


free and independent: let your revenues depend on requisitions of proportionate quotas from them: let application be made to them repeatedly, and then ask yourself, is it to be presumed that they would comply, or that an adequate collection could be made from partial compliances? It is now difficult to collect the taxes from them: how much would that difficulty be enhanced, were you to depend solely on their generosity? I appeal to the reason of every gentleman here, and to his candor, to say whether he is not persuaded that the present confederation is as feeble as the government of Virginia would be in that case; to the same reason I appeal, whether it be compatible with prudence to continue a government of such manifest and palpable weakness and inefficiency.

RED JACKET

ED JACKET (Indian name SAGOYEWATHA), an orator chief of the Seneca tribe, was born at Old Castle, near Geneva, N. Y., about the year 1752, and died January, 1830, at Seneca village, New York State. In the War of the Revolution, he took the British side, and was useful as a scout and runner to the "red coats," an officer of which presented him with an elaborately embroidered scarlet jacket, which on high occasions he was fond of wearing—hence the appellation of "Red Jacket." The sachem had notable gifts as an orator, a specimen of which, in his speech at Fort Stanwix, in 1784, to secure a more favorable treaty between the Six Nations and the United States authorities, is appended here. In 1792, on a visit to the Capital, Washington gratified the chief by the gift of a silver medal, which he proudly added to his adornments. Unhappily, in his latter days, he was addicted to intemperance, that curse of his race; though in the War of 1812 he and his tribe gave loyal service to the United States, as allies during the war on the Niagara frontier. Prior to the war, he also gave to an agent of the United States government timely information of the hostile intentions of the Ohio Indians, under Tecumseh. Red Jacket lived out his dignified, though pagan and at periods dissolute, career on the Seneca reservation, N. Y., and his life was written by W. L. Stone, Albany, 1867.

SPEECH AT FORT STANWIX

[A succession of outrages upon the Indians residing along the Pennsylvania border, resulting at different times in the murder of several of their people, induced the Senecas and Tuscaroras in February, 1801, to send a deputation of their chiefs to the seat of the Federal government, which, since the last Seneca embassy, had been transferred from Philadelphia to the city of Washington. Red Jacket was at the head of this deputation, which was received formally, with an appropriate speech, by the acting secretary of war, Samuel Dexter, on the 10th of February. On the 11th Red Jacket replied, setting forth the business of his mission in the following speech:]

BROTHER,—We yesterday received your speech, which removed all uneasiness from our minds. We then told you that should it please the Great Spirit to permit us to rise in health this day you should hear what we have come to say.

Brother, the business on which we are now come is to restore the friendship that has existed between the United

States and the Six Nations, agreeably to the direction of the commissioner from the fifteen fires of the United States. He assured us that whensoever, by any grievances, the chain of friendship should become rusty, we might have it brightened by calling on you. We dispense with the usual formality of having your speech again read, as we fully comprehended it yesterday, and it would therefore be useless to waste time in a repetition of it.

Brother, yesterday you wiped the tears from our eyes, that we might see clearly; you unstopped our ears that we might hear; and removed the obstructions from our throats that we might speak distinctly. You offered to join with us in tearing up the largest pine-tree in our forests, and under it to bury the tomahawk. We gladly join with you, brother, in this work, and let us heap rocks and stones on the root of this tree that the tomahawk may never again be found.

Brother, your apology for not having wampum is sufficient, and we agree to accept of your speeches on paper, to evince our sincerity in wishing the tomahawk forever buried. We accompany a repetition of our assurances with these strings. [Strings of wampum.]

Brother, we always desire, on similar melancholy occasions, to go through our customary forms of condolence, and have been happy to find the officers of the government of the United States willing in this manner to make our minds easy.

Brother, we observe that the men now in office are new men, and, we fear, not fully informed of all that has befallen us. In 1791 a treaty was held by the commissioners of Congress with us at Tioga Point, on a similar occasion. We have lost seven of our warriors, murdered in cold blood by white men, since the conclusion of the war. We are tired of this mighty grievance and wish some general arrangement

to prevent it in future. The first of these was murdered on the banks of the Ohio, near Fort Pitt. Shortly after two men belonging to our first families were murdered at Pine Creek; then one at Fort Franklin; another at Tioga Point; and now the two that occasion this visit, on the Big Beaver. These last two had families. The one was a Seneca; the other a Tuscarora. Their families are now destitute of support, and we think that the United States should do something toward their support, as it is to the United States they owe the loss of their heads.

Brother, these offences are always committed in one place on the frontier of Pennsylvania. In the Genesee country we live happy and no one molests us. I must therefore beg that the President will exert all his influence with all officers, civil and military, in that quarter, to remedy this grievance, and trust that he will thus prevent a repetition of it and save our blood from being spilled in future. [A belt.]

Brother, let me call to mind the treaty between the United States and the Six Nations, concluded at Canandaigua. At that treaty Colonel Pickering, who was commissioner on behalf of the United States, agreed that the United States should pay to the Six Nations four thousand five hundred dollars per annum, and that this should pass through the hands of the superintendent of the United States, to be appointed for that purpose. This treaty was made in the name of the President of the United States, who was then General Washington; and, as he is now no more, perhaps the present President would wish to renew the treaty. But if he should think the old one valid and is willing to let it remain in force we are also willing. The sum above mentioned we wish to have part of in money, to expend in more agricultural tools and in purchasing a team, as we have some

horses that will do for the purpose. We also wish to build a sawmill on the Buffalo creek. If the President, however, thinks proper to have it continue as heretofore, we shall not be very uneasy. Whatever he may do we agree to; we only suggest this for his consideration. [A belt.]

Brother, I hand you the above-mentioned treaty, made by Colonel Pickering, in the name of General Washington, and the belt that accompanied it; as he is now dead we know not if it is still valid. If not, we wish it renewed — if it is, we wish it copied on clean parchment. Our money got loose in our trunk and tore it. We also show you the belt which is the path of peace between our Six Nations and the United States. [Treaty and two belts.]

Brother, a request was forwarded by us from the Onondaga Nation to the Governor of New York that he should appoint a commissioner to hold a treaty with them. They have a reservation surrounded by white men which they wish to sell. The Cayugas also have a reservation so surrounded that they have been forced to leave it, and they hope that the President's commissioner, whom they expect he will not hesitate to appoint, will be instructed to attend to this business. We also have some business with New York which we would wish him to attend to.

Brother, the business that has caused this our long journey was occasioned by some of your bad men; the expense of it has been heavy on us. We beg that as so great a breach has been made on your part, the President will judge it proper that the United States should bear our expenses to and from home and whilst here.

Brother, three horses belonging to the Tuscarora Nation were killed by some men under the command of Major Rivardi, on the plains of Niagara. They have made applica-

tion to the superintendent and to Major Rivardi, but get no redress. You make us pay for our breaches of the peace, why should you not pay also? A white man has told us the horses were killed by Major Rivardi's orders, who said they should not be permitted to come there, although it was an open common on which they were killed. Mr. Chapin has the papers respecting these horses, which we request you to take into consideration.

DEFENCE OF STIFF-ARMED GEORGE

[Some time during the year 1802, John Hewitt, a white man, was murdered at Buffalo Creek by Stiff-armed-George, an Indian, who was intoxicated at the time he committed the act. His surrender was demanded by the civil authorities of New York. This demand was resisted, the fact of drunkenness on the part of the offender being pleaded in extenuation of the crime. After several meetings between the Indians and the citizens, in which the latter had vainly attempted to persuade the former to surrender the culprit, a council of the principal chiefs of the Senecas, Cayugas, and Onondagas was convened at Canandaigua, to give the question a more solemn consideration. A conference having been arranged between the council and the principal inhabitants, Red Jacket, arguing against the surrender upon the principles already indicated, delivered the following speech, addressed particularly to the white portion of his audience:]

BROTHERS,—Open your ears and give your attention. This day is appointed by the Great Spirit to meet our friends at this place. During the many years that we have lived together in this country good will and harmony have subsisted among us.

Brothers, we have now come forward on an unhappy occasion. We cannot find words to express our feelings upon it. One of our people has murdered one of your people. So it has been ordered by the Great Spirit, who controls all events. This has been done: we cannot now help it. At first view it would seem to have the effect of putting an end to our friendship; but let us reflect and put our minds

together. Can't we point out measures whereby our peace and harmony may still be preserved? We have come forward to this place, where we have always had a superintendent and friend to receive us and to make known to him such grievances as lay upon our minds; but now we have none; and we have no guardian — no protector — no one is now authorized to receive us.

Brother, we therefore now call upon you to take our speech in writing and forward our ideas to the President of the United States.

Brothers, let us look back to our former situation. While you were under the government of Great Britain, Sir William Johnson was our superintendent, appointed by the King. He had power to settle offences of this kind among all the Indian nations without adverting to the laws. But under the British government you were uneasy — you wanted to change it for a better. General Washington went forward as your leader. From his exertions you gained your independence. Immediately afterward a treaty was made between the United States and the Six Nations, whereby a method was pointed out of redressing such an accident as the present. Several such accidents did happen where we were the sufferers. We now crave the same privilege in making restitution to you that you adopted toward us in a similar situation.

Brothers, at the close of our treaty at Philadelphia General Washington told us that we had formed a chain of friendship which was bright; he hoped it would continue so on our part; that the United States would be equally willing to brighten it, if rusted by any means. A number of murders have been committed on our people — we shall only mention the last of them. About two years ago a few of our warriors

were amusing themselves in the woods to the westward of Fort Pitt; two white men coolly and deliberately took their rifles, travelled nearly three miles to our encampment, fired upon the Indians, killed two men and wounded two children. We then were the party injured. What did we do? We flew to the treaty and thereby obtained redress perfectly satisfactory to us, and we hope agreeable to you. This was done a short time before President Adams went out of office; complete peace and harmony was restored. We now want the same method of redress to be pursued.

Brothers, how did the present accident take place? Did our warriors go from home cool and sober and commit murder on you? No. Our brother was in liquor and a quarrel ensued, in which the unhappy accident happened. We would not excuse him on account of his being in liquor; but such a thing was far from his intention in his sober moments. We are all extremely grieved at it, and are willing to come forward and have it settled as crimes of the same nature have heretofore been.

Brothers, since this accident has taken place we have been informed that by the laws of this State, if a murder is committed within it, the murderer must be tried by the laws of the State and punished with death.

Brothers, when were such laws explained to us? Did we ever make a treaty with the State of New York and agree to conform to its laws? No. We are independent of the State of New York. It was the will of the Great Spirit to create us different in color; we have different laws, habits, and customs from the white people. We shall never consent that the government of this State shall try our brother. We appeal to the government of the United States.

Brothers, under the customs and habits of our fore-

fathers we were a happy people; we had laws of our own; they were dear to us. The whites came among us and introduced their customs; they introduced liquor among us, which our forefathers always told us would prove our ruin.

Brothers, in consequence of the introduction of liquor among us numbers of our people were killed. A council was held to consider of a remedy, at which it was agreed by us that no private revenge should take place for any such murder — that it was decreed by the Great Spirit and that a council should be called to consider of redress to the friends of the deceased.

Brothers, the President of the United States is called a great man, possessing great power. He may do what he pleases—he may turn men out of office, men who held their offices long before he held his. If he can do these things can he not even control the laws of this State? Can he not appoint a commissioner to come forward to our country and settle the present difference, as we, on our part, have heretofore often done to him, upon a similar occasion?

We now call upon you, brothers, to represent these things to the President, and we trust that he will not refuse our request of sending a commissioner to us with powers to settle the present difference. The consequence of a refusal may be serious. We are determined that our brother shall not be tried by the laws of the State of New York. Their laws make no difference between a crime committed in liquor and one committed coolly and deliberately. Our laws are different, as we have before stated. If tried here our brother must be hanged. We cannot submit to that; has a murder been committed upon our people, when was it punished with death?

Brothers, we have now finished what we had to say on

the subject of the murder. We wish to address you upon another, and to have our ideas communicated to the President upon it also.

Brothers, it was understood at the treaty concluded by Colonel Pickering that our superintendent should reside in the town of Canandaigua, and for very good reasons: that situation is the most central to the Six Nations; and by subsequent treaties between the State of New York and the Indians there are still stronger reasons why he should reside here, principally on account of the annuities being stipulated to be paid to our superintendent at this place. These treaties are sacred. If their superintendent resides elsewhere the State may object to sending their money to him at a greater distance. We would therefore wish our superintendent to reside here at all events.

Brothers, with regard to the appointment of our present superintendent, we look upon ourselves as much neglected and injured. When General Chapin and Captain Chapin were appointed our wishes were consulted upon the occasion and we most cordially agreed to the appointments. Captain Chapin has been turned out, however, within these few days. We do not understand that any neglect of duty has been alleged against him. We are told it is because he differs from the President in his sentiments on government matters. He has also been perfectly satisfactory to us; and had we known of the intention we should most cordially have united in a petition to the President to continue him in office. We feel ourselves injured; we have nobody to look to, nobody to listen to our complaints, none to reconcile any differences among us. We are like a young family without a father.

Brothers, we understand that the President has appointed a superintendent who is altogether unknown to us and who

is unacquainted with Indian affairs. We know him not in our country. Had we been consulted upon the subject we might have named some one residing in this country who was well known to us. Perhaps we might have agreed upon Mr. Oliver Phelps, whose politics, coinciding with those of the President, might have recommended him to the office.

Brothers, we cannot conclude without again urging you to make known all these our sentiments to the President.¹

REPLY TO MR. CRAM

[In the summer of 1805 a young missionary named Cram was sent into the country of the Six Nations by the Evangelical Missionary Society of Massachusetts to found a mission among the Senecas. A council of their chiefs was convoked to hear his propositions. These were made in a short speech to which the Indians listened with earnest attention. After a long consultation among themselves Red Jacket rose and spoke as follows:]

FRRIEND AND BROTHER,—It was the will of the Great Spirit that we should meet together this day. He orders all things and has given us a fine day for our council. He has taken his garment from before the sun and caused it to shine with brightness upon us. Our eyes are opened that we see clearly; our ears are unstopped that we have been able to hear distinctly the words you have spoken. For all these favors we thank the Great Spirit, and him only.

¹ The eloquent pleadings of the Indians were unavailing. They were compelled to surrender the offender to the inexorable law of the white man, though it was done with great reluctance. His name was Stiff-armed-George. He was tried and convicted at the Oyer and Terminer of Ontario county, on the 23d of February, 1803—Brockholst Livingston, one of the justices of the supreme court, presiding; but as the murder was without pre-existing malice, and was moreover attended by various mitigating circumstances, the court, the attorney-general, the grand jury that indicted him, together with many of the people of Canandaigua, united in a petition to the governor, George Clinton, for his pardon.

Brother, this council fire was kindled by you. It was at your request that we came together at this time. We have listened with attention to what you have said. You requested us to speak our minds freely. This gives us great joy; for we now consider that we stand upright before you and can speak what we think. All have heard your voice and all speak to you now as one man. Our minds are agreed.

Brother, you say you want an answer to your talk before you leave this place. It is right you should have one, as you are a great distance from home and we do not wish to detain you. But we will first look back a little and tell you what our fathers have told us and what we have heard from the white people.

Brother, listen to what we say. There was a time when our forefathers owned this great island. Their seats extended from the rising to the setting sun. The Great Spirit had made it for the use of Indians. He had created the buffalo, the deer, and other animals for food. He had made the bear and the beaver. Their skins served us for clothing. He had scattered them over the country and taught us how to take them. He had caused the earth to produce corn for bread. All this he had done for his red children because he loved them. If we had some disputes about our hunting ground they were generally settled without the shedding of much blood. But an evil day came upon us. Your forefathers crossed the great water and landed on this island. Their numbers were small. They found friends and not enemies. They told us they had fled from their own country for fear of wicked men and had come here to enjoy their religion. They asked for a small seat. We took pity on them; granted their request, and they sat

down amongst us. We gave them corn and meat; they gave us poison in return.

The white people, brother, had now found our country. Tidings were carried back and more came amongst us. Yet we did not fear them. We took them to be friends. They called us brothers. We believed them and gave them a larger seat. At length their numbers had greatly increased. They wanted more land; they wanted our country. Our eyes were opened and our minds became uneasy. Wars took place. Indians were hired to fight against Indians, and many of our people were destroyed. They also brought strong liquor amongst us. It was strong and powerful and has slain thousands.

Brother, our seats were once large and yours were small. You have now become a great people, and we have scarcely a place left to spread our blankets. You have got our country, but are not satisfied; you want to force your religion upon us.

Brother, continue to listen. You say that you are sent to instruct us how to worship the Great Spirit agreeably to his mind; and, if we do not take hold of the religion which you white people teach we shall be unhappy hereafter. You say that you are right and we are lost. How do we know this to be true? We understand that your religion is written in a book. If it was intended for us, as well as you, why has not the Great Spirit given to us, and not only to us, but why did he not give to our forefathers the knowledge of that book, with the means of understanding it rightly? We only know what you tell us about it. How shall we know when to believe, being so often deceived by the white people?

Brother, you say there is but one way to worship and

serve the Great Spirit. If there is but one religion, why do you white people differ so much about it? Why not all agreed, as you can all read the book?

Brother, we do not understand these things. We are told that your religion was given to your forefathers and has been handed down from father to son. We also have a religion, which was given to our forefathers and has been handed down to us, their children. We worship in that way. It teaches us to be thankful for all the favors we receive; to love each other and to be united. We never quarrel about religion.

Brother, the Great Spirit has made us all, but he has made a great difference between his white and red children. He has given us different complexions and different customs. To you he has given the arts. To these he has not opened our eyes. We know these things to be true. Since he has made so great a difference between us in other things, why may we not conclude that he has given us a different religion according to our understanding? The Great Spirit does right. He knows what is best for his children; we are satisfied.

Brother, we do not wish to destroy your religion or take it from you. We only want to enjoy our own.

Brother, you say you have not come to get our land or our money, but to enlighten our minds. I will now tell you that I have been at your meetings and saw you collect money from the meeting. I cannot tell what this money was intended for, but suppose that it was for your minister, and, if we should conform to your way of thinking, perhaps you may want some from us.

Brother, we are told that you have been preaching to the white people in this place. These people are our neighbors.

We are acquainted with them. We will wait a little while and see what effect your preaching has upon them. If we find it does them good, makes them honest, and less disposed to cheat Indians, we will then consider again of what you have said.

Brother, you have now heard our answer to your talk, and this is all we have to say at present. As we are going to part, we will come and take you by the hand, and hope the Great Spirit will protect you on your journey and return you safe to your friends.