

Samuel Marsden to CMS Secretary Josiah Pratt

Parramatta Feby 4th 1818

Rev^d Sir

I had the pleasure to receive your Letter by the Friendship – and was very glad to find that some legal Steps were likely to be adopted for the protection of the Natives in the South Sea Islands. I have nothing more to communicate, as I wrote very fully to you by the Harriet – One caution I omitted to give you relative to the Natives at New Zealand. On the return of the Harriet from the Bay of islands, a Statement was published in the Sydney Gazette, that the Natives intended to take the Harriet – I believe this to be a direct Falsehood. I have Letters from all the settlers, and not the least mention is made of such an Intention. From all that I could learn from the Men on Board, the Natives rendered them every assistance in their Power – There was [f] nothing to prevent the Natives from taking the Harriet in one moment, if they wished to do so. The Ship's Company were in a State of mutiny when the Vessel lay in the Harbour – They had only 29 men on Board including the Officers and Lascars – nine of the Europeans were confined by the Captain's orders, from their difference with him. There were not more than three men kept watch at night – and I was informed by those on Board, that 20 of the natives slept on Board every night. The natives had their war Canoes with them, and one of the mates told me the natives were very numerous – This is stated in the Gazette. I am certain 2,000 or 3,000 New Zealanders would at any time take a Vessel like the Harriet in one moment – The master told me, that the

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men whom he had confined for mutiny wanted the natives to join them to take the vessel. No man, who knows the Situation the Harriet was in when lying [f] for weeks in the Timber District near the Shore, with so few men on Board; and where there was such a number of natives, who fear no danger will believe the Account to be true, which is published in the Gazette. That Account was published in my opinion with no other view, than to injure the Cause of the Mission— There has not a single Act of Violence been done to any European Sailor or vessel from the North Cape, to the River Thames, since the settlers resided at the Island. I merely write these few Lines by Dr Bromely [sic] in order that you may not give any Credit to Reports against the Natives of New Zealand, coming thro' such a Channel, without some Act is committed. I contend they could have no Intention to take the Harriet, because they did not take her when there was nothing to prevent them. Any night the natives who slept on Board could have thrown the two or three men who kept watch overboard, and got Possession [f] of the Vessel. If any thing should happen you will receive Information from me or the Settlers as soon as possible— I think it may be possible that the Master of the Harriet was afraid, as he was on Board as first mate the Jefferson Whaler, when the Captain behaved so ill at the North Cape, and if I am not wrong informed, he was at New Zealand at the time Tippahee, and his people were killed by the Europeans. When I hear again from the settlers they will inform me what past while the Harriet was there. If any difference had happened, some of them would have mentioned it

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when the Harriet returned as they all wrote to me by her. Should Dr Bromely [sic] call upon you, he will inform you how we are going on. I expect nothing but war here, while the present Administration continues. Open war with the wicked, is better for the Christian than close Connection. He will watch and pray more and live nearer to his God –

I am Dear Sir

Yours affectionately

Sam^l Marsden

Rev^d J. Pratt