THE ADMINISTRATION OF BRITISH POLICY
TO THE INDIANS IN THE
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF NORTH AMERICA
1760 - 1783

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by
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Beth Pulfer
September 1970
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INTRODUCTION

For good or for ill, the white man and the red man in eighteenth century North America were locked in a relationship to one another which had fateful results for both. In the years from the conquest of Canada to the end of the American Revolution, the British government in North America and in England struggled to establish a policy of dealing with the Indians which would serve the ends of both sides in the best possible manner; the failure to put such a policy into effect damaged the interests of both, though it seems fair to say that the Indians suffered the greater tragedy.

This thesis is an attempt to explore the struggle by the British in North America to establish a scheme of relations with the tribes which was at once just, harmonious and economically sound. The Indian nations with which we shall be concerned are those included in what was called for purposes of Indian affairs the Northern District. The tribes of the great triangle of the Ohio Valley, that area ceded by the French in 1763, were included; the Shawanese and the Delawares were the most significant. Tribes living on lands which had not yet been purchased by white men within the frontiers of the colonies were also included; thus, Indian nations within the borders
of Quebec, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia were encompassed in the Northern District. By far the most important of these were the mighty Six Nations, who lived within the boundaries of the colony of New York.

The officials in this area who were in charge of interpreting and carrying out British policy to the Indians were referred to throughout this period as the 'Indian Department.' There were actually two Indian Departments in North America in this period, one over the Northern District and one in the Southern District, each presided over by a Superintendent of Indian Affairs; the Southern District included the frontiers of the Carolinas, Georgia and the Floridas. Unless otherwise specified, we shall use the term 'Indian Department' to refer to that in the Northern District, although many of the problems and policies of the two districts were similar.

Through the years from 1756 to 1774 the Indian Department functioned under the direction of the Commander in Chief of the British forces in North America; from 1774 till the end of the Revolutionary War it operated under the Governor and Commander in Chief of Quebec.

The first chapter of the thesis will deal with the conditions which led to the creation of an Indian Department and will provide a chronological outline of the changes in the structure and policies of the Department during the whole period. The second chapter will be concerned largely with the character and personal attitudes
of the officials in the Indian Department, and with the effects these had on the course of Indian relations.

The third chapter will examine the role played by the Commander in Chief during the period when the Indian Department was under his direction. The fourth will deal with the conduct of Indian affairs under the Governor of Quebec, especially during the Revolutionary War; the use and implications of the use of the Indians as allies will be discussed.

This form rather than a strictly chronological one has been adopted because the problems encountered and the solutions attempted in the course of Indian relations are more clearly seen in terms of the bodies and officials responsible for Indian affairs on various levels than in terms of chronological events.
CHAPTER ONE

THE INDIAN DEPARTMENT

The English colonies of North America in the mid-eighteenth century clung to the fringes of the continent, forming a line in the shelter of the Appalachian Mountains. The North American Empire of His Most Christian Majesty the King of France, on the other hand, had plunged deep into the heart of the continent, establishing a far-flung but still formidable chain of defense in the rear of the English provinces. The French had penetrated the wilderness for many reasons - geographical accessibility, curiosity about the unknown, a quest for national prestige - but perhaps none was more important than eagerness to gain the lion's share of the original economic base of New France, the fur trade. French-speaking Canadians had for over a century pushed their way into the interior, braving its dangers and hardships, wooing and emulating its hardy population, in order to carry the riches of the trade back to their St. Lawrence stations for France.

The English colonists, too, wanted to gain a greater share of this profitable trade, and the English and Dutch merchants of Albany were willing, mercantilist empire or no, to sell goods to Canadian traders to gain at least
some of the profits of the trade. More important, however, than this commercial rivalry, was the westward pressure of those colonies penned up on the seaboard, the colonizing urge which would eventually take these men and their descendants to the other side of North America. The French had established some settlements scattered through the interior, but their population in North America was too small to support major colonizing ventures. The land of the interior was to be the primary goal of the English American colonies, as the fur trade had been to the French.

By the eighteenth century Anglo-French economic rivalry in North America was part of a titanic global struggle of empires. However, though the wars which eventually gave the English dominion over the French Empire in North America were to some extent European in their origins and directed by considerations outside the North America sphere altogether, they had in some ways their own peculiarly North American roots and the conflict of interests of fur traders and settlers, of commercial policy and settlement policy, were to continue long after the national rivalry between French and English had ceased to be a primary factor. The interests and lives of a great many groups of people hinged on the fate of North America's interior; settlers, traders, missionaries, land speculators, politicians, colonial officials, soldiers and monarchs watched the area with interest, but no group was more involved, nor perhaps less understood than the original
inhabitants of North America, the Indians.

Through their position with the two empires, their dependence on European goods brought to them by trade, and their susceptibility to the white man's diseases and the white man's warfare, the Indians were inevitably brought into a fateful relationship with the Europeans. The policy of the British government towards the Indians with whom they dealt was formulated from a mixture of motives, some of which were humanitarian and some not, some closely related to the actual situation of the Indians and some not. Whatever the policy, or confusion over policy, emanating from the government in Britain, it was carried out by a body of officials in North America referred to as the Indian Department, which fluctuated in structure, in powers and in size throughout the period which we will be examining.

The creation of the Indian Department came from the long-standing Anglo-French rivalry in North America and was conceived primarily to meet military objectives. Both the English and the French had always cultivated the alliance of the Indian tribes, partly to gain advantages over the other side, partly to dissuade the Indians from depredations on frontier settlements. On the whole, the French had achieved a more congenial relationship with the Indians, partly because of the adaptation of a number of their citizens to the Indian way of life through the fur trade. They had been able to mobilize fairly strong Indian
support in their rivalry with the English, and the Canadian woodsmen proved very adaptable to the kind of warfare that the Indians found so valuable in the wilderness. On the western frontier, however, the imperialist ambitions of the French clashed with those of the powerful Six Nations, whose 'long house,' as they referred to their confederacy, stretched from the Mohawks on the frontier of New York to the Senecas near Lake Erie.\(^1\) The Six Nations themselves had designs on land, and more particularly on control, especially commercial control of the tribes in the West; they had dispersed the Huron, or Wyandott, nation largely because of their refusal to join a trade partnership against the French. Thus the alliance with the English which the Six Nations more or less consistently adhered to was not one based entirely on mutual regard, nor was it one of exploitation of the Six Nations by the English; it was one in which the Six Nations had their own aims to further. They were a powerful force in the international game in North America. Besides providing a valuable buffer between the French in Canada and the frontiers of New York, the Six Nations possessed a degree of strength which was important in itself.

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\(^1\) The Six Nations were by some officials and writers referred to as the Five Nations because the sixth nation, the Tuscaroras, were 'children' of the Oneidas, an immigrant tribe from elsewhere dependent on the Oneidas and sponsored by them in 1710 for membership in the Confederacy. Flexner, Mohawk Baronet, p. 29.
The British colonies were not so fortunate as to have a unified government to deal with Indian relations as had New France. As all the Indians with whom the British dealt, before the Seven Years' War, lived within the boundaries of the different colonies, relations with them were the responsibility of the different colonial governments; of course, because the boundaries of the Indian nations did not coincide exactly with colonial boundaries, and as the lines between the colonies were often in dispute, the colonies' concerns with the Indians overlapped at many points. Each colony had its own methods of dealing with the Indians and its own aims in doing so. New York appointed three commissioners of Indian affairs stationed at Albany, whose interest lay in the fur trade of which Albany was the English hub. Pennsylvania retained the veteran Indian expert Conrad Weiser on the frontier to act as its agent in dealing with the Indians. In the northern colonies, the frontiers of New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia were of the most importance with the Indians; New York was perhaps the centre of chief concern, as within her borders dwelt the mighty Six Nations, who were the traditional bulwark of the English colonies against the French in Canada. The importance of New York in relation to the Indians was one of the reasons, besides his peculiar abilities and style, that William Johnson, the energetic frontiersman who was to become Superintendent of Indian Affairs and a baronet, achieved prominence; it was partly his situation
in New York which made him of such vital importance in Indian relations.

Both the French and the English made as much use as possible of their Indian allies in their wars against each other, to gather intelligence and to terrorize the frontier inhabitants of enemy colonies. This necessitated constant diplomatic activity among the Indians to encourage them, coax them and bribe them; the bond which existed between the Indians and the French was admitted to be a definite advantage, and a hindrance to British diplomacy. In the terrifying guerrilla type of warfare which the Indians waged against frontier settlements, the French had two advantages: they had fewer people settled on the frontier, and their widespread fur trade gave them contacts with many more Indians.

The English were not, however, unmindful of the need for diplomacy among the Indians. Their traders, too, pushed forward among the tribes within colonial boundaries, especially the Six Nations, and it was through trade that Sir William Johnson achieved his fortune and a large part of his influence among the Indians. A nephew of an eminent New Yorker, Sir Peter Warren, Johnson had been brought from Ireland by his uncle and set up in business on the frontier of New York. As he achieved wealth as a trader, Johnson eventually became a justice of the peace in 1745, and a

\[2\text{Ibid., p. 31.}\]
member of the Legislative Council of the colony;\textsuperscript{3} nonetheless, he was never considered quite respectable by New York society, because of his long-lasting liaisons with an indentured German servant and then with a Mohawk woman, and because of his adaptation to many of the Indian ways in order to gain the confidence of the Six Nations. If his stature in the eyes of the New York colonial gentry was far from high, however, his influence with the Indians of the Six Nations was surprising; one of two of the official Six Nations council fires, or meeting places, was built at his estate, Johnson Hall, which became the constant centre of activity for the Indians, equal in importance to their other council fire at Onondaga.

Whatever suspicions the rulers of New York may have had of Johnson as an individual, they recognized that his influence among the Six Nations was valuable and his position on the frontier convenient. In the renewed war with France which broke out in 1744, this proved especially important. One faction in New York, led by Johnson's relative, James De Lancey, did not think New York should become involved in the war, although another group, led by Sir George Clinton, argued for war; Johnson's support for Clinton gave him a claim to consideration for military preferment. New England was especially eager to go to war; the successful expedition which the colonies undertook

\textsuperscript{3}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 110.
in 1746 against the supposedly impregnable fortress of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island secured New England shipping and fishing from French depredations, at least until the end of the war, and the New Englanders were anxious to safeguard this victory. In August of 1746, Sir William Johnson was commissioned by Sir George Clinton as 'Captain-General and Governor in Chief of the armed forces of New York to supply provisions to war parties going against the French.' As with many eighteenth century government contracts, Sir William Johnson was expected to provide the supplies and then try to recover his expenses from the Council of New York, which was to prove difficult. That Johnson's help in directing the military operations of these unruly allies would also be valuable was recognized a day later when he was commissioned by Clinton as 'Colonel of the Forces to be raised out of the Six Nations of Indians . . . and as Commissary of the Stores & provisions.' The commission also gave him responsibility for any white volunteers who might choose to serve with the Indians, and empowered him to pay rewards for scalps taken by the raiding and scouting parties under his care.

The end of 'King George's War' in 1748 meant that

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4 George Clinton, August 27, 1746. The Papers of Sir William Johnson, (referred to as Johnson Papers), Volume 1, p. 59.

5 George Clinton, August 28, 1746. Ibid., Volume 1, p. 60.

6 Ibid.
for a time the urgency of diplomatic relations was over, and Johnson returned his attention to his trading and his own relations with the Indians, though he did retain a provincial commission from Clinton as colonel of fourteen companies of militia. The short peace was also filled for Johnson by an attempt to recover his losses from the New York Council; the feud between Clinton, whom he supported, and De Lancey, the casualness with which he had laid out provisions and the difficulty of accounting for the necessity of giving the Indians 'presents,' a traditional tool of diplomacy, all combined to make it difficult to recover his money; this may offer one explanation for his later somewhat cavalier attitude to government money, an attitude which he certainly passed on to his nephew. He also took his seat on the Council, and attempted at its meetings to have money spent for Indian presents and repairs to Fort Oswego. Aside from his military responsibilities in the last war, and his consciousness of the Indian nations as a line of defense against the French, Johnson realized that the future of New York, indeed of all the frontier colonies, lay in the peaceful expansion of their commerce and their settlements through friendly relations with the Indians.

Thus, even at this early stage in his official

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7George Clinton, February 29, 1748. Ibid., Volume 1, p. 139.
8Flexner, op. cit., p. 105.
9Ibid., p. 110.
career with the Indians, Johnson was motivated by a number of concerns which were to have a great effect on the course of subsequent Indian policy. Men like Conrad Weiser, the Pennsylvanian agent, Daniel Claus who was sent out in 1754 to learn the ways of the wilds from Weiser,\textsuperscript{10} and a number of others with varying military and colonial objectives, were, like Johnson, interested in the Indians for various reasons. Land, settlement, trade, military advantage, were all things which turned the eyes of these people to the Indians in the West.

The storm cloud of war with France was threatening to burst again in North America, and the home government recognized the importance of the Indians in a scheme of defense for the American colonies. In 1753 the Earl of Holderness, then Secretary of State for the Southern Department, wrote to the governors of the provinces encouraging them to appropriate money for Indian presents and diplomacy.\textsuperscript{11} In 1754, Indian relations was one of the primary reasons for the Albany Congress, though the Congress was later much more noted for its consideration of a

\textsuperscript{10}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 117.

\textsuperscript{11}Dickerson, O. M., \textit{American Colonial Government}, p. 340. The Board of Trade wrote in September of 1753, 'We think it for His Majesty's Service that you should take the very first opportunity of representing . . . of how great importance it is . . . to preserve the friendship and affections of the Indians and the fatal consequences which must inevitably follow from a neglect of them.' Barck and Lefler, \textit{Colonial America}. New York: MacMillan, 1968, p. 450.
plan for colonial union. 'In 1754,' wrote Benjamin Franklin, 'war with France again being apprehended, a congress of commissioners from the different colonies was by an order of the Lords of Trade to be assembled at Albany, there to confer with the chiefs of the Six Nations concerning the means of defending both their country and ours.' Apparentely, reports of an unsatisfactory meeting between Governor Clinton of New York and the chiefs of the Six Nations had inspired the Board of Trade, the advisory body to the Privy Council which considered questions of colonial government, to suggest a joint congress between the colonies and the Indians. The Indian conference which was held was somewhat overshadowed by the abortive plan for colonial union which was discussed as well; but the need to enlist Indian help against the French was deeply impressed upon the minds of the colonial governors, by the commissioners returned from the Congress, and the Principle that no further encroachments should be made on Indian lands except through public government negotiations was suggested as a useful policy in relations with the Indians.

The war in North America broke out in 1754, rather than in 1756, as it did in its European manifestation;

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14 Dickerson, op. cit., p. 340.
the Seven Years' War got off to rather an unpromising start for the English, with the defeat of Colonel George Washington, whose disaster in the Ohio country seemed to many a graphic demonstration of the necessity of devoting more attention to the Indians in order to succeed against the French on the frontier.

The French achieved by their defeat of Washington dominance in the Ohio Valley, and the securing of the allegiance of the Indian tribes there. Their success here also stretched their military resources very thin, though the English military authorities had no real way of calculating this. The defeat of Washington added a new urgency to the problems of colonial security and also to the question of relations with the Indians.

Even those colonial governors who were most opposed to Sir William Johnson personally saw his merits as a man of influence with the Indians. In February of 1755, Governor William Shirley of Massachusetts wrote to James De Lancey, Lieutenant-Governor of New York, suggesting some co-ordination between their governments of a proposed expedition to Crown Point; his assembly had directed him to appoint a suitable man to command the expedition and although he might have nominated an 'Officer of Rank and Experience,' he had thought instead of Sir William Johnson who would be better able to direct the operations of the Indians.\(^{15}\)

\(^{15}\) Shirley to De Lancey, February 24, 1755. Johnson Papers, Volume 1, p. 465.
Unfortunately, even as the Indian Department was being brought into the world, Johnson was plagued by confusion and uncertainty as to what his actual responsibilities were. On April 15, 1755, Edward Braddock, Commander in Chief of the royal forces in North America, 'by Virtue of the Power & Authority to me given & granted by His Majesty to appoint a proper Person or Persons to have the sole Management & direction of the Affairs of the Six Nations of Indians & their Allies, to the end that the said Indians may be heartily engaged in & attached to the British Interest ... do hereby appoint you the said William Johnson in the Name and behalf of His Majesty to superintend & manage the Affairs of the said Nations & their Allies, giving you full power & Authority to treat & confer with them as often and upon such matters as you shall judge necessary for His Majesty's Service.' 16 His responsibilities were military, and lay with the Indians as military allies, though this gave him diplomatic functions as well; he was to report to the Commander in Chief. One important step taken in this commission towards the creation of an Indian Department was that 'all Persons to whom the Direction of the Affairs of the said Nations or their Allies have been heretofore committed and all others whatsoever are strictly required & enjoined to cease & forbear acting or intermeddling

16Braddock, April 15, 1755. Ibid., Volume 1, p. 465.
Johnson was also empowered to appoint a Secretary of Indian Affairs, a position which he entrusted to his friend Peter Wraxall, as well as one or more interpreters; this was the birth of the Indian Department.

At the same time, De Lancey and Shirley both sent him identical instructions on which they had agreed for conducting the Crown Point expedition, assuming that they could direct his operation in his capacity as a provincial major-general. In the ensuing clash between Johnson and Shirley the confusion over the commission played only a minor role, but Johnson argued that his commission from Braddock overrode any directions Shirley might give him on anything remotely to do with Indians. In December of 1755 Johnson resigned his provincial command, but continued to act with the Indians under Braddock's commission. As the King wrote to Shirley and asked that

17 Ibid.
18 Sir William Johnson to Peter Wraxall, April 15, 1755. Ibid., Volume 1, p. 467.
19 De Lancey to Sir William Johnson and Shirley to Sir William Johnson, April 16, 1755. Ibid., Volume 1, pp. 468 and 472.
21 Johnson Papers, Volume 1, p. xxii.
Johnson continue to carry on relations with the northern tribes, 22 Shirley as commander under Braddock of forces raised locally 23 assumed that Johnson was to act under him, and sent a commission and instructions to Johnson transferring his responsibility from Braddock to himself. When Johnson failed to accept the commission, Shirley wrote to him with some surprise, emphasizing that he was offering him essentially a continuation of Braddock's commission. 24

Johnson continued to hold out for a direct royal commission, however, and on February 16, 1756, received one from George II, appointing him to be 'Colonel of our Faithful Subjects and Allies the Six United Nations;' he was to take his orders from his superiors 'according to the rules and discipline of war' and also as 'Sole Agent and Superintendent of the said Indians and their Affairs;' his salary, in this latter capacity, of £600 per year was to be paid by the Commander in Chief, 'whose Commands & Directions you are punctually to observe in all Matters relating to the Affairs of the said Indians.' 25 Thus his commission was still a military one, depending upon the

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22 The King to Shirley, no date. Ibid., Volume 2, p. 396.
23 Flexner, op. cit., p. 124.
24 Shirley to Sir William Johnson, December 24, 1755. Ibid., Volume 2, p. 396.
25 'Commission,' February 17, 1756. Ibid., Volume 2, p. 434.
Commander in Chief, but not a regular military commission in that he had responsibilities which were not strictly military.

In 1760, he again wrote to resign his office recalling that in 1755 'I was, from the knowledge which was had of the acquaintance I had with the Indians of the Six Nations, as well as from a consideration of the part which I bore with the former War, pitched upon & appointed by General Braddock to the Sole Superintendency of these People,' and complaining that although he had received £600 as Indian Superintendent, he had received no military pay as 'Colonel of the Six Nations,' 'Altho' I have constantly taken the Field at an expense equal to the amount of my Sallary as Superintendant.'

He failed in his attempt to incorporate the Indian Department, or at least himself, into the military establishment in a regular way, though he did receive a new commission from George III in March of 1761. It was essentially a repetition of the old one, making him subject to the Commander in Chief for payment and direction.

These commissions did not make it entirely clear, however, what Johnson's exact powers were, and what his precise relationship with the military authorities was.

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Indian diplomacy, the outfitting and direction of war parties, the distribution of the presents which were the traditional medium of diplomacy had all been accepted as his province from the beginning of his appointment in 1755, but as an old trader and frontier landowner, he knew only too well that other wider questions lay at the root of friendly relations with the Indians, and that the regulation of land and of trade must somehow be integrated into the supervision of the Indians.

Even before his commission Johnson had been concerning himself with the disposition of Indian lands, and as far as the regulation of trade with the Indians went, Johnson assumed, and Jeffrey Amherst, the Commander in Chief, imputed to him, certain responsibilities. These questions were increasingly important as the whole diplomatic, military and legal situation was revolutionized by British military successes between 1758 and 1760. As the French empire shrank before British advance in the interior, the welfare of the conquered areas became increasingly the province of the Commander in Chief and his subordinates, including Johnson. George Croghan, the Pennsylvania trader whom Johnson had appointed to be one of his deputies

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in 1756, 29 wrote to him in January of 1761 saying 'there is now a prospect of a good Treade with ye. Indians Butt unless you Regulate itt on a plan to which ye. Treaders from ye Several governments must be bound I fear itt will Come to Nothing as we Shall over Trade our Selves an Interfear with one a Nother. I Must Beg pardon for men- shoning this to You Butt as I have herd some General oficers Say itt was you that Should Regulate ye. Indian Treade I thought I wold Menshon itt as it Certainly Requires to be putt on som footing Imeadetly this way.' 30

Amherst wrote in early February to ask Johnson's advice about the carrying on of the trade. He planned to garrison the forts in the interior properly and appoint a governor at Detroit to manage the trade; he asked what kinds of goods and what prices should be included in the commerce. 31 It was obvious from the letter, however, that Amherst intended to supervise the trade himself, through Johnson.

In his reply to this letter, Johnson envisioned a British policy to the Indians which would go far beyond the

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31 Amherst to Sir William Johnson, February 1, 1761. Ibid., Volume 3, p. 315.
idea of the Indians only as allies. The main responsibility for keeping the Indian attachment, and preserving a
'Steady, Uniform and friendly Conduct and behaviour towards them,' would lie with the commanding officers of the posts.\(^{32}\)
'Next to that,' he continued, 'there's nothing can more Effectually Establish & preserve a good understanding between us and them than a free and open Trade to be carried on with them under proper Regulations & Restrictions, by a Law to be passed for that purpose, which Law should be put in Execution by proper officers or Intendants against all Delinquents.'\(^{33}\) Although Sir William did not specify by whom these laws were to be passed, he seems by his rejection of Shirley's commission and his regulations pertaining to trade to have envisioned some kind of royally commissioned power for the Indian Superintendent, with a civil power of some kind over cases involving Indian relations and trade.

In the summer of 1761, Sir William made a trip to Detroit and Niagara, and laid down some directives to the commanding officers; he also sent directives to the more distant posts of Michilimackinack and St. Joseph. The officers were to maintain good relations with the Indians, to choose 'one of the honestest and best Qualified of the French inhabitants' for an interpreter, and to see 'that


\(^{33}\) \textit{Ibid.}.  

all Traders strictly adhere to the regulation made for that purpose, on pain of being banished.\textsuperscript{34} The traders were to carry on commerce only at garrisoned posts, and were not to be allowed to trade unless they could show a passport from Sir William Johnson 'his Majesty's Sole Agent and Superinten-
dent of Indian Affairs, or his Deputy, and sealed with his seal at Arms.'\textsuperscript{35}

These regulations, limiting trade to the posts and putting trade under the eye of the commanding officer, had been authorized by Amherst,\textsuperscript{36} and went into effect despite the complaints of the traders at being unable to go outside the posts to actively compete with the French; they were also concurred in by the Earl of Egremont, who had expressed uneasiness at the reported frauds perpetrated against the Indians by English traders.\textsuperscript{37}

Meanwhile the group of people appointed by and reporting to Johnson was increasing. George Croghan reported from Fort Pitt the number of officials he thought neces-
sary to do justice to the Indians and to 'Make themselves well acquainted with the Indian customs, Maners & policies that plots may Nott be consorted by any Ill Dispos\textsuperscript{d}

\textsuperscript{34} 'Indian Proceedings at Niagara and Detroit,' July-September, 1761. \textit{Ibid.}, Volume 3, p. 473.

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{36} J. Sosin, \textit{Whitehall and the Wilderness}, p. 40.

\textsuperscript{37} Egremont to Amherst, December 12, 1761. \textit{Johnson Papers}, Volume 3, p. 588.
Indians.\textsuperscript{38} The list consisted of two Assistant Agents at Detroit, two interpreters 'as there can Nott be own found which spokes all y\textsuperscript{e}. Indian Langudgess spoke there,' a gunsmith and man at Detroit, an Assistant Agent at Michilimackinack and an interpreter to serve Michilimackinack, La Baye and St. Joseph.\textsuperscript{39} Sir William Johnson approved of these suggestions, but recognized the likelihood that the Commander in Chief would be unwilling to make heavy expenditures in the Indian Department; such officers would be accepted 'if Indian Alliances or Trade with them be considered worthy our attention, if not it will be thought extravagant and unnecessary.'\textsuperscript{40}

Indeed, Amherst had already expressed his determination to be fair but firm. The Indians were not to be treated badly, but they were not to be pampered; they were not to be the cause of a lot of expense, and especially were to be given only small amounts of ammunition.\textsuperscript{41} The expenses for Indian officers he could not understand. Indian complaints of ill treatment at the posts were probably groundless; they must know the English to be masters

\textsuperscript{38}Croghan to Sir William Johnson, October 12, 1761. \textit{Ibid.}, Volume 3, p. 549.

\textsuperscript{39}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{40}Sir William Johnson to Croghan, November 30, 1761. \textit{Ibid.}, Volume 3, p. 573.

\textsuperscript{41}Amherst to Sir William Johnson, August 18, 1761. \textit{Ibid.}, Volume 3, p. 519.
of the posts.

With the conquest of Canada and the approach of the end of the war, Johnson hoped that the machinery for Indian diplomacy would not grind to a halt as it had in 1748, even though the French threat in military terms had been removed from the frontier. He warned the Board of Trade in August of 1762 that the Indians had been filled by the French with a great many wild fears, and that the importance — and the threat — of the Indians would not end with a peace treaty. He pointed out that a people showered with favours by the French would naturally expect their new neighbours to continue the tradition, and hoped that "we who always fell greatly short of the Enemy in presents and kindnesses to them, may [not] become too premature in a sudden retrenchment of some yet necessary Expenses." 42 The prize, he reminded them, was "a quiet possession of our distant posts, and an increase of settlement on the back parts of the Country so as within a few years to have a well Settled Frontier, in itself strong enough to repel any sudden attempt from the Indians," and warned that the posts were no defense against an Indian war; "they may prove a means of retarding the progress of an Army, or oppose an European force; they can in no wise prevent the Incursions of the

42 Sir William Johnson to the Board of Trade, August 20, 1762. Ibid., Volume 3, p. 865.
Indians, who need not approach them in any of their inroads, and can destroy the inhabitants and their Dwellings with very little risque." 43 Trade and friendship were the only means of guaranteeing peace on the frontier, and in order to assure the proper conduct of Indian affairs, it was imperative that the Indian Department be carried on 'with the utmost regularity and uniformity.' 44

In spite of this warning, the resources of the Indian Department were cut down. Croghan reported that the western Indians were sure the cessation of the sale of powder to them was a sign the English intended to fall on them; 'they had great Expectations of being very Ginerally Supply'd by us & from their poverty & Mercenery Disposition they cant Bear such a Disapointment.' 45 Daniel Claus wondered if he would get army pay if, as seemed likely, he was dropped from the Indian Department. 46 Amherst dismissed reports of restlessness among the Indians by saying, 'they Never can Hurt us unless We are Weak Enough to Put Ourselves in their Power,' 47 and minimized the damage an Indian war could cause. In spite of his formal, almost mocking, deference

43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
45 Croghan to Sir William Johnson, December 10, 1762. Ibid., Volume 3, p. 964.
46 Claus to Sir William Johnson, June 6, 1763. Ibid., Volume 4, p. 150.
47 Amherst to Gladwin, May 29, 1763. Ibid., Volume 4, p. 98.
to Johnson's experience among the Indians, Amherst never really saw the need for large expenditures on Indian affairs, and his control over the purse of that Department made it very difficult for Sir William Johnson to extend his diplomacy into the newly conquered West.

The explosion of Pontiac's rising, caused largely by discontent at the parsimony of the English, shook English policy to the foundations, and Amherst's desire to extirpate the savages, root and branch, did not carry as much weight as the realization that good relations with the Indians were important not only in the face of the French, but in time of peace as well. The Proclamation of 1763 was the first step towards trying to make permanent the Indian policy which had been found by trial and error to work during the war. In the first place, the Proclamation set aside the land beyond the boundaries of the existing colonies as a reserve for the Indians, closed to settlement altogether. During the war, when the Board of Trade had blocked a move by New York to throw open the frontiers to settlement, Amherst rejoiced to be able to tell the tribes that all future purchases of Indian land within the colonies would have to be made in public, by government authority; this position was reiterated by the Proclamation.

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48 Sosin, op. cit., p. 48.

49 'Indian Proceedings at Niagara and Detroit,' July-September, 1761. Johnson Papers, Volume 3, p. 428.
The Proclamation made no specific regulations for trade, except that trade with the Indians was to be open rather than monopolistic, free to all British subjects; the Board of Trade informed Sir William Johnson that trade regulations and general Indian policy were to be a separate plan, dependent largely on 'such opinions and proposals as we shall receive from you and His Majesty's Agent for the Southern District.' The question of civil government in the area should be included in one colonial government or another, the Board of Trade's arguments won out, and the Proclamation established no civil government for the interior.

The Board of Trade was now left with the task of drawing up some regulations governing the Indian trade. In June 1764 Croghan made a trip to London, partly to clear up some of his own affairs, but also to present Johnson's advice to the Board of Trade. Advice came as well from other sources; one set of hints regarding Indian policy recommended that military strength be used as a means to awe the Indians, with the colonies to pay the cost of the


52 Ibid., p. 139.

53 Sosin, op. cit., p. 74.
troops. 54 Just after the Proclamation, the Earl of Halifax, President of the Board of Trade, speculated that the trade plan accepted would be to restrict the trade to posts, and for the governors of the provinces to issue licenses for trade. 55

The plan which the Board of Trade at length drafted and sent to Johnson for comment on July 10, 1764, provided that the two superintendents, Johnson and John Stuart, were to be responsible directly to the Crown, with ex officio seats on the councils of all colonies they were concerned with. They would carry on all political and military relations, and supervise traders licensed by the colonial governments from the time they entered Indian territory. Commerce would be carried on only at military posts and would be directed by commissaries responsible to the superintendents though appointed from London. 56 Against their better judgment, the Board also gave the superintendents power to define the boundaries between the colonies and the Indians, for Sir William Johnson argued that the boundaries drawn by the Proclamation were unrealistic; 57


55 Halifax to Amherst, October 19, 1763. New York Documents, Volume 7, p. 535.

56 Flexner, op. cit., p. 274.

57 Ibid., p. 275.
legitimate grants of land had already been made beyond the line, and as late as 1766 people were being required to pay rent to a government which officially regarded their holdings as illegal. 58

The plan of 1764 ran into several problems, however. The opposition of provincial governments was easy to foresee, for they felt that the superintendents would be independent of any civil or military authority, and as such in danger of building their own kingdoms. 59 The Governor of Quebec, James Murray, was particularly vehement in his criticism of the plan, with its creation of a 'power within a power,' an independent official within the borders of his province. 60 He felt that the posts should be attached to the nearest colonial government and the supervision of the trade left to commissaries at the posts. 61

Johnson, too, had his reservations about the plan; he did not object to being independent of civil and military authority, but he felt he needed support of the kind that only a superior rank, civil or military, could give him. Thus the plan of 1764 was never put into effect, and the

58 Sosin, op. cit., p. 107.

59 Ibid., p. 154.

60 R. A. Humphreys, 'Governor Murray's Views on the Plan of 1764 for the Management of Indian Affairs.' Canadian Historical Review (referred to as CHR), June, 1935. Volume XVI, p. 163.

61 Ibid., p. 168.
Board of Trade promised to draw up a new scheme.

Meanwhile, Johnson felt that regulations must be drawn up to control the trade, and to avoid the danger of allowing the Indians to be mistreated or defrauded. The trade had attracted a great many from the southern colonies as well as Quebec into the interior, and some regulation must be given to the trade. In the vacuum which existed, Sir William Johnson drew up his own regulations and proceeded to apply them to the wilderness. The restriction of the trade to the posts, and the supervision of the trade by the commanding officers were what Johnson had been trying to enforce since the war. Now, he added Indian commissaries to manage the trade itself and to maintain relations with the Indians, and to give traders permission to pass from one post to another. 62

Though Johnson had drawn up the regulations on his own authority, an implicit approval of them came from both the Commander in Chief and the Secretary of State in England. General Thomas Gage, the new Commander in Chief after 1764, was willing to put up money for the enforcement of Johnson's regulations, on the assumption that 'the King and his ministers will have that confidence in you as to approve any steps you take.' 63 The Earl of Shelburne,

62 Carleton to Shelburne, March 2, 1768. Colonial Office, Series 42 (referred to as C042 with volume number and page), Volume 28, p. 159.

63 Flexner, op. cit., p. 313.
Secretary of State, also approved the regulations, and directed John Stuart, the Superintendent in the Southern District, to regulate the trade in his area. Murray, in spite of his sympathy for the complaints of the Canadian traders about the regulations, seems to have regarded Johnson's regulations as binding, for he restricted trading to the posts by proclamation early in 1766.

On the other hand, the regulations do not seem to have been issued as a matter of course, for Shelburne wrote to Carleton in June of 1767, 'As no Regulations for carrying on the Indian Trade have been framed here in consequence of the Proclamation of 1763, I have written to Sir William Johnson to furnish you with the Regulations observed by the Traders of the several Colonies in his District.'

The confusion inherent in this undefined situation soon manifested itself, especially in the relationship between military officers at the posts and the commissaries. Both groups seemed to have quite extensive, though vague, jurisdiction over Indian affairs, and it was almost impossible to make a clear distinction of their functions.

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64 Stuart to Governor Johnstone, December 17, 1766. Haldimand Collection (referred to by British Museum Additional Manuscripts volume number and page, as "B.M.Add. Mss." plus volume number and page), Volume 21671, p. 120.


66 Shelburne to Carleton, June 20, 1767. C042/27, p. 87.
Johnson admitted, 'I am not ignorant of the Difficulties under which both labour, the commanding officers having received Instructions for their conduct at the Posts, before the creating the Office of Commissaries, from which they cannot recede without orders from the Commander in Chief, and on the other hand ye commissaries are of no use unless they have the entire Management of Trade & Indian Affairs where they reside, which is very particularly expressed by His Majesty's Intentions in the letters to me & in the Plan.'

Under this rather dubious authority - his old instructions and a plan which had been shelved - Sir William declared that 'the Commissary was to have sole direction of the Trading Town of the Post of his residence,' with the assistance of the commanding officer, including a 'Judicial authority to try causes to a certain amount,' and to commit criminals for trial to colonial courts.

He expected these powers to be confirmed shortly by the Privy Council and in the meantime the commissaries were directed to exercise them anyway.

A howl of protest arose from both traders and military officers about the degree of power thus granted to the commissaries. The traders asked for due process of law rather than being left to the mercy of the commissaries.

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68 Ibid.
69 Carleton to Johnson, March 27, 1767. CO42/27, p. 81.
and the military officers complained 'they are a set of people the like not to be found.'

When official action was taken, however, it was not really caused by such considerations as the complaints of the Quebec traders, or the shaky authority of Johnson; rather the changes were part of the general contraction of British expenditure in North America which followed the repeal of the Stamp Act, and were opposed to the strengthening of his department which Johnson wished to see. The new plan of 1768 from the Board of Trade called for the evacuation of all inland posts except for Niagara, Detroit and Michilimackinack, and the transfer of the management of the Indian trade from the Indian Department to the colonies, leaving the Superintendent of Indian Affairs to manage only diplomatic relations with the Indians and government purchases of land. 'All officers appointed by the Superintendents for regulating said Trade are as soon as possible to be discontinued and discharged,' according to the plan. The lack of regulation had shown to the Board of Trade the confusion which could result, and it was hoped 'the ill Effects of such Inattention & neglect will induce [the colonies] to use more caution and better management.'

71 Stuart to Haldimand, August 1, 1768. B.M. Add. Mss. 21671, p. 299.
72 'Report of Board of Trade,' July 30, 1768. 'Miscellaneous,' Burt Transcripts.
The Earl of Hillsborough, Secretary of State, explained 'the great Expence of the Variety of the Establishment far Exceeds the Value of the object & the Difficulties which have attended the Execution of that Plan in General for want of due Authority in the Superintendants,' had caused the change, as well as the desire to give someone definite authority over the activities of the traders. His hope was that Johnson's 1765 regulations, which seemed to content the Indians, would be adopted by the colonies, thus achieving effective regulation, while saving money; since the disappearance of the French from the northern half of the continent, friendship with the Indians was not of such critical importance as it had been before.

Needless to say, this plan of 1768, about which Amherst, Benjamin Franklin and Carleton, who supported the traders in Quebec, had been consulted, but not Johnson, filled the Indian Superintendent with alarm. The Indian Department could not, of course, be abandoned too abruptly, and Sir William protested that it was necessary to keep many of the Indian officers at their posts until such time as the colonial governments saw fit to take over their responsibility.

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73 Hillsborough to Haldimand, April 15, 1768. B.M. Add.Mss. 21673, p. 75.
74 Ibid.
75 Flexner, op. cit., p. 324.
76 Sosin, op. cit., p. 148.
functions, to 'give some time to the Colony assemblies to make some provisions in their stead,'\textsuperscript{77} and Gage, although he supported in general a withdrawal from the interior, conceded Sir William's argument,\textsuperscript{78} and continued to pay some of Johnson's officers.

As Johnson realized, waiting for the colonies to take responsibility for the conduct of Indian affairs was not a short-term proposition, and in the meantime he continued to apply his regulations on the fur trade, on even less definite authority than before. By the beginning of 1769, the traders in Quebec were again complaining about the regulations on trade,\textsuperscript{79} Quebec was one of the few provinces which took its responsibilities in the Indian trade seriously; Carleton vowed to prevent 'improper People going out of this Province into the Upper Countries,'\textsuperscript{80} and a committee of the Quebec Council attacked the question of how the provinces 'can form a system tho' ever so well appointed and necessary and give it it's binding effect upon persons casually residing for purposes of Trade in a Country not liable to receive a Law from them, or enforce

\textsuperscript{77}Sir William Johnson to Captain Brown, November 24, 1768. B.M. Add. Mss. 21678, p. 120.

\textsuperscript{78}Gage to Captain Brown, November 13, 1768. B.M. Add. Mss. 21678, p. 118.

\textsuperscript{79}'Council Minutes,' April 5, 1769. CO42/29, p. 69.

\textsuperscript{80}Carleton to Captain Brown, April 18, 1769. B.M. Add. Mss. 21678, p. 126.
obedience to it, when formed; whilst His Majesty was pleased to appoint a Superintendent for Indian Affairs with power to regulate the different Posts. . . . it was not difficult perhaps for each Province to restrain its own Traders from doing anything contrary to his directions, besides that there always was an Agent upon the spot with a proper Military Force. 81

If Quebec was aware of her impotence when it came to extending control over the upper country, so were several of the other provinces, and since, as they saw it, Johnson's commission had been revoked, 82 five of the colonies made one fruitless attempt at formulating a program of united Indian policy. An invitation issued by the New York Assembly was received in Quebec before the beginning of 1770, 83 following an earlier suggestion of common regulations received in July of 1769. 84 A meeting was planned for January of 1770, a move which Hillsborough objected to, saying 'the King did not approve the holding Congresses upon the Business of the Indian Trade & the sending commissioners from the different Colonies for that purpose.' 85

81 'Minutes of Meeting of Committee,' April 8, 1769. C042/29, p. 71.
82 Ibid.
83 Cramahé to Hillsborough, April 29, 1771. C042/31, p. 36.
Before this reprimand arrived, however, the conference had collapsed of its own accord, although the Virginian commissioner arrived not having been informed of its cancellation. 86 Although Hillsborough could not bear the thought of a repetition of the Stamp Act Congress, he was beginning to see the need for a general settlement of Indian affairs in the West, and suggested an act of Parliament as the solution. 87

Meanwhile, Johnson continued, with Gage's approval, to act upon his old commission and his regulations. When Gage left for England in 1773, he left General Frederick Haldimand, who was to take his place during his absence, a list of Indian officers at the posts; these were paid by the commanding officers, who drew the salaries from the Commander in Chief. 88 Haldimand tended to rely on Sir William Johnson's advice to a greater extent than Gage had. He realized that there was little hope for a solution to the problem of Indian affairs 'whilst such different interests prevail in the several provinces concerned in the Indian trade,' 89 and referred the officer commanding at Detroit to Johnson who would 'give you further Directions

86 Sosin, op. cit., p. 214.
87 Ibid., p. 216.
concerning what may be proper to be done therein.'

Johnson turned to the new Commander in Chief with a plea that his Department be extricated from the difficulties it had been put into by the plan of 1768. His deputies had, he said, acted under his own commission from the beginning, but his other officers were acting only in an uncertain capacity. Though he had reason from Hillsborough to 'apprehend that some improvements might shortly take place' he asked whether royal commissions for his officers might not give them greater influence and greater usefulness to the service. Haldimand in reply expressed his admiration for Johnson's experience and ability, but pointed out the difficulty of getting rid of an officer holding a royal commission if he did not prove satisfactory. That the eradication of the Indian Department since 1768 had not been so complete as Johnson sometimes indicated is shown by the fact that Johnson still had the power to appoint a commissary to Detroit, and by these discussions over the actual position of Indian officers. He also apparently continued to issue regulations, and of course to exercise his

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90 Ibid.
function in carrying on councils and land negotiations with the Indians, of which the Treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1768 was one example.

Nonetheless, Johnson often felt paralysed by the drastic reduction of his power in 1768, and the confusion and danger of the frontier and the friction created by the inroads of traders and settlers, darkened the last days of his life. At his death on July 11, 1774, Johnson was still acting under a commission which had rested on shaky foundations for some years, and passed the confusion on to his successor, his nephew and son-in-law, Guy Johnson.

On the death of his uncle, Guy Johnson, serving under the authority of Gage's 'approbation and direction', to continue in the terms of Sir William's commission, 96 carried on the business of the Indian Department, meanwhile asking for a direct royal commission for himself. Acting apparently on the Commander in Chief's letter, Colonel Guy Johnson did not get a royal commission as Superintendent of Indian Affairs until 1776, while he was in England. 97 Before the receipt of his commission, the state of the Indian Department had undergone several changes.

95 Guy Johnson to Dartmouth, July 26, 1774. New York Documents, Volume 8, p. 472.


By the Quebec Act of 1774, the entire interior area of the country was put under the civil government of the province of Quebec, and besides the military officers and officers of the Indian Department already in the interior, lieutenant-governors were to be sent as well to the four new civil governments created in the West.

Another event which put Indian relations in a new perspective was the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, which brought the whole question of the Indians back into the foreground of British policy. Guy Johnson began the diplomatic relations which were intended to keep the Indians attached to the British interest; but during the American invasion of Canada, he and Daniel Claus went on leave to England, not to return to the upper country till 1779. With Johnson out of the country, the Indian Department, partly because of its uncertain position since 1768 and partly because of the war raging in the upper country, fell into even greater confusion. Before he left, Johnson had sent John Butler to Niagara to mind the affairs of the Indian Department from there, though Butler did not have a regular appointment. An old feud with Sir William had prevented an appointment before his death, and after 1774, he drew pay as an interpreter, as there were no other vacant positions in the Department. In spite of his

98 Guy Johnson to Haldimand, June 24, 1779. B.M. Add.Mss. 21766, p. 3.

somewhat irregular position and his other responsibilities
during the war as an officer of a ranger company, the
general care of the Indian Department seems to have
devolved on him; Carleton thought highly of him, 100 and
Haldimand looked to him 'to be the Chief of that department
in those parts, other people having absented themselves
from this duty.' 101 Yet Butler's authority was not in the
same class at all as Sir William Johnson's had been, nor
that of Guy Johnson before his early departure. Carleton
reported in 1777 that he felt Lieutenant-Colonel Barry
St. Leger had taken Johnson's place, 102 and didn't seem at
all sure of the procedure for paying Indian officers, 103
though the Quebec Act had placed Indian affairs in his
domain. The financial affairs of the Indian Department
seem to have been in a bewildering state indeed, for
Carleton sent money directly to Sir John Johnson, Colonel
Butler, Captain Tyce and Captain Fraser, among others,
before complaining that 'It appears to me therefore extremely
improper to be paying large sums of money to so many dif-
ferent hands, for the same purposes, and it is become
highly necessary to put the direction of these matters under

100 Carleton to Bolton, May 15, 1777. CO42/36, p. 193.
101 Le Maistre to Bolton, January 22, 1778. B.M.
Add. Mss. 21678, p. 197.
102 Carleton to Germain, July 9, 1777. CO42/36, p. 308.
103 Carleton to Claus, November 3, 1777. B.M. Add.
one person, who cannot with propriety be any other than the Commanding Officer at Niagara to whom therefore I must refer this business. 104

Another thing which complicated the affairs of the Indian Department was the appearance and disappearance of civil government from the Ohio country. Of the lieutenant-governors who were appointed under the Quebec Act, Edward Abbot did not arrive at Vincennes until 1777, only to flee shortly thereafter; Patrick Sinclair at Michilimackinack was taken prisoner; Mathew Johnson never reached Kaskaskia at all; only Henry Hamilton served from 1775 to 1779 at Detroit 105 and was then led in chains to Williamsburgh after his abortive expedition to recapture Vincennes from the rebels.

In the absence of these men, the management of Indian affairs fell on the remnants of the Indian Department, acting more or less officially and on the military officers at the posts. The old question of the rank of Indian officers during wartime arose, with the military authorities as determined as ever that the Indian Department's officers were not part of the regular military establishment. Guy Johnson's application to have a regular rank was turned down in 1779, because, although he was

104 Carleton to Claus, October 20, 1777. B.M.Add. Mss. 21700, p. 22.

105 A. L. Burt, The Old Province of Quebec, Volume 2, p. 11.
'a worthy and unexceptionable Officer' others in his Department were unfit to take the place a regular rank would entitle them to. 106

The Indian officers themselves argued that if they did not have commissions they would not, in war, receive the protection of the laws of war when carrying out their duties; 'the Officers in the Indian Department having no commissions or in fact anything to shew they act by Authority, will, if taken by the Enemy, be considered in no other or better light than as public Murders & Highway men and Treated as such'; 107 many of them had served long in the service at a sacrifice of their families and property, and one of them had already met an 'ignominious death' at the hands of the rebels. 108 Alexander McKee, for example, had served in the Department for twenty-two years in 1780, yet 'should he be so unfortunate as to be taken by the Enemy, he has no rank to protect him from insult.' 109

As a rule the commanding officer or lieutenant-governor, who did have superior rank, had control at a post, and the Indian officers possessed only nominal ranks


107 'Memorandum from John Butler,' June 4, 1778. B.M. Add.Mss. 21765, p. 32.

108 'Memorial of Officers serving in the Indian Department,' no date. B.M. Add.Mss. 21769, p. 90.

which enabled them to command among each other, and also to avoid interference from regular officers in affairs concerned purely with Indians. 110

In 1779, Guy Johnson at last received permission to go once more into the upper country, to act as Colonel of the Six Nations and Superintendent of Indian Affairs; Haldimand laid down an emphatic prohibition against him having anything to do with military affairs, and assured Butler that he would have no power to deal with the Rangers. 111 Under the Quebec Act, the responsibility of the Indian Superintendent was to the Governor and Commander in Chief in Quebec, and thus Haldimand had direct control over the affairs of the Indians.

The natural confusion of Indian and military affairs during the war did nothing to clear up the chaos of the Indian Department after the death of Sir William Johnson, and indeed seems to have added to the puzzle, by blurring the lines of responsibility for the distribution of that increasingly important item, the Indian presents. Partly from a sincere belief in the efficacy of presents as a means of diplomacy, partly from a casualness in the accounts of the Indian Department which Guy Johnson so often protested was part of the heritage of his uncle, and partly

from an undoubted wish among the Indian officers to enrich themselves in the upper country, the accounts for presents grew more and more staggering with every passing year, and Haldimand's reaction changed from a sort of bewilderment to shrill protest. One man, who claimed he had tried to be honest in his post as storekeeper at one of the posts, asserted that his salary had been cut in half when he first arrived to allow for the fortune he was sure to make,\textsuperscript{112} and most of the Indian officers fell under suspicion, at one time or another, of peculation staggering even in that century of inexact budgets and casual finances. As early as 1779, Haldimand was being asked by the Treasury to submit suggestions for some way the expenses of the upper posts might be reduced.\textsuperscript{113}

By 1782, a new plan for Indian affairs, based on Haldimand's suggestions, had been formulated, which attempted to lay down in specific terms the responsibilities and powers of the Indian Department. The Department was to be under a 'Superintendent-General and Inspector General of Indian Affairs,' a post given on Haldimand's recommendation to Sir John Johnson, Sir William Johnson's son, who had been active during the war leading a corps of loyalist volunteers. The Superintendent-General was to be subject to the direction

\textsuperscript{112}Daniel Bliss to Powell, September 30, 1781. B.M. Add. Mss. 21761, p. 182.

\textsuperscript{113}Treasury to Haldimand, July 30, 1779. B.M. Add. Mss. 21706, p. 190.
of the Commander in Chief of the forces in Quebec, but would have full powers of inspection in the Indian Department, and the regular rank of brigadier-general, so that when he visited a post, he would take command. His deputies were to be responsible for the distribution of presents, but it was to be presided over by the commanding officer of the post. Haldimand was to settle Sir John's salary; Guy Johnson was instructed to turn over to his cousin all the Indian belts, papers and records left to him by Sir William Johnson, though he protested that many of them had been lost.

Haldimand's letter of instruction to Sir John gave advice as to means of retaining the affection of the Indians; one suggestion was to supply good interpreters by looking among the Loyalists for 'some Boys to send very young to the Neighbouring Indian Villages to establish an early knowledge of the Languages, that done, to put them in an English School for three or four years until they are 12 or 14 years old ... from there sent back to the Indian Villages where they will soon recover the Languages, under

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114 Shelburne to Haldimand, April 22, 1782. B.M. Add.Mss. 21705, p. 23.
the Care and Tuition of the most approved chiefs. Sir John's greatest task was to be to restore economy in the Indian presents. He was to have no power of making appointments, but was assured that his opinion would carry great weight. In cases of 'justice' the Indian Department was to refer to the commanding officers.

Thus, though Haldimand's distance from the posts prevented him from exercising direct control, he intended to keep a tight rein on the Indian Department and on the people in it, through Sir John Johnson, a person of 'Rank, Influence, Knowledge and Perfect Honour'—perhaps his experiences with Guy Johnson led him to italicize the last qualification. The plan, however, was not the answer to all of Haldimand's prayers. Sir John seems to have been a man without a great deal of imagination, and lacked what his cousin had inherited of Sir William's feeling for ceremony and drama, qualities which Sir William, at least, evidently valued above his son's stolid integrity.

In any case, the new system was not really given a chance, for the end of the war brought an end, by treaty, to Britain's official control over the interior. The

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118 Ibid.


yielding of the Ohio Valley to the new United States was something which left the officials in Quebec and in the Indian Department aghast; their fear of a new Indian war led them to put off giving up the posts in the West until refusal to give them up had become British policy. Jay's Treaty of 1794 laid down the official boundaries of British North America and the United States; though it also contained a renewed British promise to evacuate the western forts, there were British troops in these forts as late as the War of 1812. The Indian Department thus retained its structure and carried on its activities as before, although it apparently used Britain's uncertain position in the interior as a reason for struggling to be more free from the Commander in Chief in Quebec.\(^{121}\) In a sense, the task of the Indian officers had never been more important, for quieting the fears of the Indians and trying to maintain their friendship in the face of a flow of American landseekers,\(^ {122}\) was an almost impossible assignment. The Indian Department continued to act as it had for long periods of its existence, upon authority which was neither clear-cut nor based on solid powers; the Department continued to adapt itself to what it viewed as an accurate construction of changing Indian policies.

\(^{121}\) Major Mathews to Haldimand, August 9, 1786. B.M.Add.Mss. 21736, p. 215.

CHAPTER TWO

THE INDIAN OFFICERS AND THE INDIANS

As we have seen in Chapter One, the Indian Department was never one in which lines of authority were clear-cut, or powers definitely allotted. The marriage of civil and military elements within the Indian Department, between those individuals who had military jurisdiction as well as some part in Indian affairs and those who were concerned solely with the Indians, was an uneasy one at best; either one at any given time might have the more prominent role. The Department was composed of people whose operations had to be very closely watched, and yet whose functions required a great deal of discretionary power; of some for whom Indian affairs was a career and of others whose position or skills might make them useful in some part-time capacity; of correct and gentlemanly officers like De Peyster and illiterate interpreters like La Mothe; of some whose respect and affection for the Indians and their ways were genuine, and of others who could hardly endure the contact they were forced to have with the tribes; of those whose lives were more Indian than European, and those who felt Europeanization was the only key to future harmony with the Indians.
At the top of this conglomerate organization stood the Indian Superintendent, deriving his authority from the Commander in Chief and responsible to him, but acting with a great deal of discretionary power and usually listened to by the Commander in Chief. This was partly due to the nature of his responsibilities, but also in large part due to the nature of the first Indian Superintendent himself. In fact the period may almost be thought of as consisting of two distinct phases: one when the personality of Sir William Johnson was the most important factor in the conduct of Indian relations; the second after his death in 1774, when his less competent successors were continually unable to draw together the confused elements of the Department.

Sir William Johnson was one of those figures whose color and singularity fascinated observers of the North American frontier. The son of a good but poor Irish family, he was brought to America as a young man by his uncle Sir Peter Warren, who was a well-known figure in New York politics. Sent out to the frontier near Schenectady to manage some of his uncle's land, young William soon set up on his own, and did very well at farming and trading with the Indians. The life Johnson lived on the edge of the forest as a landholder and trader was bound to be without all the attractions and society of New York, but from the beginning he was attracted more than others to the ways of the Indians and the life they led. Like other traders, he
came to know Indian language and Indian habits. From the first he showed a remarkable ability to understand and live among the Indian nations, and eventually was to have an influence among them unsurpassed by any other white man in North America. He naturally became somewhat estranged from the social milieu of New York and Albany; the constant stream of Indians to his dwelling, his visits to the towns of the Six Nations, his appearance in Indian dress, all marked him as an eccentric. At the same time he was obviously a man of importance, wealth and energy, whose connections and influence could not be ignored.

Johnson's abilities to deal with the Indians were increasingly, though sometimes reluctantly, recognized; he was called upon by New York and by the Commander in Chief to perform various tasks and to assume new responsibilities concerning them, first as commissary of the Indian forces, then as Colonel of the Six Nations, finally as Superintendent. His original interests with the Indians, land and trade, which had engaged him as a private citizen, were always at the core of the policies or the interpretations of policy he was called upon to make.

The advance of the trader and settler was something Johnson had no desire to stop, but he was deeply concerned that this advance should be made without the destruction or demoralization of the tribes. The Indians must in time make an accommodation with European civilization, but Johnson did not want them to suffer from this transition.
He did not want them either killed off by lawless frontiersmen or demoralized like the weak 'civilized' tribes of the Atlantic coast, who had been put into European clothes, schools and farms, and had lost all will to live vigorous and active lives. The Indians were receptive to European goods and ideas; let this be exploited and the Indians accustomed gradually to the new life they must live.¹

William Johnson himself lived somewhat in the manner of a feudal lord; his vision of a peaceful and orderly community in the wilderness where white and Indian lived in harmony and brotherhood, was largely based upon this relationship with 'his' Indians, especially the Mohawks, and his tenants, for in his own neighbourhood he felt he was beginning to achieve the ideal. This happy result of his instinct and perhaps his boyhood on a paternalistic Irish estate was one which he felt could and should be duplicated wherever white met Indian.

The regulation of settlement was imperative for the construction of this community, for unplanned and lawless settlement was the greatest threat to its achievement. That Johnson himself was involved in the land speculation rampant in the colonies was evident. He was advised by one of his friends in New York:

I have no Indian deed among my Papers that I know of relative to your Susquehanna Purchase. . . . All Petitions for large Tracts are at a Stand; the

¹Flexner, op. cit., p. 289.
Council seem determined to grant no more than 20,000 acres in one Patent, so that if they come to such a Resolution you must present as many Petitions for 20,000 acres as will include the quantity you meant to take up and take out as many Lycences as Petitions. It will be necessary perhaps too that you at least offer a share to each of the Gentleman of the Council.  

But Johnson's land purchases were always developed in the interests of the Indians, at least as he saw them, and bought in full and open discussion with the Indians. It was the fraudulent purchases and incursions by squatters he was anxious about, for he knew how vital Indian land was to their survival and their dignity. 'The dread of having their lands snatched from them ... is ... the greatest trouble and uneasiness they labour under,' he told his friend Cadwallader Colden. The Indians would rather die 'all at once than to live in misery & at last starve.'

He constantly pointed out to the colonials the danger they ran of frontier war. The Indians 'may be induced to take such Measures for redressing themselves as cannot fail of terminating in bloodshed, and as a Quarrel of that Nature will hardly rest there, it will be highly necessary to take such Measures as may effectively prevent the fatal Consequences to the Province in General, which an Affairs of that Kind would be productive of.'

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The land speculators were also running a dangerous course, he warned:

The thirst after Indian lands is become almost universal, the people who generally want them are either ignorant of, or remote from the consequences of disobliging the Indians, many make a traffic of lands and few or none will be at any pains to get them settled, consequently they cannot be loosers by an Indian War, and should a Tribe be driven to despair and abandon their country, they have their desire tho' at the expence of the lives of such ignorant settlers as may be upon it.  

The colonies had nothing to fear from the Indians, he stressed, 'provided the Stricteste Justice be done to them in regard of their Lands, and the Indian Traders (with their Servants) capt under proper Regulation.'

The Proclamation of 1763, although it at first encouraged Johnson to be hopeful of good results, proved a broken reed, given the absence of clear-cut legal jurisdiction and effective policing in the interior; administrators and officials showed little interest in enforcing it even to the extent that was possible. Johnson appealed to everyone who had a claim to authority - to the Commander in Chief after 1763, to the colonial governors after 1768, to the military forces - to take effective steps where they could to stop illegal settlement. Though the Proclamation laid down a specific procedure for the purchase of Indian lands in full council, the obtaining of fraudulent

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6Haldimand to Governor Browne, August 15, 1768. B.M.Add.Mss. 21673, p. 92.
deeds and the movement of squatters could not be stopped; such practices were not always sincerely discouraged by the colonial governments, as land speculators were powerful in all of the provinces. Some of them backed up their claims by the spurious decision of Lord Camden regarding Indian lands:

In respect to such places as have been, or shall be acquired by Treaty, or Grant from any of the Indian Princes or Governments Your Majesty's Letters Patents are not necessary the Property of the Soil Vesting in the Grantee by the Indian grants subject only to your Majesty's rights of Sovereignty over Settlements as English Settlements and over the inhabitants as English Subjects; who carry with them your Majesty's Laws whenever they form Colonies and Receive Your Majesty's Protection by Virtue of your Royal charter.7

This indecisive document originally referred not to Indian lands in North America at all, but to lands in India; only the acquiescence of colonial judges and legislatures permitted it to assume any validity.

Sir William Johnson warned, 'The spirit of purchasing & putting settlements into the back Country, remote from the Influence of government and where they do as they please is already so prevalent that unless his Majesty shall fall upon some vigorous measures to prevent it, I despair of its ever being done. The Indians justly observe that we have not half settled the Country near the Sea, and that those who go back are a Banditti who disregard our

Laws as much as they hate them. When the horrible and apparently unprovoked murders by Colonel Cresap on the frontier of Pennsylvania and Virginia threatened to bring on an Indian war with the Virginians, Johnson had little sympathy for the frontiersmen.

The Indians before sufficiently alarmed at the forcible Entry of the Virginians and others into the Lands at and below the Falls of Ohio, far beyond the limits proposed by government are now in an uproar in that Country, since the late public attack made upon their Persons, with the additional Circumstance of scalping the dead, which they always consider as a Declaration of War... The Bulk of the People, particularly the Warriors will not sit down contented & see themselves deprived of their Hunting, their Country & their Lives... The few acts committed compared with what they suffer are nothing, especially when we consider that they are a People without Laws or Authority & that we pretend to both, tho' as they say we manifest neither.

The tension of the situation, which was to culminate in the outbreak known as 'Lord Dunmore's War', was increased by the activities of the Virginian settler 'volunteers' who had captured Fort Pitt, which they renamed Fort Dunmore. For the Cresap murders were not the only outrage. John Conolly, the self-appointed commandant at Fort Dunmore, ordered out an expedition to fall on a party of Shawanese who had just escorted a group of white traders to the safety of the fort, at great risk to their own lives; only the refuge offered by the Pennsylvanian settlers in the area,

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8 Sir William Johnson to Haldimand, September 30, 1773. B.M.Add.Mss. 21670, p. 82.
who had been as ill-treated as the Indians by the Virginians, saved the Shawanese from death. Though he died unable to save this dangerous situation, Johnson could feel little but rage at irresponsible settlers like these.

He corresponded as well with the Earl of Dartmouth, Secretary of State for the Colonies, who had offered to co-operate to prevent a proposed settlement near the Illinois, "which I look upon as a very dangerous and impolitic measure." He also considered the traders an element whose activities must be regulated. Even during the Seven Years' War, as we have seen, Sir William took a hand in attempting to regulate the trade by restricting it to the posts where it could be supervised by military officers. In 1762 he complained to Amherst, "I have been lately informed that passes are granted by officers at some of the different outposts permitting Traders to go where they please into the Indⁿ. Country Notwithstanding Genⁿ Gages passes & mine are limited to the sevⁿ Garrisons, as the evil effects of the contrary practice are very evident." The frauds and deceits practised by the traders and their irresponsibility when it came to selling rum were, Johnson feared, a source

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10 St. Clair to Penn, June 22, 1774. American Archives, Series 4, Volume 1, p. 474.


12 Sir William Johnson to Amherst, September 24, 1762. Johnson Papers, Volume 3, p. 884.
of irritation and certainly injustice to the Indians. Some of them complained, 'notwithstanding the Number of Traders from Albany we should have little Else but Rum had it not been for the Traders from Pensilvania & Mr. Sterling from New York, who are the only people who have brought any considerable quantities of goods for the Indians.'

The plan which the Board of Trade drew up in 1764 was formulated largely on the basis of Johnson's suggestions and sought to restrict trade to the posts with licenses to be issued by the colonial governors or provincial commanders in chief, a departure from Johnson's suggestions, as he felt he and his deputies should license traders. Johnson waited in vain for official instructions and trade regulations from London, and in 1765 began to implement his own regulations as though the plan of 1764 were official policy. The expense and the affront to colonial authority which were inherent in the plan soon began to tell, however, especially after the furor over the Stamp Act, which had been pitched on instead of a tax on the fur trade to help finance the defense and Indian affairs establishment. By 1767, Sir William Johnson was defending the plan of 1764 in the face of mounting criticism. Frauds against the Indians were carried on 'in the eye of a Garrison & Indian Commissary without their being able to prevent it. How

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13 Niagara and Detroit Proceedings,' July-September 1761. Ibid., Volume 3, p. 450.
much more will such practices & others much worse be the case if Traders go where they please under no inspection whatsoever." He reminded the government that 'the Traders are the only British subjects with whom the Indians are acquainted (the Garison excepted, and with them they had not much intercourse as they cannot understand each other) the Traders then become in great measure the only people by whom they can form a judgment of the English and indeed the Only white People seen by the Nations most distant; it is therefore certainly our interest that those people through whom alone they can form any conception of our abilities or integrity . . . should either be men of strict probity and worth, or if that cannot be expected, that they should be kept within bounds."

When the plan of 1764 was finally cast aside in 1768 in favour of leaving the management of trade in the indifferent hands of the colonies, Johnson felt the traders had persuaded the government to implement a mistaken policy. Indeed the traders, and their supporters, had put forth some very good arguments. Guy Carleton, the Governor of Quebec from 1766, argued, with some justification, that the Quebec traders were a special case. Not only were the Canadians more than usually well acquainted with the upper

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country, 'as well as with the Genius of its Savage Inhabitants,' but for them there was no 'speedy Refuge among the back Settlers,' as had been complained for other traders; the journey up country was long, arduous and expensive.

One of the clearest sets of arguments against the plan of 1764 was advanced by the Montreal merchant John Gray. He argued that the traders must be allowed to trade freely among the Indians to obtain any gain at all on their investment; 'whether [the Indian] covers himself with furs or with good broad cloth is a matter of small concern to him . . . he will go very little out of his way to obtain a finer or more comfortable garment.' Under the French, free trade had not led to any of the abuses feared by Sir William Johnson; the English, he admitted, from their 'mercantile disposition,' might not people the trading posts with people of such high class as the French, but he felt that regulations might be drawn up so that 'self-interest shall take the place of Honour.' Anyone who had risked so much on an expedition to the interior 'will seldom be so foolish as to run the risk of losing his whole adventure in order to do a poor Indian an injustice.'

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16 Carleton to Board of Trade, March 28, 1767. CO42/27, p. 138.

17 Shelburne to Carleton, June 20, 1767. CO42/27, p. 87.


19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.
Such close regulation as was proposed was against the rights of British subjects, argued the traders. Besides, they had no intention to defraud the Indians - 'It is not permitted more to cheat a Savage than a Christian, this is the common law of Nature and known in every Nation.'

Johnson wrote, 'that Plan was not carried into full Execution because of its great Expence and the representation of some interested Traders, that part relating to Trade was left to the Management of the Colonies and such officers as were appointed for its inspection, namely Commissarys, Smiths & Interpreters at the Posts were discontinued.' The result of the scheme of having the colonies manage their own traders was seen by Johnson to confirm his worst fears of failure. 'The reduction of Officers and the Retrenchment of Expences in the Indian Department has been already represented by their Agents as instances of Our parsimony neglect and contempt, and the want of any powers for their relief as marks of our injustice & disregard, the unrestrained conduct & cheats of the Traders have been given as characteristick proofs of our dishonesty and want of authority, the neglect of sending Missionaries of our Church amongst them, as an instance of our irreligion.'

21 Carleton to Shelburne, March 2, 1768. C042/28, p. 159.


later apologized to Sir William, indicating that the Board of Trade's hope had been that the basic plan put forward in 1764 would be implemented by the colonial governments; there had been no way of knowing that the colonies would be so backward in accepting their responsibilities.24

Besides land and trade, one of Johnson's preoccupa-
tions was the establishment of civil order in the West. Admitting as he did that the Indians would eventually have to submit to English law and English order, he merely stressed the vast cultural differences between white and Indian, and greeted all signs of any Indian change with rejoicing as a landmark. In one case, where some Senecas had killed four Canadian traders, Sir William Johnson carried on a long series of negotiations which showed his tact and his ability to avoid giving way either to the discontented Senecas or to his fire-breathing English colleagues in New York. The collision of white law with Indian traditions was obvious. 'It is a perplexing business,' wrote Sir William, 'Because their Ideas respecting punishment are so different from ours at the same time it is a Duty we owe to the Crown & to the Public to insist on the satisfaction required by our Laws.'25 With the co-operation of the chiefs, some of the murderers were

24 Hillsborough to Sir William Johnson, December 4, 1771. Ibid., Volume 8, p. 286.
turned over to Johnson. 'It is more than has been before asked of or complyed with by these Indians; who have hitherto made up all private acts according to their own antient customs,' he wrote, and asked for instructions as to how he should deal with the murderers.\(^{26}\) The Indians asked for mercy on the prisoners, and 'enlarged much on the many murders committed on their People upon ye Frontiers for which no satisfaction can be obtained.'\(^{27}\) Sir William recommended that leniency be shown to the murderers, considering 'the novelty of their delivering up any of their People to be dealt with according to our Laws (more especially as they have so often represented the ill treatment they receive from our Frontier Inhabitants without redress).'\(^{28}\) Haldimand was moved by Johnson's entreaties and the apologies of the chiefs for crimes they abhorred, to offer them pardon after the tribe had made restitution for the property stolen in the incident.\(^{29}\) The readiness with which the Six Nations were willing to comply pleased Sir William:

It is no small satisfaction to me that notwithstanding all grievances, & when so many rumours are abroad, the fidelity of the greater part of that Confederacy may be relied on, especially as their situation,

\(^{26}\) Sir William Johnson to Haldimand, November 25, 1773. B.M.Add.Mss. 21670, p. 95.

\(^{27}\) Sir William Johnson to Haldimand, April 21, 1774. B.M.Add.Mss. 21670, p. 127.


\(^{29}\) Haldimand to Sir William Johnson, April 27, 1774. B.M.Add.Mss. 21670, p. 129.
Influence & Capacity render them of the most essential importance to us whenever there is any prospect of trouble with the rest.\(^{30}\)

He suggested the establishment of some kind of civil authority, perhaps under the officers of the Indian Department armed with civil jurisdiction,\(^{31}\) and admitted his helplessness in the face of frontier lawlessness and disorder. 'The ignorant people who are guilty of all this without reflecting that they will first fall a sacrifice to their obstinacy still continue this conduct in so much as I can no longer amuse the Indians with promises of Justice as they can see plainly that we either want the power or the will to redress them.'\(^{32}\)

'The Authority of Commissaries is nothing,' he complained, 'and both, the commanding Officers of Garisons and they are liable to a civil prosecution for detaining a Trader on any pretence, and should their crime be sent to the next capital, there is no law to punish them.'\(^{33}\)

Sir William was concerned as well about the civilizing effect of religion, specifically the Anglican communion, upon the Indians; in all the suggestions he made for the


\(^{32}\)Sir William Johnson to Board of Trade, June 28, 1766. Ibid., Volume 7, p. 837.

disposition of Indian affairs, he recommended support for the work of the Anglican missionaries, and he retained close connections with Henry Barclay, John Ogilvie and other Missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Indians. Anglican mission efforts, he said, had been 'hitherto greatly neglected, and as yet make little or no progress.'\textsuperscript{34} In this respect, he admitted, the British had an infinite distance to go to catch up with the French. He did not allow his admiration for the French missionaries to be dimmed by his basic suspicion and dislike for Catholicism. The Catholic missionaries to the Indians were men of spirit, abilities and a knowledge of the World who lived amongst them, became Masters of their language, acquired a thorough knowledge of their manners and disposition, and at length obtained a vast influence which they improved to such advantage . . . as to convince us . . . that the duties of Religion are not incompatible with those of a Warrior or Hunter, and that they need not cease to be the latter in order to become to all appearance better Christians, than numbers of their White neighbours. Whilst the steps taken by many probably well meaning but gloomy people amongst us, to abolish at once their most innocent customs, Dances, and rejoicings at marriages etc. & their premature proposals for bringing families amongst them to instruct them in agriculture etc. as well as their arguments against hunting alarm the Indians who hear of them with apprehension.\textsuperscript{35}

If there was a need to counteract the influence of the Catholics, Johnson also felt that the field should not

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{35}Ibid.
be left to the Nonconformist missionaries, who were naturally very active on the fringes of the colonies, especially in New England. He felt that only a liturgical church could satisfy the Indian need for pageantry, and it was a taste he shared, perhaps as part of his disposition to paternalistic autocracy. He once wrote to Henry Barclay, the revered missionary among the Mohawks to inquire about the progress of the Book of Common Prayer Barclay was then translating into the Mohawk language.

I am of opinion that this Edition will conduce to incline the Christian Indians to the Established Church, which will have a better effect upon them than what I see arises from their inclination to the Presbyterians as all those Inds who are Instructed by the Dissenting Ministers (who are the only Clergy in these parts) have imbibed an air of the most Enthusiastical cant.

I cannot omit mentioning my opinion of the great necessity there is for some Ministers of the Established Church to reside in these parts, as well for the Whites, as Indians . . . as to the Inds who in general begin to incline to that Presbytery all those of that denomination are likewise become the most troublesome & discontented Exchanging their Morality for a Sett of Gloomy Ideas, which always renders them worse Subjects but never better Men.36

At a council with the Oneidas and Tuscaroras, he introduced a Rev. Mr. Occum, 'as a person sent to them for their instruction in the principles & practise of the Christian Religion, earnestly recommending it to them to treat him with the respect due to one of his sacred

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function, which they sincerely promised to do, returning hearty thanks for this proof which the English gave of their regard for their future happiness. 37

When Johnson observed his beloved Mohawks, there seemed some cause for optimism about his whole object of civilizing and Christianizing the Indians. With their chapel at Fort Hunter, their communion service presented to them by Queen Anne, and their receptiveness to his ideas, the Mohawks seemed to Sir William to be far along the road to what he hoped to achieve. But the dream did not succeed everywhere as it did among the Mohawks; further west, the tribes, if they had anything to do with the Christian religion, clung to the Catholicism given them by the French.

Throughout his thirty year career, Johnson was a shrewd and conscientious observer of the Indians and took very seriously the task of interpreting their actions and explaining British actions to them. No one realized better than he that this was at least a full time job. 'Too many people,' he complained

affect a knowledge of Indian affairs. However ridiculous or partial their reports might be rendered by any competent judge as their representations cannot be fully known, they are not easily refuted at 3000 miles distance. . . . It is not during the period of a Governors residence at an American capital, of a commandant at an outpost, or of a traveller in the country that [an accurate] judgement can be gained, it is only

37Niagara and Detroit Proceedings,' July-September 1761. Ibid., Volume 3, p. 437.
to be acquired by long residence among them, a daily intercourse with them & a desire of information in these matters superseding all other considerations.\(^{38}\)

His attitudes towards the Indians were of a kind of paternal affection; he understood their shortcomings and was exasperated by them, but had their interests genuinely at heart. At times, he made it appear that he had taken the task on unwillingly, referring to it as a duty 'which however disagreeable in itself, I undertook from a presumption that I should be able to do my Country some service at a time when Indian affairs were in a very fluctuating condition, & when we had not interest sufficient to prevail on them to come to a meeting with us.'\(^{39}\) There is no doubt that he was often exhausted and ill, especially in his later years, because of the constant round of councils and the strains of Indian meetings.\(^{40}\) He seems nonetheless to have thrived on the challenges, the drama and the colour, and the disorderliness of his life, though he realized how unorthodox it must appear to his friends in New York. He wrote with humour to a friend, 'We are all peaceable here except a few boxing Bouts now & then between Brothers & Sisters, Men & their Wives &ca together with Shivering each

\(^{38}\)Sir William Johnson to Hillsborough, August 21, 1769. New York Documents, Volume 8, p. 179.

\(^{39}\)Sir William Johnson to Pitt, October 24, 1760. Johnson Papers, Volume 3, p. 269.

\(^{40}\)Flexner, op. cit., p. 90. 'Thank God, the greatest hurry is now over for the time!'
other with broad & Narrow Axes, all w. contributes to make them a bolder People, and render them better soldiers whenever we may have another war.41

He defended the Indians as allies, holding that the distinctiveness of their methods of fighting had been mistaken for lack of military skill. He argued the Indians were not inferior in sagacity and stratagem, qualities most essentially necessary in this country; their ideas of courage are different from ours, and they are only deficient in that courage which the nature and situation of their country renders less necessary amongst them, as they attack by surprise, and on failure of success (of which they never neglect taking advantage) are able to repeat their attacks, at the next advantageous place they meet with, killing many of our people in each encounter, with a very small loss on their side.42

They had many advantages in war.

Without any exception, I look upon the Northern Indians to be the most formidable of any uncivilized body of people in the World. Hunting and War are their sole exertions, and the one qualifies them for the other, they have few wants, and those are easily supplied, their properties of little value, consequently expeditions against them however successful, cannot distress them, and they have courage sufficient for their manner of fighting, the nature and situation of their Countries require not more.43

Such a sweeping statement was characteristic of

43 Sir William Johnson to Board of Trade, November 13, 1763. Ibid., Volume 7, p. 572.
Johnson's somewhat cavalier approach to debate, based as it was on a comparison of which he could have no personal experience.

The settlers were the despair of his heart, for their contempt for the Indian not only threatened Johnson's policy, but clashed with his own affection for the native peoples. He feared that the frontiersmen would draw the 'resentment of an enraged uncivilized people, whose vengeance is too often felt by the fair Traders or industrious Husband man, the Indians seldom confining their Revenge to particulars.'

If his voice went sometimes unheard among policy-makers, his influence among the Indians was undeniable; as early as 1756 it was said, 'The Indians have a high opinion of his Courage and Integrity and have often experienced his

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Sir William Johnson to Shelburne, May 30, 1767. *Ibid.*, Volume 7, p. 928. In another letter, he went on to say that the war had 'no sooner terminated at a considerable loss and expense, than the Frontier inhabitants from Virginia to this Province . . . began under the spacious pretence of Revenge, but in violation of the British faith, to murder, Robb and otherwise grossly misuse all Indians they could find in small partys either on their way to or from the Southward, or a trading amongst them, whilst those who avoided imbruing their hands in blood, added fuel to their jealousy by encroaching upon their rights and treating the Indians with contempt, much greater than they had ever before experienced; this has at length thoroughly confirmed their opinion of our having projected their ruin. . . . Our People in general are very ill calculated to maintain friendship with the Indians, they despise these in peace whom they fear to meet in war, this with the little artifices in Trade, and total want of that address and seeming kindness practiced with such success by the French, must always hurt the Colonists.
liberality and Kindness, 45 and that the Indians preferred him over the New York Indian Commissioners at Albany. 46 Perhaps it was fitting that he died in the midst of the crisis which was to erupt into Lord Dunmore's War. When he died, in July of 1774, his nephew reported that the Indians had shown 'the most extraordinary signs of distress and sincere affliction that ever before were observed among that people.' 47 Messages of condolence and grief came in from all who had appreciated his peculiar stature among the Indians; perhaps Haldimand most nearly put his finger on the questions raised by the loss when he wrote to Guy Johnson that 'not only his Family but the Public will feel the loss of that good and useful man. I hope you will be able to preserve the influence he had with the Indians.' 48

For Sir William in his baronial splendour on the frontier had had a somewhat dynastic approach to the Indian Department. He had surrounded himself with a knot of trusted officers whom he trained to take over from him; of the four most important at the time of his death, three

45 Governor Hardy to Board of Trade, January 16, 1756. New York Documents, Volume 7, p. 3.
46 Peter Wraxall to Sir William Johnson, January 9, 1756. Ibid., Volume 7, p. 15.
47 Guy Johnson to Governor Penn, July 22, 1774. American Archives, Series 4, Volume 1, p. 645.
were members of his immediate family. There had been three children born to him, apparently illegitimately, by his German mistress Catherine Weisenberg; John, the later Superintendent-General, Nancy, who married Daniel Claus, one of Sir William's deputies, and Mary, who married Sir William's nephew Guy Johnson. Any shortcomings in John and Guy, Sir William was blind to; he had no doubts at all that they would follow admirably in his footsteps.

The other man, George Croghan, was by the time of Sir William's death beginning to sink in importance, and he disappeared as a patriot in the Revolution, but he had been one of Sir William's most trusted assistants since the early days of his concern with the Indians. Croghan, like Johnson, had begun as a trader, and had come to know the Indians through his business dealings. The semi-literate Irishman was considered even less respectable than Johnson, though he had done well from the trade. His influence among the Indians was respected, however, as well as his fearlessness about undertaking dangerous diplomatic missions. In 1765, for example, he went into the interior to try and make peace with some of the nations who had not yet been treated with since the Pontiac Revolt. On one occasion, his party was attacked by a group of Indians, and he wrote lightly that he had 'got the stroke of a hatchett on the Head, but my Scull being pretty thick the hatchett wou'd not enter, so you may see a thick Scull is of service
on some occasions. 49

In spite of what was widely considered his irresponsibility, he was a perceptive observer of the western Indians, and his carefully penned dispatches were a major source of information for Sir William. In the first days of British possession of the interior, he warned of the need to treat the Indians carefully, and stressed the need for a full complement of Indian officers 'in order to see strict Justus Don ye Several Nations of Indians in their Trade and Commerce with his Majestys Subjects as Well as to Transact publick Business with those Nations & that these People May Make themselves well acquainted with the Indian Custom, Maners & policys that plots may Nott be Conserted by any Ill Dispos'd Indians.' 50 He spoke of the need not to neglect the Indians. 'The Indians in these Parts behave very Sively to all our Traders butt Now & then Some of ye Most Sensable of them ask Me what is ye Reason that we allways was Calling them to Council During ye Warr & giveing them presents & Now Take No Notice of them.' 51 Their uneasiness over Amherst's prohibition of the sale of ammunition had reached a critical point, he reported

They seem convenst in their own opinion that as soon as they Deliver up all our Prisners that we

49Peckham, Croghan's Journal, p. 5.
50Croghan to Sir William Johnson, October 12, 1761. Ibid., Volume 3, p. 549.
will then fall upon them \textsuperscript{h} is Natural anouff as they themselves are a peple who never forgett Nor forgive they think we will act upon ye same principles . . . The Indians are a very Jelous peple & they had great Expectations of being very Ginerally Supplyd by us & from their poverty & Mercenary Disposition they cant Bear Such a Disappointmment. Undoubtedly ye Gineral has his own Rason for Nott allowing any presents or amunision to be given them & I wish itt may have itts Desird. Effect Butt I take this opertunity to acquaint you that I Dread the Event as I know Indians cant long persevere. They are a Rash Inconsistent peple & Inclin\textsuperscript{d}. to Mischiff & will never Consider con- sequences tho itt May End in thire Ruen.\textsuperscript{52}

The need to compete with the French for the affection of the Indians was the thing which struck him in 1765.

Pontiac's Rebellion has not changed the Indian Affections to them, they have been bred up together like Children in that Country & the French have always adopted the Indian customs & manners, Treated them Civily & supplyed their wants generously, by which means the gained the Hearts of the Indians & Commanded their Services & injoyed the Benefit of a very large Furr Trade.\textsuperscript{53}

Croghan acted as Johnson's agent in London while the plan of 1764 was being formulated, and his own statement to the Board of Trade shows the compatibility of his ideas with those of Johnson.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{52} Croghan to Sir William Johnson, December 10, 1762. Ibid., Volume 3, p. 964.

\textsuperscript{53} Alvord, The New Regime, p. 53.

\textsuperscript{54} Croghan to Board of Trade, no date. New York Documents, Volume 7, p. 602. "By entering into a War with the Indians, we can get nothing but fatigue and devastation of our frontiers, and load the Nation with debt, Tho' they may deserve to be severely punished for their behaviour the last summer, but I don't look on it any ways decisive between the Indians and us, the manner hitherto taken in making war on them, marching an Army at an immense expence in to their Country and driving a parcel of wretches before us, who, we know, won't give us a meeting, but where they
Daniel Claus became involved in Indian affairs when he was sent in 1754 by the Pennsylvania government to learn Indian language and customs as a possible successor to their veteran Indian agent, Conrad Weiser. Though he was sent really to combat Johnson's influence, Claus soon came to admire the New York man, and eventually attached himself to Sir William's service, much to the disgust of the Pennsylvanians, who looked upon it as a kidnapping. Conscientious and methodical, Claus was an obedient but effective deputy to

"have the advantage of either beating us or running away, and then content ourselves in burning their villages of Bark Huts, destroying the Corn and driving them into the Woods.—This can not be called conquering Indian Nations; I grant it is removing them and that the removing Indians from their villages is practicable if we will go to the expense; but what end does it answer? When we remove them from their places of abode by surprise, which has happened but seldom, they fly to some other part of their country without regretting any magnificent buildings they have been obliged to leave behind ... they live secure from us, till the next year, when we may be able to make another campaign, to remove them from the place we drove them to last; the facility with which they can remove their Habitations whenever we may be able to penetrate them, will secure them for many years from being exterminated by us from the face of the earth.

"I know them to be a proud and haughty people, who from their great love of liberty, which they have long enjoyed, they entertain and flatter themselves with the highest notions of their own importance and dignity. ... They are to be governed only by love and fear; to acquire the first, it requires a long acquaintance with their singularities, and study of their dispositions, to know how to flatter their vanity, so as to gain their confidence, which only can fix their love and affection, which undoubtedly, Justice, Honour and our own interest demand from us. ... There is no way to make them happy but by fear, for, if we suffer them to entertain too high notions of their own importance, it will naturally lead them to think, we are influenced by dread of their power, and so beget their contempt; then their expectations would be exorbitant and their insolence beyond sufferance."

55Flexner, op. cit., p. 117.
his chief, with his own influence among the Indians.\textsuperscript{56} Though he never adopted the Indian way of life to the same degree as other Indian officers, his assiduity and his admiration for Johnson made him an able agent. Presumably he had Johnson in mind when he said Indian officers should be 'possessed of an even temper, great patience and good nature, being well acquainted with their customs manners and language, persons of authority and consequence, of merit and character in public life, and according to the Indian phrase, have been great and successful Warriors in their time.'\textsuperscript{57}

The direction of Indian affairs, however, was reserved for Colonel Guy Johnson, Sir William's nephew. The position of Superintendent had been marked out for him almost as a hereditary one by Sir William, who had written of the need to 'keep the office of Agent for Indian Affairs immediately under the Crown, and the Transactions in one channel.'\textsuperscript{58} The Six Nations, in their address of condolence for Sir William's death, told Colonel Johnson that they hoped the King 'will approve of you as the only person

\textsuperscript{56}Sir William Johnson to Claus, February 9, 1762. \textit{Johnson Papers}, Volume 3, p. 629.

\textsuperscript{57}Claus to Knox, March 1, 1777. \textit{New York Documents}, Volume 8, p. 700.

\textsuperscript{58}Colonel Guy Johnson to Dartmouth, July 12, 1774. \textit{Ibid.}, Volume 8, p. 471.
that knows us and our affairs. Johnson had little trouble obtaining the appointment, for in spite of Sir William's complaints, his voice still carried a great deal of weight. In fact, Colonel Guy Johnson was perhaps the most obvious choice, though Sir William had been blind to certain flaws. Sir William's successors were not equal to him, however, and the chaos which he had been more or less successful in staving off settled like a cloud over the Indian Department; in 1777 Claus lamented, 'But alas! with him all these necessary Qualifications were buried, and it may with Confidence be asserted there is no one to be found to equal him in that respect.'

Guy Johnson's own estimate of his performance as Indian Superintendent was high; later, he was to speak of himself as 'a person who was so far honoured by the late Sir William Johnson (notwithstanding the nearer Tyes of Blood and affection in which other able & worthy Personages stood) to be recommended to His Majesty to be the only person who from application to Indian affairs he thought

59 'Condolence for death of Sir William Johnson,' July 14, 1774. Ibid., Volume 8, p. 480.

60 'Remarks on Management of Indians delivered to William Knox,' February 1777. R.M. Add. Mss. 21776, p. 14. Claus' name is not on this document, but from similarities to another document (Claus to Knox, March 1, 1777. New York Documents, Volume 8, p. 700.) it seems that he must have written it. If so, he was responsible for Haldimand's scheme of training English boys as interpreters by raising them among the Indians.
qualified to succeed him in the compass of his knowledge. 61 He seems, indeed, to have had his uncle's sure touch when it came to analysing and understanding the Indians; his advice to Haldimand during the later stages of the war seems to have been based on careful observations. He explained, for example, with no little perceptiveness, some of the social changes which had taken place during the war in the Six Nations.

The True Chiefs have lost much of their Ascendancy since the Commencement of the Rebellion, by a neglect of their old Customs, in introducing young men of little Experience and Interest to be heads of parties who can't make sufficient body, without loading them with favours ... as they have not acquired sufficient reputation according to the Indian Mode, whereas the real Chiefs have an influence derived from long services in the Indian way, which is of infinite use in the Field. 62

He was a strong advocate of the rights of his Indian officers who, he argued, should receive pay equal to the Rangers, as they were not inferior in 'services, fatigues or Losses.' 63

If Colonel Guy Johnson's grasp of Indian affairs was sure, his effectiveness was severely limited by several factors. One of these was his protracted stay away from


the scene from 1775 to 1779, which both Carleton and Haldimand regarded as a dereliction of duty — and, indeed, such action does seem to have been somewhat irresponsible. His flamboyance with respect to Indian presents, of which more will be said in a later chapter, seems to have shown his uncle's extravagance in company with a less sound judgment on when extravagance was well-placed. On one occasion when Johnson whimsically distributed an irregular gift of clothes to the Indians at St. Regis, quite apart from the regular system of presents, Alexander Fraser complained that this favoritism and extravagance would have had an ill effect on all the Canadian Indians 'if Sir John had not forbid the Colonels meddleing with the Canadian Indians and taken the necessary precautions to prevent any difference in that Department.' 64 Though he claimed he had desired no 'pecuniary advantage' from the Indian service, 65 and said he had been 'notorious for my endeavours to cheque Officers Contingent Accounts,' 66 he was at least extremely negligent, if not corrupt, in the handling of the Indian accounts.

At any rate, Sir John Johnson was chosen to try and

64 Fraser to Haldimand, November 7, 1779. B.M.Add. Mss. 21787, p. 100.
penetrate the fog which surrounded the operations of the Indian Department by 1781. The man who had inherited Sir William's title and responsibility for his lands had been isolated from Indian affairs since the outbreak of the war by his concerns with the Loyalist forces and Loyalist emigration, although of course he had been surrounded from childhood with activity in Indian affairs. Supported for appointment by Carleton and Haldimand, praised for staying at his post while his private affairs fell into ruin (a somewhat pointed contrast with his cousin), Sir John's devotion to duty would no doubt have made some differences in the Indian Department had his hands not been tied by the coming of the peace; whether he could have lived up to Haldimand's high expectations of him is difficult to say.

Under the level of the Indian Superintendents, in the Department, was a confused heap of officers with official and unofficial appointments, partly because of the flexibility this gave the Department in their relations with the Indians, partly because of the vague nature of the structure of the Department at various times. Even the group which had perhaps the most clear-cut definition and characteristics, the military forces, comprehended a

variety of attitudes to and actions concerning Indian affairs, as their influence in Indian affairs waxed and waned with changes in policy, and as each commanding officer at the wilderness posts had a great degree of autonomy from any of his superiors. The ordinary soldiers of the garrisons in general, according to Sir William Johnson at least, had little to do with the Indians, 'as they cannot understand each other,' although on occasion they do seem to have created friction with the local Indian population. Johnson wrote to Claus, 'I greatly commend your care in accommodating the many differences which have happened between them and Soldiery &ca. I am surprised to hear that gentlemen of any Rank or sense should give themselves Airs now in talking so Slightly of Inds who before would fly before a handful of them, nay perhaps would do so now if put to the trial.'

The most important people in dealing with Indians were the commanding officers of the posts who under Sir William's plan of 1764 had to preserve law and decorum in the conduct of the trade, except where the commissaries clung on; who during the Revolutionary War assumed great responsibilities in Indian affairs, both military and otherwise, because of the absence of the Indian Superintendent.


The commanding officers' major military responsibility was, of course, to the Commander in Chief; in Indian affairs, however, though Sir William Johnson's authority was less than official, they deferred to him. After his death, their role changed somewhat; during the war they were more or less autonomous, though they reported to the Governor of Quebec. The life at the posts was a hard one physically; Bolton's health was 'so much impaired as to confine him a great part of the year to his room,'^71 and Guy Johnson, Sinclair and others suffered from ill health at various times. It was also a taxing one mentally, both for the summers of exhausting activity, and the winters of relative boredom that followed; Allan Maclean once wrote asking anyone who had any old newspapers to 'send some to a poor solitary man that has a great deal of time to kill in the winter.'^72 There were some Indians who stayed about the forts; Major Basset at Detroit reported, 'Their Squaghs & Children are now much about the Fort, this is reckoned by the Inhabitants an exceeding good sign, to see their Familys bring in Meat & stay about the Fort in Winter.'^73

Whatever these military officers had in common -

^71 Haldimand to Powell, October 7, 1780. B.M.Add. Mss. 21795, p. 216.


their suspicion of falling under the command of civilian Indian officers, their responsibilities to superior military officers as well as their instructions from the Indian Superintendent - their approach to Indian affairs varied widely. At the post of Niagara during Haldimand's governorship in Quebec, different officers commanded. Lieutenant-Colonel Mason Bolton, as mentioned above, suffered from ill health and was withdrawn in 1780. He was a widely travelled officer, having served in Europe and the West Indies, but he admitted he knew little of the country he now served in; he seems seriously to have made the suggestion that if the posts were too expensive, they should be given into the hands of the Indians to manage, which must have perplexed some people in the military command. 74 Under Brigadier Allan Maclean the command of Niagara seems to have become much more distinguished than under Bolton or Powell, though of course this was partly because Maclean was called upon to deal with the delicate task of explaining the peace to the Indians. Much trusted by Haldimand, Maclean interceded sympathetically on behalf of the Indians. He expressed his opinion that if the Indians 'clap up a separate peace with the Rebels . . . we could not blame them,' 75 and burst out, 'It is a cruel thing for a Man of honor to have


75 Maclean to Ross, April 22, 1783. B.M. Add. Mss. 21763, p. 52.
to do in such cases as the present, with such worthless and faithless People as the Rebells, for while I was busy in using Every means in my Power to prevent the Indians from going to War, they were Preparing to cut the throats of the Indians. 76 He wrote to Washington that he had restrained the Indians from offensive war, and only the irresponsible publication of inflammatory reports in the colonies had produced stories of atrocities. 77 He insisted that the Indians must know the truth from the military officers about the peace treaty, for 'we have plenty of People amongst ourselves, that are sufficiently officious and vicious to do all the mischief they can.' 78

Yet he did show a certain cynicism about the Indians and their motives. Though he thought the habit of giving rum to the Indians ought to be broken, 79 he thought it in moderation a useful tool of diplomacy; he was 'convinced that a Puncheon of Rum will have more effect on the Six Nations than all the abilities of Sir John Johnson.' 80

76 Maclean to Haldimand, April 22, 1783. B.M.Add. Mss. 21763, p. 50.


Colonel Arent De Peyster, who served as commanding officer at Michilimackinack and then Detroit, eventually fell under suspicion for misusing funds. He was a man who was a somewhat easy prey to the temptations of his post, and who stood rather more stiffly on military protocol and precedence than others in the fluid circumstances of the upper country; he was nonetheless recognized as an Indian officer of great insight by Haldimand, who continued him at his post even when his conduct appeared suspicious to others.

Like Maclean, De Peyster was willing to co-operate with the Governor and with official policy, but he raised protests whenever he felt his analysis of the circumstances warranted it. After sending away two hundred Pottawotamies empty-handed until they should do some useful service, he wrote, 'I think I may safely affirm that in the treatment of the Indians I have hitherto stretched the cord to its utmost extent, whosoever shall hereafter give it another pull must inevitably break the chain of alliance.'

Though horrified by the Muskingum massacre, he was to respond to the tortures committed by the Shawanese in

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81. Powell to Haldimand, August 7, 1782. B.M. Add. Mss. 21762, p. 118. De Peyster objected to serving under Lieutenant-Governor Hay at Detroit as Hay's military rank was inferior to his own.

revenge by a sharp message to Alexander McKee, who was to
tell the Indians the English were 'ever ready to assist
them against their common Enemy provided they avoid
Cruelties,' but that if the atrocities did not cease, he
would recall the troops, 'who must be tir'd of such Scenes
of Cruelty.' 83 With the nearing of the peace, he spoke of
his sympathy for the tribes, of the 'drooping spirits of
the Indians, who begin to fear they are to be the dupes of
the War.' 84

Though there were really few examples of military
officers who were completely unacceptable to the Indians,
the experiences of Major Ross at Oswego showed what pro-
blems such a man could cause. Even as the Revolutionary
War drew to a close, Ross' thinking was conditioned by
memories of Pontiac's Revolt, twenty years earlier. 'The
Example at the close of the last War is recent in my
memory,' he said. 85 Ross' major point of difference with
the Indians was over military matters; as soldiers, he felt
the Indians, particularly the mixed groups he was given to
lead, were of little use. 86 Guy Johnson said of him, 'A
good regular Officer not much acquainted with Indians may

83 De Peyster to McKee, August 16, 1782. B.M.Add.
Mss. 21762, p. 116.
84 De Peyster to Maclean, January 7, 1783. B.M.
85 Ross to Haldimand, April 10, 1783. B.M.Add.Mss.
21784, p. 8.
86 Ross to Haldimand, October 7, 1781. B.M.Add.Mss.
21784, p. 9.
be induced to condemn conduct differing from his own;' this was after the Indians had raised objections incomprehensible to Ross when he ordered them to assemble in a large clear space near Johnson Hall, a practice which was unknown among the Indians.\textsuperscript{87} Ross did his best to be moderate, and to make allowances, but the Indians still balked at serving with him. They were 'so much hurt at the unfavourable and unmerited reports Major Ross made of their behaviour last fall to your Excellency that they refused to serve under him; Tho' they at the same time expressed their attachment to Government and their willingness to go anywhere else.'\textsuperscript{88}

The civilian officers of the Indian Department were by the very nature of their roles, bound to be rather individualistic and to lead somewhat unorthodox lives. The aristocracy of these officers were the deputies and agents, who were the direct subordinates of the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, although during the absence of Guy Johnson, like the military officers, they took upon themselves more complete responsibility. Perhaps the most knowledgeable and experienced of these was Alexander McKee, who was appointed Deputy Agent to the Shawanese by Sir William Johnson;\textsuperscript{89} he was one of three deputies - Claus and John

\textsuperscript{87}Colonel Guy Johnson to Haldimand, December 2, 1781. B.M. Add. Mss. 21767, p. 263.

\textsuperscript{88}Powell to Haldimand, April 30, 1782. B.M. Add. Mss. 21762, p. 29.

\textsuperscript{89}De Peyster to Maclean, August 1, 1783. B.M. Add. Mss. 21763, p. 216.
Dease were the other two. 90 He was spoken of with respect and admiration by the rest of the Indian Department. Colonel Guy Johnson referred to him as 'a good attentive officer,' especially useful among the Shawanese. 91 De Peyster persuaded him not to go to Europe in 1780, and spoke of his usefulness with the Indians: 'He appears to be a sensible man, and much of the Gentleman; his influence with the Shawanese nation is beyond conception.' 92 John Butler, himself a man of some influence among the tribes, spoke of him with great warmth: 'Mr. McGee is the only man I know of that has the most influence on the Shawanese &c. to the Southward, nor do I know a man more beloved than he is.' 93 Jehu Hay said of McKee that he 'understands the management of Indians as well as any officer in the Department.' 94

McKee does not seem to have been overly efficient as an administrator - he sent Sir William Johnson some long overdue bills for provisions 'long since advanced which I


91 Colonel Guy Johnson to Haldimand, June 1, 1780. B.M.Add.Mss. 21767, p. 73.


never expected to have anything to do with, but he seems to have taken on some kind of responsibility later in the war for finances in the Indian Department; De Peyster referred to 'the interior Oeconomy of the Indian Department being now under the direction of Mr. McKee.' His primary task was another one; he lived among the Indians, moved with them, directed their military operations, reprimanded them. Though he assured De Peyster after the torture of some Americans, 'there is not a White Person here wanting in their duty to represent to the Indians in the strongest terms the highest abhorrence of such conduct . . . being contrary to the rule of carrying on War by civilized Nations,' much of his sympathy lay with the Shawanese, who had seen Moravian women and children killed at Muskingum. In some ways he was like an echo of Sir William Johnson, in his reference to any non-Anglican missionaries as 'jesuitical,' in the love for him of his own adopted people, the Shawanese, in his paternal attitude and devotion to the Indians.

At the other extreme sat Alexander Fraser, who was the Superintendent of the Six Nations in Canada. As early

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97 McKee to De Peyster, August 28, 1782. B.M. Add. Mss. 21762, p. 147.
98 McKee to De Peyster, September 26, 1781. B.M. Add. Mss. 21761, p. 171.
as 1766, when he undertook a journey into the Illinois country, Fraser was describing the Indians in very unflattering terms: 'They are cruel and treacherous to each other & consequently so to Strangers they are dishonest in every kind of Business & lay themselves out to over reach Strangers, which they often do, by a low cunning peculiar to themselves, and their artful flatteries, with extravagant Entertainments (in which they affect the greatest hospitality) generally favour their Schemes.'

During the Revolutionary War, while he was Indian Superintendent, his dislike and suspicion towards the Indians does not seem to have mellowed. He complained

They cannot be got to do a piece of Service without it be beforehand purchased at ten times as much as it is worth, and when refused any request (be it ever so unreasonable) they do not scruple to declare they will get better Treatment from the Yankees. ... On receiving presents they will promise ten times as much as is required of them & a hundred times as much as they mean to perform.

He questioned the whole concept of presents to the tribes:

I think it is full time to be convinced that squandering of presents upon Indians will not better them - A sort of sly cunning which weak men in the management of them are unable to explore, but which very little penetration may develope at present procures them every thing they ask for & continual approbation for doing little more than nothing - nay sometimes

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99 Alex. Fraser, 'Journal,' May 4, 1766. B.M.Add. Mss. 21686, p. 34.

100 Fraser to Haldimand, July 6, 1779. B.M.Add.Mss. 21780, p. 48.
the greatest applause when they merit censure.\footnote{101}

He seems not to have imagined that such attitudes might interfere with his effectiveness in the Indian service:

I most heartily despise gaining popularity among the Indians & I abominate them as the most treacherous worthless and ungrateful race of Men on the face of the Earth, but while I am employed in the care of them, it is necessary for the good of the Service that I do not incur their ill-will. I should therefore wish that they may not be told I communicated my sentiments on these points so fully.\footnote{102}

Indeed he boasted 'I imagine there is none that has the same means of knowing what may be carried on privately in the Canada Villages as I could have,' and asked for a promotion after twenty-five years of being commanded by 'Boys from School, or Sutlers and Mechanics.'\footnote{103}

Reports of Fraser's sentiments were of course upsetting to the Indians, though Fraser could not apparently imagine why,\footnote{104} but when he sent a report that some female American prisoners on Carleton Island had been publicly raped by a group of Indians, which 'will if known among the Colonists create His Majesty more bitter enemies than he can collect of usefull Allies amongst the Indians,'\footnote{105}

\footnote{101} Fraser to Haldimand, July 29, 1779. B.M.Add. Mss. 21780, p. 56.

\footnote{102} Fraser to Haldimand, October 29, 1779. B.M. Add.Mss. 21787, p. 96.

\footnote{103} Ibid.

\footnote{104} Ibid.

\footnote{105} Fraser to Haldimand, June 2, 1780. B.M.Add. Mss. 21787, p. 141.
even Haldimand had to reprove him for the tone of his letter. 106 The report was apparently false, 107 for Europeans were constantly struck by the fact that Indians, unlike European soldiers, never ravished their captives; the incident nonetheless shows Fraser's poisonous hatred for the Indians and the rather unpleasant relations he had with them.

Beneath the deputies the Indian Department dissolved into a kind of fluid mass of individuals attached in greater or lesser degrees to the Indian Department, by official or unofficial ties, devoting a greater or lesser amount of time to the business of Indian affairs. There were interpreters, agents of one kind or another, commissaries and smiths, though the functions at least of interpreter and agent very often overlapped. The interpreters were a vital part of the Indian service; their functions were much more expanded than their title implies, for in smaller or more isolated Indian villages they often assumed complete direction of Indian relations. Some of them were French, some English soldiers of fortune or Indian prisoners who had learned the ways of the wilderness, some partly or entirely Indian. The necessity for having some means of understanding

106 Fraser to Haldimand, August 26, 1780. B.M.Add. Mss. 21787, p. 162.
the Indian languages, and the power of the people who spoke them was recognized by all those concerned with Indian relations. Major Carleton complained of 'two low fellows who live with them and having the advantage of speaking their language persuades them to all sorts of irregularities and wrong headedness,'\textsuperscript{108} helpless himself to counteract their influence. Another perplexed man wrote from Carleton Island that 'for want of a proper Interpreter I do not rightly understand whether ye Indians mean that three hundred or a thousand are coming to this Island.'\textsuperscript{109} Claus spoke of the need to obtain 'Sober Interpreters of some Education in whom the Indians may confide and Esteem and the Officers have a Dependance upon & rely and in great Measure be directed by as to Indian Matters and his Prudence and Direction will dictate.'\textsuperscript{110} The interpreters had their own methods - one officer reported sending an interpreter to find out the disposition of a tribe, saying 'as he is very intimate with the major part of their woman, I make no doubt if shuch a thing is on foot but he will be able to get me the truth of it.'\textsuperscript{111} - but their

\textsuperscript{108}Major Carleton to Haldimand, November 24, 1778. B.M.Add.Mss. 21792, p. 16.

\textsuperscript{109}Captain Aubrey to Haldimand, December 6, 1778. B.M.Add.Mss. 21787, p. 21.


\textsuperscript{111}Lieutenant Ritchy to Haldimand, June 10, 1767. B.M.Add.Mss. 21671, p. 214.
influence was known and their importance recognized.

There were the seven Montour brothers, sons of a French mother and a Delaware father, five of whom were killed during the Revolutionary War.\textsuperscript{112} They did a great deal of good service on the English side - Rowland Montour, for example, was described at his death as 'a brave and Active Warrior';\textsuperscript{113} although John Montour helped some rebel prisoners to escape and was saved imprisonment only at the insistence of the Indians.\textsuperscript{114} There was Abraham Coone, who saved a prisoner, though he 'took him under my care with much difficulty, as the Indians wanted to Barbicue him.'\textsuperscript{115} There was La Mothe, who was sent to Carleton Island 'as an Interpreter and to have the management of the Messessagues,' but who needed assistance for his commissary duties. 'As he does not understand English and I believe cannot read or write,' Haldimand explained, 'he may find some difficulty in the management of the Indian goods entrusted to his care and disposal.'\textsuperscript{116} The interpreters who lived in Indian villages often played a large part in military operations. 'Were the officers who

\textsuperscript{112} Maclean to Haldimand, November 16, 1782. B.M. Add. Mss. 21762, p. 213.

\textsuperscript{113} Lieutenant Johnson to Colonel Guy Johnson, September 17, 1780. B.M. Add. Mss. 21760, p. 366.

\textsuperscript{114} Hamilton to Carleton, April 25, 1778. B.M. Add. Mss. 21782, p. 29.

\textsuperscript{115} Coone to De Peyster, March 1, 1781. B.M. Add. Mss. 21761, p. 15.

\textsuperscript{116} Haldimand to Major Nairne, June 21, 1779. B.M. Add. Mss. 21788, p. 40.
reside at the Indian villages sent with their own people, and Rangers join'd with them when they go out upon any Scout of consequence, it would certainly have a better effect, than Lieutenant Brown remaining constantly at the Isle aux Noix for that purpose, as the Indians will not pay any attention to him as they would do to an officer they are acquainted and connected with.¹¹⁷

Of other officers, the commissaries at the posts were the most important, though again their authority fluctuated with changes in policy. The Indian commissaries, who managed the Indian trade goods, were distinct from the military commissaries who were also retained at the posts to handle purely military stores. The former were part of Sir William Johnson's scheme for regulating Indian affairs and trade through the posts; their responsibility was to distribute Indian presents and to supervise the trade in Indian goods. After 1768 their position became a more equivocal one, as their office had supposedly been abolished, and in some posts they did disappear, leaving the military storekeepers and commandants performing their old tasks. Though Sir William Johnson recognized that 'it would be a needless Expense to keep officers there if disabled from discharging their Duty as must be the case without their former Allowances,' he ordered the commissaries and other

¹¹⁷Powell to Haldimand, February 23, 1779. B.N. Add.Mss. 21793, p. 82.
officers to stay at their posts to allow the colonies time to make alternative arrangements. \textsuperscript{118} The Indian commissaries were rather noted for their involvement in trade, \textsuperscript{119} and widely accused of corruption. There were others, like Dupérron Baby, \textsuperscript{120} who were not regular Indian commissaries, but who performed much the same function, chosen by the commanding officers to assist them as their role in Indian affairs expanded.

There were also surgeons employed, though usually not exclusively or regularly to look after the Indians. Haldimand approved one officer's 'humanity in granting the request of the Indians for the assistance of the Surgeon,' \textsuperscript{121} and another officer requested a doctor for the troops and Indians as 'the latter numbers are now in a wretched way with the Venerial disorder.' \textsuperscript{122}

Between these lower levels of the Indian Department and the Indians the difference was not always clear; the

\textsuperscript{118} Sir William Johnson to Captain Brown, November 24, 1768. B.M.Add.Mss. 21678, p. 120.

\textsuperscript{119} Bliss to Powell, September 20, 1781. B.M.Add. Mss. 21761, p. 182.

\textsuperscript{120} De Peyster to Maclean, August 1, 1783. B.M. Add.Mss. 21763, p. 216.

\textsuperscript{121} Haldimand to Captain Lord, March 9, 1774. B.M. Add.Mss. 21693, p. 355.

\textsuperscript{122} Major Basset to Haldimand, October 13, 1773. B.M.Add.Mss. 21730, p. 338.
interpreters, agents and Indians mingled and were one at some points. There was really only one Indian, however, who achieved a high position in the Indian Department as a whole, and that was the Mohawk Joseph Brant. Joseph Brant was an old protégé of Sir William Johnson, the brother of his dearest love Mary Brant, and a promising young warrior. Joseph also came closest to Sir William's idea of the enlightened Indian; for several years he attended the college set up by the Presbyterian missionary Eleazar Wheelock, and learned to read and write in both Mohawk and English. As an Indian educated in the white man's ways, Joseph possessed all the usefulness, and all the dangers of one who knew both worlds well, but fitted comfortably into neither. With his obvious military talents and his ability to command men, he attracted a large following, both Indian and white, though he was probably distrusted by as many more, and regarded by the Americans as an arch-fiend. Claus warned Haldimand of the danger of Brant: 'Indians, let their Disputes be ever so great among themselves, will in the End stick together and Brant has Understanding, Ambition & Education sufficient to paint his ill usage from the white people in a striking light to Indians.'

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123 Claus to Haldimand, October 13, 1778. B.M. Add. Mss. 21774, p. 5.
124 Ibid.
As a military leader, he combined superbly the tactics of Indian warfare with the strategic plan of the war, and soon came to the notice of Germain, who wrote, 'The astonishing activity & success of Joseph Brant's Enterprizes and the important Consequences with which they have been attended, give him a claim to every Mark of our Regard,' and sent Brant a commission as Colonel of Indians and a miniature of himself made when he had visited London.\(^{125}\)

For Joseph Brant, however, being honoured in this conventional way created difficulties. As Haldimand explained it, Joseph was still a young warrior in the scheme of the Six Nations, and to give him a British honour would upset the social order within the confederacy; 'His being Civilised, and more Particularly, for his good Services, has from a Jealousy predominant in Indians, procured him as many Enemies of his own People as friends with us.'\(^{126}\)

The commission was suppressed, and Brant was kept on as a mere captain in the Indian Department, but even so Powell wrote in 1781 that Joseph wished to give up his company: 'I believe he would be much happier, and would have more weight with the Indians, which he in some measure forfeits, by their knowing that he receives pay.'\(^{127}\) Haldimand wrote

\(^{125}\) Germain to Haldimand, April 16, 1779. C042/39, p. 15.

\(^{126}\) Haldimand to Germain, September 13, 1779. B.M.Add.Mss. 21714, p. 46.

that Joseph could be released from his attachment to the Indian Department if he would be happier, though he must be prepared to co-operate with the Department when needed. 128

Haldimand had to explain to Germain that Joseph's military endeavours were not on a large scale.

I find likewise that Joseph Brant's Excursions upon the Frontiers have been considered at home as Operations. He is very Zealous, and has been very attentive and useful in striking Smal Strockes at different places, destroying grain &ca which have partially distrested the Enemy, but the Reports of his having defeated a considerable Detachment of Congress Troops, or his having effected anything of material Consequence, are Totally without foundation. 129

Nonetheless, they were useful; even Major Ross wrote glowingly, 'I cannot say too much in his favour . . . he rules the Indians as he pleases, and they are rejoiced at seeing this Place [Oswego] occupied.' 130 Another thing for which Brant was applauded was his humanity in treatment of the rebels during military attacks. Bolton, for example, wrote warmly of Joseph's humanity at Cherry Valley, 131 though the Americans spread reports which made him out to be unbelievably bloodthirsty. Records kept of Brant's raids would seem to bear out Bolton's statement. On one

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128 Haldimand to Powell, June 21, 1781. B.M.Add. Mss. 21764, p. 188.
129 Haldimand to Germain, October 24, 1779. CO42/39, p. 388.
occasion the following return of rebels killed, taken
prisoners and released was kept: 132

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>By parties directly under Brant</th>
<th>By parties under others</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KILLED</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAKEN PRISONER</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELEASED</td>
<td>47</td>
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Joseph was, however, not completely trusted nor
liked by all the British officers. There were rumours of
friction with Guy Johnson, 133 and he certainly seems to
have had some kind of feud with John Butler, who apparently
nearly drove him to leave the service for good. 134 Both
John and Guy Johnson had little affection for members of
Sir William's Indian family, whom they regarded as rivals. 135
Mathews made the peculiar statement that Joseph "is a most
Excellent fellow but as he Candidly acknowledges, a
thorough Indian, being of a more implacable disposition." 136
Maclean also found Joseph's very abilities dangerous:
'Captain Joseph Brant,' he wrote, 'tho' a brave fellow,

132 'Return of Prisoners & killed by Different
Partys under the Direction of Captain Brant,' August 1780.
B.M.Add.Mss. 21769, p. 70.

133 Powell to Haldimand, May 15, 1781. B.M.Add.
Mss. 21761, p. 72.

134 Claus to Haldimand, November 30, 1778. B.M.
Add.Mss. 21774, p. 19.

135 Flexner, op. cit., p. 344.

136 Mathews to Ross, July 1, 1782. B.M.Add.Mss.
21785, p. 40.
and who has been a faithful active subject to the King, has been the most troublesome, because he is better instructed & much more intelligent than any other Indian.\textsuperscript{137}

He was especially feared as reports of the peace settlement began to trickle in. 'Joseph knows too much and too little,' warned Maclean, 'tho a good fellow in the main, he is a perfect Indian, and after all the News & intelligence he Would pick up in Canada, some true & some false, his returning here might be attended with bad Consequences.'\textsuperscript{138} Joseph was understandably bitter at hearing the terms of the peace. He told Maclean the 'English had sold the Indians to Congress.'\textsuperscript{139} In reporting to the Governor the course of negotiations with the rebels he said apprehensively, 'I believe the Maricans means to treat us in treacherous manner for they taking every advantage against us.'\textsuperscript{140}

At the same time, he feared the chiefs 'wont see their own interest they wont see any distance before them. I saw my dearest friends killed, both sides of me in the

\textsuperscript{137} Maclean to Haldimand, May 9, 1783. B.M.Add.Mss. 21763, p. 99.


\textsuperscript{139} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{140} Brant to Mathews, April 17, 1783. B.M.Add.Mss. 21772, p. 223.
late war never did me made so painfull as it did at this time. After our friends the English left us in the lurch still our own chiefs should make the mater wors., 141 He spoke of the difficulty of trying to be part of two worlds at once. 'I have tried all I could to be true to my poor foolish countrimen the five nation & other engagements,' he said, and 'even danger itself' would not weaken his loyalty. 142 He made a trip to London in 1785, and though he made a sensation in London society, his attempts to gain compensation for his people's losses in the war were only partly successful.

Of the other Indians, perhaps the most important, among the Six Nations at any rate, was Joseph's sister Mary Brant, or Miss Molly, as she was known. She had been Sir William Johnson's beloved Indian wife for a long period of his life; it was not unusual for women of the Six Nations to take an active part in politics, and she had served as Sir William's assistant in many negotiations. After he died, her own influence lingered on, and was recognized as of great importance by officials of the Indian Department. Even Fraser when he reported that some Indians had not only done a service 'with cheerfulness & punctuality, but behaved better in every respect than ever

141 Ibid.
I saw so great a number of them do before,' said 'their uncommon behaviour is in a great Measure to be ascribed to Miss Molly Brant's influence over them, which is so far superior to that of all their Chiefs put together ... tho' she is insatiable in her demands for her own family, yet I believe her residence here has been a considerable saving to Government as she checks the demands of others both for presents & provisions.'\textsuperscript{143} Haldimand replied that he was glad to hear of her usefulness.

She has always been unreasonable in her Demands for her own family and favorites, but if by gratifying them a greater Expence is avoided, it becomes the lesser Evil, and indeed her attachment has been so warm & so Steady that she is deserving of attention besides that, in a political view, it is necessary to keep her in Temper.\textsuperscript{144}

At the end of the war she was awarded a pension of a hundred pounds a year 'in consideration of the Zealous services manifested by Her and Her family to the King's Governm\textsuperscript{t},'\textsuperscript{145} which, with a house and other things she had been given, allowed her to live comfortably for the rest of her days.

The management of Indian relations during this

\textsuperscript{143} Fraser to Haldimand, March 21, 1780. B.M.Add. Mss. 21787, p. 116.

\textsuperscript{144} Haldimand to Fraser, April 16, 1780. B.M.Add. Mss. 21787, p. 78.

\textsuperscript{145} Haldimand to Brant, May 27, 1783. B.M.Add. Mss. 21765, p. 330.
period falls into two distinct phases; the first while Sir William Johnson, by the force of his personality and abilities, conducted his own Indian policy with a remarkable degree of success in the face of neglected and fluctuating policies from above, the second while the irresponsibility of his nephew and the irresolution of his son left Indian policy largely in the hands of individual officers in scattered places.

The character of the Indian Department, the wide variety of people it encompassed, and the large degree of autonomy they had, made the attitude of the individual officer to the Indians and of the Indians to him of great importance to Indian relations. The degree of closeness between the officers and the Indians, the adoption of Indian ways, the learning of Indian language, the respect for Indian culture, all played a part. Yet as we have seen, the gulf which separated the Indian officers in the Department, above the interpreter level at any rate, from the Indians, was one which could not be bridged, even by Joseph Brant, who perhaps came closer than almost anyone to doing it.

The death of Sir William Johnson, too, must not be underestimated as a factor which changed the fortunes of the Indian Department. Before 1774, policy was in a state of confusion to be sure, but Sir William was able to make the best of the situation. But the qualities which were buried with him failed to reappear in the years after the
Quebec Act, and Indian affairs settled into permanent chaos. Leadership in the Indian Department was a vital factor; after Sir William Johnson, those who had the authority to lead were found wanting, and those who might have led with more success lacked the authority to do so.
CHAPTER THREE

RELATIONS WITH THE INDIANS UNDER THE
DIRECTION OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
1760 - 1774

The office of the Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Forces in North America was not an old one, but one which was born of much the same conditions and causes as the Indian Department. The two were both part of an attempt on the part of the British Government to formulate a more unified plan of defense for all North America, a scheme which hoped by co-ordinating all defense in North America through one central body to eliminate a good deal of the confusion, the ineptitude and the cost of the previous welter of defense plans under the haphazard care of the colonial governments. The problem of getting the colonies to accept the creation of an office with power to operate within their borders with no responsibility to them and in some ways superior to them was shown at the abortive Albany Congress of 1754. Not only were the colonies apprehensive about creating a 'power within a power,' they were as usual reluctant to take on the burden of paying for their own defense. Though no political union was even suggested, the military union proposed ran
into rough weather from the beginning; the Board of Trade's plan for the co-ordinated defense of North America, including Indian affairs, collapsed with the Conference, for the moment at any rate.

Not that anyone really disputed the right of the King and his government to make what disposition they would for the defense of North America. The Board of Trade recommended to His Majesty that 'the command of all the Forts & Garrisons and of all forces raised upon emergencies and the sole direction of Indian Affairs be placed in the hands of some one single person, Commander in Chief, to be appointed by your Majesty, who is authorized to draw upon the Treasurer or other proper officer of each colony for such sums of money as shall be necessary as well for the ordinary as well as extraordinary service; they pointed out as well that the King may 'as we humbly apprehend, legally and by virtue of your own authority, invest any person your Majesty shall think proper, with such power.'

The outbreak of what was to be known in America as the 'French and Indian War' made the appointment of such a

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2 Board of Trade to King, August 9, 1754. New York Documents, Volume 6, p. 901.

3 Ibid.
person imperative in the eyes of the imperial government, and General Edward Braddock became the first of a succession of Commanders in Chief, whose powers were to wax and wane with the years until the American Revolution. Between 1754 and 1758 the powers of the Commander in Chief were severely limited, largely because of William Pitt's reluctance to provoke the colonies by a display of British military power. Under General Jeffrey Amherst, however, as the pressure of the war in America increased, the office became of necessity more and more important.

As we have seen in Chapter 1, shortly after his commission as Commander in Chief, Braddock issued a commission to Sir William Johnson as Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Northern District, with John Stuart acting in the same capacity in the Southern District from about the same time. As Commander in Chief, Braddock was to have ultimate direction of Indian affairs; as both their offices were new, and somewhat vaguely defined, the Superintendents and the Commanders in Chief had a somewhat uneasy relationship for several years. Sir William Johnson envisioned the Superintendents as possessing an authority in some way separate from the direction of the Commander in Chief; (on one occasion he had to be directed to send his 'regular and fixed correspondence' to England through the Commander in Chief.) By 1763, Sir William Johnson seems to have

4 Carter, 'The Office of Commander in Chief', p. 175.
5 Ibid., p. 189.
become accustomed to his role vis-à-vis the Commander in Chief; although it is possible, as we shall see, that this easier relationship had something to do as well with the differing attitudes of Amherst and General Thomas Gage to the Indians and to British policy towards the tribes.

Thus the whole question of Indian affairs was integrated almost entirely with that of defense in the mind of the Commander in Chief. The question of defense itself of course, involved other matters such as land, for the friendship of the Indians could not be maintained without the abrasive issues of settlement and trade regulation being taken into account. The use of the Indians as military allies was something about which British military authorities tended to be somewhat ambivalent. That they were capable of being used by the French with devastating effectiveness was amply demonstrated by the horrible defeat of Braddock on his ill-starred expedition to the wilderness. Rarely had the traditional tactics of European open field fighting come into such damaging collision with the alarming guerrilla warfare which the adaptable French and their Indian allies pursued on the frontier.

Indian methods of warfare were repugnant to Europeans partly because of an imperfect understanding of Indian society and geographical environment. Indian warfare depended largely on speed and surprise; the Indians gave no warning of their attack, which caused the Europeans to

\footnote{Ibid., p. 189.}
think they were treacherous, and they struck from behind trees and rocks to save indispensable warriors, which caused the Europeans to look upon them as cowardly. As the battlefield was their home as well, they often had to interrupt their fighting to hunt or secure their families, which cast doubt upon their reliability. As they lived very near to the level of subsistence, there were many occasions on which they could not afford to take prisoners, and they would put men, women and children to death in a manner which Europeans regarded as barbarous.

The British regarded people who used such methods as dubious allies at best; besides, compared to the French, the British commanded the allegiance of very few Indian nations, and though the powerful Six Nations were kept friendly largely through the assiduous efforts of Sir William Johnson and his deputies, even some of them, notably the Senecas, wavered in their loyalty from time to time. It was important, however, that the Indians form some kind of line of defense against the French in Canada, and so the 'covenant chain' as the Indians themselves referred to it, of alliance with the Six Nations was brightened, and attempts were made to include other nations in the alliance. Sir William Johnson expected great things of the Indians as allies; he felt their type of warfare was one which could accomplish wonders if properly used on the frontier.

Amherst was not so sure; the thought of having as allies people who 'are very capable of turning Cossack'
filled him with a certain repugnance. At first, he too had high hopes of the effectiveness of the Indians; 'I am Confident,' he wrote, 'that the Indians will not only be of great use but likewise Entire Success, the Consequence of which will be the Entire Reduction of Canada.' The mischief done by the French Indian allies was obvious, and the difficulty of pursuing them, even with Rangers, strikingly evident, but Amherst never did feel, after 1759, even before the shock of the Pontiac rising, that the Indians could be trusted.

'If,' he burst out on the loss of three men, 'Messieurs les Sauvages were as strong in our interest as they would have us believe, they would have proved it by saving them; it confirms me in the opinion I have always had of them and in the precautions necessary to keep them as far away as possible from our posts.'

He suspected them of fighting only to gain prisoners

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8 Amherst to Sir William Johnson, August 6, 1759. Johnson Papers, Volume 3, p. 119.


10 A. L. Burt, The Old Province of Quebec, Volume 1, p. 56. Burt feels that Amherst's distaste for the Indians issued largely from Pontiac's revolt but there is ample evidence that his dislike was manifested long before.


and did not even trust their intelligence reports; when a scouting party returned, he noted in his journal, 'Reports very likely to be false.'\(^{13}\) In action he regarded them as of little use. 'I had the Indians mustered by Major Gordon - a most idle worthless sort & if their Captains were not taken Prisoners I should send them all to their homes. If I send them on a scout they all come back in twelve Hours sick & here they will do nothing but eat and drink unless forced to it.'\(^{14}\) More even than the Indians in general, Amherst distrusted those who declared their British allegiance later in the war, or who couldn't seem to make up their minds; 'I cannot help saying that I think these People ought to determine on which side they will be, and unless they do it, I do not think it prudent to Suffer them at our Posts, since they cannot be supposed to come there with any other Design, than to Obtain Intelligence for the Enemy.'\(^{15}\)

Amherst felt that his policy towards the Indians should be one of firmness, but justice, although his critics felt that the former outweighed the latter by a significant margin. In his directions to Sir William Johnson, to be transmitted to the other Indian officers, he said, 'I must remind you that from the little Dependance

\(^{13}\) Amherst, Jeffrey, *Journal*, p. 147.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., p. 173.

that can be made on Indian promises it is necessary to caution all those whom you treat with as I mean not to take anything from them but on the Contrary to Ensure them the free and uninterrupted Enjoyment of their own I Expect that they shall behave & Demean themselves in every Respect as good Neighbours and Allies; that whenever they Swerve from these Rules, I shall look upon and treat them as Enemies; And on the other hand that whenever they Render themselves of any use or Service to us, they shall most punctually meet with the Reward due to their merit.\[16\] In a somewhat less jovial vein, he warned that 'upon the first Hostilities they May be Guilty of, they Must not only Expect the Severest Retaliation, but an Entire Destruction of all their Nations, for I am firmly Resolved, whenever they give me an Occasion, to Extirpate them, Root and branch.'\[17\] Thus, even if Amherst never did carry out his reputed plan to wipe out the Indians with smallpox-infested blankets,\[18\] his thoughts about the Indians can hardly be considered humanitarian.

As the French were gradually squeezed out of the


\[18\] For an analysis of this accusation against Amherst, see Knollenburg, *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 1955.
interior in North America, Amherst's responsibilities as Commander in Chief grew greater as he became in fact governor of the land being vacated by the French. Even before the peace, Amherst was forced to take account of the staple issues of the Indian Department, land and trade. In 1761, he put a tentative boundary on the area available for settlement, already foreshadowing the policy of an Indian reserve in the interior by which it was attempted to put a buffer between the colonies and the Indians.\textsuperscript{19} He assured the Indians that he had not come to obtain more of their lands; 'on the Contrary, that so long as they adhered to [the King's] Interest and by their Behaviour gave proofs of the Sincerity of their Attachment to his Royal Person and Cause, I should defend and maintain them in their Just rights, and give them all the aid and Assistance they might be liable to, from the Enemy, thro' their Attachment to us.'\textsuperscript{20} He also sent Sir William Johnson to Detroit, to attempt to pacify the western tribes, authorized to draw up a set of regulations for the Indian trade, to be put into operation under the military commanders of the western posts.\textsuperscript{21} He even turned his mind to what was to be one of the most

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{19}{J. M. Sosin, \textit{Whitehall and the Wilderness}, p. 32.}
\footnotetext{20}{Amherst to James Hamilton, March 30, 1760. \textit{Johnson Papers}, Volume 3, p. 204.}
\footnotetext{21}{Sosin, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 40.}
\end{footnotes}
complex problems of the interior, that of law and justice. His basic impulse, for the time being, was to bring everyone in the interior, including the Indians under the justice of the military, obeying the maxim that 'there must be law where there is Society, and the Military will prevail where no Civil Jurisdiction is established.'\textsuperscript{22} He felt that even the Indians would benefit by being included in the system of military law. When Sir William Johnson inquired how to deal with some Indian murderers, Amherst replied, 'The bringing the Murderers to Condign punishment by the Sentence of our own Garrison must, in any opinion, have a better Effect than by Leaving them to the Wild Fury of the Indians who are Apt to run into Extremes, and perhaps might be as ready to Sacrifice the Innocent as the Guilty . . . I am firmly determined, while I have the Honor to Command, to make Examples of Every One, whether Indian or white, that are Guilty of that Horrid Crime of Murder, in Districts where the Civil Law cannot take place.'\textsuperscript{23}

Amherst was capable of more humane perceptions of the Indians, as when he described an Indian family to whom he had given some food,\textsuperscript{24} though their behaviour when drunk

\textsuperscript{22} Meeting of Committee,' April 8, 1769. CO42/29, p. 71.

\textsuperscript{23} Amherst to Sir William Johnson, October 10, 1762. Johnson Papers, Volume 3, p. 895.

\textsuperscript{24} Amherst, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 217.
stunned him. 'The Indians were out of Luck this evening, they had by some means got at Rum and one man was so wounded they expected he would die... In their frolics the Indians cut a horse to pieces who belonged to a sutler. They are devils when drunk; when sober quiet enough.'

This caused him to dismiss many of the complaints of the Indians about being ill-treated at the posts; 'the Complaints of the Indians of being Ill treated at our Posts, I have reason to think are groundless, for I suspect what they call Ill treatment is only necessary Checks which the commanding officers are obliged to give them in their Drunken Frolics.'

Amherst's lack of sympathy for the Indians resulted at least partly from a reluctance to undertake responsibility, which he felt would be his, for anything the Indians did as British allies, atrocities as well as accomplishments. As can be imagined, however, the Commander in Chief's failure to see what importance there could be in maintaining friendly relations with the Indians created problems in his relationship with the Indian Department. His letters to Sir William Johnson were filled with a sort of exaggerated deference which was obviously tinged with condescension, and his letters to others about Johnson were

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25 Ibid., p. 219.

even less complimentary. He wrote to Haldimand to say his reports concerning the Indians had been sent to Sir William Johnson; 'it is in his department and he should certainly know better than anyone how to manage them, but he is often mistaken, for they don't want to be managed.'

For his part, Sir William Johnson chafed under the limitations he felt he suffered under Amherst. He wrote in exasperation to Croghan that he approved his proceedings in the West, 'if Indian Alliances or Trade with them be considered worthy our attention, if not it will be thought extravagant and unnecessary.' He knew he was regarded with some suspicion by the gentlemen of His Majesty's regular forces; his taking command of the expedition against Niagara on the death of Brigadier General Prideaux had been a great disappointment to General Haldimand, and one for which he was consoled by his military colleagues. Johnson felt that as a man of influence and importance among the Indians, his delicate diplomacy with them should not be jeopardized by an unsympathetic superior. In 1761, he felt that the peace with the former French Indian allies was 'settled on so stable a foundation . . . that unless

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27Amherst to Haldimand (in French), May 26, 1760. B.M.Add.Mss. 21661, p. 56.


greatly Irritated thereto they will never break the Peace Established with them.\textsuperscript{30} In the next couple of years he felt as though the delicate alliances he had devoted so much energy to forging were crumbling under Amherst's policy. In the spring of 1761, he wrote to Claus that he was going away, and the Indians should be warned not to pay their usual spring visits to Johnson Hall; 'besides,' he continued, 'General Amherst is not for my being any ways free or generous to any station of Indians which should they come they would expect.'\textsuperscript{31} Johnson was not the only one who felt keenly the necessity of maintaining at least acquiescence among the Indians to keep peace on the frontier. As Governor Wright wrote:

> What is 2000 or even 2500 militia scatter'd over a large content of country, who have their wives, children & property to take care of, and if not are undisciplined & not one in 5 or 10 that would face an Enemy [against] 4000 most daring Insolent Savages, who have no Property to take care of & their women & children all safe & sound and who are always at home go where they will & without any Expence.\textsuperscript{32}

The tragedy which followed hot upon the cession to Britain of the interior of the continent, the so-called Pontiac Revolt, was felt by Sir William Johnson to be a

\textsuperscript{30}Sir William Johnson to Amherst, November 5, 1761. \textit{Johnson Papers}, Volume 3, p. 559.

\textsuperscript{31}Sir William Johnson to Claus, March 17, 1761. \textit{Ibid.}, Volume 3, p. 360.

\textsuperscript{32}Gov. Wright to Haldimand, February 15, 1774. B.M.Add.\textit{Mss.} 21672, p. 200.
result of Amherst's blindness, and by Amherst to be a confirmation of the low opinion he had always held of the Indians. Though not all the causes of the rising are completely clear, it does not seem to have been, as once was thought, a 'conspiracy' carefully organized by the treacherous Pontiac, with or without the direct help of the French. Though the Ottawa chief Pontiac did lead his tribe in the initial outburst of the rising, the other attacks seem to have been scattered and spontaneous, though rooted in some of the same aspirations.

It was widely believed at the time that the French were behind the rising. Haldimand referred darkly to 'the ridiculous hopes that these ignorant and ill-intentioned people have sown'; 33 Amherst probably put his finger on one source of the trouble when he speculated, 'I cannot think but it will turn out to be only some of the French Traders, who may have thrown out some Insinuations to Ingratiate themselves with the Savages, so as to Engross the Trade to themselves & that they never Could have Imagined Matters would have been Carried to so great a Length.' 34

Sir William Johnson's analysis of the causes of the revolt was based on a criticism of Amherst's treatment


34 Amherst to Sir William Johnson, August 14, 1763. Johnson Papers, Volume 4, p. 186.
of the Indians as 'too inconsiderable' to warrant the presents and the attention they had received under the French. 'If we had no occasion for frontier posts, back settlements and an Indian trade, we might rest tolerably secure in our present possessions, without being at any expense in cultivating the Friendship and affection of the Indians;' under the circumstances, however, he felt that Amherst's parsimony and prejudice had borne tragic fruit.

The rising was unexpected, and for a time the Commander in Chief was incapable of suppressing it; peace having been concluded in Europe, Amherst was uncertain how many troops he could command. Besides this, Amherst for some time refused to accept the possibility of a dangerous rising. When Gladwin reported the rumours of bad feeling among the former Indian allies of the French, who were reported as reasoning 'that they had better Attempt Something now, to Recover their Liberty, than Wait till We were better Established,' Amherst replied, 'they never can Hurt Us, unless We are Weak Enough to Put Ourselves in their Power.'


36 Major Gladwin to Amherst, April 20, 1763. Johnson Papers, Volume 4, p. 95.

37 Amherst to Gladwin, May 29, 1763. Ibid., Volume 4, p. 98.
Besides Indian weakness, he cited reason and common sense as sure factors preventing a rising. 'There is no doubt,' he wrote to Sir William Johnson,

but it is & has been in the power of the 6 Nations to Interrupt the Communication at any time since the Troops were Detached from this Continent to the Havana, were they Disposed thereto; But there is as Little Doubt but that such a step would in the End bring Certain Ruin on their own heads; Indeed it is more so; for their Commencing Hostilities against Us, and persisting therein might be Attended with the Loss of our Inferior Posts, and a few of Our People at first, but must Inevitably occasion such measures to be taken as would Bring about the Total Extirpation of those Indian Nations. 38

Even when the rising had started, he hoped that the tribes not yet involved 'will not be so Foolish to Quit the Enjoyments they now Possess to involve themselves with a Giddy Tribe, in Projects that will Recoil Heavy on their Heads, and Should they Persevere in them, it must end in their Total Ruin and Extirpation. 39

Unfortunately, denied the presents which had always oiled the wheels of Indian diplomacy, accustomed to dealing with the Indians as trading partners, and unaware of the deep attachment the Indians still bore to the French, the commanding officers of the far-flung British posts were entirely unprepared for the rising, and beginning with the surrender of Detroit, the garrison of one post after

38 Amherst to Sir William Johnson, July 9, 1763. Ibid., Volume 4, p. 166.
another fell; the commanding officers more than once made
the same mistake as Ensign Pauli at Sandusky, who had let
in 'some of his own Indians who received him very Friendly."40
Amherst watched with shock as the officers at the posts
were all 'surprized and taken by the Indians coming as
friends in their usual way, and by a too accustomed and
ill-judged confidence of the Officers in these Savages.'41
'It is amazing, ' he wrote, 'that an officer could put so
much faith in the promises of Indians as to capitulate with
them, when there are so many recent instances of their
never failing to massacre the people whom they can per-
suade to put themselves in their power.'42

Enraged and shocked by the refusal of the Indians
to respect military surrender and by the reported tortures
executed on some soldiers by the Indians, Amherst felt that
his pessimism about the Indians had been confirmed, and he
demanded their punishment. He wrote to the commander at
Niagara after the rising to have no contact with the
Indians in his district whatsoever; 'it is very improbable
you can have any come near you, but as Enemies . . . if
any Should come near your Post, they are to be treated as
Such & Instantly put to Death.'43 Amherst further warned

40"Court of Inquiry," July 6 and 10, 1763.
B.M.Add.Mss. 21682, p. 54.
41Amherst, op.cit., p. 314.
42Ibid., p. 310.
43Amherst to Lt. Col. Browning, October 6, 1763.
B.M.Add.Mss. 21678, p. 27.
him not to put too much reliance in Sir William Johnson's distinctions, which he regarded as spurious, between tribes who had remained peaceful and those who had taken part in the rising; 'it is your Business to be Watchfull & on your Guard against the Whole Race of Savages; for in truth there are none of them to be Trusted.'

Amherst did not completely reject this distinction between peaceful and hostile Indians, for he suggested a punitive expedition against an Indian village on the grounds that it 'would have a very good Effect by shewing the Indians the Distinction we make between those who have Committed Hostilities & the Others who have Remained Quiet and Peaceable.' But he did feel that all the Indians ought to feel the weight of British displeasure, and that the expenses of the Indian Department should be lessened because of the defection of so many. He feared that it was not the end of Indian violence; 'I suspect the Indians will try every Method that treachery and baseness can suggest to destroy those whom they fear.' He suggested to Johnson that proper atonement be exacted before trade was resumed.

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'As to presents,' he continued, 'it would certainly be the highest presumption in them to expect any. Justice they shall have, but no more; for they can never be considered by us as a people to whom we owe rewards; and it would be madness, to the highest degree, ever to bestow favours on a race who have so treacherously and without any provocation on our side, attacked our Posts and butchered our Garrisons.'

Sir William Johnson, on the other hand, felt that Pontiac's Revolt had issued from Amherst's neglect of the Indians, and that the British government must try and make up for lost time in putting the fears of the Indians at rest. The Six Nations, except for the Senecas, had remained loyal, and he felt that only a skillful course of diplomacy could persuade France's former Indian allies to come around to the British interest. It was a time to be generous rather than to cut off Indian expenses altogether, he argued. In this case, the British government agreed with him. The Board of Trade wrote to assure him that they were 'convinced that nothing but the speedy establishment of some well digested and general plan for the regulation of our Commercial and political concerns with them can effectually reconcile their esteem and affections.'

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47 Amherst to Sir William Johnson, September 30, 1763. Ibid., Volume 7, p. 568.

48 Board of Trade to Sir William Johnson, September 26, 1763. Ibid., Volume 7, p. 567.
Even while the putting down of the rising went on, and troops gradually arrived in the West — before whom 'the Tawny Race will disperse' 49 — the Proclamation of 1763 was being issued with its guarantees for Indian lands against encroaching settlement from the colonies, and the complementary promise to Sir William Johnson of a plan of commercial regulation and revenue was meant to result in a comprehensive plan. The Proclamation also changed the function of the Commander in Chief; by taking the Ohio country yielded by the French out of the civil jurisdiction of any government, it made the Commander in Chief virtual governor of this area, although his authority in the area was never clear-cut nor universally accepted. Shelburne had suggested some formal provision in the Proclamation giving the Commander in Chief civil authority in the interior, but this role was left informal and vague; 50 such a policy evaded rather than solved the problems of this region.

The issuing of the Proclamation was followed shortly by the appointment of a new Commander in Chief for North America, General Thomas Gage, who took over Amherst's papers and instructions in November of 1763, 51 though he

50 Carter, 'The Office of Commander in Chief,' p. 182.
51 Ibid., p. 177.
did not receive a regular commission under the Great Seal until a year later.\textsuperscript{52} That the prestige of his office had grown beyond simple military matters can be seen from the fact that he had one colonial governor recalled for interfering in Indian affairs.\textsuperscript{53} His commission, when it arrived, made the Commander in Chief's powers over Indian affairs no more explicit; it laid out only routine military powers for the Commander in Chief, and gave no instructions about the other powers which the Commander in Chief continued to accumulate; these other powers were then based only on precedents and informal instructions. The conduct of Indian affairs, for example, continued to be guided by the commission given by Braddock to Sir William Johnson in 1755.\textsuperscript{54}

Gage has been criticized, with some justice, for his shortcomings as a soldier, and for his military failure as Commander in Chief; but his accomplishments as an administrator, which after all took up most of his energies in peacetime, seem not to have been fully appreciated until recently.\textsuperscript{55} A man of great tact and charm, who seemed to have the affection of all those with

\textsuperscript{52} Haldimand to Gage (in French), January 22, 1765. B.M.Add.Mss. 21662, p. 183.

\textsuperscript{53} Carter, 'The Office of Commander in Chief,' p. 193. Governor Johnstone in West Florida, nephew of Murray, was recalled supposedly for starting war with Creeks. \textit{Gage Correspondence}, Volume 2, p. 51.

\textsuperscript{54} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 178.

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 179.
whom he dealt, Gage did a remarkable job of allaying the well-grounded alarm Sir William Johnson had felt at Amherst’s policies and of making what could be made from the uncertainties of the Indian Department.

The shock which had struck the British forces in North America with their experience of an unexpected and horrible frontier war against which their little posts were no defense had by no means worn off. Gage issued constant warnings about being 'too diffident of the Indians,' and told his subordinates they must be on guard against Indian treachery. 56 He felt they should be dealt with severely when they committed any acts of violence; when a soldier was fired on by some Indians, Gage hoped those concerned had had 'prompt and adequate Punishment in having one or two of their People knocked on the Head, which is the shortest and I believe the only way of deterring them from vio-lences of this Kind.' 57 He had no faith in the loyalty of the Indians; during the war he had said of the western Indians, 'it is their Fear only of the Six Nations prevents them doing us Mischief.' 58 He felt that their natural rivalries should be exploited to weaken


58 Gage to Haldimand, April 21, 1760. B.M.Add. Mss. 21662, p. 52.
them against the British; 'it is much of our Interest, that Jealousy should be kept up amongst the Indians, by which we may be umpires in their disputes, and probably they will be fearfull of Attempting anything against us, as long as they continue distrustfull of Each other.' 59

Gage was, nonetheless, much more sensitive than Amherst had been to the necessity of keeping the Indians peaceful and resigned to British rule, rather than fearful of it. He saw the validity of John Stuart's argument that a war with the Indians 'will in one year cost us more money than the Indian Establishment will in twenty.' 60 He demanded more than Amherst's stern justice from those dealing with the Indians; he demanded tact and generosity, and turned his attention to dealing with the Settlers and the traders, for whom he had little respect. The failure of the British government to follow the Proclamation with a comprehensive plan for trade and defense rendered Gage's task more difficult. In military terms, Gage diverged from Amherst's policy of building up British forces in the interior. He preferred fewer posts with greater concentrations of troops to a large number of posts defended by a few. 61 For one thing, after the furor over the Stamp


61 Sosin, op. cit., p. 111.
Act, he felt the need to have more troops on hand on the eastern seaboard. For another, he felt that lessening the number of posts occupied in the interior would make the Indians happy by preventing 'the Jealousy they have, or may entertain, of our having fortified Places in their Country.'

62 He sent directions for troops to be withdrawn gradually, 'His Majesty being of the Opinion for many Weighty Reasons that all the Posts in the interior, as well as the settled parts of North America may be abandoned, unless necessary for the facilitating of Commerce or for Publick Safety.' 63 One of his zealous subordinates, discussing the withdrawal of the garrison from one post, said he would not be surprised if the Indians or the traders, 'who are even worse,' burned the fort, and then suggested the British should burn it themselves to give them an excuse to withdraw.

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The rivalry of the French in North America was still a living threat to Gage; they and their occasional allies the Spanish had not been pushed off the Continent but only south and west. The French still held the southern Mississippi valley and Gage, along with most of the British, attributed to French machinations the Pontiac rising.


63 Ibid.

64 Haldimand to Gage (in French), August 5, 1767. B.M.Add.Mss. 21663, p. 100.
Intelligence reports of messages passing between Pontiac and the French, among other things, fed those suspicions. At Michilimackinack, Gage wrote, 'the fury of the savages fell only on the British soldiers & Traders. They neither hurt the Canadians nor plundered their goods. From which circumstance it was imagined there was some collusion betwixt the Canadians and the Savages, to exclude the English from the trade of the Upper Lakes.' But he realized that the English could learn certain things from the French about Indian diplomacy, and put the failure of one small expedition in the interior to the fact that 'nobody took the precaution to pave the way with Presents, which the French have always done.' He realized already, however, the potential dangers of escalating Indian gifts, and warned Haldimand that the accounts for presents 'are more or less as Occasions happen, and often require Trouble to keep them within Bounds.'

On the question of Indian lands, Gage was adamant that the Indian reserve laid out in the Proclamation should be strictly honoured. In 1765, he managed to obtain a

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65 Gage to Halifax, October 13, 1764. The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage with Secretaries of State, 1763 - 1775 (referred to as Gage Correspondence), Volume 1, p. 40.
66 Gage to Egremont, August 28, 1763. C042/24, p. 191.
formal Board of Trade condemnation of illegal settlement in the interior, but punishing the transgressors proved to be difficult. The land speculators were powerful in the colonies, and in London, and the Secretary of State showed very little sympathy for Gage's protests against the illegal movements of settlers. The dangers of a frontier war were great, he complained, and outrages were committed by the settlers with abandon, because they knew 'no Jury would condemn them for murdering or ill treating an Indian.'

Gage devoted some troops to removing some of the squatters, but they returned almost immediately, and in the absence of a clear cut judicial authority for the Commander in Chief, Gage's complaint was that 'every Villain finds some powerful Protector.' He continued to order his juniors to 'pull down as fast as any Persons shall presume to build up,' but the impotence of the Indian Department and the Commander in Chief in any civil sense made it impossible to stem the flow of westward settlement.

As well as the English settlers, in the Indian territory, there were two other groups more or less under Gage's jurisdiction as Commander in Chief - the traders

69 Sosin, op. cit., p. 108.
70 Ibid., p. 109.
71 Carter, 'The Office of Commander in Chief,' p. 173.
72 Gage to --, April 8, 1771. B.M.Add.Mss. 21687, p. 104.
and the Canadians who were settled in the interior. The traders Gage regarded with some exasperation, and they reciprocated this feeling to a large extent, as he adopted Sir William Johnson's policy of restricting trade to the posts, to keep prices down for the Indians, a policy which was stated, though not given official sanction, in the Board of Trade's plan of 1764. He did not agree with the traders that they would lose out to the French unless they were allowed to go among the Indians to trade; if they were sent to the tribes, 'I do apprehend that the French Traders will then entirely get the better of all ours and still retain their influence amongst the Nations, and not impossible that they may get some of them killed and draw us into Quarrells. There is nothing so scandalous as they would not do for a temporary Advantage.'

While both he and Sir William Johnson tried to persuade the authorities in Britain to proceed with the promised set of official regulations to govern the trade, Gage tried various expedients to try and regulate the behaviour of the traders on his own authority. The extent of his jurisdiction over the traders was uncertain; the Attorney General of New York once told him that a group of traders was outside colonial jurisdiction and ought to

73Sosin, op. cit., p. 41.
be tried in a military court; other colonial governments, such as that of Quebec, did assume some kind of role in managing their traders. The Quebec government administered an oath to traders, the penalty for breaking which was forfeiture of goods. Gage urged the colonial authorities to make Indian agents and commissaries justices of the peace so they would have some kind of recognized legal authority over the traders at the posts, and did his best to obtain some arrangement for justice in the interior more complete than the power given by the Mutiny Bill of 1766 to send criminals from the Ohio country to court in the nearest colony. He suggested an amendment to the Mutiny Act empowering military officers to try traders in the interior by court martial, but failed to win this. 'I have once represented the Necessity of having Courts of Justice in the Uninhabited Country, but all I could get was the clause in the Mutiny Act,' he lamented to Johnson.

The turning over to the colonies of the regulation of their own trade, in 1768, decreased even further Gage's formal power over the traders. With the abolition of the


76Carter, 'The Office of Commander in Chief,' p. 185.

77Sosin, op. cit., p. 105.

78Gage to Welbore Ellis, January 22, 1765. Gage Correspondence, Volume 2, p. 266.

commissaries, the expenses of the Indian Department were cut down, and the commanding officers of the posts were only 'to give Protection to the Traders, to keep up Order and Regularity, and to prevent the Indians meeting with any ill treatment.' In spite of this, however, Gage disliked being helpless to prevent bad behaviour among the traders. 'If it was in our Power to deal with the vagabonds in the upper Country when they are taken as they deserve, and as it is in our Interest to do, the savages would not be amused with a number of idle stories; but the Laws allow very little or no Punishment to be inflicted on them.'

The other group, those Canadians who had settled in the interior under the French, enjoyed a very uncertain status in the years between the Treaty of Paris and the Quebec Act. When the Proclamation was issued in 1763, the ban on settlement in the Ohio country seems to have been meant to apply to these small groups as well as to new settlers; this was the way Murray and others interpreted it at any rate. British officials seem to have given no recognition of the existence of these settlements.

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82 Murray to Halifax, March 9, 1764. C042/25, p. 58.
in formulating the Proclamation, though they probably knew of them.\(^{83}\) In 1773, the Commander in Chief and government in Britain were still discussing the fate of these communities, and admitting they were 'embarrassed what to do with them.'\(^{84}\) For more than ten years, the settlements on the Illinois hung in a kind of limbo as far as civil jurisdiction over them was concerned. Gage's initial policy and the one which seems to have guided their affairs until the Quebec Act, was to allow them to settle their own disputes; he instructed his military officers to 'meddle as little as possible with the affairs of Justice.'\(^ {85}\)

The only people over whom Gage had any direct control were the military and the Indian Department. To the best of his ability, he tried to delineate the responsibilities of the two groups. He ordered the commanding officers of the posts not to interfere with the work of the commissaries; though of course after the abolition of commissaries in 1768, the military officers had to fill both roles.\(^ {86}\) Gage explained to Haldimand in 1767 that 'the officer must command his Fort and the commissary treat with

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\(^{85}\) Carter, 'The Office of Commander in Chief,' p. 183.

\(^{86}\) Ibid., p. 193.
the Indians, and as I presume that the Indians will naturally first come to the Commander he will after compliments paid refer them to the Commissary.\textsuperscript{87} He was aware of the delicate diplomatic task the military officers were called upon to perform, and on occasion administered sharp rebukes to his subordinates. When unfortunate Captain Lord threw a drunken Indian into jail, which resulted in a riot which cost property and lives, Gage railed at him, 'You have dealt with riotous Indians as if they had been a Dublin mob.'\textsuperscript{88}

For the most part, Gage left the officers of the Indian Department to their own devices, a policy which Sir William Johnson felt to be a refreshing change from that of Amherst. On occasion, however, he did take a firm decision in the province of Indian affairs, as when he refused to withdraw traders from the interior in a time of tension, as the Indian Superintendent suggested, because he felt it would look like a declaration of war.

When Gage returned to England for a period in 1773 - 1774, he left General Frederick Haldimand as acting Commander in Chief. Haldimand had learned a great deal from Gage as his junior in the Floridas, and his policy towards the Indians as Commander in Chief reflected this. Like

\textsuperscript{87} Gage to Haldimand, March 30, 1767. B.M. Add. Mss. 21663, p. 12.

\textsuperscript{88} Gage to Lord, August 30, 1772, quoted in Carter, 'The Office of Commander in Chief,' p. 180.
Gage, Haldimand was deeply affected by the treachery of the Indians in 1763, and warned the commanding officer at Detroit that 'little dependance shou'd be placed on their shew of Friendship, and not to abate in the least of the caution which is absolutely necessary in such Posts.' He spoke of them as 'Gens sans Lumière' who might be pardoned for their ignorance as long as a firm control was kept over them.

Shortly after taking office, Haldimand sent Lieutenant Jehu Hay on an information gathering tour of the area, to 'procure an exact description of that country and the inhabitants.' Though Sir William Johnson was informed of this journey, it was done under Haldimand's own auspices. Together with the gathering of information and, he hoped, some proposals for a form of government for the Illinois settlements, Haldimand intended the trip to be one step towards his major objective during his time as Commander in Chief, the reassurance of the Indians that the tide of settlement into their lands would be stopped.

94 Ibid.
Jehu Hay carried a proclamation 'relative to the incroachments attempted by some of our people on the Wabash,' and instructions to the commanding officers 'to prevent any such attempts by all means in his power.'

Haldimand had little sympathy for the settlers from the colonies who were moving into illegally gained Indian lands. 'I am not at all surprized to learn that the Indians in General should be displeased with the incroachments Daily committed by the Rash Emigrants from the Colonies,' he wrote, and he informed the Earl of Dartmouth that 'the irregular & rash proceedings of our frontier inhabitants constantly going to seek settlements down the Ohio, form a circumstance which offends the Indians greatly.'

His fear was that the frontier settlements 'so far remote from all influence of the Laws, will soon be the Assylum of the Lawless and the repair of the most Licentious Inhabitants of His Majesty's already most Extensive Colonies in America.' Such lawless elements were for him and the Indian Department a constant source of trouble;

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95 Ibid.
97 Haldimand to Dartmouth, August 3, 1773. B.M.Add.Mss. 21695, p. 32.
during his period as Commander in Chief, the frontier seemed in constant danger of war. Such atrocities as the murder of two young Cherokees by a youth as they sat eating their dinner at his mother's table, and the inflammatory proceedings of Dr. Conolly, self-appointed Virginian governor of Fort Dunmore, as he renamed Fort Pitt, actually did lead to an outbreak known as Lord Dunmore's War in which the Virginias became embroiled. Haldimand refused to take responsibility for those who went where they had been warned not to go; their encroachments 'might very will be expected to prove fatal to some of them; and I conceive that any thing of the kind ought to be considered in the light of a Just Punishment and a check to put a stop to the rashness of others, rather than to occasion a War, unjust in itself and very expensive in the end.'\textsuperscript{99} 'All the inhabitants of the frontiers put together are not worth to the nation what it would cost to make a campaign against the savages,'\textsuperscript{100} he reiterated.

He often suspected the colonial governments of actively encouraging the activities of those who were inflaming the Indians. In the delicate situation between the Indians and the Virginians, he thought it would be unwise to send troops, as 'it looks as though they would

\textsuperscript{99} Haldimand to Dartmouth, November 30, 1773. B.M.Add.Mss. 21695, p. 46.

\textsuperscript{100} Haldimand to Gage (in French), June 12, 1774. B.M.Add.Mss. 21665, p. 240.
be attacked going or returning; the people of our frontiers would ask nothing better, because we would become the center of a quarrel they have fomented and in which I think we should try to take no part." ¹⁰¹ A panic on the frontier, he pointed out to Dartmouth, might teach the colonies 'in what manner the Indians ought to be treated and not to be so anxious to acquire their Lands & to be driving them farther & farther even from their very best hunting grounds.' ¹⁰² He suspected that 'the great benefit which would immediately accrue to any of the new Provinces from an Indian War by bringing a vast deal of money amongst them and in the end removing the Indians to a greater distance may be no small weight in the scale in which the advantages or disadvantages resulting from it wou'd be weighed amongst them.' ¹⁰³ Even where he did not accuse the colonies of actively fomenting Indian war, he felt their greed for land was inexcusable; he said one of the colonial governors thought 'there is no object in America more important than the sale of the lands he has unfortunately acquired from the Indians.' ¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Haldimand to Dartmouth, April 6, 1774. B.M.Add.Mss. 21695, p. 95.
¹⁰³ Ibid.
In the spring of 1774, when several of the southern colonies were anxious to go to war with the Creeks, who had killed some settlers, he tried to prevent the incident becoming the occasion for war. However, 'shou'd the war with the Creeks be indispensably necessary,' he consoled himself, 'it may be perhaps a favourable opportunity to make the Legislature of the different Colonies sensible of the necessity of passing laws to form an uniform and steady plan of carrying on the trade with the Indians.' 105

The traders were still a problem to the military. These 'outcasts of all Nations and the refuse of Mankind,' as one disenchanted post commander called them, refused to recognize the Commander in Chief's strictures against trading away from the forts. To avoid the posts they would merely 'land [their goods] down the River & have a Thousand other tricks to deceive the commanding officer & cheat the poor savages.' 106

Haldimand was called upon, like his predecessors, to deal with the problem of whether the Indians came under some kind of civil jurisdiction of the British government. The difficulty of applying one law to all people in the interior was evident, especially given the problem of bringing anyone in the interior to trial in any court. His

105 Haldimand to Dartmouth, March 2, 1774. B.M.Add. Mss. 21695, p. 76.
106 Major Basset to Haldimand, April 29, 1773. B.M.Add. Mss. 21730, p. 44.
policy as he stated it, was to be 'conducted by a principle of equity to the Indians, at the same time the Honor of the Nation ought not to be compromised.' Haldimand felt that the Indians should be subject to the same laws as the traders and settlers, and not left to prosecute their own justice, but he, like Gage, recognized the difficulties inherent in this course. When four Canadian traders were murdered by a group of Senecas, Sir William Johnson was able after very difficult negotiation with the Six Nations to obtain the surrender of the murderers for trial in an English court; this done, he asked that this precedent be rewarded by pardoning the criminals and sending them back to their tribe, to show that the British were merciful as well as just. Haldimand at length conceded this, 'tho' they highly deserve to be capitally punished . . . at your solicitation and in consideration of the abhorrence which the Nation to which they belong in general and their head men in particular express for the crime of which they have been guilty.' He explained to Dartmouth, 'as they have too much reason to Complain, that whenever any of their People get killed by ours, they never can get any satisfaction, I think that after keeping them in Prison for some Time, it will be most


eligible to grant them a Pardon. During the investigation to find the murderers, the Commander in Chief graciously allowed the Senecas to continue trading as usual, 'however contrary this was to their own maxims in general.'

This uncertainty in the application of the law worked to shelter Indians as well as whites, of course. As a subordinate of Haldimand's in the Southern District wrote:

The Nature of Indians is as there is some Good & Some Bad & them that is bad hath not the Hart till they Get Drunk, they Will Kill eater father Mother Brother or Sisters as for the Manners of the Indians they Have None for the Great Man would think Nothing of Stealing a White Mans Horse & Goods & threaten to kill himself into the Bargain & the Reason of it is when they kill a White Man there is no Satisfaction asked for.

In another case where some settlers were killed, Haldimand pointed out the difficulty of exacting restitution from the Indians: 'There is little dependance to be had on the stability of the Indians, and the difficulty of giving a satisfaction equal to the offense may put difficulties in the way of an accommodation.'

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109 Haldimand to Dartmouth, November 30, 1773. B.M. Add. Mss. 21695, p. 46.


111 Sergeant Wright's Journal, B.M. Add. Mss. 21686, p. 43.

112 Haldimand to Sir William Johnson, March 18, 1774. B.M. Add. Mss. 21670, p. 119
The policy of the military Commanders in Chief, then, was one of keeping peace on the frontier, generally by diplomacy rather than force, with the exception of Amherst.

Both Gage and Haldimand in their Indian policies laid heavy stress on justice, as Amherst had, but also added tact and delicacy to the qualities they required of their juniors in dealing with the Indians.

One of Haldimand's inferiors before he became Commander in Chief wrote to him:

Reason teaches me one day or other These Savages may be at peace and will represent the methods we took to sett them to war which is sufficient reason to enrage the savage mind to destroy ous in return, but where they have no grounds I think it is best and am happy to think your Orders gave me a greater Inlet to the knowledge I was blest with.  

The defense of the frontier, even in peacetime, was a necessary preoccupation of the Commander in Chief, whose responsibility grew, as we have seen, from a simple military one, to a more complicated, though informal, civil and judicial one. Through the Indian Department, over which they exercised real, though discreetly used, control, the Commanders in Chief directed British policy towards the Indians, and in their struggle to assist the Indian Department in formulating and obtaining official

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sanction for a comprehensive Indian policy, they were persistent and conscientious, though not always successful. Their powers were undefined, but real, and as we have seen, the attitudes and policies of these three men towards the Indians had a real effect on the relations of the British in North America with the Indians in the interior.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE INDIANS AND THE WAR

Since the time of the French, the province of Quebec had had a special relationship with the Ohio country. Economically and geographically, through the great fur trade carried along the Mississippi, the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence, the two areas were very closely linked. The Canadian traders and voyageurs seemed in some ways made for the trade, in a sense in which the English traders, even when they were let into the area, never were; possessed of great gifts when it came to dealing with the Indians, adapting themselves almost completely to the life the Indians lived, the Canadian fur traders were a breed never rivalled. English manufactures were reported to be cheaper and of better quality than those of French origin; that the English traders were considered an inferior article to the French can be seen in the sale of English goods to Canadian traders by the worthy merchants of Albany, sales which the colony of New York tried in vain to stop and which probably helped to make Albany the only place on the New York frontier which was spared Indian attacks. That the government of Quebec should direct the affairs of the interior, that Quebec's
people should trade and settle there was never successfully challenged until the cession of Canada to Great Britain and the removal of the Ohio country from the jurisdiction of Quebec by the Proclamation of 1763.

As furs were the main and only important export staple of Quebec at the time of the Conquest, the direction of the trade was of great concern to her governors, and the conduct of the trade under the Commander in Chief and the Superintendent of Indian Affairs came under a great deal of criticism from both James Murray and Guy Carleton, governors of Quebec during the period between the peace and the return of the Ohio country to the direct jurisdiction of Quebec with the Quebec Act in 1774. Murray, ironically enough in view of his later ill treatment at the hands of the traders, was their champion in arguing that the plan proposed by Sir William Johnson and the Board of Trade in 1764 would hamper the trade; though he did say he was reluctant to express any opinion at all, on the grounds that his only source of information was the merchants, and 'few mercantile men will speak truth when inconsistent with the dictates of self-interest.'¹ The restriction of trade to the posts, and particularly the proposed tax on the export of furs, he felt would cripple the trade, and 'the savages, who once lived

¹R. A. Humphreys, 'Governor Murray's Views on the Plan of 1764 for the Management of Indian Affairs, CHR, June 1935, p. 163.
without European commodities, may have recourse to their ancient usages before America was known to us and which are by no means extinguished among them. 2 He suggested instead that the control of the fur trade be left in the hands of the provinces; the posts could be assigned for regulation to the various provinces. Indian affairs could be managed by provincial superintendents, who could have yearly meetings to discuss general Indian policy. 3

As we have seen, the Commander in Chief and Sir William Johnson began after 1764 to implement the Board of Trade plan as though it were official policy, with very limited success. By the time Murray returned to England, the plan had lost much of its powerful support, and the policy of provincial management of Indian affairs embodied in the plan of 1768 was gaining favour, a policy which was also to have only limited success. Sir Guy Carleton, who followed Murray in Quebec, was also concerned about the effect Sir William Johnson's policy, however imperfectly implemented, might have on the trade. As long as the military under the Commander in Chief could restrain the traders at the posts, he argued, the British would never gain control of the fur trade; 'unless the present Restraints are taken off, that Trade must greatly suffer, this Province be nearly ruined, Great Britain be a

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2 Ibid., p. 166.
3 Ibid., p. 167.
considerable loser, and France the sole Gainer, as they must turn the greater part of the Furs down the Mississippi, instead of the St. Lawrence.\footnote{Carleton to Johnson, March 27, 1767. C042/27, p. 81.} The traders were their own best policemen, he argued; they 'never could think of stirring up an Indian War, which must evidently endanger both their Lives and Fortunes.'\footnote{Carleton to Shelburne, March 28, 1767. C042/27, p. 73.}

Carleton recognized the great influence the French had possessed, and though he saw 'how much it must conduce to the King's Service and the Publick Welfare to preserve the several Tribes of Indians dispersed through this extensive country in perfect Amity and Friendship,'\footnote{Carleton to Shelburne, December 20, 1766. C042/27, p. 12.} he was not convinced they were completely trustworthy. Was it better, he asked, 'to suffer them to live dispersed and our Traders to go among them, whose safety and whose Interest requires they should treat them all well, and who all allow, keep but spirituous Liquors from them, and they are an inoffensive people, or our forcing those who can come for the Necessaries of Life, to assemble in great Numbers ever year about our Forts.'\footnote{Carleton to Shelburne, March 28, 1767. C042/27, p. 73.}

In spite of their rivalry with the French, Carleton admitted that they had outdone the English in the business of Indian relations.
They did not depend on the Number of Troops, but on the Discretion of their Officers, who learned the Language of the Natives, acted as Magistrates, compelled the Traders to deal equitably and distributed the King's Presents, by this Conduct they avoided giving Jealousy and gained the Affections of an ignorant, credulous and brave People, whose ruling Passions are Independence, Gratitude and Revenge, with an unconquerable Love of strong Drink, which must prove destructive to them and the Fur Trade, if permitted to be sent among them . . . thus managing them by Address, where Force could not avail.

In a sense, Carleton's arguments about the Quebec traders were valid. Sir William Johnson's worries about the frauds and deceits practised upon the Indians were more applicable to traders from other colonies. The traders from Quebec, who were by far the largest group trading far inland, made a bigger investment of time, money and energy going to the upper country, and were usually careful not to jeopardize it by unethical practices among their clients. The Quebec government was conscientious in watching the affairs of the people in the upper country, and willing to co-operate with other governments and the Indian Department in supervising the behaviour of the traders. From the beginning of English rule, Quebec traders were required to obtain licenses containing details about their cargoes and employees; failure to comply was punishable by forfeiture of goods. Carleton considered it important nonetheless that Quebec have an even firmer control over the affairs of the interior. The plan of 1768 for managing the trade

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8Carleton to Shelbourne, March 2, 1768. C042/28, p. 159.
had not worked; the provinces had refused to take any responsibility, and Sir William Johnson and Gage had continued to try to implement the plan of 1764 with even less authority and less co-operation than they had had before 1768. The settlements in the interior had been without civil government for ten years. These considerations, as well as constitutional questions within Quebec itself, led Carleton to press for a new parliamentary arrangement for Quebec, and the result, the Quebec Act, rejoined the upper country with the province of Quebec.

Although Carleton as Governor of Quebec was now also governor of the Ohio country, he did not win his battle on behalf of the traders to have Sir William Johnson's plan of 1764 officially cancelled.

In fact his instructions, to which he paid on the whole somewhat limited attention, made a sort of compromise between Sir William's plan and the scheme of 1768, by giving governors of all colonies power to grant trading licenses, but subjecting traders to regulations to be approved by the legislature of Quebec. The regulations which were to be adopted 'are fully stated in a Plan proposed by Our Commissioners for Trade and Plantations in 1764 . . . which will serve as a Guide in a variety of cases.' The instructions also plunged Carleton into

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9 'Instructions to Carleton,' Kennedy, op. cit., p. 157.
10 Ibid., p. 157.
the issue of Indian lands, by instructing him to fix firmly the limits of the posts and to allow no settlement elsewhere, 'seeing that such Settlement must have the consequence to disgust the Savages; to excite their Enmity; and at length totally destroy the Peltry Trade, which ought to be cherished and encouraged by every means in your Power.'

Hitherto the province of Quebec, as indicated in the instructions, had been interested in the interior almost exclusively from the point of the fur trade; the pressure for actual settlement in the interior from Quebec was almost nil, and the struggle of settlers to get into the Indian lands had not been of direct concern except as a kind of distant threat to the trade. Now, of course, almost as the Quebec Act began to operate, the conflict between settlement and the fur trade, between Quebec and the thirteen colonies was complicated and made urgent by the outbreak of the American Revolution. Also, almost as the Quebec Act was taking shape, the death of Sir William Johnson changed the relationship of the Indian Superintendent with his superiors. In the Ohio country, the responsibility of Colonel Guy Johnson, the new Superintendent, was now to the Governor and Commander in Chief of Quebec; within the other colonies his role withered away or at least became an unofficial one, with the storm of war.

\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 156.}
In Quebec, of course, the Indian Department dealt with the Indians on the same basis as in the Ohio country. The peacetime concerns of the Indian Department, land and trade, were overshadowed by, though not unconnected with, the conflict with the rebellious Atlantic colonies.

The question of a policy towards the Indians during the war was one which concerned Carleton immediately. The old need to compete with the French for allies was not present in this war, and the quarrel of the Indians with the settlers and land speculators from the thirteen colonies made them more naturally the friends of Quebec. There was, however, quite a strong feeling among the Indians for staying out of the war altogether, or at least of trying to remain friendly with both sides. Carleton saw the necessity of keeping the Indians satisfied and quiet, and became involved in the old game of diplomacy by means of presents. Colonel Guy Johnson arrived in Montreal in July of 1775 to begin talking with the Indians in Canada, and Carleton was anxious to know what his exact role was to be and what his expenses should be.\(^\text{12}\) The province, especially Montreal, hung under the threat of an invasion from the south, which was expected later in the summer. He didn't discount absolutely the possibility that the Indians might be needed as active allies; they must be satisfied in 'the Article of Presents

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\(^{12}\) Carleton to Dartmouth, August 14, 1775. C042/34, p. 174.
that, in case circumstances hereafter should make it necessary for us to call for their assistance we may be assured of not meeting a denial.\textsuperscript{13}

Carleton was reluctant, nonetheless, to allow the Indians free rein as allies of the British, to prosecute their own war against the settlers; the idea of indiscriminate attacks on whomever was nearby filled him with horror.

However proper and justifiable it may be to make use of the Indians in a defensive War or to chas-tize the real criminals, yet policy as well as humanity forbids an indiscriminate attack, such as is intended by the Savages, wherein women and Children, aged and infirm, the innocent as well as the guilty, will be equally exposed to their fury - I desire therefore that all means may be used to prevent this and to turn the force of the Indians to the use which will be most for the King's interest and their own good, by acting in concert with the Troops.\textsuperscript{14}

In direct defense of their own lands or punishment of people who had acted directly against them, the Indians might be allowed to act 'under proper management, to punish effectually where it is necessary and this must answer every end of theirs equally well while it serves so much better the King's cause.'\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13} Carleton to Burgoyne, July 25, 1776. B.M.Add. Mss. 21699, p. 21.

\textsuperscript{14} Carleton to Lernoult, February 9, 1777. B.M. Add. Mss. 21678, p. 192.

\textsuperscript{15} Carleton to Butler, February 9, 1777. B.M.Add. Mss. 21699, p. 87.
Even to be brought to this point in 1777 required a great deal of persuasion for Carleton. The depredations of the colonists on the frontier, and the impossibility of holding the Indians back forever from acting against the settlers seem to have been among the deciding factors. Lord George Germain wrote to Carleton in 1776, 'The Proofs which the Indians have already given, of their Zeal of Fidelity and the Manifest Utility which large Parties of them must be of to the Army, leaves no room to doubt but you will have exerted every means in your power to induce them to a general Declaration in our favour.'

Daniel Claus reported that his portrayals to the Six Nations of the dangers of abandoning the British interest had been so effective that the Indians had straightway determined 'of attacking & laying waste the New England frontiers;' he had told them that all the government wanted of them for the moment was their vigilance. One of the main advocates of using the Indians as partners in the war was the new Lieutenant-Governor of Detroit, Henry Hamilton; although he ranked with Joseph Brant in American eyes as one of the foremost fiends of the war, he seems to have come with reluctance to the decision that Indians should be used for other tasks than gathering intelligence and

16 Germain to Carleton, August 22, 1776. CO42/35, p. 89.

17 'Claus Memorandum,' December 1, 1776. CO42/36, p. 37.
acting as guides for the troops. He spoke of the Indian 'inclination for War, but I hope the Colonists will open their Eyes before the Clouds burst that hang heavy over their heads.'\(^{18}\) He felt that the Indians had legitimate grievances which they wanted to settle by war, 'which the arrogance, disloyalty and impudence of the Virginians has justly drawn upon them.'\(^{19}\) Even after he had been empowered to employ the Indians, he said, 'Would to God this storm which is ready to fall upon the Frontiers could be directed upon the guilty heads of those wretches who have raised it and pass by the miserable many who must feel its fatal effects.'\(^{20}\)

Although he was uncertain about using the Indians for more than gathering intelligence, Carleton sent word to them in January of 1777 that they were to hold themselves ready for instructions from the Commander in Chief in the spring.\(^{21}\) The British military plan in the summer of 1777 called for an expedition against the rebellious colonies launched from Quebec. Meanwhile, although the Declaration of Independence accused George III of

\(^{18}\) Hamilton to Germain, September 2, 1776. CO42/35, p. 190.

\(^{19}\) Ibid.

\(^{20}\) Hamilton to Carleton, July 27, 1777. CO42/37, p. 57.

\(^{21}\) Carleton to Lieutenant-Colonel Anstruther, January 21, 1777. B.M.Add.Mss. 21699, p. 82.
endeavouring 'to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages,' the Continental Congress in May of 1776 had authorized Washington to employ the Indians;\textsuperscript{22} and the debate in England over the use to be made of the Indians in the war raged on. Lord Chatham stormed, 'Who is the man who dared to authorize and associate to our arms the tomahawk and scalping knife of the savage? . . . What! to attribute the sanction of God and Nature to the massacres of the Indian scalping knife!'\textsuperscript{23}

But it was to no avail. In March of 1777, Germain wrote to Carleton that he was to employ the Indians for fighting as Hamilton suggested, 'under the direction of the King's Officers,' to 'restrain them from committing violence on the well-affected and Inoffensive.'\textsuperscript{24} The officers of the Indian Department tried to reassure Carleton that 'every means is used by their chiefs to prevent depredations on the frontier,'\textsuperscript{25} and that the willingness of the Indians to wait until organized by Hamilton showed their obedience; at the same time, there was a less cheerful report of Indians killing some prisoners in spite of the presence

\textsuperscript{22} N. V. Russell, 'The Indian Policy of Henry Hamilton: A Re-evaluation,' CHR, March 1930, p. 24.

\textsuperscript{23} James, George Rogers Clark Papers 1771 – 1781 (Clark Papers 1), p. xxxix.

\textsuperscript{24} Germain to Carleton, March 26, 1777. B.M.Add.Mss. 21697, p. 158.

\textsuperscript{25} Colonel Butler to Carleton, March 31, 1777. CO42/36, p. 117.
of British troops. The new Commander in Chief, for North America, General John Burgoyne, who commanded the Indians in their military role, congratulated the Indians on their restraint, 'the hardest proof I am persuaded to which your effection could have been put,' and exhorted them to 'Strike at the common Enemies of Great Britain and America - Disturbers of publick order, peace and happiness, Destroyers of commerce, Parricides of the State;' but he warned them that not everyone in their path was an enemy - 'the King has many faithful subjects dispersed in the Provinces' - and that 'I positively forbid bloodshed when you are not opposed in Arms.'

As there were conflicting opinions on the use of the Indians before the decision was made to employ them, there continued to be differing evaluations once they were in use. Carleton saw them as an uncertain force 'parties being continually leaving them and returning, as their humor leads them,' and was constantly apprehensive about their activities, even under the direction of British officers, who had been ordered to accompany them.

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Hamilton was always very proud of the behaviour of the Indians, who showed a restraint he had not expected of them. When Daniel Boone was brought prisoner to him by a party of Indians, Hamilton reported him as saying that the inhabitants of Kentucky, who were receiving no help from Congress would probably decide 'to trust to the Savages who have shown so much humanity to their prisoners.'

On the other hand, they were certainly guilty on occasion of extensive ravages on the frontier. John Butler reported that 'all Accounts from the Westward agree, that the Indians in that quarter have carried fire and desolation into the Enemies Country and reduced the extensive frontier upon the Ohio, to a heap of Ashes.'

Many officers found that directing the operations of the Indians was a far from easy job. Even Butler, whose influence was greater than most, found it difficult always to command them; when he suggested to the Six Nations a time for carrying out an operation, it was reported, 'the Savages may think it necessary to commence hostilities sooner, in that case I believe he must acquiesce,' and later in the summer Butler reported an engagement in which

29 Hamilton to Carleton, April 25, 1778. CO42/38, p. 198.
30 Butler to Carleton, December 14, 1777. CO42/38, p. 102.
31 Bolton to Carleton, April 8, 1778. CO42/38, p. 114.
the Indians had given no quarter, taking 227 scalps, and only five prisoners. 32

The arrival of General Frederick Haldimand to succeed him as Governor of Quebec and Commander of the troops there in June of 1778 put an end to Carleton's direct control over Indian affairs, although he continued to have some influence, as was shown in the Treasury seeking his opinion about the appointment of Sir John Johnson as Superintendent General of Indians near the end of the war. Haldimand was plunged immediately into the fantastic complexities of Indian affairs, which were becoming more and more confusing as the war progressed; though, as we have seen in the last chapter, he had already had some experience with Indian relations as Commander in Chief. Haldimand's attitude towards the Indians as allies was not one of great enthusiasm, but he realized the importance of the friendship and co-operation of the tribes and was prepared to invest in it.

Tho' the Expence be considerable the numerous Tribes of Savages dispersed throughout this extensive Province, or upon the Borders of it, must be kept in good Humor, cost what it will, for if they do no Good, they may do much Harm, and the Rebels are leaving no stone unturned to gain them; assisted by the French and Spanish may they not chance to succeed. 33

Later he urged compliance with one of the Indians'

strongest demands, the building of a fort at Oswego, 'altho' it must occasion a further heavy Expence of Provision and other Articles which they will expect to be supplyed with.\textsuperscript{34}

He stressed the importance of the co-operation of the Indians to Alexander Fraser in the following terms:

At a Time when the Safety and defence of the Upper Country have long and still depend alone upon the Indian, when Even with the United Force, we were not in a Situation to meet the Enemy in that Quarter in the Field to court their displeasure by an Affection of Power, utterly impossible to exercise, and by that means to Join them to the Number of our Enemies and Remove the only Obstacle to their Marching directly up to our Posts, is an Event, which I shall very carefully avoid.\textsuperscript{35}

As the Indians were already in use as allies, and as their employment seemed to him the only way of keeping them in the British interest,\textsuperscript{36} Haldimand could only issue the strongest injunctions to his subordinates to supervise their activities carefully. On one occasion he wrote that a party of Indians might be used as scouts, 'but you are to take especial care that proper persons of your appointing and for whom you can be responsible, shall accompany them upon all occasions in order to prevent entirely every act of cruelty or inhumanity from being committed by them.'\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{34}Haldimand to Germain, October 15, 1778. B.M. Add.Mss. 21714, p. 12.

\textsuperscript{35}Haldimand to Alexander Fraser, February 12, 1780, B.M. Add.Mss. 21787, p. 72.

\textsuperscript{36}Haldimand to Germain, October 25, 1780. B.M. Add.Mss. 21714, p. 129.

\textsuperscript{37}Haldimand to Mr. Peters, July 25, 1778. B.M. Add.Mss. 21722, p. 7.
He did, however, feel obliged, 'in order to conform to the disposition of the Savages, whose ardour it might be impolitic to check too much to permit some excursions of these People towards the Rebel Countries on our Frontiers,' 38 and suggested such excursions might change the minds of some colonists. 39

Thus, like Carleton, he felt that the Indians were a liability as well as an asset, and was sickened by such lapses of discipline as the battle at Cherry Valley, where some settlers who were not in arms were killed by Indians in the attack; the success at Cherry Valley would have been very satisfying, he wrote, 'if his endeavours to prevent the excess to which the Indians in their fury are so apt to run had proved effective,' and added, 'I hope that you and every Officer serving with the Savages will never cease your exhortation to them, till you shall at length convince them that such indiscriminate vengeance, taken even upon the treacherous and cruel Enemy they are engaged against, is as useless and disreputable to themselves as it is contrary to the disposition and maxim of their King whose cause they are fighting.' 40 He wrote to


a subordinate that he still had no objection to employing the Indians 'provided it be to procure intelligence and that they proceed to no greater lengths than taking prisoners, but you must insist upon their containing themselves within the bounds of humanity towards them.'

He also cautioned his officers against trusting the Indians:

We have every day Instances of their Perfidy & are often disappointed in those from whom we expect most - You would therefore do well not to rely too much upon them, particularly as the French, to whom they are warmly attached, have sent an armament to the continent, nor to trust them upon so short acquaintance with any Dispatch of much Consequence.

Haldimand's subordinates reflected the ambivalent attitudes of the Governor, showing varying degrees of enthusiasm about having the Indians harassing the frontier. Lieutenant-Governor Abbott of Kaskaskia wrote that, in his opinion, 'employing Indians on the Rebel frontiers has been of great hurt to the cause, for many hundreds would have put themselves under his Majesty's protection was there a possibility, 'but they were forced to take up arms against their Sovereign or be pillaged and left to starve . . . it is not people in arms that the Indians will ever daringly attack, but the poor inoffensive families who fly to the deserts to be out of trouble, and

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who are inhumanly butchered sparing neither women or Children. 43

Lieutenant-Colonel De Peyster as well was reluctant to send groups of Indians against the frontiers, because he feared an Indian force was likely to break up into small undisciplined parties who would perform acts of cruelty against those not in arms. 44

From Detroit Dupérron Baby pointed out another difficulty of having the Indians as partners, their own rivalries. 'Indians in small parties cannot prevent the progress of the Enemy, and in large or great numbers must be directed by white people, or officers supported by soldiers to distribute Provisions, Ammunition and other necessary stores among them, and to guard such stores, but likewise to reconcile . . . their jealousys, private interest and ambition towards one another, even between different Tribes in the same Nation.' 45

Some of the Indians did not share the enthusiasm reported by Hamilton for going against the rebels; the Indian Superintendent at Montreal reported that 'nothing but threats seconded by spirited measures against

43 Lieutenant-Governor Abbott to Carleton, June 8, 1778. B.M.Add.Mss. 21782, p. 41.


45 Brehm to Haldimand, August 2, 1779, transmitted Baby's opinion. B.M.Add.Mss. 21759, p. 77.
Delinquents will ensure their service. This was especially true of the western Indians, notably the Shawanese and the Delawares, who frequented the posts at Detroit and Michilimackinack. Haldimand explained to Sir Henry Clinton,

Indefatigable pains have been taken & immense sums have been lavished to secure their Affection, yet they are every day declining, particularly since the American Alliance with the French, to whom they have an old & very firm attachment, add to this the misfortunes of Mr. Hamilton, the disappointment of Reinforcements promised to them from year to year, the unwearying pains of the Spanish from the Mississippi to debauch them & the advances of the Enemy on all Sides, into their Country which with all the Pains that were taken last year they never could be brought vigourously to oppose - & it is too plain that nothing but the Example & Continual Remonstrances of the Five Nations prevented their abandoning us entirely.

Haldimand admitted that they had not been 'so Zealous or Active as might be expected in the Defense of their own Country.' De Peyster apologized for their lack of discipline, explaining that he found it 'impossible to change their natures. I assemble them, get fair promises and send them out, but when once out of sight the turning of a straw may divert them from the Original plan. If too severe with them, upon such occasions, they tell us we are well off that there are no Virginians in this

Yet the importance of maintaining the alliance of the Indians around the posts on the Lakes was unquestionable. ‘The Indians in this Country must be looked upon as a large body of Irregulars, Feed and Clothed, to prevent the inroads of the Virginians into this country and who must be delicately managed to prevent their favouring the rebels.’ And for all his exasperation Haldimand too recognized the indispensability of the Indians; ‘there is not a single Instance where the Indians have fulfilled their Engagements, but influenced by Caprice, a dream or a desire of protracting the War to obtain Presents ... it would nevertheless be impossible to succeed in any Attempt in those Countries without the Friendship of the Indians (by which alone we have kept p[ossession] of it) & there is no doubt they are very useful attendants upon an Army, but in all places where Success depends upon Enter-prize and Perseverance little must be sett down to their credit.’

On the other hand, though the brunt of the rebel attack fell on the Six Nations as usual, they remained loyal, with the exception of the Oneidas and some of the

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50 Ibid.

Tuscaroras, and went through severe trials for the cause of the British King. The Oneidas early declared their intention to remain neutral, though there were later suspicions of their carrying out intelligence missions for the rebels; 'We cannot intermeddle in this dispute between two brothers,' they said, 'We Indians cannot find nor recollect in the traditions of our ancestors the like case or a similar instance.' For the rest, the Six Nations were loyal; the Mokawks were driven out of their country entirely in 1779, and forced to migrate into Canada.

Whether or not the Indians in general as allies were guilty of an inordinate number of barbaric cruelties in the course of the war is not completely clear, though it can be said with certainty that many of the atrocities which outraged their enemies were in response to equally barbarous actions against them. In the eyes of the Americans, Henry Hamilton was the major villain of the piece, although General George Rogers Clark, who was triumphantly to take Hamilton in chains to Williamsburgh after his disaster in the Illinois and whose hatred of Hamilton was unconcealed, reported that he had been egged on by Germain 'to do everything which depends on him to excite them to assassinate the inhabitants of the frontiers

of the United States. The whole British establishment was implicated as well. 'I am well acquainted with the Kaskaskia Gentry they are damn'd Rogues as well as their ancient leader RocheBlave God send him a sight of Williamsburgh Govr Henry won't be displeased to see one of those Hair Buyers.' The indictment of Hamilton for 'inciting the Indians to perpetrate their accustomed cruelties on the citizens of these states without distinction of age, sex or condition, with an eagerness and activity which evince that the general nature of his charge harmonized with his particular disposition,' and offering 'standing rewards for scalps, but offered none for prisoners,' showed the repugnance with which Hamilton was held; the charges seem to have been laid by a trader named John Dodge and based on little more than spite. As for the charge of paying for scalps, if British officers ever did

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53 Clark to Inhabitants of Vincennes, July (13?), 1778. Clark Papers 1, p. 50. Lord George Germain's Indian policy has been the subject of much controversy. He certainly regarded Carleton's reluctance to use the Indians as close to insubordination. He does not seem to have considered the possible moral implications of sponsoring Indian terrorism, and spoke to Carleton of the King's 'resolution that the most vigorous efforts should be made and every means employed that Providence has put in His Majesty's hands for crushing the rebellion and restoring the constitution.' See Brown, G. S., The American Secretary, pp. 60 - 62, and Valentine, A., Lord George Germain, pp. 185 - 187.

54 James Willing to Clark, September 1, 1778. Clark Papers 1, p. 67.

55 'Indictment of Henry Hamilton,' June 16, 1779. Clark Papers 1, p. 337.
pay for scalps, it was a fine old colonial tradition which colonial legislatures continued to follow during the Revolution; if the Senecas were right, General Schuyler offered $250 for Butler's scalp.\textsuperscript{56} De Peyster - and other British officers - reasoned, however, 'I am pleased to see what you call \textit{live meat} because I can speak to it and get information. Scalps serve to show you have seen the enemy, but they are no use to me.'\textsuperscript{57}

Hamilton wrote that he always promised presents for prisoners brought in alive,\textsuperscript{58} and all the British officers who had any part in directing the activities of the Indians seem to have done all they possibly could to restrain the Indians from any inhumane practices in the course of their attacks on the frontier. On his ill-fated expedition to the Illinois, Hamilton in fact reported his great satisfaction at the discipline of the Indians, though he did not deny that the Indians were difficult to restrain. The capture of Vincennes, he said, was a 'scene of disorder which lasted until the curiosity (I cannot say avarice) of the Savages was gratified . . . they have not committed a single act of cruelty and treated the inhabitants with the humanity which was recommended to

\textsuperscript{56} Russell, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 25.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., p. 34.

\textsuperscript{58} 'Henry Hamilton Proceedings from November 1776 to June 1781.' \textit{Clark Papers} 1, p. 175.
them - had a single shot been fired, probably the settlement would have been destroyed in an hour's time.\textsuperscript{59} No inhabitants had been injured, and he had kept the Indians in line by arguing for the stability of any peace reached with the Americans if they 'had living proof of the humanity of the Indians, in the preservation of the Children and other defenceless Persons.'\textsuperscript{60}

Haldimand was congratulated later on in the war for his admirable control over the Indian allies by Shelburne:

I cannot sufficiently commend the sound Policy as well as Humanity of your Reasoning upon the subject of these savage People in the case of Vermont, where you say "You have not sent a single Indian across Lake Champlain, knowing the Impossibility of restraining them to Discrimination chusing rather to risk the loss of their services should Vermont attack than the Danger of exasperating that People by trusting the Indians amongst them.\textsuperscript{61}

If the Indians were difficult to restrain from outrage, so almost equally were the American settlers and frontier militia units, whom the American Board of War described to Washington as 'a wild ungovernable race, little less savage than their tawny neighbours; [who] by similar barbarities have in fact provoked them to revenge.'\textsuperscript{62}

One British soldier reported the barbarity of the rebels\textsuperscript{62}

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\textsuperscript{60} Hamilton to Haldimand, July 6, 1781. B.M.Add. Mss. 21783, p. 48.
\textsuperscript{61} Shelburne to Haldimand, April 22, 1782. B.M. Add.Mss. 21705, p. 44.
\textsuperscript{62} Clark Papers 1, p. xlvi.
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in killing an Indian woman prisoner, and said, 'they also open'd the graves of Indians that had been buried several months and scalp'd them.'

Haldimand kept an uneasy eye on such incidents and Guy Johnson told officers in charge of Indian forces to divide them into small groups at the scene of action to 'keep the Rebels in continual alarm and greatly heighten their distresses without sullying the reputation of Government by the Commission of Acts of Cruelty as the Rebels were used to affirm.'  One of the incidents which caused the greatest outcry in the colonies occurred in July of 1782, even as the British tried to withdraw from offensive operations; this was the torture of Colonel Crawford and two rebel captains after they were captured at Sandusky. Haldimand regretted the incident, lamenting the reawakening of 'that Barbarity of Prisoners which the unwearied Efforts of His Majesty's Officers had totally extinguished.'

The reason given by the Indians, and by the notorious half-breed interpreter Simon Girty, for the torture of the prisoners, however, gives some indication that Indian barbarity was not always unprovoked. In 1772, two Moravian

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missionaries had led a group of Delawares whom they had converted to a tract of land away from the tribes, where they founded three villages. The Moravian Indians attempted to stay neutral during the war, but as they were in a strategic location between Port Pitt and Niagara, they were constantly accused of treachery by both sides and eventually driven from their villages by the Americans. Apparently they were told that they could return to harvest their corn, however, and though warned to stay away, a group of about ninety Moravians, largely women and children, returned for the harvest, whereupon they were captured and shot by the Americans.\textsuperscript{66} Their parent tribe, the Delawares, and their allies the Shawanese were patient at first; it was reported that, 'They daily bring in prisoners and beg of me to observe the different treatment they give to their enemies, who acknowledge to have received kind treatment . . . [except] where prisoners have been too weak to march, few people have suffered, and we have had many instances of the Indians having carried the sick for several days.'\textsuperscript{67} Then they swore revenge and claimed that Crawford and his men were the perpetrators of the Muskingum massacre.\textsuperscript{68} Haldimand declared his concern that

\textsuperscript{66}J. A. James, George Rogers Clark Papers 1781 - 1784 (Clark Papers 2), p. xxxvii.


\textsuperscript{68}Haldimand to De Peyster, July 11, 1782. B.M. Add. Mss. 21781, p. 16.
the Shawanese and Delawares had followed 'so base an example, and the abhorrence I have had thro' out the War at Acts of Cruelty, which, until this Instance, they have so humanely avoided,' ⁶⁹ but he admitted there would be 'unavoidable Hostilities between the Indians and the Americans upon the Frontiers as long as the Latter Con-
tinue their Present System of Invasion.' ⁷⁰

After Hamilton's disaster in the Illinois, Haldimand ordered that the Indian operations be of a defensive nature only, and by September, 1781, was writing, 'The War in that Country Detroit is on our Part entirely defensive, except by Scouting Parties constantly employed to prevent the Encroachments of the settlers & to harras the Frontiers, which I encourage as much as possible.' ⁷¹

It was difficult, nonetheless, to keep the Indians in check when the American frontiersmen were 'determined to Exterminate the Indians.' ⁷² In spite of his efforts to keep the war defensive, wrote De Peyster, 'a late incursion of the Enemy will nevertheless throw great obstacles in my way.' ⁷³ 'It is evident that the back settlers will

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Haldimand to De Peyster, October 21, 1782. B.M.*Add.*Mss. 21781, p. 16.


⁷² De Peyster to Haldimand, November 21, 1782. B.M.*Add.*Mss. 21783, p. 274.

⁷³ Ibid.
continue to make war upon the Shawanese, Delawares and Wiandotts even after a truce shall be agreed to betwixt Great Britain and her Revoluted Colonies," he warned. 74 'A Defensive War will in spite of human prudence almost always terminate in an offensive one,' and they must 'urge the necessity of the back settlers holding out the olive branch instead of setting on foot one Expedition after another declaring on their setting out that their intentions are to Exterminate the whole Savage tribe.' 75 Meanwhile the Indians were warning darkly, 'we have injuries to revenge and altho' you protect the Enemy from the Stake you shall not from their Death. . . . be not surprised at seeing in future more Scalps than Prisoners.' 76

Haldimand recognized the impossibility of totally restricting the Indians to scouting under such circumstances, and the necessity to be prepared to meet American moves. Curiously enough, Haldimand's suggestions for defense involved some recommendations for the improvement of the traditional Indian method of warfare. The Indians must act 'more conjointly' than they had ever done, he said.

Wavering & breaking off in Small Parties, as they have always done, after any trifling Success, will never have any Material Effect against their

75 Ibid.
Invaders. . . . The Indians seem either not to know their own strength or by a fatality to act in such a manner as to render it ineffectual. . . . The advantages they have from their Manner of Fighting, choice of ground &ca over an Enemy coming into their Country should enable a very Small body of them to oppose almost any numbers. They must be strongly united and determined to Support each Other, not to drop off by Threes and fours after taking a Scalp or two - in Short if they mean to defend their country Vigourously & with Success they must in some Measure adopt our System, and be advised by Officers of knowledge & experience Who May be Sent to Conduct them.77

On whatever terms the Indians existed as allies, whether as fighting units or merely as scouts, whether as loyal and suffering friends or as doubtful acquaintances, the means of maintaining the interest and friendship of the Indian nations was the traditional tool of diplomacy, perfected by the French, the presents. The matter of Indian presents during the war and especially under Haldimand, was one of the most complex and exasperating issues the Governor of Quebec had to face, and one over which Haldimand grew more and more anxious, caught as he was between his imperial employers in London with their concern for the British taxpayer, and his subordinates of the Indian Department whose preoccupation was with the moods and requirements of the Indians themselves. Nothing illustrates so well as the question of the Indian presents the difficulties of translating Whitehall policies through the intermediary of Quebec to the Ohio hinterland.

That presents were necessary, Haldimand was aware; as we have seen, his feeling was that the tribes 'must be kept in good Humor, cost what it will.'\(^{78}\) As late as the end of 1780, he expressed his opinion that presents were not only necessary, but a positive good, and ought to be given at the expense of trade, if necessary: 'The present is not the time for pushing Commerce, it is that of defence and nothing will more tend to keep the Indian allies to their duty than to make them feel a Dependance upon the King their Father for such goods as have now become in some Manner necessary to their Existence.'\(^{79}\) The mounting bills for goods to the upper posts year after year were an increasing source of anxiety to him, however, and the pouring of goods and money into the bottomless pit of the Indian Department became the major problem in dealing with the tribes. It was 'impossible to find Words Strong enough,' he apologized, 'to Express the very great Concern which the Enormous Expence of the upper Posts occasions to me.'\(^{80}\)

One nagging source of needless expense was what one commanding officer called 'the slovenly irregular manner in

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\(^{78}\) Haldimand to Germain, July 25, 1778. B.M. Add. Mss. 21702, p. 11.


\(^{80}\) Haldimand to Germain, October 20, 1781. CO42/42, p. 17.
which all the Indian Presents have been sent up from Canada,\(^ {81}\) and the unsuitability of some of the goods to the needs or desires of the Indians. John Campbell, the Superintendent of the Six Nations in Canada suggested, for example, that iron and steel be sent up country instead of ready-made hatchets, as apparently English hatchet-makers were not au courant on the subject of Indian hatchets; 'those sent this year will be entirely lost the form of them is sufficient to prejudice the Indians against them. Besides they are not temper'd to withstand this climate.'\(^ {82}\) Campbell complained again that the blue str ouds he had received were 'the worst in quality I ever saw ... it is a Reflection upon Government that the goods in the King's Stores are worse than those in the store of any Merchant in town.'\(^ {83}\) A mystified officer wrote that at Niagara they had received 'two large Trunks of Spunges, what they are intended for, no Man here can tell;' on the other hand serge, which was in great demand, was missing entirely from the shipment.\(^ {84}\)

Some anonymous advisor who had been sixteen years in


\(^{82}\) Campbell to Haldimand, November 12, 1781. B.M. Add. Mss. 21772, p. 108.

\(^{83}\) Campbell to Haldimand, October 11, 1779. B.M. Add. Mss. 21771, p. 166.

\(^{84}\) Maclean to Haldimand, December 24, 1782. B.M. Add. Mss. 21762, p. 238.
the upper country wrote Haldimand that the heavy expenses for presents could only be the result of 'bad management which in my opinion originates in London,' and suggested someone be employed in England to advise on the quantity, quality and packing of Indian goods. Such charges were hotly denied by Under-Secretary William Knox, who was in charge of dispatching the goods. No previous complaints had been received, he wrote; Haldimand had approved the shipments, Campbell had inspected the accounts each year and Claus had been asked to inspect the goods in London.

However that might be, Haldimand had already called in a merchant, James Stanley Goddard, who had spent a long time at the posts to advise him about the quality and type of goods to be sent; in the absence of the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Campbell had been doing the accounts. 'Mr. Goddard's former Residence among the upper Nations will enable him to judge of the goods,' Haldimand explained to Campbell. Haldimand asked Goddard to furnish him with a list of suitable Indian goods and an estimate of a total year's consumption. Goddard protested that it was

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85? to Haldimand, October 20, 1781. B.M.Add.Mss. 21769, p. 160. This may have been Goddard.


87 Haldimand to Campbell, April 8, 1779. B.M.Add. Mss. 21773, p. 19.

88 Haldimand to Goddard, April 10, 1780. B.M.Add. Mss. 21769, p. 50.
so long since he had been at the posts that he didn't know how many presents would be needed, though he did give suggestions as to what type of presents were not suitable; all he could indicate was that Michilimackinack 'undoubtedly has more Indians depending upon it than any other, notwithstanding that Post has not cost Government anything like Niagara or Detroit.'\(^{89}\) He did express his astonishment, however, at the large sums demanded by the officers at the upper posts.

Another major factor in the mounting expense on Indian goods was the Indian demand for and dependence on the presents as the war went on. The goods on which the Indians had long been dependent through the fur trade, notably arms and tools, were now supplied, at first partially, then more completely, by the British King. As the dislocation caused by the war, especially in the case of the Mohawk refugees, and by the openhandedness of some of the Indian officers, made presents more of a matter of course, the Indians became more dependent on them than ever.

Naturally the Indians exploited these advantages. Haldimand wrote, 'They absolutely depend upon us for every Blanket they are covered with. I am far from wishing to curtail the advantages these poor people ought to derive from their services, but to Cloath and feed the idle and

\(^{89}\) Goddard to Haldimand, April 16, 1780. B.M.Add. Mss. 21771, p. 192.
undeserving is certainly, if it can be avoided, improper. 90

The refugees in particular, but to a greater or lesser extent all the Indian allies, were becoming less able to look after themselves, by the disruption of their routines of subsistence and by the availability of goods from the posts. Haldimand reported to the Commander in Chief that Hamilton at Detroit had made such large promises to the Indians that many 'Families have deserted their Habitations and others have neglected the usual precautions of providing for their Subsistence.' 91 At Niagara the demands were somewhat more legitimate because of the 'great Number of Savage families who have been driven from their habita-
tions and obliged to take Protection at the King's Posts.' 92 but Haldimand still felt the cost was staggering. Between November 1778 and March 1779, a total of 1756 men, 2333 women and 2400 children were outfitted in the following manner:

usual suit to men: blanket, breech clout, shirt, legings, fuzees, ammunition, knife, vermillion, brass wire, razor, awls, gun worms, fire steels, flints, combs, looking glasses, tobacco and pipes.

usual suit to women: blanket, shift, petticoat, gartering, legins, small ax, beads, scissors, needles & thread, thimbles, rings, clasp knife, awls, kettle.

90 Haldimand to De Peyster, August 10, 1780. B.M. Add. Mss. 21781, p. 11.


outfit to chiefs: 3-point or scarlet blanket, coat and waistcoat hat and feather, fine ruffled shirt, scarlet leggings & ribbons, black silk handkerchief, silver work.\textsuperscript{93}

These were only the ordinary outfits, quite aside from rewards for going out on service or special consideration for hardship. Haldimand pointed out the dangers of allowing the Indians to become too used to being supported at the posts. If they were not weaned from this habit 'which their circumstances have so late accustomed them to, that of being so generally supplied with Provisions from the King's Stores, they will likewise become idel, which when the Door of the Store is shut up, will prove very fatal to themselves, and troublesome to all who may have to do with them.'\textsuperscript{94} He was afraid that 'the Petit Guerre is now become a Lucrative Profession, their Ease and Luxury is gratified by it, and a Total defeat of the Enemy, or a sudden peace, would be equally unacceptable to them.'\textsuperscript{95}

The difficulty of distinguishing between Indians who merited presents and those who didn't, between those presents which were rewards and those which were incentives, caused Haldimand to write, 'I shall really suspect the

\textsuperscript{93} Return of Clothing and Arms at Niagara, November 1778 - March 1779.' B.M.Add.Mss. 21769, p. 16.

\textsuperscript{94} Haldimand to Powell, April 11, 1781. B.M.Add. Mss. 21764, p. 166.

\textsuperscript{95} Haldimand to Colonel Guy Johnson, September 5, 1781. B.M.Add.Mss. 21766, p. 38.
Indians in general of wishing to protract the war merely to obtain presents and spend their time in indolence. 96

The difficulty of getting goods to the posts in the first place made Haldimand especially apprehensive about the rate at which they disappeared once there; the hazards of transporting goods through the inhospitable barrier of woods and rocks in the interior more than once threatened the western posts with complete isolation. The priority given to military stores along these transportation routes made it difficult for traders to get their goods into the interior, and made presents all the more necessary, though it does not seem too much to suppose that part of the exclusion of the traders was a deliberate measure on the part of military officers only too glad to have the traders subdued for a time. 'What the service and the calls of humanity requires I am persuaded you will do for the Indians, but your situation is such as points out the necessity for an early attention to the safety of your post by a rigid economy in the distribution of provisions,' he wrote to the commandant at Niagara. 97

In order to encourage the Indians to recover their lost independence, Haldimand made a number of attempts, with little success, to turn them back to cultivation and


hunting. The patterns of hunting had been disrupted by the war, though the fur trade seems hardly to have felt the shock;\textsuperscript{98} though Haldimand complained that the vast quantities of traders' goods disappearing into the upper country must be going to the rebels, it seems that nearly all the goods were required legitimately to meet an increase in trade. The cultivation programs seem to have varied in their success. Haldimand wrote to Butler at Niagara in April of 1779 to persuade the Indians at the post to cultivate the land, optimistically promising that the government would buy any surplus produced.\textsuperscript{99} He also wrote to Guy Johnson that the burden of Indian support might be reduced 'by employing their Boys \& women in rearing Cattle \& raising Corn \& roots.'\textsuperscript{100} Axes and hoes were an item among the presents sent to the Indians,\textsuperscript{101} and by May of 1780 it was reported that a total of 1142 displaced Indians had

\textsuperscript{98} The record for export of beaver furs for the Christmas quarter was as follows:

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<th>Year</th>
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B.M.Add.Mss. 21861.

\textsuperscript{99} Haldimand to Major Butler, April 8, 1779. B.M. Add.Mss. 21756, p. 48.

\textsuperscript{100} Haldimand to Colonel Guy Johnson, August 12, 1779. B.M.Add.Mss. 21769, p. 19.

\textsuperscript{101} Mathews to Lieutenant Maurer, May 22, 1780. B.M.Add.Mss. 21721, p. 52.
gone out to plant. The Indians seem to have been genuinely eager to ease the consumption of provisions. De Peyster reported that they took only a few guns to their wintering grounds in the fall of 1779; 'they say they hope by this moderation to make amends for the great expence they have hitherto put Government to without doing any Essential service.'

But these schemes which were to make the Indians self-sufficient made only fitful progress, as witness Haldimand's suggestion to have the Indians drive cattle which fell into their hands to the posts. 'These People are so averse from Labour,' complained Haldimand, 'that little Progress can be expected from them while the King's Stores remain open to their Demands.' The hunting and fishing in the new grounds were precarious, and De Peyster reported that the Indians 'are become very Idle

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102 'Return of Indians gone out to plant at Different places, their Villages having been destroyed,' May 26, 1780. B.M.Add.Mss. 21769, p. 62.


105 Haldimand to Major Butler, October 9, 1778. B.M.Add.Mss. 21722, p. 90.

even in their hunting season. 107 Germain's suggestion that 'Much advantage, as well as a Considerable Saving of Expence must Accrue from employing the Indians and the Inhabitants and Troops in cultivating the Lands about the Posts,' 108 was answered by reasonably optimistic reports from Haldimand, 109 but the project for cultivation, except among the resettled Mohawks, was never felt to be a stunning success. The demoralization of the Indians and the fact that the western tribes were unused to cultivating anyway were handicaps almost impossible to overcome in the context of wartime chaos. The shortage of provisions produced times of real destitution among the Indians; it was reported at one point that they were 'so ill of for Provisions that many of them have Nothing to subsist upon but Roots and Greens which they gather in the Woods so that little assistance from them is to be expected in this Way.' 110

Another factor which drove the cost of Indian goods upward was the practice into which the officers at the posts fell of buying locally any goods they fell short of

107 De Peyster to Haldimand, June 1, 1779. B.M. Add.Mss. 21757, p. 106.
in the regular shipments. As we have seen, the traders were not really encouraged during the war. They were restricted to the posts and their goods were last on the list of priorities for transportation on the Lakes; but there was a chance for profit in Indian goods. They argued, with some justice, that it was risky and expensive shipping goods up country in time of war, and that it was worthwhile to the commanders to have a sure supply of Indian goods available.

Haldimand felt, however, that the traders were encouraging the Indians to demand things they would otherwise have been content without, thus creating a market for luxury goods 'which only serve to effeminate them.' \(^{111}\)

'They urge the Indians,' he complained, 'to make demands, not only of greater Quantities than are necessary but many Articles they themselves would never think of.' \(^{112}\)

He charged that 'the Traders are very Industrious in throwing every Temptation in the Way of the Indians by holding before their Eyes, the most alluring and most Expensive merchandize, and the Commanding Officers at the different Posts find it difficult if not dangerous to refuse them.' \(^{113}\) He pointed out 'the Impropriety of


\(^{112}\) Haldimand to Germain, October 25, 1780. CO42/40., p. 131.

\(^{113}\) Haldimand to Germain, October 20, 1781. CO42/42, p. 17.
Multiplying the Wants of the Indians by Accustoming them to Wine &c. unnatural to them and Consequently unnecessary, and accused the traders of being 'at pains to make choice of such [goods] as are most likely to attract their notice and as industrious in exciting them to make demands.' 114

In 1780, Haldimand ordered that in future no goods at all were to be bought locally; a year's estimate was to be made, as we have seen, and a whole year's goods were to come from England. 115 The Indian Department seems to have made a conscientious effort to establish a comprehensive list of provisions, which was somewhat larger than the old one. Imagine Haldimand's shock when the year's goods arrived in the fall, and he found that the Treasury had reduced the requisitions in its own attempt at saving money. It spoiled his own efforts, fumed Haldimand, and meant goods would have to be bought locally once more. 116 In 1783, the Treasury was still ordering that no presents were to be bought in Canada and writing 'to express to you in the strongest manner to prevent a possibility of your permitting the Payment of a single

116 Haldimand to Knox, October 20, 1781. B.M.Add. Mss. 21715, p. 36.
shilling for that Service.\textsuperscript{117} Haldimand complained to Guy Johnson that 'the consumption of Provisions by the Indians has alone prevented me these two years past from taking post at Oswego or undertaking an Operation of Moment in the Upper Country, these disappointments and apprehension of want, are more serious than the Expense attending it,'\textsuperscript{118} and lamented that the shortage of provisions had 'prevented our effecting with the Indian Alliance whatever we might have chosen to undertake.'\textsuperscript{119} The Treasury asked for his ideas on how to deal with the problem,\textsuperscript{120} and recommended that he take some of Carleton's suggestions to prevent abuses;\textsuperscript{121} and Haldimand's reaction to news of yet another instance of the awkwardness and uncertainty of Indian fighting was to burst out against 'the shameful dastardly conduct of a people who cost Government so many thousands yearly - I cannot think of the Subject with any degree of Patience.'\textsuperscript{122}

\textsuperscript{117} Treasury to Haldimand, February 7, 1783. B.M. Add.Mss. 21707, p. 106.

\textsuperscript{118} Haldimand to Colonel Guy Johnson, October 9, 1780. B.M. Add.Mss. 21766, p. 36.

\textsuperscript{119} Haldimand to Colonel Guy Johnson, May 8, 1780. B.M. Add.Mss. 21766, p. 35.

\textsuperscript{120} Treasury to Haldimand, July 30, 1779. B.M. Add. Mss. 21706, p. 190.

\textsuperscript{121} Treasury to Haldimand, March 30, 1782. B.M. Add.Mss. 21707, p. 76.

\textsuperscript{122} Haldimand to Powell, November 16, 1781. B.M. Add.Mss. 21756, p. 120.
The thing that was most unnerving of all to Haldimand about the expenses to the upper country, however, was not the growing dependence of the Indians or the profiteering of the traders, but the total lack of control he could exercise over his subordinates, both in the military and in the Indian Department, once they were in positions of responsibility in the interior. His inability to 'prevent or detect abuses,' 123 made him feel helpless even before he discovered that anything more than overcasual attention to the accounts was the problem. Eventually such a welter of profiteering, misplaced open-handedness, flamboyance, carelessness and ineptitude was discovered as to rock the Indian Department to its foundations. At first, Haldimand was saying only 'The Character of the Officers commanding at these Posts are such as undoubtedly afford every Assurance that no Expences are incurred by them except as they conceive the King's Service Absolutely requires it, but the distance of their Situation and the difficulty I have in communicating with them make it impossible that I should be a Judge of all the necessities these Gentlemen find for such disbursements as they make.' 124

Later, in 1780, he was somewhat more critical:

I am far from attributing the Evil to Indifference

or unhandsome Conduct of the Officers under whom the Expence is incurred, yet I cannot help being persuaded, from Comparison, that a Stricter and Earlier Attention to this Essential Circumstance would have prevented Evils which it is now very difficult to repair - and long Habit of Indulgence has created Wants with the Indians which, otherwise, they would never have experienced - such as fine Saddles and many Luxuries carefully exhibited to their View by the all grasping Trader. I think it would be cruel to deny these poor people who are employed by us such marks of our Attention and Regards as are necessary to their comfort - every Shilling beyond that is Superfluous to them and a loss to Government, nor is it in a political view necessary, for however they may threaten to forsake us, we must know it is impossible they can exist without our Aid. . . . I am very sensible that the Persecution which a Commanding Officer at one of these Posts must go through from the Indians continually excited by the avidity of the Trader is very great - but as in these Situations the most essential part of their Duty is to attend to the Expenditure of the Public Money, I am persuaded it will be cheerfully borne. 125

He also warned against government officials taking any part in trading operations. 126

By 1782, however, Haldimand was confiding to Germain that 'the Commanding Officers or Lieu't Governor at the several Posts consider themselves as at liberty to incur what expence they please and as subject to no Controul. Their being constantly Resident holds out a temptation to the Indians to be continually with them and each of them to prove his superior Address & Interest with the Indians over the others load them with presents

126 Ibid.
as the certain means of attaching them to their persons.\textsuperscript{127}

This mixture of motives - greed, desire to impress, the escalating Indian demands - were very difficult to untangle, particularly as there were nearly as many ideas about the quantities and reasons for Indian presents as there were Indian officers.

The sentiments of those concerned with the Indians towards the Indian presents ranged from those of the put-upon Daniel Bliss who claimed to be trying to live on half his salary rather than taking any perquisites to those of Colonel Guy Johnson who in the grand tradition of Frontenac and, he said, his uncle, created a great dramatic display which was, unfortunately, not to be accounted for in pounds and shillings. Some of the officers were basically on Haldimand's side. Thrifty Captain Fraser wrote that he had been able to make a saving of about £10 stg. a week by employing a baker who made nine pounds and a half of bread for seven of flour; as the Indians were willing to take a pound of bread for a pound of flour, the saving was constant.\textsuperscript{128} Brigadier Powell at Niagara sent officers periodically to the Indian villages to count the inhabitants, who were given monthly tickets to present to the commissary at the

\textsuperscript{127}Germain to Treasury, January 24, 1782. B.M. Add.Mss. 21705, p. 27.

\textsuperscript{128}Captain Fraser to Haldimand, February 21, 1780. B.M. Add.Mss. 21764, p. 97.
post. Colonel Mason Bolton wrote regretting his lack of knowledge of the country, and reported that an Indian council had cost £14000 (N.Y.) plus £20000 for presents; 'to keep the Indians in good temper . . . has cost old England much more than the Posts are worth & as to their Scalping Women Children & Prisoners I find its not impossible to prevent them.'

Perhaps the one with whom Haldimand had the freest exchange on the subject of presents was Brigadier Allan Maclean at Niagara, the one to whom Haldimand turned for information about the situation in the interior. When he first went to Niagara, said Maclean, he had 'conceived that there was something Wrong in the distributing of the Indian Presents,' and had set himself to procuring a greater efficiency in the post's stores; on discovering such things as a deficiency of £1000 for the stores in October and November of 1782, he had made such improvements as replacing the old man and the eighteen-year-old youth who kept the stores. He had also traced some of

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133 Ibid.
the confusion to the door of the Indian officers. Though Butler and Campbell seemed innocent of any knowledge of the deficiencies, Maclean pursued his investigations without consulting them. 'It is a hard matter,' he wrote, 'for the best men to divest themselves of prejudice or partiality in a matter where they are interested in One of the Parties; besides it is a maxim I find that has been long adopted in this part of the World that whatever can be got from Government is well got, where no censure can issue.'

One of the cases where this maxim seemed to hold true was that of the Indian Superintendent, Colonel Guy Johnson, which will be dealt with later.

In the case of those who sooner or later fell under a cloud - even Butler eventually incurred displeasure - for expenses they could not account for, it was difficult to distinguish between actual corruption, of which there was definitely a certain amount, generosity and carelessness in keeping the accounts. Colonel Arent De Peyster, the commanding officer at Michilimackinack and then Detroit, for example, was never really able to clear up the irregularities which pervaded the books at Detroit; yet


135 Carleton, then Lord Dorchester, wrote in 1790, 'If Lieutenant-Colonel Butler still desires to retire from the King's service, he should speak out, and I have only to regret my having taken pains to divert him from that purpose.' C042/69, p. 221.
he was recognized as a man of ability and of influence with the Indians, and made what seemed like sincere protestations of wishing to keep the expenses of his post down. In 1778 he declared his optimism; 'the Method of pleasing the Indians without any very Extraordinary Expense to Government may be easily acquired by a Person possessed of any degree of Patience and Activity.'\(^{136}\) By the beginning of 1779, however, the demands of the Indians were starting to defeat him; he reported to Campbell that 'they either lose their blankets and other articles when they are in liquor or give them away to other Indians they might have met with on their way, or hide them until they were again supply'd from Michilimackinack. . . . many of their canoes are generally renderd useless on their return from [Montreal] and their fuzees suffer more or less according to the quantity of rum they drink on the Voyage.'\(^{137}\) He also reported that when warriors came to the post, they were 'always naked, the Squaws never failing to tear everything off their Backs, before they enter the Fort.'\(^{138}\) He and Dupérron Baby had tried everything to discourage this conspicuous consumption, but had been forced 'to pursue the

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\(^{136}\) De Peyster to Carleton, June 29, 1779. B.M. Add.Mss. 21756, p. 3.

\(^{137}\) Campbell to Haldimand, February 1, 1779. B.M. Add.Mss. 21771, p. 49.

old plan of Pleasing the Indians at all Events."\textsuperscript{139}

In 1781 when the accounts of the Indian Department were being centralized, he obeyed the order to send word to Indian officers to stop using the discretionary powers they had acquired to issue presents, only pointing out that 'the order will greatly alarm them, in as much as they must expect ill treatment should they refuse to comply with the demands of the Indians;' nonetheless he would 'prepare myself to stand the brunt of constant upbraidings from the Indians in Council.'\textsuperscript{140}

De Peyster reckoned that by 1782 his vigilance had saved the government £10000, and wanted some kind of suitable reward; as Indian gifts were not considered a legitimate perquisite, he told Haldimand, he had appropriated the \textit{lods et ventes} 'in support of the dignity of a british commandant.'\textsuperscript{141} Haldimand replied rather uncertainly that he didn't think the \textit{lods et ventes} could be taken for private use;\textsuperscript{142} his uncertainty about De Peyster's claims to reward and his uneasiness about the \textit{lods et ventes} show the difficulties of his position, and the

\textsuperscript{139}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{140}De Peyster to Haldimand, August 17, 1781. B.M. Add.Mss. 21783, p. 74.
\textsuperscript{141}De Peyster to Haldimand, November 21, 1782. B.M.Add.Mss. 21783, p. 274.
\textsuperscript{142}Haldimand to De Peyster, February 14, 1783. B.M.Add.Mss. 21783, p. 298.
impossibility of controlling from such a distance the expenses at the upper posts.

Lieutenant-Governor Patrick Sinclair of Michilimackinack was another person whose accounts came under suspicion. Sinclair admitted that the expenses at Michilimackinack were high and said that he had tried to cut them down. 'If the necessity for relieving, for Cloathing rewarding or employing an Indian is allowed in any degree to rest with me, I offered in my Justification to your Excellency that I made no purchase from Traders when the necessary Articles were in Store.'\textsuperscript{143} However, he protested, the habits of the Indians could not be changed instantly and many Indians were dependent on their visits to the posts; 'all at once to deprive them of Provisions or Presents necessary for their Subsistence would be the same thing as to destroy them for they bring scarce anything with them to the Post.'\textsuperscript{144} The attempts of Sinclair and his commissary, George McBeath, to reduce expenses were not sufficiently successful to satisfy Haldimand, and in October of 1782, he told Sinclair that although he had not 'personally incurred my Displeasure,' the accounts of the post would have to be fully investigated.\textsuperscript{145} The Governor wrote to ask the Treasury if

\textsuperscript{143} Sinclair to Haldimand, March 9, 1782. B.M. Add.,Mss. 21783, p. 116.

\textsuperscript{144} Sinclair to Haldimand, July 5, 1782. B.M. Add.,Mss. 21758, p. 144.

\textsuperscript{145} Haldimand to Sinclair, October 21, 1782. B.M. Add.,Mss. 21758, p. 184.
payment of only part of Sinclair's bills of exchange made them liable for all of them, and refused payment of Sinclair's bills until they were investigated thoroughly. To the commissary's complaints, he replied, 'Mr. McBeath has no Right to Complain of what his own Folly, not to make use of a harsher expression, occasioned.' The Treasury approved his refusal to honour Sinclair's bills, and Sinclair was brought out for investigation. Though the investigation ground to a halt because of Sinclair's ill health and subsequent return to England, he was never freed from suspicion.

Meanwhile, his successor at Michilimackinack, Captain Robertson, began by proclaiming confidently, 'I think of diminishing [the Indians'] Ordinary Presents to His Excellency's satisfaction without incurring their dislike to our interest.' But though he claimed to have lowered expenses by £50000, he was forced to write, 'I was much hurt and concerned on hearing my bills on Government were not honoured, as I have exerted myself to

147 Haldimand to Treasury, November 7, 1782. CO42/43, p. 282.
the utmost to effect the purpose of my coming here. 150

Haldimand's anxiety over the expenditures of the Indian Department resulted in many attempts to reform the distribution of Indian goods. An anonymous plan for reformation of expenses pointed out the habit of the commanding officers at Michilimackinack and Detroit of appropriating the furs, grease and corn which the Indians brought as their gifts to the British, 'all which commodities these Gentlemen have consider'd as due perquisites of their places, to which by the tenor of their Commissions they are entitled; and which they have accordingly converted to Cash in the most advantageous manner for their own benefit.'

'It is perhaps just as likely (if not more so),' the report continued, 'to find that degree of conscience not to push the abuse to excess among the Military Line, as amongst the class of people employ'd in the Indian Department, tho' the temptation (under the circumstances described as they stand at present) appears to me I confess too great to be thrown in the way of either.' 151

The confusion, especially in the absence of Colonel Guy Johnson, the blurred lines of authority - Haldimand once had to ask a subordinate to send warrants to him


151 Plan of reformation of expenses in the Indian Department, ' no date. B.M. Add. Mss. 21758, p. 360.
instead of straight to England - the taint of corruption and the impossibility of making sense out of affairs he was not familiar with drove Haldimand as early as the fall of 1781 to suggest the appointment of Sir John Johnson as Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, to have complete responsibility for the Indian Department, as a man of proven ability and honour, acceptable to both the Indians and the rest of the Indian Department. As the son of Sir William and cousin to Guy Johnson, Sir John had been all his life in a position to observe closely the management of Indian affairs. In April of 1782, Johnson received his appointment; he was to supervise all Indian accounts and direct Indian affairs under the direction of the Governor of Quebec. As a Brigadier-General as well as civil Superintendent, Sir John Johnson had more clear-cut authority over the military as well as the civil officers in the Indian Department than any Superintendent before him, and yet was more definitely subordinate to the Governor and Commander in Chief in Canada. Haldimand hesitated to decide Sir John Johnson's salary.

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152 Campbell to Haldimand, August 9, 1779. B.M. Add. Mss. 21771, p. 150.


154 Shelburne to Haldimand, April 22, 1782. CO42/42, p. 137.

155 Haldimand to Townshend, October 25, 1782. B.M. Add. Mss. 21716, p. 4.

156 Ibid.
but he gave him firmer directions in the matter of reducing the exorbitant costs of Indian presents, 'which the Necessity of the Times and bad Management have introduced.'\textsuperscript{157} All presents were to be distributed under the watchful eye of the post commanders and all without exception were to be accounted for to Sir John and any changes in Indian Officers were to be cleared through the Commander in Chief.

One of the first duties Sir John Johnson had to perform as Superintendent-General was to try and untangle the chaos surrounding the operations of his cousin Colonel Guy Johnson, who was Superintendent of Indian Affairs, with his headquarters at Niagara. Guy Johnson had not been exactly in Haldimand's good books throughout the war; though he declared his intention in 1779 of moderating the expense of the Indian Department 'so loudly censured by the Nation and so much my duty to restrict,'\textsuperscript{158} Haldimand wrote to Germain that Johnson was 'not possessed of either Abilities, Temper or the Necessary Talents to Conduct a Department of Such Importance.'\textsuperscript{159} Besides, Johnson's tendency to self-importance irked him:

\begin{quote}
I find that he takes to himself a great share of the Merit of the Conduct which has been observed
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{157} 'Formal Instructions to Sir John Johnson,' February 6, 1783. B.M. Add. Mss. 21776, p. 10.

\textsuperscript{158} Colonel Guy Johnson to Haldimand, November 11, 1779. B.M. Add. Mss. 21767, p. 49.

\textsuperscript{159} Haldimand to Germain, January 28, 1780. B.M. Add. Mss. 21714, p. 89.
by the Five Nations in the present Contest which, in fact, he has not the Smallest Claim to any part of, having left his Duty in 1775 (when the Province was invaded) instead of Remaining in the Indian Country, where his Presence was, at that Period, indispensably necessary, by which his Department was thrown into the last Confusion, from which it was Rescued by the unwearied attention, application & judicious conduct of Major Butler. 160

Haldimand was, nonetheless, encouraged by the seeming success of Johnson's attempts at resettlement of the Mohawks and other Indians, but the charges for presents at Niagara increased at an astonishing rate.

Johnson explained this as well as he could.

The desires of the Indians had been extended to many Articles, and some of them expensive ones, which they had not formerly received or expected. . . . Many of the Indians will no longer wear Tinsel Lace, and are become good judges of Gold & Silver that they frequently demand & have received Wine, Tea, Coffee, Candles and many such articles. . . . There are many Articles in the Western Indian Assortment not much in use in the Six Nations and many Colours in Esteem with one sett of Indians that are disregarded by another. The Six Nations are not as fond of gawdy Colours, as of Good and Substantial Things, but they are passionately fond of Silver Ornaments and neat Arms. 161

He also laid part of the blame at the feet of the traders. 'Goods bought here are not only very high, but unnecessary Articles must be taken, as no Trader will break up his Assortment, and either from this, or other Circumstances, the wants and requests of the Indians are

160 Ibid.

extended to several Articles not formerly in demand among the Six Nations. 162

The Treasury, as well as Haldimand, had been amazed at the charges of Guy Johnson for the Indian service. In the spring of 1781, Knox reported that he had reduced the amount of goods sent, and noticed that Johnson's requisitions accounted for almost half the near £55000 worth of goods sent. 'Altho' the number of Indians he has anything to do with is not near so great as those Mr. De Peyster has to supply,' Knox noted sarcastically, 'from the nature of the Articles as well as the Amount of the Cost, it Should seem he imagined the importance of his Services would be rated by the greatness of the Expense he put the public to.' 163 Among the things Johnson had ordered for an estimated 5200 Indians (1100 of whom were warriors) were such items as 400 silver armbands, 5000 large silver brooches and another 5000 small ones. 164

Johnson protested that he had cut down the number of Indians regularly receiving provisions from over 4000 to less than 1000, 165 and that he had only asked for £16000 worth of goods, which, as anyone could see, was

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163 Knox to Haldimand, April 7, 1781. B.M.Add. Mss. 21710, p. 132.


not half of £55000. Haldimand pointed out that luxury articles were not necessary; Johnson argued that while the Indians were now accustomed to 'Articles of Luxury from which they ought to be weaned,' it was necessary to keep giving them to the tribes during the war, especially the chiefs. The main reason the costs were higher at Niagara than elsewhere, he said, was that few of the Six Nations Indians were now able to hunt; actually he felt that the expenses of the post were relatively low, 'though the Services are many and Constant and the Six Nations once Masters of all.' Haldimand hastened to explain to the Secretary of State that his accusations against Johnson were not of a personal nature, but were motivated only by his general concern for the King's service.

It soon became, however, more than a question of restricting Colonel Johnson's open-handedness. As early as the summer of 1781, a merchant from Niagara was writing mysteriously that 'everything is discover'd and come to light... The Great Man Trembles, George [Forsyth] Sulks, hacks & Spits in short the whole body of the

168 Ibid.
169 Haldimand to Germain, October 22, 1781. B.M. Add.Mss. 21717, p. 112.
Department appears to be in great perturbation. 170 By the next year, a clerk in the Niagara firm of Taylor and Forsyth, with which Colonel Johnson dealt, had reported a vast discrepancy between the bills of exchange drawn by Johnson and the actual goods supplied to the Indian Department. 171 Though Taylor and Forsyth themselves seemed unquestionably guilty, the question of Colonel Johnson's part in the discrepancy, and its causes, had yet to be determined. Colonel Johnson was called to Quebec at the same time the suit against Taylor and Forsyth was begun, and the massive task of attempting to make some sense out of the Indian Department accounts at Niagara commenced. 172

The charge that his conduct was connected with the disgrace of Taylor and Forsyth wounded Johnson 'as an Officer and a Man of Honor;' he had hoped, he wrote, to be known to all, Indian or not, as one 'whose known sacrifices for Government were very considerable, and very cheerfully made and whose duties were very laborious and successfull and his Character in all Monied Concerns irreproachable.' 173 When complaints that the pay bills

171 Haldimand to Townshend, October 22, 1782. CO42/43, p. 182.
172 Ibid.
of the garrison were not in order arose, and they were returned to be 'more regularly done,' it upset him as well.

The Board of Accounts, which had been created at the same time as Sir John Johnson was appointed Superintendent-General, was now called upon to investigate the accounts, both of Colonel Johnson himself, and of the Indian Department at Niagara. The Board consisted of Major-General H. Watson Powell, former commander at Niagara; Henry Hamilton, Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec; Colonel Henry Hope, Quartermaster-General; Lieutenant-Colonel John Campbell, Superintendent of Indians in Canada; Major Robert Lernoult, Adjutant-General; Captain Twiss, Commanding Engineer; Thomas Dunn, paymaster of incidental contingencies; Daniel Claus, Superintendent of the Six Nations in Canada; and Jenkin Williams, Solicitor-General. Thus the Board was not by any means devoid of people who could sympathize with Johnson's position; Daniel Claus, for example, had known Colonel Johnson and the Indian Department since the days of Sir William Johnson and was Guy Johnson's brother-in-law. The Board stated that it intended to act on the most liberal principles possible,


176 Members of Board,' no date. B.M.Add.Mss. 21770, p. 204.
and would admit all charges Colonel Johnson could find precedents for or that members of the Board with experience in Indian affairs thought were justified. 177

Even this Board, however, sympathetic as it was, could not make head or tail of the Niagara accounts, and Haldimand wrote to England that the accounts were proving very difficult to untangle. 178 It was clear, however, that for all Guy Johnson's protests that 'an enquiry into my ordinary mode of living' would show how much of his own fortune had been sacrificed to the Indian Department, 179 he had inherited his uncle's zest and talent for display when it came to spending money, but little of the discretion and integrity which Sir William Johnson had devoted to using it. Allan Maclean, whom Haldimand had directed to pursue some private investigations into the state of affairs at Niagara wrote that, as far as he could determine, Johnson's extravagance was unquestionable, but he could get little direct information from his colleagues. 'Colonel Buttler is and has been,' he wrote, 'the best superintendent the Crown had amongst the Indians, he never will say anything that may have the appearance of

177 'Board investigating Colonel Guy Johnson's accounts,' September 26, 1783. B.M.Add.Mss. 21770, p. 216.

178 Haldimand to Lord North, November 2, 1783. B.M.Add.Mss. 21716, p. 60.

bearing hard upon Johnson, let be for let be is a prudent maxim; and I believe Colonel Buttler follows it.\(^{180}\) He did discover that Johnson 'kept a very expensive house, that Chiefs frequently dined at his table and Drank Wine,'\(^{181}\) and the officers reported that great quantities of wine, almonds, raisins and sugar disappeared into the Johnson household, and twice as much soap was being issued as usual. Maclean said 1710 pounds of butter per month were being issued, supposedly to the Indians, but 'they do not thank you for butter.' In all, he found Guy Johnson's accounts 'extravagant, wonderfull & fictitious, and the quality of the Articles so Extraordinary, new & uncommon, that one may Exclaim with Hamlet where he sees his fathers ghost, "he comes in so questionable a shape, that I must speak to it."'\(^{182}\) He suggested that the Board refer the accounts to the Treasury in England to be sorted out;\(^{183}\) which eventually was done.

Meanwhile, Colonel Johnson was trying, by means of testimony and letters, to account for the phenomenal con-

\(^{180}\) Maclean to Haldimand, May 17, 1783. B.M.Add. Mss. 21763, p. 114. One wonders whether Johnson would have been equally as discreet had their positions been reversed. There seems to have been a conflict between the two men. Haldimand to Bolton, August 27, 1783. B.M. Add. Mss. 21764, p. 37.


\(^{182}\) Ibid.

\(^{183}\) Ibid.
sumption of liquor, chocolate, raisins, ribbon, handkerchiefs and so on at Niagara. The intertwining of the government accounts with Johnson's own was such that they were almost indistinguishable, and he claimed that some charges had been indiscriminately put in one when they should have been in the other. 184 He also claimed that many of his account books had been lost in a boat wreck at the Cedars; 185 and there were some charges he simply couldn't remember.

His most frequent defense, however, his investigators found somewhat hard to accept. In the first place, he said, he had no time or talent for keeping accounts. 'My unacquaintance with Accounts, and my necessary attention to what I deemed the more essential objects of my duty' would, he trusted, account for any discrepancies there might be. 186

In the second place, people in Quebec were not really competent to judge the circumstances or demands among the Six Nations; Sir William Johnson's methods had not been challenged for thirty years, and there had been little method then, for 'an Officer might at any time . . .

184 'Further extracts from Colonel Guy Johnson's personal account,' no date. B.M.Add.Mss. 21768, p. 162.

185 'Proceedings of Board,' October 2, 1783. B.M.Add.Mss. 21770, p. 256.

find his private fortunes involved whilst acting to the best of his Judgement.\textsuperscript{187} He argued that from 'General practise of the Superintendant of the Six Nations for almost 30 years, he cou'd not be expected to produce Vouchers & Rect\textsuperscript{S} for his own Acct\textsuperscript{S} which had never been required, that the Indian Department has ever differ'd widely from all other Departments of the State, not only from the circumstances of the Ind\textsuperscript{S}, but of the many illiterate persons concerned or connected therewith.\textsuperscript{188}

Whatever Colonel Johnson's role was in the case involving him and Taylor and Forsyth, the confusion was more or less impenetrable, for he had been careless and extravagant in what he said was the public interest as well as his own. Many of his bills were disallowed, though he was never really discredited.

Meanwhile, his cousin the Superintendent-General was not coming up to Haldimand's most optimistic expectations. Although he was not blessed with Guy Johnson's extravagance, he does not seem to have been blessed with imagination to any remarkable degree either. Although he did, for example, come up with a promising scheme for systematically reducing the size of the Indian Depart-


\textsuperscript{188} Colonel Guy Johnson to Board of Accounts, October 5, 1783. B.M.Add.Mss. 21770, p. 232.
ment, he seems to have been somewhat indecisive in cutting down expenses according to Haldimand's wishes. He claimed one of the reasons for this was that he could not act as long as the commanders at the posts could make expenditures, to which the Governor replied that his appointment as Superintendent-General had cancelled any such authority. Haldimand had to direct him not to encourage the Indians 'to forsake their Hunting & other means of procuring their Livelyhood,' and to exact obedience and complete information from all of his officers. Either Sir John could not believe that after all this time an Indian Superintendent finally had such complete power, or he was not born to command; he was however, a man of unquestioned integrity, and as such was on the road to making some needed reforms.

The new broom had arrived too late in the day, however; the gradual reduction of military operations in the interior was accompanied by the first rumours of a treaty of peace with the rebels. To make this treaty acceptable or at least tolerable to the Indians was without doubt the most difficult problem in Indian affairs that

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Haldimand was called upon to face. The news that the whole of the Ohio country was to be yielded to the Americans, with no consideration at all given to the effect this would be likely to have on the Indians, was such a shock that at first the Governor could not believe it was true. The Indians had been the cause of a great deal of trouble and expense; they had been allies, undependable at times, but they had also on occasion suffered mightily for the King's cause and been promised his undying affection in return. When the first rumours of a peace began to filter through late in 1782, Haldimand wrote that the Indians

must not be considered subject to orders or easily influenced where their Interests or Resentments are concerned . . . They cannot look for Reconciliation upon any other terms than Abandoning the Royal Cause. They are thunderstruck at the appearance of an Accommodation so far short of their Expectation from the Language that has been held out to them, and dread the Idea of being forsaken by us and becoming a Sacrifice to a vengeance which has already in many instances been raked upon them.192

As we have seen, the slowing down of the formal war did not seem to affect the behaviour of the frontiersmen in the least; in February of 1783 the rebels cut off the Shawanese town of Standing Stone Village and 'indiscriminately massacred its Inhabitants of all Ages and Sexes.'193

192 Haldimand to Townshend, October 23, 1782. B.M.Add.Mss. 21717, p. 146.
The thought of the explosion which would occur on the frontier if the Indians were merely abandoned to the Americans filled Haldimand with alarm. 'Policy as well as gratitude demands of us an attention to the sufferings and future situation of these unhappy people involved, on our account, in their miseries of war with an implacable enemy."

The truce between the regular armies had by this time already tied his hands. He wrote to Maclean of the difficulty of telling the Shawanese that he could do nothing to defend them, 'particularly in a people who found their rights and even their existence upon the principle of retaliation and who consider themselves & in fact are a free people.' He directed Maclean to 'condole with them their late misfortune as if they were our flesh and blood, which in fact I shall always consider them while they continue by their attachment & fidelity to their great father mutually with us to support his & their own interests.' He also sought to begin reconciling the Indians to their American neighbours. Maclean should tell them that 'we are not to judge of a whole country by the disposition and conduct of a few licentious interested

194 Ibid.
Persons, void of every Principle of humanity and goodness, and Exiles from the People they belong to . . . who infest the Indian Country and take the advantage of the Present Times to establish themselves in the valuable Parts of it. 197

At the same time Haldimand was very upset that he could not carry out what he felt to be his moral obligations to the Indians; 'I cannot passively look on and see their Country ravaged, their Women & Children murdered for their attachment to the Royal Cause,' 198 he wrote. By April he still had not heard officially the terms of the treaty, but he feared the worst if it was true the Indians were not considered. 199

Maclean wrote anxiously that the Indians had also heard rumours of what the treaty contained; he had seen some of the Six Nations, who could not believe the King would 'pretend to cede to Americans what was not his to give.' 200 Though he felt the Six Nations would remain loyal while the British were in possession of the posts 'I would by no means answer for what they may do when they see us evacuate these posts, I should rather then be

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apprehensive of some disagreeable scenes. The Indians 'did not think they had any great reason to expect any friendship from either Party,' they told Maclean, and if the English really had pretended to give their lands to the Americans 'it was an act of cruelty & injustice that only Christians were capable of doing, that the Indians were incapable of acting so, to friends & allies.' They declared their intention to 'defend their own just Right or perish in the attempt to the last man, they were but a handful of small People, but they would die like Men, which they thought preferable to misery & distress if deprived of their hunting grounds.' Maclean had tried to reassure them by telling them the Americans 'never would act so contrary to their own interest as to quarrel with them Wantonly, or go to war about some miles of a Desert, and risk loosing a number of their own People for the sake of distressing them, that such an action would render them infamous to all the World,' but he suspected that this was only too likely to be what the Americans would do, and suggested that Joseph Brant be detained in Canada as he was 'so much more sensible of the miserable situation in which we have left this unfortunate People.'

203 Ibid.
204 Ibid.
Haldimand, too, was visited by Indian deputies and 'was much embarrassed & wished to have it in my Power to talk to them with more Certainty than I could.' \(^{205}\) The official news that the British were to evacuate the interior horrified Haldimand; the Indians were satisfied with the boundaries laid down in the Fort Stanwix Treaty of 1768, but 'they have as enlightened Ideas of the nature and obligations of Treaties as the most civilized nations have.' \(^{206}\) Though he thought eventually they must leave the Indians to make what terms they could with the Americans, this must be done gradually. He had Sir John Johnson explain that the treaty did not mean what it obviously did mean: 'You are not to believe or even think that by the Line which has been described it was meant to deprive you of an extent of Country of which the right of Soil belongs to and is in yourselves as sole proprietaries.' \(^{207}\)

By such diplomacy he felt able to assure Amherst in the fall that if the Americans conducted themselves properly, the Indians 'will be tranquil and will make peace in good faith,' though otherwise he feared 'there will be between them a most cruel war.' \(^{208}\)

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\(^{205}\) Haldimand to Lord North, June 2, 1783. B.M. Add.Mss. 21716, p. 22.

\(^{206}\) Haldimand to North, November 27, 1783. C042/46, p. 41.


\(^{208}\) Haldimand to Amherst (In French), November 8, 1783. B.M.Add.Mss. 21727, p. 237.
Meanwhile, Haldimand did not hasten to turn the posts over to the United States. When the first American Emissary, Baron de Steuben, arrived wishing to have a tour of the new United States acquisitions, Haldimand politely but firmly told him, 'I could not conceive myself at Liberty . . . to enter into the discussion of arrangements necessary to be made for the Evacuation of the Forts in the Indian Country' as he had not received official instructions from the British government,¹⁰⁹ instructions which he intimated he would like to avoid receiving for some time.¹¹⁰ He wrote to Washington that 'few things would afford me greater Pleasure, than to manifest my Readiness to comply with your Excellency's wishes, as far as it is consistent with my duty,' but he had, unfortunately, received no direct orders to turn over the posts.¹¹¹ In April of 1784, North wrote approving his refusal to give up the posts to Baron de Steuben, and stating the British government's recognition of the dangers of evacuating the posts.

Our retaining the Possession of those Posts will not even be detrimental to America, and may even be the means of preventing Mischiefs which are likely to happen, should the Posts be delivered

¹⁰⁹ Haldimand to North, August 20, 1783. C042/44, p. 241.
¹¹⁰ Haldimand to North, November 27, 1783. C042/46, p. 41.
¹¹¹ Haldimand to Washington, August 11, 1783. C042/44, p. 252.
up whilst the resentment of the Indians continues at so high a pitch. I hope the people of America will treat them with kindness. Indeed if they considered it for a moment their own interest would prompt them so to do, but if they should be determined to pursue a different Conduct, you may assure these unfortunate People, that they will find Asylum within His Majesty's Dominions.212

Haldimand continued to be exquisitely polite, but evasive, to the Americans, lamenting to Clinton in May of 1784 that 'some accident which has befallen the Packet or Messenger has hitherto prevented me from receiving from England any notification of the Definitive Treaty.'213 The stipulation that the posts should be given up with 'all convenient speed' was now being interpreted as infinitely elastic, the excuse was being used that America was not complying with their agreements in the Treaty,214 and the new United States, who had been united only in their struggle against Great Britain, were absorbed in trying to forge a workable union.

With the Indians, Haldimand still felt somewhat helpless. When General Schuyler gave a speech which seemed to threaten all the tribes with extinction, Haldimand wrote sadly to Sir John Johnson 'it is as painful

212 North to Haldimand, April 8, 1784. B.M.Add. Mss. 21705, p. 175.

213 Haldimand to North, May 12, 1784. CO42/46, p. 146.

reflection to me to remain silent when called upon for advice by these unfortunate deserving people, as it is hazardous to give my Sanction and Authority for the Part the Indians have to act with the Americans.\textsuperscript{215} His secretary, Captain Mathews, wrote to his friend Joseph Brant, 'You know enough of the Laws we Christians are Subject to and the Yoke that is hung about our Necks, to be convinced that the Power of helping you is not in the Breast of the General, or of his Warriors, unless the Americans should attack You on that side of the Line which the Peace Makers have marked out for us.'\textsuperscript{216}

Haldimand counselled the Indians to go about 'an Attention to the Support and Happiness of your Families by the Cultivation of Your Lands and resuming your Hunting as before the War, in Expectation of Enjoying the blessings of a lasting Peace,'\textsuperscript{217} assuring them that 'I do not consider any Part of their Country that falls within the American States ceded by the Line specified in the Treaty merely to determine the Territory of Great Britain.'\textsuperscript{218} He saw hopeful signs of the Americans changing their attitudes to the Indians as well; 'they have relaxed in

\textsuperscript{215} Haldimand to Sir John Johnson, April 12, 1784. B.M.Add.Mss. 21723, p. 65.

\textsuperscript{216} Mathews to Joseph Brant, April 12, 1784. B.M. Add.Mss. 21725, p. 6.

\textsuperscript{217} Haldimand to Six Nations, March 24, 1784. B.M. Add.Mss. 21779, p. 158.

\textsuperscript{218} Haldimand to Sir John Johnson, April 12, 1784. B.M.Add.Mss. 21723, p. 65.
their Sentiments and Conduct towards the Indians,' he wrote after a speech of Clinton's, 'and . . . they seem so well disposed to treat with them upon liberal terms.'

They encouraged the Indians not to yield in their negotiations with the Americans, on the subject of a meeting place, for example, but could not intervene directly.

Meanwhile, the British held the posts, and the work of the Indian Department had to continue. Haldimand's efforts were now directed to putting its operations on a less expensive footing. He had been directed by the Treasury to curb expenses for presents, though the Secretary of State recognized the 'Justice and Necessity of continuing Our Supplies of Presents to those unfortunate People, who are now suffering from the part they have taken.' 'These People are justly entitled to Our peculiar attention and it would be far from either generous or just in Us, after Our Cession of their Territories and Hunting Grounds, to forsake them,' North wrote of the Mohawks, but nonetheless it was hoped they might soon be able to carry on their hunting as usual.

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The Indian officers were ordered to stop giving presents, and Mathews wrote to Sir John Johnson that he had understood the Indians were cultivating land. The Indian Department was also to be cut down in numbers; Mathews wrote, 'His Excellency is equally at a loss to know in what manner 66 persons can be, at this period, employed in the Indian Department.' Haldimand directed that 'Economy and discontinuance of the enormous Expense of the Indian Department so strongly urged by the Nation and commanded by the King's Ministers, and also from my personal knowledge that the Expenses of the Department previous to the Rebellion were not in any degree of proportion to what they now are. I am sensible that from the long habit in which the Indians have been during the War of receiving presents and provisions in the bountiful way which they have been bestowed, that it will be difficult to reconcile them to the former System, yet it must be done, and it is now full time it were effected.'

In reality, of course, it was impossible to stop the flow of presents abruptly. Maclean warned that presents and Indian officers 'we dare not remove for fear of

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creating disagreeable suspicions.\textsuperscript{227} Haldimand himself said his general ban on presents did not intend 'that Objects of Compassion such as you have represented to me who have a Claim to the King's protection from being left Widows and Orphans by His Service and of others who have been maimed in it, should be indiscriminately numbered with the Bulk of Indians who are not to be provisioned,' and also said deserving individuals could be provisioned with discretion.\textsuperscript{228} Campbell pointed out the injustice of carrying out the order 'so recently after repeated promises made by the Government to those Indians and at the conclusion of a warr in which they bore a part, were very serviceable in course of it, and after these pledges from Authority, which left them no reason to doubt but the deserving or needfull at any time thereafter, should meet that reward from their Great father whom they were made to believe should never for sake them in their distress.'\textsuperscript{229}

Thus we see that both of the major innovations of the period when the Indian Department was directly controlled by the Governor and Commander in Chief were never really tested to prove what difference they might have

\textsuperscript{227}Maclean to Haldimand, May 11, 1783. B.M. Add. Mss. 21763, p. 104.

\textsuperscript{228}Haldimand to Campbell, October 30, 1784. B.M. Add. Mss. 21724, p. 111.

\textsuperscript{229}Campbell to Mathews, October 23, 1784. B.M. Add. Mss. 21772, p. 253.
made under ordinary circumstances. The changes brought by the Quebec Act were soon swallowed up in the abnormal situation of the war with the other colonies. During the war, the old problems of settlement and trade, which had preoccupied the Indian Department since 1763, were overshadowed though not solved, by the question of dealing with the Indians as allies or at least potential friends, and the economic difficulties which accompanied it.

The appointment of a Superintendent-General was again an innovation which did not really have long enough to show its effect, because of the coming of the end of the war. The appointment was in part an attempt to coordinate the administration of the Indian Department, which had become confused during the war, especially with the absence of Guy Johnson, and in part an attempt to replace Colonel Johnson with someone on whose character the Governor could place more reliance. What Sir John Johnson might have accomplished had the circumstances not been so extraordinary, it is hard to say, but one can safely conclude that he was no Sir William - a fact which his father himself had recognized when he had passed on the care of the Indian Department not to his son but to his nephew, although this may also have been partly to give Sir John charge over more gentlemanly cares, such as land, and the local militia.

The years when the Province of Quebec was in control of the Indian Department were unusual years, and the
preoccupations and policies of the Department reflect this.
CONCLUSION

The policy of the British government in North America towards the Indians of the Ohio Valley was a matter of some importance to the North American empire. It was important in terms of international defense, in terms of trade, in terms of security on the frontier. The Indians must be persuaded to serve these external ends; the means for doing this was to try and keep them as satisfied as possible — for a very few people this was an end in itself.

Between these high considerations of British policy and the Indians themselves, however, lay the medium through which the policy must be interpreted, the Indian Department. The composition of the Indian Department, and its effectiveness in maintaining smooth relations with the Indians, varied with changes in official policy and with economic and political conditions inside and outside North America. The course of Indian affairs between the British conquest of Canada and the end of the Revolutionary War can, however, be divided into two quite distinct periods, from 1760 to 1774, and from 1774 to 1783.

The first might with some justification be called the Sir William Johnson period of Indian affairs. The influence of this man and of the Indian officers under
his direction over the Indians was something which was never quite duplicated. Sir William Johnson came closer perhaps than any other man in North American history to being able to understand, pacify and serve the Indians, while at the same time preparing them for an accommodation with European civilization which by this time was inevitable, and which could only be softened and extended, not prevented.

Besides Sir William Johnson's great skills, and partly because of them, he had the advantage of exercising as much influence as any official in North America was able to over policy as it was decided in Great Britain. Even so, the failure of the British government to give an official stamp to the plan of 1764 and its replacement with the plan of 1768, showed how little weight was given in Whitehall to the purely domestic situation in North America, and how much they were swayed by external considerations of expense and relations with the Atlantic colonies.

Thus, even in Sir William's time, there were difficulties in the path of the Indian Department. The unofficial nature of Johnson's regulations for trade and settlement after 1765 invited challenges and contraventions from the colonial governments, from settlers, from the military, from anyone who did not agree with his scheme. After 1768, when the regulation of trade was turned over to the colonies, his position was even more
shaky, for though his own regulations still filled a vacuum, their authority was more tenuous than before.

During the period of his office, Sir William Johnson was officially acting under a commission from the Commander in Chief of British forces in North America, and was responsible to him. In fact, as was outlined in Chapter Three, the office of the Commander in Chief, like that of the Indian Superintendent, was one in which responsibilities and authority were blurred. As an outside officer with some authority inside the colonies, as one with a mixture of civil and military duties, the Commander in Chief had with Sir William Johnson a very flexible relationship. On some occasions he did take major decisions concerning Indian affairs; more often he allowed the Indian Department to make most of its own decisions. The change of Commander in Chief made some difference; Amherst and Sir William Johnson had a markedly more uneasy relationship than that which existed between Gage and the Superintendent. By and large, however, the Commander in Chief's control over the Indian Department was somewhat nominal.

With the military as a whole, who were in some parts of their duties officials of the Indian Department, the civilian section of the Indian Department engaged in a continuing rivalry. Although the combination of military and civilian officers worked surprisingly well, and the commanding officers of the posts, in particular, were in general ready to further Sir William's policy in spite of
his lack of defined authority over them, this alliance increased the confusion in the makeup of the Indian Department and was to be especially unhappy after Sir William had gone from the helm.

Sir William's death nearly coincided with a new hierarchy in the Indian Department. The reluctance of the colonial governments to take responsibility for regulating their citizens in the interior, the absence of civil government for those settled there legitimately, the special relationship of the Ohio triangle with Quebec, all influenced the government to replace the interior in the boundaries of the province of Quebec under the Quebec Act.

Thus 1774 saw two major changes in Indian affairs, the death of Sir William Johnson and the passage of the Quebec Act. A third change was not long in following - the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. War or no war, the death of Sir William Johnson would have been a blow; it was one from which the Indian Department never recovered. The chaos into which the Department fell under the leadership, if such it can be called, of Guy Johnson and later his cousin Sir John, was not capable of correction by individual officers doing their part competently in isolated locations, though some of these men were quite effective. In the course of the war, the Indian Department was a rather catch-as-catch-can operation, with various tasks being attended to by whoever was in a situation to do them.

In this situation, the role of the Governor and
Commander in Chief of Quebec in Indian affairs was much more important than that of Commander in Chief for North America had been. Carleton and Haldimand were concerned deeply with directing the activities of the Indian officers, who looked to them for guidance where they had once looked to Sir William Johnson.

The Governor of Quebec, however, was not in quite the same position as the Indian Superintendent. His distance from the interior, his concern with other matters, and his unfamiliarity with the Indians were a handicap in directing the course of Indian affairs. He depended heavily on the officers on the spot, men like John Butler, Allan Maclean and Arent DePeyster, who enjoyed an expansion of informal authority over Indian affairs; this fragmentation of authority in the Indian Department was perhaps its major characteristic during the war years.

Haldimand also showed himself, not surprisingly, influenced much more by external British concerns, such as economy in the operation of the Department, than had Sir William Johnson. His agitation over the question of Indian presents is an example of this preoccupation with matters of overall imperial importance rather than with specifically Indian issues.

In spite of his position between the British government and the Indian Department, however, Haldimand was as surprised and horrified as anyone at the abandonment of the Indians which was part of the peace settlement of 1783.
It was a step which bore absolutely no relation to the situation in North America; it was an outside imposition which embarrassed and weakened the government in Quebec. The fact remained that it could not be followed; abandoning the Indians, whether it was official policy or not, was impracticable. Though British policy could impede the management of Indian affairs, it was also subject to modification when the situation demanded it.

When the British took over the heart of North America, the way of life of the Indians was really already doomed to wither at the advance of white settlement. The question of whether the Indians could have made a satisfying transition to a new culture, as Sir William Johnson believed they could, is one which can only involve speculations about what would have happened if Johnson had not died, if his successors had been more like him, if he had had his way in the formation of Indian policy and the authority to enforce it, if the Ohio Valley had not been turned over to the United States.

The Proclamation of 1763, in combination with a coordinated plan of settlement and trade regulation, seems to have been the most humane and gradual policy which could have been followed. For a great variety of reasons, it could not be and was not implemented.

What really did happen in the course of Indian affairs was a confusing series of stopgap measures, shifts in policy and external events like the Revolution which
had a great effect on the fate of the Indians. The outcome of these events, as we have seen, did little to stem the tide of disaster which was to overcome the Indian.
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