's stores on board the Westmoreland adding that small hatchets sold so well amongst the natives, <sup>^that</sup> I would be desirable to write for a large quantity in order that we might be well supplied. Now these hatchets are all of them used by the natives as weapons of war. We all of us know it to be a fact. You know it to be a fact yourself. But as these hatchets are not used as weapons of war by the English, I suppose, it was on that very account that the cries of the innocent children whose parents had been butchered by them did not occur to you. I say not too much, when I assert, that your observations & your feelings are not in unison. These may be men in the world who could view with pleasure a human body cut up with a hatchet in preference to being dispatched with a musket ball, but not Mr Marsden. I am fully convinced that the people of New Zealand will be in a savage state so long as they use savage weapons: and altho'. Muskets will not convert them to Christianity yet I believe they may on certain occasions use them, even after they become Christians. [f] It is only as we part with merciful weapons in preference to savage ones, and this as a medium of exchange for the needful

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property and services we require that we have been led to part with them at all. My own conduct will bear me out, that I suffered many privations & suffered them a long time before I parted with a single musket. And could I now part with dollars, prints [?] &c as easy, I would never part with another.

Your argument respecting Agriculture is indeed very plausible: but you ought either to have settled us here as free from the concerns of the world as the Monrovia [?] Missionaries are, or otherwise you ought not to have blamed us for making use of, as well as other men, the usual articles of exchange in order to encourage it.

The people at and near the Bay of Islands are bent upon subduing the Natives of the whole northern island. How can we help this? We do not persuade the people to go to war? [?] It is an act of providence and a mercy that we are under the protection of so strong a party of natives. We should in the [f] event of their weakness have been subdued with these. Do you think that the natives at a distance are less inclined to war, or that they are less cruel than those around us, towards their vanquished enemies! I beg leave once for all to observe, that we have nothing to do with the New Zealand way. There is not one of us, in my opinion, but may remain secure at New Zealand, and also may be useful. For my own part, I have only one purpose in view. Here I live, & here I wish to die. I know I have infirmities and great ones, and also great sins to be sorry for, but God is not to blame and as far as he enables me to go on in his service I am happy to say, I find that to be delightful.

*Thomas Kendall to Samuel Marsden*

I generally agree with you in your replies to my Letters as stated in your 1<sup>st</sup>. 2<sup>nd</sup>. & 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraphs. The sentiments expressed in the 4<sup>th</sup>. are such as I expected from you.

I cannot object to your answers contained in your 5<sup>th</sup>. 6<sup>th</sup>. & 7<sup>th</sup> Paragraphs. [f]

I conclude, by repeating my former observation, that I do really and truly desire to obey and act cordially with the Society; and I object to any insinuation which may lead the Society to think I desire to act otherwise. You are greatly mistaken if you suspect that I want to treat either the Society or yourself disrespectfully. The Society I am persuaded will not finally blame me for bringing this subject fairly before them and not hiding my meaning from their view. I think I have said all that can be said either in excuse for, or as to the expediency of, the conduct of the Missionaries bartering with Muskets &c among the Natives. The Locals have a right to condemn me, and my colleagues if they think we have done wrong, for we are their Servants. There is one observation <sup>^however,</sup> which I must make with due respect to you. You seem to be more afraid of suffering in your good name and reputation respects the above Questions, than you are ~~of~~ [f] desirous of explaining the truth; putting it in its true light, & cleaving to your New Zealand Colleagues - Have you forgotten your own amendments of my Sentiment "that a Musket has a greater "tendency to give a civil feeling, to the Native mind "than the use of a savage weapon."

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The 75£ worth of Fish Hooks were equally divided between the two Settlements as soon as I returned <sup>^Mr Butler Knew this.</sup> – I have not acted partially or selfishly, but fairly & kindly to all the Missionaries in those matters.

I am glad, I have opened my mind freely to you in my Letters by the Westmoreland & I thank you for your reply altho: it is a sharp one – I believe, that if I had always had you with me at New Zealand, we should have agreed well – You would then have known my wants – have cheerfully supplied them. Nor would my misrepresentation have occurred in which my name has even been brought into question respectg [f] how unpleasant whispers which have wounded your feelings so severely. I assure you, I cordially esteem you for your pious & dis interested service in the cause of our common Lord; and I fervently pray that it may please God to confer the richest blessing, upon yourself & family. And am

Dear Sir

Your very/ Obed<sup>t</sup> Ser<sup>t</sup>.

Tho<sup>s</sup>. Kendall

Rev<sup>d</sup> Sam<sup>l</sup>. Marsden