

Nations used to lett him sett out of doors like women; if the Five Nations still make him a woman they must; but what is the reason the Governor makes him a woman?

Governor Morris replied

that he held Councils on a hill, has no Secrets, never sits in swamps, but speaks his mind openly to the world; . . . the Six Nations may be wrong; they are not under his Direction; and therefore he is not answerable for their conduct, if they have not treated the Delewares as men. 41

The struggle was not resolved for some time. In fact, as long as the war between the French and English was still in doubt, the Delawares continued to seek their independence from Iroquois domination. At an Easton Conference two years later, Croghan wrote to Sir William Johnson

I have a bad opinion of this Treaty ye Indians are much Divided and Jelious of Each other, ye Muncys & Mohickenders Dispise Teadyuscung as Well as ye Six Nations and ye Quaker party hear I faer will Indeavour to Supert him if So ye Six Nations will be much Dis-pleasd with us and Indeed they are unready Jelous of itt. 42

Just a month earlier, Post had witnessed the humbling of an old Onondago at the forks of the Ohio who had claimed that, as a member of the Six Nations, the Ohio was "his own ground."

⁴¹Minutes of Easton Conference, "Fryday," July 30, 1756. C.R., VII, 217.

⁴²William Johnson Papers, III, 4. September 26.

A Delaware, proclaiming the same feeling of independence that Teedyuscung represented in the East, said of this Onondago "he endeavours to frighten us, by saying this ground is his; he dreams," and said to him "You endeavoured to frighten us; but know, we are now men, and not so easily frightened."⁴³

Among both the whites and the Indians the organizations which had transacted most of the official business between the races disintegrated or were at least badly shaken under the shocks of war. While those colonists who sought to pacify the Indians by coming to terms with them, as between equals, were struggling under the difficulties which cropped up at their treaty conferences, those who believed in pacification by military force had more immediate success.

The achievements of the Imperial Government and armies were not entirely due to feats of arms. Economics and diplomacy played as large a part in their activities as it did in the plans of the persuaders and pacifists who were bungling their way through the Easton Conferences; with this difference, however, that the government and military did not conceive of the Indian tribes as their equals. Any concessions they made to Indian needs or demands were only temporary means of detaching them from the French, but the ultimate aim was to eliminate all competitive powers, French or Indian, and then

⁴³Post's Journal for August 24 and 25, 1758, in Thwaites, Travels, I, pp. 201-03.

to dictate peace terms.

One of the strongest aids to the English was the scarcity of French trade goods. They had generally been of inferior quality, higher cost, and fewer than their English counterparts, but during the war this condition was aggravated by the British control of the seas, which cut off Canada. In 1758 Johnson explained that the Indians were not supporting the French because the latter had ". . . neither provisions nor Presents to give them."⁴⁴

During the summer of 1758 General Forbes marched from the settled part of the province towards Ft. Duquesne, establishing a firm base for his operations at Ft. Bedford. An advance guard which prematurely approached the forks of the Ohio was defeated, but after this the Indian support for the French melted away, and presently so did the French themselves. On November 18, 1758 the ailing general was carried into the smoking and deserted ruins of Ft. Duquesne, which the French had blown up and fired during the night, and then abandoned upon the imminent approach of the overwhelming British force.

When the superior power of the English became apparent, the Indians went over to them. "The French," they told the government, "they were but as a handful of Corn, quite in yr

⁴⁴William Johnson Papers, III, 271.

power."⁴⁵ Their excuses were like those given to Sir William Johnson by the Iroquois when they assured him that they would no longer dally with the French. They said

We own we have been lost or drunk these several years past in not listening to you . . . You acquainted us some time ago of the designs of the French in encroaching upon our hunting-grounds, and advised us to be upon our guard against them, or otherwise they would come and dispossess and destroy us all; it seems to us now that they had blinded our eyes, and it is plain to us as the sun that rises in the morning, that they had it in view. ⁴⁶

Viewed in historical perspective, it may seem apparent that the French never had any chance of reconquering the upper Ohio Valley. It did not seem so apparent to the scattered English and colonial forces garrisoning the area during 1759. There were Indian raids and continuous alarms that "... the French and their Indians will attack Fort Duquesne [recte Fort Pitt, which was built by the English a short distance from the remains of Ft. Duquesne] as soon as the river is clear of ice,"⁴⁷ or that "... they will be here in One month, Perhaps in less . . . Come immediately with a great many men,

⁴⁵Daniel's Report at Easton Conference, recorded in Richard Peter's Journal for October 2, in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, quoted in Wallace, Weiser, p. 528.

⁴⁶Speech of Canaghquayeson, December 26, 1755. Account of Conferences, p. 6.

⁴⁷Letter from Governor Denny to General Amherst, March 3, 1759. C.R., VIII, 284.

otherwise these will be the last words we shall speak, for both you and we shall be killed."⁴⁸ A concerted attack on Fort Ligonier on July 6 was thought to indicate a heavier attack impending on Fort Pitt,⁴⁹ and, in fact, the French were preparing to invade Allegania. It was only news that ". . . a great army of English and Sir Wm. Johnson, with the Six N^{ns} & a great number of other Indians, were on their march to attack Niagara"; which caused the French commander to ". . . lay by thoughts of going down the river [the Allegheny to Fort Pitt] till he had drove the English from Niagara," thereby diverting his forces and his Indian Allies.⁵⁰

To make matters worse, General Forbes was seriously ill, and unable to take the many necessary steps to strengthen his conquest. The Indians said that "they are acquainted the General is Sick; Is there no Body else to do the King's Business?"⁵¹ There was not, and the General continued ". . . in a languishing Condition," until his death on March 11 in

⁴⁸Speech of Six Nations Chiefs at Fort Pitt, January 6, 1759, C.R., VIII, 295. See also letter of Colonel Mercer to Governor Denny, January 8, 1759. C.R., VIII, 292.

⁴⁹Report of Adam Stephen to General Stanwix, July 7, 1759. P.A. Ser. 1, III, 668-69.

⁵⁰Letter from Croghan at Pittsburgh to Governor Denny, July 15, 1759. P.A., Ser. 1, III, 671-72.

⁵¹Report of Andrew Montour to Secretary Peters, February 20, 1759. C.R., VIII, 270.

Philadelphia.⁵²

Considering all the factors which made the British advance into and occupation of the upper Ohio country tenuous, it is not surprising that the Imperial Government and its military commanders courted the favor of the Indians. General Forbes paid far more attention to Indian affairs than did Braddock,⁵³ and his commander-in-chief, General Amherst, was most solicitous of the Indians during the entire period that the English were gradually occupying the more distant French wilderness posts. As late as 1761 he wrote a general letter which was read at Pittsburgh and Detroit.

Bretheren, Kings, Captains and Warriors of Many Nations . . . I do assure all the Indian Nations, that his Majesty has not sent me to deprive any of you of your Lands and Property; . . .

I mean not to take away any of your Lands, But as the necessity of his Majesty's Service obliges me to take Post, and build Forts in some parts of your Country to protect our Trade with you, and prevent the Enemy from taking possession of your Lands, and hurting both you and us, as you are sensible, that if we do not build Forts the French will. In that case I assure you, that no part whatever of your Lands joining the said Forts shall be taken from you, nor any of our People be permitted to Hunt or Settle upon them; but they shall remain your absolute Property, and I will even promise you some Presents, as a consideration for the Lands where such Forts and Trading

⁵²Letter from Governor Denny to General Amherst; March 3, 1759. C.R., VIII, 284. Also see P.A., Ser. 1, III, 579, fn.

⁵³Volweiller, Croghan, pp. 136-37.

Houses are or may be built upon, . . . 54

Such assurances were more effective, however, when combined with a show of force and with the economic need of the Indians fur trade. Colonel Mercer wrote to Secretary Peters from Pittsburgh on March 18, 1759, that despite the danger from the French and their Indians from across the Great Lakes,

We have nothing to fear, in my Opinion, and as little to Loose from the Delawares, they chuse to lye by and wait the Event of this Summer's Campaign; . . .

As soon as an Army marches up superior to the French force on the Lakes, you will have the chiefs of these Ohio Indians and many Men go to treat at Philadelphia. The Safety of their Families will induce them to Wait for our first taking Vigorous measures. 55

Moreover, the Indians themselves stated very clearly what they wanted.

We desire that you may forget all that is past, and we assure you we are resolved never to Break the Peace now Settled between you and Us.

Brethren, we beg you will consider our wants, & send some of your Traders amongst us.

. . . the Delawares, will Conduct our Bretheren the, [sic] Traders, to our Towns, you may be assured we will take great care of them and bring them safe home. 56

54"Message of General Amherst to the Indians, 1761"
"Given under my Hand and Seal of Arms, at Head Quarters, at Fort George, in the City of New York; this twenty seventh day of April, one thousand seven hundred and sixty," P.A., Ser. 1, IV, 49. But see P.A., Ser. 1, III, 745-46, dated 1760.

55C.R., VIII, 310-11.

56Speech of Tightwee Chief at Fort Pitt Conference, August 2, 1760. P.A., Ser. 1, III, 751-52.

It was to meet such requests and needs, as well as to regulate the behavior of traders, that the Assembly passed an act in April, 1758, which established a system of trading posts owned and operated by the province and regulated for the benefit of the Indians.⁵⁷ However, prices were high, and goods were hard to procure. Repeatedly, observers on the frontier, or Indians themselves, stressed the importance of supplying trade goods. As long as the French were still present this need was greatly increased. Andrew Montour warned that ". . . the Indians, if kept any longer in this State of uncertainty, will be constrained to join the French, which they have no mind to do, . . ."⁵⁸ Colonel Mercer said "there is a great Demand for Indian Goods. I have refused great Quantities of Skins and Furs; a fair Trade Cannot be too soon begun,"⁵⁹ and again,

you will discover in Shingas' speech his attention to the Interests of Trade; every part of his Conduct here is of a Piece; the Indians are surprized, and so must everyone be that offer repeated Promises of proper Assortments of Goods, being sent to barter with them on the Government's account, none have yet appeared. . . . Course Goods will not do; such things as the

⁵⁷M. Carey and J. Bioren, Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, . . . 1803, I, 343. Hereafter Laws of Pa.

⁵⁸Report of Montour to Secretary Peters, February 20, 1759. C.R., VIII, 270.

⁵⁹Letter to Governor Denny, January 8, 1759. C.R., VIII, 292.

Indians formerly have dealt in must now be more Showey and of the finest Sort. The Price they don't Value, so they find it much the Same down the Country. 60

Except for the shortage of goods, the Indians were pleased with the English attention and favors, and to find that

our young Men, who were sent . . . with Speeches . . . were kindly received, & brought Back answers which were agreeable to our Nations. . . .

Brethren, ever since you drove the French from this peace, we have heard from the Indians of all Nations who came to Visit you, how kindly you have Treated them; . . . Your behaviour since you came here has gained the Hearts of all the Indians, for you has dispersed the Dark Clouds which Hung over our Heads, & Proclaim'd Peace thro' this whole Land. You have given us fresh Spirits, our Women & Children look pleasant, all our Countenances are Changed. 61

Behind the messages of brotherhood and peace, however, there was profound misunderstanding and suspicion. The Indians wondered why they received peace messages at the same time their land was invaded by General Forbes' army.

Brother, this is what makes us jealous, and we do not know what to think of it: if you had brought the news of peace before your army had begun to march, it would have caused a great deal more good. We do not so readily believe you, because a great many great men and traders have told us, long before the war, that you and the French intended to join and cut all the Indians off. 62

⁶⁰Letter to Secretary Peters, March 18, 1759, C.R., VIII, 310.

⁶¹Speech of Tightwee Chief at Fort Pitt Conference, August 2, 1760. P.A., Ser. 1, III, 751.

⁶²Answer of Shingas and Delaware Chiefs to Post on September 4, 1758. Thwaites, Travels, I, 221.

In fact, they wondered why the contending European forces were there at all. "It is plain that you white people are the cause of this war; who do not you and the French fight in the old country, and on the Sea? Why do you come to fight on our land? This makes every body believe, you want to take the land from us by force, and Settle it."⁶³

They feared that having once occupied the Ohio country, the British would never leave, and so they asked General Forbes, ". . . In a most soft and loving manner, to go back over the mountain, and to stay there; for, if you will do that I will use it for an argument, to argue with other nations of Indians."⁶⁴ So deep seated was the Indian suspicion of the aims of the British government that they warned them

that all the nations had jointly agreed to defend their hunting place at Allegheny, and suffer nobody to settle there; and as these Indians are very much inclined to the English interest, so he begged us very much to tell the Governor, General, and all other people not to settle there. And if the English would draw back over the mountain, they would get all the other nations into their interest, but if they staid and settled there, all the nations would be against them; and he was afraid it would be a great war, and never come to a peace. ⁶⁵

⁶³Speech of Shingas and Delaware Chiefs to Post on September 1, 1758. Thwaites, Travels, I, 213.

⁶⁴King Beaver's Speech to General Forbes (to be conveyed by Post) on November 28, 1758. Thwaites, Travels, I, 274.

⁶⁵Speech of Ketiofhund to Post, November 29, 1758. Thwaites, Travels, I, 278.

The Eastern Delawares even threatened Sir William Johnson that they would take action, if the white men didn't uphold their promises to exchange prisoners.

'Tis true brother, as you say, we are not at our own command, but under the direction of the Six nations; . . . we are much obliged to you, brother, that you tell us to stop, . . .

But, brother, Johnson, some of our young men, a few days ago, went out against the English; we can't help it, . . . Now, brother, you must take care of your side too; many of our people are now captives among the English, we must see every one of them return again, or else it will not be well. We shall wait two months to see whether our captives are given up, and if we don't see them then, we don't know what we shall do; when we see our people again, then we shall contrive to make up the matter [the reason of the quarrel between us and our brethren the English] and settle affairs, and not till then. 66

The Indians did not know the plans of the Imperial Government, which did not at this time contemplate acquiring any more of their territory, nor did they understand the many political pressures which made white policy fluctuate, such as the animosity between the proprietary government and the colonial party in the assembly. They were, however, all too aware of the results of these fluctuations. Over and over the speeches of Indians contained the appeal that the white men should ". . . hold fast what you have begun, and be strong."

⁶⁶Letter of Delawares to Johnson, in Rev. Hawley's letter of December 27, 1755. Account of Conferences, p. 13.

"Now, brethren, you know our hearts, and what we have to say; be strong;" "Now we desire you to be strong;"⁶⁷

then he [Teedyuscung] repeated the Delaware word "Whish Shicksy" . . . with great Earnestness and in a very Pathetic Tone. Mr. Weiser, who knew the word to have a very extensive & forcible sense, desired the Interpreter to ask him what he meant by "Whish Shicksy" on this particular Occasion, and Explained himself in the following manner ". . . Whish Shicksy, be Strong; look round you; . . . be sure perform every Promise you have made us in Particular, do not Pinch matters neither with us nor other Indians; . . . what you do, Do Quickly; the times are Dangerous, they will not admit of Delay; Whish Shicksy [sic], do it Effectually, and with all Possible Dispatch." 68

The particular sense of the phrase might change, but its general meaning is clear. The Indian is telling the white man to keep his word, because he does not believe the white man will.

⁶⁷Speeches to Post, in Thwaites, Travels, I. Speech of Kuckquetackton (White Eyes) and Killbuck, Delaware Chiefs, on August 27, 1758, p. 211.

Speech of Delaware George on September 2, 1758, p. 220.

Speech of King Beaver on November 29, 1758, p. 277.

⁶⁸Minutes of Easton Conference, July 28, 1756. C.R., VII, 209. Charles Thomson, "A prominent Philadelphia Quaker" (Thwaites, Travels, I, 182) appends the following to the three previous uses of the phrase:

p. 211, "That is, go on steadily with this good work of establishing a peace--"

p. 220, "The Indian word, that is translated, be strong, so often repeated, is an expression they use to spirit up persons, who have undertaken some difficult task, as to lift, or move, a great weight, or execute a difficult enterprise; nearly equivalent to our word, 'courage!, courage!'"

p. 277, "The word, wilchickly, translated, be strong, is of a very extensive signification, be strong, be steady, pursue to effect what you have begun &c."

The Indian had in mind the frontier settler, who did not heed the Imperial or provincial government's promises, and the traders, many of whom cheated the Indians any way they could, as well as the apparently indecisive governments. Viewed from the Indian side of the frontier, all white men were responsible for the acts of their compatriots, which is no less reasonable than the mirror opposite belief of most whites. In a sense, this total lack of trust in the rival race, and lumping together of its members, was as realistic for the immediate contact situation as the more 'enlightened' attitude of the responsible leaders on both sides was for their diplomacy.

There were some other Indian reasons why the peace maneuvering of the French and Indian War ultimately collapsed in 1763. One was that they always tried to arrange negotiations in such a way that the prestige of their tribe would not suffer in the competitive tribal world in which they still lived. Therefore, they would not treat for peace unless they could make it seem that was the English who were suing for peace, not the Indians. They would wait until they could tell the commissioners that peace was ". . . sought by the English: you have talked of peace: you are sorry for the war: you have dug up the peace that was buried, . . ." ⁶⁹ And another

⁶⁹ Charles Thomson's note on Speech of Delaware George to Post, September 2, 1758, Thwaites, Travels, I, 218.

was that they were still a proud, unhumbled, people. They might feel uncomfortable when dealing with the white man, but among themselves there was still no doubt of their own superiority.

There is not a prouder or a more high minded people in themselves, than the Indians. They think themselves the wisest and prudentest men in the world; and that they can over-power both the French and the English when they please . . .

The Indians are a people full of jealousy, and will not easily trust any body; and they are easily affronted, and brought into jealousy; then afterwards they will have nothing at all to do with those they suspect; and it is not brought so easily out of their minds; they keep it to their graves, and leave the seed of it in their children and grand children's minds; so, if they can, they will revenge themselves for every imagined injury. They are a very distrustful people. Through their imagination and reason they think themselves a thousand times stronger than all other people.⁷⁰

All this Indian suspicion, understanding and misunderstanding, pride and jealousy, was bound to show up when they were despised by the white men. They knew just enough about their own position in the relationship in white men's eyes to resent it deeply. Teedyuscung expressed it thus:

Bargains or [are] Bargains, and we Stand by them tho' we should have had even only pipes, which will be brock to-morrow for Some of our land, but we think we Should not be Ill used on this account by those very people who now enjoy the fruit of our lands, nor be

⁷⁰ Post at the end of his first Journal. Thwaites, Travels, I, 230-31.

Called fooles for it, the Indians are not such fooles as not to bear this in their minds. 71

The western Delawares on the Ohio, and Alleghenny, were also aware of this.

Look now, my Brother the white people think we have no brains in our heads; but that they are great and big, and that makes them make war with us; we are but a little handful to what you are; but remember, when you look for a wild turkey you cannot always find it, it is so little it hides itself under the bushes: and when you hunt for a rattle snake, you cannot find it; and perhaps it will bite you before you see it. 72

The Indians were not much mistaken in their belief that they were despised by the white men, but they did not understand that this was connected with the white man's belief that it was the Indian who was faithless. As Colonel Mercer said at Fort Pitt: ". . . these Scoundrels come in Shoals every Day, to live upon us, pretending the utmost friendship."73 ". . . the young Villains who have swilled so much of our Blood, . . . have still some French Poison lurking in their Veins, that might perhaps break out at a Convenient Opportunity."74

71"Remarks on an Indian Conference Held at Easton in Nov^r. 1756." P.A., Ser. 1, III, 39.

72Speech of Shingas, King Beaver, Delaware George, etc. to Post, September 1, 1758. Thwaites, Travels, I, 230-31.

73Letter from Colonel Mercer to Governor Denny, January 8, 1759. C.R., VIII, 292.

74Letter from Colonel Mercer to Secretary Peters, March 1, 1759. C.R., VIII, 305.

Not only did most Anglo-Americans think the Indians were not to be trusted, they held a very low opinion of their political and military power, at least after the passing of the French menace no longer made Indian alliance necessary. "We can now talk to our new allies in a proper Stile, as their Services are not Necessary, tho' the Consistency of our Plan in bringing them entirely over to the British Interest, ought to be preserved by treating them with great kindness, but suffering none of their insults."⁷⁵

It was at this point, when the French had been defeated and Canada surrendered on September 8, 1760, that the British military commanders adopted a new policy with regard to the Indians. General Amherst's instructions to Sir William Johnson, outlining the new approach, show also the white man's scorn for the natives. "You are sensible how averse I am," he wrote, "to purchasing the good behavior of the Indians, by presents, the more they get the more they ask, and yet are never satisfied."⁷⁶ And later, he threatened that if they did not ". . . adhere firmly to His Majesty's interest . . . they Must not only Expect the Severest Retaliation, but an Entire Destruction of all their

⁷⁵Letter from Colonel Mercer to Governor Deñny, August 12, 1759. C.R., VIII, 394.

⁷⁶Letter from General Amherst to Johnson, 1761. William Johnson Papers, III, 520.

Nations, for I am fairly Resolved, Whenever they give me an Occasion, to Extirpate them Root and branch . . ."⁷⁷ Accordingly, the Indians were told:

We do not offer Peace to the Indians thro' any apprehensions of their Power joined to the French, for we have this last year defeated their United Forces in different places; but . . . We . . . out of pitty to them, and from the Remembrance of our Antient Friendship are now willing and ready to renew our former friendship. . . ."⁷⁸

Amherst knew that the Indians needed goods, but he hoped that "when the Intended Trade is once Established they will be able to supply themselves . . ."⁷⁹

So the first act in the tragedy of errors that extended from 1754 to 1764 was complete. Those who advocated military force had won, in the sense that they had driven the French out, and could now dictate terms to the Indians, but they had compromised their position by flattering the Indians and subsidizing them heavily to win them over from the French. So their new policy, while perfectly consistent with their ultimate aims, seemed to the Indians like betrayal. This was

⁷⁷Letter from General Amherst to Johnson, 1761, William Johnson Papers, III, 520.

⁷⁸Speech of Colonel Mercer to Delawares at Fort Pitt, February 26, 1759. C.R., VIII, 308.

⁷⁹Letter from General Amherst to Johnson, William Johnson Papers, III, 345.

aggravated by the influence of the pacifists who had treated the Indians all along as if they were independent.

Again, the Indians did not know the political pressures which forced the British Army and Imperial Government to economize after the enormous expenses of the Seven Years War, and so they could not understand that they were supposed to ". . . live by their Hunting, & not think that they are always to be receiving Presents."⁸⁰ The Indians could only see that they were being mistreated, since the gifts had stopped, and trade had not yet successfully resumed. The lack of the gifts upon which they had come to depend was particularly galling, as contrasted with the way the French had treated them (in a competitive situation, to be sure). Coghnan wrote to Johnson that the Indians asked him ". . . ye Reason why we always was Calling them to Council During ye War & giveing them presents & now take No Notice of them. They say ye French was but a poor people butt they allways cloathed any Indians that was poor or Naked when they come to see them."⁸¹ There were other aspects of the difference between English and French policy, especially as the Indian saw the latter in the distance and

⁸⁰Message of General Robert Monckton, Amherst's Second in Command, to Colonel Bouquet, April 5, 1761. From Bouquet Papers, Additional Manuscripts, 21638:205, quoted in Downes, Council Fires, p. 106.

⁸¹Letter from Coghnan to Johnson, May 10, 1762, William Johnson Papers, III, 733.

forgot its disadvantages, which were uncomplimentary to the English. The French had had one great advantage in their dealings with Indians, which was that they never tried to dispossess them, as the English colonist had to so he could farm.⁸² This complementary pattern of infiltration, rather than supplementary pattern of settlement, had placed the Indian on the horns of a dilemma. He had to choose between the fur trade items which he needed to live and which were better and cheaper at English posts, and his land which became even more necessary for his 'fur-farm,' and for livelihood itself, as it dwindled, and which the French did not threaten. The French seem to have been aware of the superiority of their Indian relations and to have encouraged, even at their own apparent expense, such practices as kept the friendship of the Indians. A young Frenchman who took part in the Ohio campaign afterwards recorded the success of this policy at the same time as he expressed the average French-Canadian's resentment against his government's favoritism.

In this country it has always been thought a bad policy to punish a Frenchman who uses violence against the savages, whereas savages can maltreat and even kill a Frenchman with impunity, incurring no more than a reprimand.

⁸²This had been apparent for several generations, e.g., see the speech of Gehesaont at Philadelphia Conference, July 20, 1721. C.R., III, 133.