

Letter
Lord Palmerston, Prime Minister of Great Britain to Foreign
Minister Charles Francis Adams, Sr.

June 11th, 1862

My dear Sir:

I cannot refrain from taking the liberty of saying to you that it is difficult if not impossible to express adequately the disgust which must be excited in the mind of every honorable man by the order of General Butler given in the enclosed extract from yesterday's Times. Even when a town is taken by assault, it is the practice of the commander of the conquering arm to protect to his utmost the inhabitants and especially the female part of them, and I will venture to say that no example can be found in the history of civilized nations till the publication of this order, of a general guilty in cold blood of so infamous an act as deliberately to hand over the female inhabitants of a conquered city to the unbridled licence (sic) of an unrestrained soldiery.

If the Federal Government chooses to be served by men capable of such revolting outrages, they must submit to abide by the deserved opinion which mankind will form of their conduct.

Lord Palmerston
Prime Minister of Great Britain