

To tell the truth, the savages are not encouraged in such actions. Among the English, it is entirely different. A savage killing an Englishman, if caught, is punished with death, while an Englishman is never punished for killing a savage. Perhaps for this reason, more savage tribes are allied with the French than with the English. But, for their own interests, savages prefer trading with the English, because the latter sell their goods at lower prices. 83

Comparison of remembered French kindness with the new English parsimony was only one of many Indian grievances. For instance, there was the sudden oppressive problem of peace, because war, limited though it might be, was part of the Indian way of life. Johnson and Croghan knew this, and tried to divert the warrior bands as far away as possible, although this complicated Superintendent Atkins' problems in the southern colonies. Croghan told the Indians ^{at} "Fort d'Troit" on December 4, 1760, that he knew "... your Warriors have all a martial spirit & must be employed at War & if they want diversion after the fatigue of hunting there is your natural Enemies the Cherokees with whom you have been long at War, there your Warriors will find diversion & there they may go, they have no other place to go, as all Nations else are become the subjects of Great Britain." 84

There was always the unsatisfactory relationship

83 J. C. B., Travels in New France, pp. 91-92.

84 Croghan's Journal, Thwaites, Travels, I, 116-17.

revolving around land purchase, although the Imperial government had tried to centralize that in 1761, by taking it out of the hands of the provincial governments.⁸⁵ The army tried to enforce the prohibition of settlement proclaimed by Colonel Bouquet for Indian lands on October 30, 1761,⁸⁶ but the settlers evaded the soldiers, or returned to their burned cabins as soon as the soldiers left.

There was friction with the traders, who had too few goods to fill the gap made by the end of the treaty gifts, and who had long mistreated the Indian, and continued to do so after this.⁸⁷ The traders were not liked by the army, nor were the official provincial traders nor the Department employees, such as George Croghan. "Our Indian agents are a kind of Load Stone attracting the Indians, who reciprocally attract Presents, for when they are absent the Savages disappear, and the expence cease; after all in several cases we cannot do without them, but if any address is required it consists rather I think in managing the managers than the Indians."⁸⁸ The army attitude

⁸⁵N. Y. Col. Hist. Docs., VII, 473, 478.

⁸⁶Cited in Smith, Fur Trade, p. 83.

⁸⁷E.g., the exchange of messages between Governor Thomas and the Assembly in 1740, in C.R., IV, 737-41.

⁸⁸Letter from Colonel Bouquet to General Amherst, May 24, 1762, in Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collection, XIX, 144, quoted in Volweiller, Croghan, p. 148.

did not aid the work of the agents, and the animosity was returned by them. Croghan did ". . . not approve of General Amherst's plan in Distressing them the Indians too much . . . How it may end the Lord knows But I ashure you I am of opinion itt will nott be long before we shall have some [quarrels] with them."⁸⁹ Furthermore, some traders and agents were becoming interested in land speculation. They pictured eventual white expansion into what was then Indian territory, and they wanted to take advantage of the explosive economy which would result.⁹⁰ With trade goods expensive, a temporary flood of furs on the market as those hoarded during the war were released, a declining market for furs in Europe, and the possibility of other ways to make money, the fur traders followed their own economic interests, just as the Indians had done. In this case it resulted in the breakdown of the Indian economic system.

One of the greatest causes of trouble between the races was the matter of prisoners. The colonies all insisted that the British Government demand from the Indians all the whites they had taken prisoner on their raids on the frontiers. If there had not been as much as a seven year lag in some cases

⁸⁹Letter from Croghan to Colonel Bouquet, December 10, 1762, and March 19, 1763, in Bouquet Collection, A 18-2:534 and A 19:98. Quoted in Volweiller, Croghan, p. 161.

⁹⁰Smith, Fur Trade, p. 91.
Volweiller, Croghan, p. 231.

between capture and liberation this would have been a reasonable request, but as it was many of the prisoners were Indians in all save colour, and had no desire to return. The Indians tortured a few prisoners to death, but the vast majority were adopted into Indian families. Children, especially, frequently lost all cultural attachment with their parents' people. This contrasted sharply with the treatment of these same child prisoners when they were returned to the Province of Pennsylvania. If no one claimed them (and many had lost their parents when they were captured) they were sold as indentured servants in Philadelphia. The Indians felt justified in saying

We love you more than you love us; for when we take any prisoners from you, we treat them as our own children. We are poor, and yet we clothe them as well as we can, though you see our children are as naked as at the first. By this you may see that our hearts are better than yours. 91

Frequently the military experienced great difficulty in getting captives to leave their captors, and in transporting them back to white settlements.

We have already upwards of 200 Captives delivered & many of them have remained so many Years amongst them, that they part from them with the greatest Reluctance. We are obliged to keep Guards to prevent their Escape, and unless they are treated with Indulgence & Tenderness

⁹¹Speech of the Delawares to Post, September 1, 1758. Thwaites, Travels, I, 214.

by their Relations, they will certainly return to their Savage Masters. The Delawares and Mingoes have not only delivered all their Prisoners, but even their Children born from White Women. 92

These, then, were the chief reasons why the peace established, half by military force which cowed but did not crush the Indians, and half by diplomacy which treated them as equals but did not fulfill its promises nor supply its trade, deteriorated until the two races were against war. Many of the problems were understood by those professionals who regularly dealt with the Indians. Sir William Johnson's proposals to the Board of Trade in 1762 represent the ideal situation from the viewpoint of the Indian Department. He advocated complete Imperial control (and incidentally, it follows, his own control) of trade, with Department inspectors and fixed prices, and strict prohibition of settling or hunting on Indian land. He felt peace could not be secure until the Indians were satisfied ". . . on the subject of their uneasiness, particularly concerning their lands; . . . A certain line should be run at the back of the Northern Colonies, beyond which no settlement should be made, until the whole Six Nations should think proper

⁹²This particular scene is after, not before, Pontiac's Rebellion, but the situation is the same. Letter from Colonel Bouquet to Governor Penn, November 15, 1764. C.R., IX, 207.

of settling part thereof."⁹³

Certainly the Department understood the behavior of the Indians better than the army did. To Colonel Mercer it seemed perfectly clear where the Indians' own best interests lay and that they must follow it, for they could not well fly in the face of the Empire. At Fort Pitt on February 26, 1759, he advised the Delawares:

Your great Men are to Consider that their Brothers, the English, from a few that came into America, are become a great People, every Day increasing in Numbers of Men and Warriors; so they should Weigh well whether it is their Interest to make us their Enemies for Ever, or now Joyfully accept the Peace we Offer them. ⁹⁴

But George Croghan knew the Indians better than that. The Indians were aware of the tremendous power of Great Britain and its colonies, but far from making them peaceable, this would do just the opposite.

They begin more and more to dread our growing power. . . . The Indians are a very Jelous peple & they had great Expectations of being very Ginerally Supply^d by us & from their poverty & Mercenery Disposition they cant Bear such a Disapointment. Undoubtedly ye Ginerall has his own Rason for Nott allowing any presents or amunision to be given them, & I wish itt may have its Desir^d Effect Butt I take this opportunity to acquaint you that I Dread the Event as I know Indians cant long persevere. They are a Rash Inconsistent peple & Inclind to Mischiff

⁹³N. Y. Col. Hist. Docs., VII, 578.

⁹⁴C.R., VIII, 308.

& will never Consider Consequences tho itt May End in thire Ruen. Thire Success ye beginning of this Warr on our fronteers is to Recent in thire Memery to Suffer them to Consider thire present Inability to make Warr with us and if ye Sinecas Dellaways & Shawnas Should Brake with us it will End in a ginerall Warr with all ye Western Nations tho they att present Seem Jelous of Each Other. 95

Yet even this analysis is only external. The white men who were experts on Indian affairs knew from experience how the Indians might be expected to behave, regardless of how clear it was to a Colonel Mercer or a George Croghan, that the "Consequences" would be "thire Ruen." But even Croghan had no understanding of the Indians' motive. To him they were just "Rash" and "Inconsistent," and yet the Indians themselves had many times explicitly stated their position and feelings. Few things show the lack of communication between the two peoples as well as Johnson and Croghan's pragmatic accuracy in predicting Indian behavior, which after all was their job, coupled with their failure to heed an explanation as clear as the following:

Brethren the English, you wonder at our joining with the French in this present War. Why can't you get Sober and think impartially? Does not the Law of Nations permit, or rather Command us all, to stand upon our Guard in Order to preserve our lives, the lives of our Wives and Children, our Property and

⁹⁵Report of Croghan to Johnson in December, 1762. William Johnson Papers, III, 964.

Liberty? Let me tell you this was our Case: have a little patience. I will tell you, Brethren, your Nation allways shewed an Eagerness to settle our Lands, cunning as they were, they always encouraged a number of poor People to Settle upon our Lands: We protested against it several Times, but without any redress, or help.--We pitied the poor People!--we did not Care to make use of Force, and indeed some of those People were very good People and as Hospitable as we Indians, and gave us Share of what little they had: and gain'd our Affection for the most Part; but after all we lost our hunting Ground: for where one of those People settled, like pigeons, a thousand more would Settle, so that We at last Offered to sell it, and received some Consideration for it:--and so it went on till we at last jumped over Allegeny Hills and settled on the Waters of Ohio. Here we tho't ourselves happy!--We had plenty of Game, a rich and large Country, and a Country that the most High had Created for the poor Indians, and not for the white People.--O how happy did we live here!--but alas! not long! O! your Covetousness for Land at the risque of so many poor Souls, disturb's our Peace again. 96

What seemed "Rash" and "Inconsistent" behavior to a white man was a "Command" of "the Law of Nations" to the Indian. And so, driven by this logic of desperation, all the western Indians rose, in May of 1763, in what is known as Pontiac's Rebellion.⁹⁷ This ended the shaky truce, and initiated the

⁹⁶"The Speech of Ackowanothio, an old Indian on the Ohio in behalf of the Delaware Indians and others living on the waters thereof. September, 1758." In Provincial Papers, Department of Archives, Harrisburg, XXVII, 69, and Penn Manuscripts, Indian Affairs, III, in Historical Society of Pennsylvania Collection. Quoted in Wallace, Weiser, p. 529.

⁹⁷Downes, in Council Fires, p. 99, says: "These weaknesses did not, however, become painfully onerous to the Indians until the year 1762. To say that Pontiac's War was inevitable before then is to add a fatalistic tinge to the events from 1759 to 1762 that gives a false color to the facts."

It is true that if we read ahead, we see every incident

third phase of this bloody decade.

Pontiac's War followed the usual pattern of Indian Wars. Initial Indian successes were climaxed by the destruction of the first white relief force, and ultimately the Indians were defeated by a later, better prepared army. The initial shock, however, was great. All British posts west of the mountains fell except Forts Detroit and Pitt. General Amherst, who had not heeded the warnings of the Indian department, was outraged. He wrote to Colonel Bouquet, who was gathering troops in Pennsylvania: ". . . I wish there was not an Indian Settlement within a Thousand Miles of our Country, for they are only fit to live with the Inhabitants of the Woods being more nearly allied to the Brute than the human Creation." So strong were his feelings, that he suggested somewhat uncivilized measures. "I wish to hear of no prisoners, should any of the villains be met in arms . . . Could it not be contrived to send the Small-Pox among those disaffected tribes of Indians?"⁹⁸

The uprising had not come without its portents, besides as incipient stirrings of revolt. On the other hand, since the basic causes for conflict existed throughout the period, as they had prior to 1754 and continued to after 1764, it is hard to see how an outbreak sometime could have been long avoided.

⁹⁸ Francis Parkman, The Conspiracy of Pontiac, II, pp. 38-40. Hereafter, Parkman, Pontiac.

the many causes of which the Indian agents had warned. Most significant among these signs was a nativistic movement which spread among the Indians in Ohio. As early as 1758 the Delawares in the Allegheny told Frederick Post that ". . . through their conjuring craft they can do what they please, and nothing can withstand them . . . They also say, that if their conjurers run through the middle of our people, no bullet can hurt them."⁹⁹ Two years later John Hays, who accompanied Post on a trip to Seneca country, reported that the Indians saw evil omens in the skies, at the same time that bad feeling against the whites was spreading.

We were diverted with a strang Storey that they told us of the Indians at Diahogo, Seeing a Vision in the Moon on May the 29th, Viz., that they Saw 2 horses in the Moon, one Came from the East, the other from the West, and they fought a battle, and the Easterly horse prevailed and threw the other Down and fell atop of him, and then Men appeared about one foot Long from the East and Drove all before them; the Indians were very Much Grieved at this Strange sight, and wanted to Know our opinions of it, but we thought best to say nothing about it. Moses and Bull Came Back in the Evening and Brought the Disgreeable Answer that we must Go back, and [not] proceed any farther, for they had some bad people in their Country, and they would not Come to us, for they Durst not trust us because of them [ie., some Delawares] that was killed over Sisquhana. 100

⁹⁹Journal entry of September 20, 1758. Thwaites, Travels, I, 230.

¹⁰⁰Hay's Journal, June 2, 1760, P.A., Ser. I, III, 738.

The woods that had been open to Frederick Post in 1758, when the French wanted the Indians to close them, were now open no longer, and the party had to turn back.

The most important feature of this nativism was its insistence that the Indian abandon all things and practices that came from the white men. This extended even to weapons, despite the fact that Indian and white man alike believed that the Indian was completely dependent on European guns and the goods he could get for the skins provided by using the guns. Many students have believed that the situation was as Wallace Smith described it.

Both the manufacture and the use of the bow and arrow had fallen into disuse so long before that the Indians had become absolutely dependent upon guns for their hunting--and hunting was their means of livelihood.

As early as the 1680's, it was recognized that firearms were needed by the Indians for hunting. All the animals with the possible exception of the beaver were killed by guns. 101

But the manufacture and use of bows had not been forgotten, for Indian youths still learned to hunt with them.¹⁰² Nor were they completely dependent on trade goods, for the adherents of the native revival were able to return to their

¹⁰¹Smith, Fur Trade, pp. 35-36, citing The Calendar of State Papers, Colonial, for America and the West Indies, 1681-1685, pp. 365-66.

¹⁰²J. C. B., Travels in New France, p. 145.

indigenous way of life.

The first principal doctrine . . . was to purify themselves from sin . . . ; to quit the use of firearms, and to live entirely in the original state they were in before the white people found out their country. Nay, they taught that that fire was not pure that it was made by steel and flint, but that they should make it by rubbing two sticks together. . . .

I knew a company of them who had secluded themselves for the purposes of purifying from sin, as they thought they could do. I believe they made no use of firearms. They had been out more than two years before I left them . . . It was said they made use of no other weapons than their bows and arrows. 103

In doing this they were following the command which the "Master of Life" had given to the Delaware Indian who was believed to have visited heaven. The "Master of Life" had spoken to this prophet, and through him to the Delaware people, as follows:

The land on which you are, I have made for you, not for others. Wherefore do you suffer the whites to dwell upon your lands? Can you not do without them? I know that [they] . . . supply your wants; but were you not wicked as you are you would not need them. You might live as you did before you knew them. Before those whom you call your brothers had arrived, did not your bow and arrow maintain you? You needed neither gun, powder, nor any other object. The flesh of animals was your food; their skins your raiment. But when I saw you inclined to evil, I removed the animals into the depths of the forest that you might depend on your brothers for your necessities, for your clothing. Again

¹⁰³From John McCullough's Narrative, in J. Pritts, Incidents in Border Life, etc. (1839) quoted in Mooney, Ghost Dance, p. 668.

become good and do my will and I will send animals for your sustenance . . .

Drive from your lands those dogs in red clothing; they are only an injury to you. When you want anything, apply to me, as your brothers do, and I will give to both. Do not sell to your brothers that which I have placed on the earth as food. In short, become good, and you shall want nothing. 104

Considering the shortage of trade goods, this admonition to repudiate them seems somewhat to be turning necessity into a virtue. However, that would be only a rationalization to help adapt to the scarcity, and it is more than that. The whole movement is an attempt to end the relationship between the races, which had now become so painful to the Indians. Pontiac's War is sometimes called a trade war, but it is more accurate to say it was an 'anti-trade war.' It was an act of desperation by all the Indians of the West, who, under Pontiac's able organization, were inspired by the preaching of the Indian, known to us only as the Delaware Prophet, who had received the message of the 'Master of Life.' "Look here!" he told the Indians, pointing to a symbolic chart he had made after his vision.

See what we have lost by neglect and disobedience;

104 From the Prophet's Story or the Pontiac Manuscript, Parkman, Pontiac, I, 207, & II, 328. See also H. R. Schoolcraft, Historical and Statistical Information respecting . . . the Indian Tribes of the United States, IV, 240-59 ["Algic Researches"?] whence this is quoted in Mooney, Ghost Dance, p. 665.

. . . by looking upon a people of a different colour from our own, who had come across a great lake, as if they were a part of ourselves; by suffering them to sit down by our side, and looking at them with indifference, while they were . . . taking our country from us. . . . Put off entirely from yourselves the customs which you have adopted since the white people came among us; you are to return to that former happy state, in which we lived in peace and plenty, before these strangers came to disturb us, . . . Then will the great Spirit give success to our arms; then he will give us strength to conquer our enemies, to drive them from hence . . . 105

In the early 1750's these tribes had still echoed the words of William Penn's time, that the two races should be closer than relatives, closer than brothers, that they should be as one. Now, in the 1760's, the same groups completely repudiated their relationship. But, just as it takes two to make a relationship, so it takes two to break it. One people cannot withdraw unilaterally. Their attempt to do so may change the relationship, but unless the other side permits them, it does not end it.

So, now, the Indians were not able to drive the white men into the sea nor to withdraw from the advancing frontier. Colonel Bouquet crushed the Indian forces at the Battle of Bushy Run on August 6, 1763, and by next year the fighting was over. The Indians had tried to end their relationship with the colonists, and had failed.

¹⁰⁵Heckewelder, Indian Nations, pp. 292-93.

The last phase of the decade of wars is the pacification which followed Pontiac's War. The Indians were now defeated, not just cowed as they had been in 1758-60, and could do nothing but submit, at least for the time being. But few of the basic causes for the war had changed, or were to be, as is shown in the pacification. In effect, military force had frozen the situation at the 'status quo ante bellum' and in this condition the relationship limped along for a few more years.

As before, trade goods were scarce. With even more vehemence than before, the whites demanded the return of captives now part of Indian families. And once again, the victors completely failed to understand why the war had occurred. Colonel Bouquet told the Ohio tribes "You have begun this War without the least reason or provocation whatsoever."¹⁰⁶ Added to these unresolved conflicts was the old but now much aggravated matter of frontier murders. The aggravation was due to the recent war, and it nearly precipitated a crisis in Pennsylvania. On December 14, 1763, provincial magistrate Shippen wrote Governor Penn that ". . . a Company of People from the Frontiers had killed and scalped most of the Indians at the Conestogoe Town early this Morning." The

¹⁰⁶Speech at Tuscarowas Conference, October 20, 1764. C.R., IX, 218.

council was ". . . moved with the cruelty & barbarity of the above action," especially considering that ". . . the Indians who were settled at Conestoga were under the protection of this Government and its Laws. . . ." and advised that the perpetrators should immediately be apprehended and tried for murder.¹⁰⁷

Things were not to go as simply as that. The Assembly told Governor Penn that they would ". . . provide for the removing and maintaining such of these unhappy People as have escaped the Fury of the above mentioned lawless Party, and desire . . . them to be brought down to some place of safety. . . ."¹⁰⁸ Accordingly, the Conestoga Indians were taken to the Lancaster Work House. But the fury of the frontiersmen was not yet sated. On December 27, Shippen wrote another horrified express to the governor.

Honoured Sir:

I am to acquaint your Honour that between two and three of the clock this afternoon, upwards of a hundred armed men, from the Westward, rode very fast into Town, turned their Horses into Mr. Slough's (an Inn-keeper) Yard, and proceeded with the greatest Precipitation to the Work House, stove open the door and killed all the Indians, and then took to their Horses and rode off,

¹⁰⁷Edward Shippen's Letter of December 14, 1763, to Governor Penn, and subsequent Council Minutes of December 19, 1763. C.R., IX, 89-90.

¹⁰⁸Message of the Assembly, December 24, 1763. C.R., IX, 97.