

MR. CLAUS TO LIEUT. GOV. GORE.

(Indians.)

AMHERSTBURG 27th Feby 1808

SIR,

The Messenger sent out to the Glaize on the 10th Instant, is not yet returned, I am much at a loss to account for his delay, he was desired to proceed to that place and see Mr. Fisher, who your Excellency has appointed an Interpreter, and to desire him to come in immediately & to bring the Shawanese Chiefs with him, and also the Prophet, the message was verbal, no writing was trusted with him for fear of accidents; the only way that I can account for his delay, is that there may be some difficulty in persuading the Prophet to come in.

On the 24th Instant I had a long conference with Guyash, a Chief of the Chippewa Nation, a tried soldier & trusty man, after a good deal of conversation he told me, that on his way here he called on the Governor at Detroit and asked him for news, the Govr told him he had received letters from Washington, and said that the English and Americans were getting nearer to each other and that he expected they were now one people, and that as soon as he heard any news he would let him know it, the conversation with Governor Hull took place last Saturday the 20th Instant. I then came to the point and asked him his opinion if there should be any disturbance between Great Britian & America, he said there were three Nations that spoke the same Language, the Ottawas Potawatamies and Chippewas that he heard that they had spoke often on that subject among themselves, and expected that they woud be called on by the King if a War took place between the two countries, but that they must sit quiet; he continued & said, if the whole of the Nations were to talk together, that may not be the case, I told him that I hoped his idea of his friends would prove true if required, for that the King their Father had always shown a great regard for them & spared no expence to make them comfortable & that he would most certainly keep his eyes looking towards them.

Two days ago I had a private meeting with the little King an Ottawa Chief from L'Arbre Croche, and after talking some time I asked him the same question that I did Guyash (what was his opinion of the Indians if a disturbance took place between Great Britain & America?) his reply was, the ground is smooth yet, I pressed it again & his answer was, you will know if it happens. Your Excellency knows how cautious Indians are in general in giving their opinion, particularly on so delicate a matter, but from the manner in which he spoke it is easily to be understood that he considers the

Indians decidedly opposed to the Americans with the exception of the Hurons, who are very few, those two are the only men on the ground that I would speak to in confidence the rest are a very indifferent set. The Little King's Band, present, only 11 men, are very respectable Indians & appear to be most completely under his control.

The season for boiling Sugar is now arrived & the whole are pressing me very hard to return to their sugar Bush and to give them clothing as they have been kept here the whole winter, which has prevented them from hunting; I do not see how it is possible to keep them here without a very great expence indeed; I am obliged to give them this day, what presents remain in store, & if I was to detain them Just now, they would look for payment for the loss of the sugar season, and make a claim on Government for bread, from a pretence of losing the opportunity of preparing the ground for their corn, I shall use every endeavor in my power to detain some of the young men, those with families will go and it more than probable that they will not return before the latter end of April or May.

I cannot discover that the American Government have had any public or private meeting with the Indians, except the one of the 24th Novr last, with Governour Hull for the purpose of making a purchase of land which has caused much dissatisfaction among the several Nations between this Post & Lake Michigan, in my opinion it will not be settled without the loss of some lives.

I cannot close my letter without expressing my thanks to Your Excellency for Captain Elliotts assistance, which I have found of great use on several occasions.

with much respect I have the honor to be

Your Excellencies
most obedient and
most humble Servant

W. CLAUS
D. S. G.

His Excellency

Lient Govr Gore &c. &c. &c.