



To George Washington from the Seneca Chiefs (Abridged) December 1, 1790

To the great Councillor of the thirteen fires,

It may be very small in your ears, & we, therefore, entreat you to hearken with attention. For we are about to speak of things which are to us very great. When your army entered the Country of the Six Nations, we called you the Town-destroyer. When you gave us peace we called you father, because you promised to secure us in the possession of our Land.

Father,

We mean to open our hearts before you, and we earnestly desire, that you will let us clearly understand, what you resolve to do. You have said we were in your hand, and that by closing it, you could crush us to nothing.

Before you determine on a measure so unjust, look up to the God who made us, as well as you, we hope he will not permit you to destroy the whole of our nation.

Hear our case, many nations inhabited this Country and therefore they warred. The six Nations were powerful & compelled them to peace. The French came among us and built Niagara. They became our fathers, and took care of us... Sr William Johnson came and took that Fort from the French; he became our father till you were too strong for his King. We have already said how we came to join against you. We saw that we were wrong: we wished for peace. You demanded a great Country to be given up to you. It was surrendered to you as the price of peace and we ought to have peace, and possession, of the little Land which you then left us.

You have compelled us to do that which has made us ashamed. We have nothing to answer to the children of the brothers of our fathers. When last Spring they called on us to go to war, The Senecas entreated them to be quiet until we had spoken to you: but on our way down we heard, your army had gone to the Country which those nations inhabit: and if they meet together the best blood on both sides will stain the ground.

You told us say they, that the line drawn from Pensylvania, to lake Ontario, would mark it for ever on the East, and the line running from Beaver Creek, to Pensylvania, would mark it on the west; and we see that it is not so. For first one, and then another, come and take it away, by order of that people, who promised to secure it to us.

Speak plainly to us concerning this great business. All the Lands we have been speaking of belonged to the Six Nations: no part of it ever belonged to the King of England, and he could not give it to you. The Land we live on our Fathers received from God, and they transmitted it to us, for our Children and we cannot part with it.

Innocent men of our nation are killed one after another: But none of your people who have committed the murders have been punished. Was it intended that your people should kill the Senecas, and not only remain unpunished by you: but be protected by you against the next of kin?

Father,

These are to us very great things. We know that you are strong and we have heard that you are wise; and we wait to hear your answer to what we have said that we may know that you are just.