



*Missionary's address to the Chiefs of the Six Nations of Indians
and their response.*

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CALL_NO:	Mss 004/ 1805
DATE:	1805
LOCATION:	Swarthmore College
AUTHOR:	Jacob Cram
SUMMARY:	Address of Red Jacket at Buffalo Creek in response to speech by Massachusetts missionary Jacob Cram.

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(1)
An Indian Speech

In the Summer of 1805, A number of the principal Chiefs and Warriors of the six Nations of Indians principally Senecas assembled at Buffalo Creek in the State of New York, at the particular request of a Gentleman, Missionary from the State of Massachusetts,

The Missionary being furnished with an Interpreter and accompanied by the Agent of the U. States for Indian Affairs, met the Indians in Council, where the following talk took place -

First by the Agent

Brothers of the six Nations, I rejoice to meet you at this time, and thank the Great Spirit that he hath preserved you in health, and given me another opportunity of taking you by the hand -

Brothers, The person who now sits by me is a friend who has come a great distance to hold a talk with you, he will inform you what his business is, and and it is my request that you should listen with attention to his words -

Missionary

My friends I am thankful for the opportunity afforded us in meeting together at this time, I had a great desire to see you and enquire into your state and welfare, for this purpose I have traveled a great distance, being sent by your old friends the Boston Missionary Society, you will recollect they formerly sent Missionaries amongst you, to instruct you in Religion and lead you to good, Altho they have not heard from you for a long time yet they have not forgotten their Brothers of the six Nations, and are still desirous and anxious to do you good -

Brothers I have not come to get your lands or Money but to enlighten your minds, and to instruct you how to worship the Great Spirit, agreeable

Transcription

yt f ytf ytf An Indian Speechyt f In the summer of 1805, a number of the principal Chiefsyt f

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agreeable to his mind, and ⁽²⁾will, and to preach to you
the Gospel of his son Jesus Christ, there is but one Religion
and one way to serve God, and if you do not embrace the
right way you cannot be happy hereafter, you have
never worshiped the Great Spirit in a manner acceptable
to him but have all your lives been in great errors and
darkness, to endeavour to remove these errors, and open
your eyes, so that you might see clearly is my business
with you -

Brothers I wish to talk with you as one friend talks
with another, and if you have any objections to receive
the Religion which I preach I wish you to state them
~~and I will~~, and I will endeavour to satisfy your minds,
and remove ~~the~~ the objections -

Brothers I want you to speak your minds freely, for
I wish to reason with you on the subject, and if possible
to remove all doubts if there be any on your minds
the subject is an important one, and it is of consequence
that you give it an early attention, while the offer
is made you, your friends the Boston Missionary Society
will continue to send you good and faithful Ministers
to instruct and strengthen you in Religion, if on your
part you are willing to receive them -

Brothers Since I have been in this part of the Country,
I have visited some of your small Villages, and talked
with your people, they appear willing to receive instruction,
but as they look up to you as your Elders Brothers
in Council, they want first to know your opinion on
the subject, you have now heard what I have to propose
at present, I hope you will take it into consideration,
and give me an answer before we part -

After about two hours consultation amongst
themselves, the Chief commonly called Red Jacket
by the white people arose and spoke as follows -

Friend and Brother It was the will of the great
spirit that we should meet together this day,

Transcription

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It was the will of the great

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(3)
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 open that we see clearly, our ears have
been unstopped that we have been able to hear distinctly
the words you have spoken, for all these favours we
thank the great spirit, and him only.

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 dont 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 cre-
ated the Buffalo, the Deer, and other animals for
food, he made the Bear & the Mink, 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 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 number
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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 & meat, they gave us poison (alluding it is supposed to ardent spirits) in return. the white people 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 liquors amongst us, it was strong and powerful, and has slain thousands.

Brother, our seats were once large and we 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 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 teach, we shall be unhappy hereafter, you say that you are right and we are lost, how do you 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 have 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

Transcription

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(B)
Religion, why do you white people differ so much about it? why not all agreed, as you can all read the books?

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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 favours 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 & Red children, he has given us different Complexions & 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 understandings; 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, we are told that you have been preaching to the white people in this place, These people are our neighbours, 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 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.

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(6)
As the Indians began to approach the missionary,
he rose hastily from his seat and replied, he could not
take them by the hand, that there was no fellowship between
the Religion of God and the works of the Devil, this being
interpreted to the Indians, they smiled, and retired in a
peaceable manner.

It being afterwards suggested to the Missionary that
his Reply to the Indians was rather indiscreet,
he observed, that he supposed the ceremony of shaking
hands would be received by them as a token, that he
assented to what they had said, being otherwise informed,
he said he was sorry for the expression.

Missionary's
address to
the chiefs of the
Six nation Indians
&
their answer—

Transcription

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