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Tecumseh, The Prophet And The Rise Of The Northwest Indian Confederation

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TECUMSEH, THE PROPHET AND THE RISE OF THE
NORTHWEST INDIAN CONFEDERATION

by

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of the requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

While the story of Tecumseh, the Prophet and their movement has been often told, existing versions are replete with apocryphal material and fabrication. The Prophet is eclipsed by Tecumseh contrary to documentary evidence. This dissertation returns to the story as found in Canadian, American and British primary sources, attempts to put the Prophet in his rightful place and to strip away the encrusted apocrypha of eight generations.

In 1805, Elskwatawa (the Prophet) announced that the Great Spirit had instructed him to preach a return to the life the Indians had lived before the advent of the whites. In exchange he promised to restore their lands and prosperity. Such a phenomenon in a disintegrating Indian society was common in red-white frontier relations, and recurred as late as 1890. Contrary to most accounts, there is no documentary evidence that Tecumseh was involved in the evolution of this revival. However, some time before 1807, he had evolved a tangential plan for retention of Indian land which depended on Indians' uniting in refusing to sell land instead of on divine intervention. He claimed the land was common property of all Indians and none could sell without the consent of all. His efforts to spread this idea resulted
in the formation of the Northwest Indian confederation. Taken together, the revival and the confederation spelled a direct threat to American Indian policy based, as it was, on acculturation and acquisition of Indian land.

With the possibility of war after the Chesapeake affair, the British and Americans became concerned about Indian support. The Prophet, who drew thousands to hear him, was a potent force. By the end of 1807, the British had decided to tell "confidential Indians" of the possibility of war. They promised these Indians land and aid in return for support. At the same time they asked them not to mention war to their more volatile tribesmen, but rather to remind them of the contrast between British concern and American landgrabbing. These reminders added to Indian hostility toward the Americans. By June 1808, the British had talked to Tecumseh and found his confederation scheme fitted their own plans well. Meanwhile, the Americans, while warning the Indians to remain neutral, inadvertently did everything to insure Indian hostility by their policy of rapid acquisition of Indian land. In this they were aided by the older village chiefs who thought further resistance foolhardy and who felt the confederation threatened their authority.

The first confrontation between the confederation and the Americans came after the 1809 Treaty of Fort Wayne where these chiefs sold over three million acres in direct opposition to Tecumseh's common ownership policy. To maintain his
supporters' confidence, Tecumseh had to react. He threatened death to the chiefs who signed the treaty unless the land were returned. This threat prompted Governor Harrison of the Indiana Territory to call councils with Tecumseh in 1810 and 1811. At them Harrison was unmoved by Tecumseh's arguments. At the end of the 1811 council, Tecumseh announced he was leaving to solicit support for the confederacy among the Southern tribes. Harrison took advantage of his absence to march toward Tippecanoe, hoping to goad the Prophet into an attack that would prove the confederacy hostile. Harrison claimed that the resulting Battle of Tippecanoe in November had destroyed the confederacy and discredited the Prophet. By spring it was clear neither claim was true. At the onset of war in June, confederacy Indians joined the British and fought in the Old Northwest and in Canada until the death of Tecumseh at the Battle of the Thames in October, 1813.
| TABLE OF CONTENTS |
|-------------------|------------------|
| CERTIFICATE OF EXAMINATION | i
| ABSTRACT | iii |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | vi |
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| CHAPTER I - Backgrounds | 20 |
| CHAPTER II - The Evolution of the Prophet's Revival | 49 |
| CHAPTER III - The Evolution of the Northwest Indian Confederation | 77 |
| CHAPTER IV - British and American Approaches to the Prophet and his Followers | 107 |
| CHAPTER V - The Treaty of Fort Wayne | 135 |
| CHAPTER VI - Confrontation at Vincennes | 164 |
| CHAPTER VII - Attempts at Neutrality | 203 |
| CHAPTER VIII - Tecumseh's Southern Journey and the Battle of Tippecanoe | 258 |
| CHAPTER IX - The Coming of the War | 296 |
| EPILOGUE | 342 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 362 |
| VITA | 381 |

MAPS

The American Lakes and Adjoining Country,...
Done, in part, from a sketch of the Late
Major General St. Isaac Brock, London, 1813...

The Old Northwest and Upper Canada, 1805-1812

vi
INTRODUCTION

In 1805 an obscure Shawnee named Elskwatawa claimed to have had a revelation from the Great Spirit which directed him to preach a new religion to the Indians of the Old Northwest and beyond. The purpose of the new faith was to return the Indians to life as they had lived it before the advent of the whites on the North American continent. Under his leadership and that of his brother, Tecumseh, this revival movement grew to enormous proportions, affecting thousands of Indians from the Great Lakes to the deep South and west at least as far as the Mississippi. By 1812, some of the Indians who had either attended the Prophet and his brother or heard their message became part of the British fighting force in the war that began that year.

In the years that have passed since the War of 1812, there have been scores of attempts by historians, both amateur and professional, as well as anthropologists and sociologists, to explain the reasons for the development of the brothers' movement and the role it played in the coming of the war. All of these efforts have had their weaknesses.

The major weakness which they all shared, and which indeed must be faced by any future attempts to detail the rise of the Northwest Indian confederation, is the lack
of Indian sources. The only records we possess about what the Indians were doing at that time come from periods when those Indians were in contact with the whites. The Indians lacked a written language. It was the whites who kept records on what the Indians said or did. The whites, however, collected such documents only within certain periods and then only those bearing on some of the incidents that took place during those times. It is safe to say then, that we have documentary records of only a very small portion of what the Indians said and did between the beginning of the Prophet's revival and the onset of the War of 1812.

Furthermore, the records that we do have consist basically of information the Indians chose to make public. We have accounts of what the Indians said in council, or sent to various agents and officials as messages, but what they said among themselves, out of earshot of white informers often planted among them, is simply lost forever.

However, such transcriptions of Indian talks and messages as may be found in our archives still leave the serious historian with many problems, reliability in particular. By the time those talks and messages were written down and preserved as documents, they had been "filtered" at least three times through a series of ethnic and national biases, as well as altered by what was, at best, very crude translation.
Later anthropological and linguistic work has shown that American Indian languages tended to be structured far differently from European tongues. The Indians, in telling their stories, often used a great deal of allegory, hyperbole and even non-sequential narrative. They were, in short, expressing not only a body of information but an entirely different way of looking at the form of their world. Their language reflected their conception of their environment. To put their statements into the language of literal-minded, sequentially-oriented Europeans and North Americans was a task that even the most talented of linguists today would probably approach with some degree of apprehension.

Yet the men who translated these Indian talks more than a century and a half ago were hardly trained linguists. Many of them had lived with the Indians for long periods and were thoroughly conversant with the native languages, but their ability to render the speeches of the Indians into English was severely hampered by the fact that many of them were illiterate and possessed of limited English vocabularies. At best then, they could produce only a rough approximation of what the Indians were saying. On the American side there was often an additional problem as many of those who served the American Indian Department as agents, messengers and interpreters were men whose mother tongue was French, the descendants of Canadian
trappers and traders who had elected to remain in the Ohio Valley after the conquest in 1763. Little wonder then, that one finds in primary sources so many references to interpreters complaining of difficulty in setting Indian talks into English. Their translations were unavoidably full of errors: honest errors in most cases, but errors nonetheless.

By the time an Indian talk had been translated, then, it had been "filtered" by the interpreter. However, the records preserved in our archives are not necessarily direct transcriptions of the words of the interpreters. Scribes were employed by both the British and the Americans to copy what the interpreter said. Their work was subject to errors in transcription as well as mutations of what they heard the interpreter say owing to their own personal or national biases. And finally, one more "filtration" took place when the official in charge, the Indian agent, territorial governor, or other functionary took the scribe's transcription in hand and wrote a report based on it to his superiors. Many of these reports eventually found their way into our collection of primary sources. How much these officials altered the notes the scribes had made cannot be determined, but the possibility that they made their own alterations from time to time cannot be dismissed.

The amount of change probably depended to a great extent on how honest or ambitious they were. Only in a
very few instances do we have the material at hand to be able to check them for accuracy. There is also the question of how honest the Indians were in what they told the whites. Most of the period dealt with in this dissertation was really prelude to war. Being honest with one's enemy has never been one of the cardinal rules of war in any society. Thus designing Indians likely passed a good deal of misinformation to the whites. How much of this kind of misinformation remains in our primary sources today as fact cannot be measured.

Even after the war the question of reliability of Indian sources remained. We have, for example, at least five Indian eyewitness accounts of the death of Tecumseh. None of them agree. Part of the reason for the disagreement of these stories can probably be traced to the curious tendency the Indians had to tell the whites what they wanted to hear. Different audiences produced different stories. This problem has made Indian statements difficult to evaluate ever since Jacques Cartier asked the Indians at Hochelaga if there might not be cities of gold further to the west. Perhaps the whites also had a tendency to hear what they wanted to hear.

The result of all these problems is that records which present-day archives preserve as documentary evidence of what the Indians did, said, or thought on any particular occasion may be an exact statement, only close, or perhaps
a complete reverse of the facts.

Of course, not all the information in primary sources about what the Indians were doing came from the Indians themselves. Much came from white observers as well: informers planted among them, Indian agents, government officials and even traders who were often pressed for intelligence on Indian activities by authorities on both sides of the growing conflict between the British and the Americans. Information from all of these sources was often included in official assessments of the Indian situation which were passed on to superiors and eventually preserved for the modern historian. The frequency with which agents and officials altered their own previous statements indicates how often they were wrong and knew it. The ratio of falsehood to truth will probably never be known. Perhaps, whether they were right or wrong was not as important, in the final analysis, as the fact that governments structured their Indian policy on the information they had from these agents and officials.

Primary sources dealing with the Indians in the period between 1805 and the onset of the War of 1812, then, are at best a good indication of the general attitudes and actions of the Indians and a close approximation of what they said. They are certainly not an infallible catalogue of exactly what the Indians said and did. At worst, they
may be totally misleading. They can prove equally misleading to the modern historian in his attempt to reconstruct the story of the role of these Indians in the confrontation that was brewing between the Americans and the British.

Secondary sources, as is usually the case, are less reliable than primary in the history of the rise of the Northwest Indian confederation and the lives of Tecumseh and the Prophet. The reasons for this are many. Some are easily understood and excused, others difficult to fathom and unpardonable.

One might expect that writers who produced accounts of the confederation or biographies of the Shawnee brothers in the first decades after the War of 1812 would express in their works some degree of national bias. One might also expect the quality of their books to suffer because they were denied access not only to many of the documents relative to their topics within their own nation, but were completely cut off from access to the documents of the enemy.1

Other early secondary works which dealt with Tecumseh, the Prophet and their movement were political bio-

1For an interesting comparison of national biases see William James, A Full and Correct Account of the Military Occurrences of the Late War Between Great Britain and the United States, (London, 1818), and Robert B. McAfee, History of the Late War in the Western Country, (Lexington, 1816).
graphies, particularly those of William Henry Harrison, whose campaign for the Presidency in 1840 included a reminder of his defeat of the Indians at Tippecanoe in his slogan, and of Richard Johnson, whose campaign for the Vice-Presidency in 1836 stressed the notion that he had killed Tecumseh. These works were naturally designed to cast their heroes in the best possible light, which often meant some adulteration of the Indian side of the story. Still other 19th century works treated the Indian as an inferior race. While grudgingly admitting that Tecumseh had been unusual, often they suggested that he was at least part white and that it was European blood that explained his greatness.

The single exception to this rule about these nineteenth century works on the Shawnee brothers is the first book-length biography of the pair written in 1841 by Benjamin Drake of Cincinnati entitled The Life of Tecumseh and His Brother, The Prophet. Drake began work on his book

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2Samuel Jones Burr, Life and Times of William Henry Harrison, (New York, 1840); Richard Hildreth, The People's Presidential Candidate, or the Life of William Henry Harrison of Ohio, (Boston, 1840); Isaac R. Jackson, Life of William Henry Harrison, (Philadelphia, 1840); William Emmons, Biography of Colonel Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky, (New York, 1833).

3Benjamin Drake, The Life of Tecumseh and His Brother, The Prophet, (Cincinnati, 1841), pp. 63-65. Drake did not subscribe to the notion that Tecumseh was part white but he does comment on the fact that the story was common at the time he was writing; Thomas L. McKenney and James Hall, History of the Indian Tribes of North America, (Philadelphia, 1838, reprinted Edinburgh, 1933), pp. 75-78.
in 1821 and over the next score of years collected information from a variety of sources. He had access to the correspondence of William Henry Harrison, the Governor of the Indiana Territory who had more direct dealings with the brothers than any other important American official. He also located and contacted pioneers and residents of the areas frequented by Tecumseh and the Prophet, in the process collecting a good deal of first-hand information from men who had actually known them.

It was Drake who persuaded both Stephen Ruddell, a white who had lived as a captive with Tecumseh's band of Shawnees while he and Tecumseh were boys and young men, and Anthony Shane, a half-breed who knew Tecumseh and the Prophet well and who often served the Americans as an interpreter and messenger, to record their recollections of the brothers. How accurate Ruddell's and Shane's accounts were, not to mention those of the other early residents of the Old Northwest from whom Drake solicited information, is open to some question, having been recorded for the first time decades after the events in question. Still, without Drake's efforts we would not have them at all. 4

4 A good portion of Drake's correspondence with these pioneer figures was turned over to Lyman Draper of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and now is part of the Draper Manuscripts, Tecumseh Papers.
The amazing thing is that with all the handicaps Drake had to work under, his book on the brothers stands up remarkably well. He went to great pains to verify his information on the confederation movement. The frequency with which he can be shown to be in error is remarkably small. In fact, to date, his book on Tecumseh and the Prophet is the most reliable work we have.

Writers who followed Drake did little of the kind of exhaustive research he had done. Most merely "borrowed" Drake's accounts and then attempted to enliven their manuscripts by adding to them varying amounts of apocryphal material garnered from a number of sources including biographies of other Indians and old pioneer stories into which they introduced Tecumseh and the Prophet as figures. Many of them were not above manufacturing a few tales either if they felt they were necessary to give life to some part of the narrative for which little if any documentary evidence was available.

One can understand national bias, lack of documentary sources, racial slurs and some political "axe grinding" from works of that period. A glance at the place and date of publication of these books should be sufficient warning to the modern student to beware of what lies between the covers. But readers might fairly have expected, with the turn of the century and the advent of "scientific history", replete with footnote and bibliographical
annotation, and with the opening of the archives of Canada, Britain and the United States to scholars, that more reliable works might have replaced those of earlier days. However, this was not to be. Historians of the confederation in this century have failed to take advantage of those sources in order to separate fact from fiction in their histories.

Instead, they have seemed "locked in" to a formula which demanded continued fictionalization of that story. The result has been that most 20th century writing on the brothers has been as bad as, if not worse than, that which was produced in the century before. Much of what modern writers have included in their lives of the Shawnee brothers cannot be substantiated in primary sources, and worse still, some of what they present as fact can be demonstrated to be fabrication. There is space here to discuss only three of these cases, but these examples give a good indication of the kind of apocrypha which fills modern accounts.

The first, a story, popular in recent biographies of Tecumseh, is that his father was treacherously murdered by a party of whites. It includes a great amount of detail as to how the murder was committed and how Tecumseh's mother came upon the dying form of her husband only in time to hear his last words which were "Behold the faith
of the white man." Tecumseh's mother, the tale continues, was determined that her son would not forget the manner in which his father had died. To this end she made annual visits with the young boy to the grave of her husband where she taught Tecumseh to hate the whites.

"Tecumseh, you shall avenge the death of your father and appease the spirits of his slaughtered brethren... Your feet shall be as swift as the forked lightning; your arms shall be as the thunderbolt, and your soul fearless as the cataract that dashes from the mountain precipice... Today you saw a deer bounding through the forest; he was lovely in strength and beauty, and fleeter than the winds... suddenly the hunter crossed his path, and an arrow clefth his heart. I led you to the spot and bade you look at the dying animal... the warm blood that flowed from his wound grew dark and chill. He was stiff and cold, and his beauty had departed. Such is death and such is the sleep of your father.

My son, you have been told of a people beyond these wilds, who are the enemies of your race. Their souls are dark in treachery and their hands are red with blood. They came with the cloak of friendship to our forest and smoked the calumet with our nation, but they met your father alone in his hills and killed him..."

This story appeared as fact in Glenn Tucker's "standard" biography of Tecumseh, *Tecumseh: Vision of Glory* in 1956. It was printed again in condensed form in Alvin Josephy's *The Patriot Chiefs* in 1961, and most recently was published in Frazer Symington's *The Canadian*
Indian in 1969.\(^5\) It probably has not seen its last airing yet. The idea of such an account, complete with quotation marks, having been preserved since the childhood of Tecumseh is in itself highly improbable. A little historical detective work discovered the source of the story to be a piece written in 1823 by a "lady in Indiana" for a fiction contest sponsored by the *New York Mirror*. It was reprinted in the *Canadian Magazine* in August, 1824. The only difference between her original composition and the account that appears in these three modern works on Tecumseh is that the Hoosier lady wrote in "King James style" English. Our more recent writers simply replaced the "thee's" and "thou's" and borrowed the rest whole.\(^6\)

It is not so much that modern writers have "faked" material on Tecumseh as it is that they have accepted every scrap of information they could find on him, his brother and their movement without any effort to critically appraise that material they put forth as fact. A recent example of this can be found in the third edition of Thomas A. Bailey's *The American Spirit*, a collection of documents of American history. In his section on the War of 1812, Bailey quotes


from a speech Tecumseh was supposed to have made to Governor Harrison at a council in Vincennes in 1810. The speech runs:

I would not then come to Governor Harrison to ask him to tear the treaty and to obliterate the landmark. But I would say to him: Sir, you have liberty to return to your own country.

The Being within, communing with past ages, tells me that... until lately there was no white man on this continent; that it then all belonged to red men, children of the same parents, placed on it by the Great Spirit that made them, to keep it, to traverse it, to enjoy its productions, and to fill it with the same race—once a happy race, since made miserable by the white people, who are never contented, but always encroaching. The way—and the only way—to check and to stop this evil is for all the red men to unite in claiming a common equal right to the land as it was at first, and should be yet. For it was never divided, but belonged to all for the use of each. That no part has a right to sell, even to each other, much less to strangers; those who want it all and will not do with less.7

While this talk reflects well the aims of the confederation, it is nothing like the version of Tecumseh's talk on that occasion that we have recorded in Harrison's journals of the council. The speech as it appears above was first printed in 1824, in Humphrey Marshall's The History of Kentucky.8 Benjamin Drake denounced it as fraudulent in


8Humphrey Marshall, The History of Kentucky, (2 Vols., Frankfort, 1824), II, pp. 482-484. It should be pointed out that Marshall hated Harrison as he considered him responsible for the death of his brother-in-law, Major Joseph Daveiss who was killed at the Battle of Tippecanoe. Perhaps it was this hatred of Harrison that tempted Marshall to "improve" Tecumseh's 1810 talk to the Governor.
his 1841 biography of Tecumseh and the Prophet. However, Marshall's other information about the 1810 Council at Vincennes is generally accurate. It is possible that he was paraphrasing what Tecumseh said there. If his version is actually a paraphrase, then it shows a remarkable flair for invention and little respect for the preservation of historical documents.

While Bailey's publication of the bogus talk is the most recent, it is by no means the only time Marshall's version of Tecumseh's speech has been used. The same talk also appears in Tucker's *Tecumseh: Vision of Glory* and Josephy's *The Patriot Chiefs.*

One more example of the kind of adulteration to which the story of Tecumseh and the Prophet has been subjected can be found in the first lines of the recent best-seller *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* by Dee Brown, published in 1970. Brown begins his book with a quotation which he attributes to Tecumseh in which the chief was supposed to

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9Drake, *Tecumseh,* p. 130.

10Tucker, *Tecumseh,* pp. 161-165. Tucker's version of this talk is actually a blend of the one found in Harrison's journals of the council at Vincennes in 1810 and the one that Marshall invented. Tucker claimed in his notes (p. 348) that he had made "some modifications . . . to correct poor translation without altering the meaning." However, without the original text of the talk in Shawnee or a knowledge of that language, it is difficult to imagine how Tucker hoped to improve the translation; Josephy, *The Patriot Chiefs,* p. 155.
have asked what had happened to the Pequot, the Narragansett, the Mohican and the Pokanoket.

'They have vanished before the avarice and the oppression of the White man, as snow before a summer sun.

Will we let ourselves be destroyed in our turn without a struggle, give up our homes, our country bequeathed to us by the Great Spirit, the graves of our dead and everything that is dear and sacred to us? I know you will cry with me "Never! Never!"' 11

The earliest printed version of this talk seen by this writer appeared in work entitled History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw and Natchez Indians by H. B. Cushman published in 1899, 88 years after the speech was supposedly delivered to a gathering of Southern Indians whom Tecumseh was trying to persuade to join his confederation.12 Before it appeared in Brown's best-seller it also was printed in Tucker's Tecumseh: Vision of Glory and Josephy's The Patriot Chiefs. Nothing resembling this talk can be found in primary sources.13

These examples are typical of the kind of adulteration to which the story of Tecumseh, the Prophet and the confederation have been subjected. Modern writers, with all the tools and sources available to them, have deliber-


ately chosen to produce this sort of romantic drivel instead of working toward a documented history of the brothers and their times. The weaknesses of our primary sources, discussed above, insure that even a documented history of the confederation written from those sources will contain distortions enough. Surely there is no need for the addition of such spurious quotations as these.

The result of the continued addition of such material to the history of the confederation has been that the story of that movement has drifted further and further from the realm of fact and stands instead on the threshold of fiction.

Where does the blame for this continued distortion lie? A portion must fall on our society, which chooses to view the Indian in one of two stereotypes. The first is that of the "Noble Savage." Tecumseh has been cast in this role and we, as a society, have certified him as a North American hero. Interestingly though, we have cast his brother, the Prophet into a role consistent with the other stereotype which we hold about the majority of Indians. Those "other" Indians we see as drunken, filthy, lazy, cunning but not intelligent, certainly not to be trusted. Our society, has complacently, if not avidly, accepted writing about Indians that satisfied one or both of these preconceived notions. We have failed to exert the same pressure on writers of Indian history as we placed on those who wrote white history. From the former we have demanded
reinforcement of stereotypes, while from the latter we have insisted on accuracy, documentation and reason.

Some of the blame must also rest on professional historians, many of whom found these romantic histories of the brothers not only acceptable but laudable. For some reason, perhaps it was that they were themselves captives of our stereotypes of Indians, they accepted kinds of information about Tecumseh, the Prophet and their followers which they would never have tolerated in an account of, say, Sir John A. Macdonald, George III or Woodrow Wilson. Their failure to apply the same critical standards to Indian history as they applied to white history has allowed writers to continue to stuff the gaps in the stories of the confederation with all manner of apocryphal material, and to pass that stuff off as fact.

This study began as an attempt to write a biography of Tecumseh. After reading the secondary literature it became apparent that a documented biography written from Canadian, British and American sources was long overdue. However, as research progressed two things became increasingly clear. The first was that no biography of Tecumseh could be written without giving not only more attention, but different treatment to his brother, Elskewatawa. Secondly, it became clear, that their lives, taken together, were, in essence, the story of the rise of the Northwest Indian
confederation. The men and their movement are inseparable.

This paper has several goals. One is to strip away from the account of the rise of the confederation the encrusted apocrypha of more than a century and a half and return to the narrative as it appears in primary sources. Another is to include in the telling of that story the Canadian and British side of events as well as the American side, which has heretofore received far more attention, even from Canadian writers. Finally, this paper will record the role of the Prophet as it appears in primary sources instead of banishing him to the background because of some ethnocentric moral judgements. The resulting narrative may not be as flattering to Tecumseh as earlier efforts, but to this it must be said that his image, as reflected in primary sources, is bright enough. Polishing that image by the addition of questionable, and worse, fraudulent material, regardless of how complimentary it may be, does no justice to Tecumseh. He, the Prophet and the readers of their story deserve better.
CHAPTER I
BACKGROUNDS

Of the European peoples the French were the first to explore and inhabit the upper Mississippi and Ohio Valley lands. For over a century it was theirs to mine of its pelts and furs. They did not, however, expropriate the land. With the exception of a few small tracts for forts and trading centers, the land remained in Indian possession. French traders visited the tribes occasionally to gather up the harvest the Indians had made in exchange for the usual items of trade: iron implements, cloth, ornaments, ammunition and guns.

While the French were reaping in the interior the British were sowing on the unlikely rocky soil of the New England coast, on the more hospitable agricultural flats of the middle colonies and in the warmer climates of Virginia and the Carolinas. They were sowing more than the seasonal crops of tobacco and rice, indigo and hemp. They were sowing hardy perennials, settlements. The British too soon learned how to relieve the Indians in their hinterlands of the skins and furs they gathered in abundance, but unlike the French they could not resist the temptation to relieve them of their land as well. Often, unfortunately, this policy led to clashes in which the Indian was inevitably, if not immediately,
defeated. In more instances than is pleasant to recount it also led to the extermination of entire tribes, so that 150 years after the British had planted the first colony in the New World many of the seacoast tribes could be remembered only by the names of towns and counties, rivers and lakes, all of which by that time were in possession of the British.

Whereas the French settlements were generally static, the British were expansive. The Anglo-Saxon considered himself to be in the vanguard of progress; impediment to his advance was not tolerated. The Indians willing to abandon their lands were spared, those not were destroyed. Where the Indian saw only hunting, fishing and a few plots of corn or squash, the Englishman could see farms and plantations, timber lots and pasture. The Indian attitude toward undeveloped land was a wasteful one in the minds of those more aware of the "stewardship of talents." Thus, it became a duty, almost a sacred charge, to acquire the lands and put them to better use. This rationale for seizing Indian lands served not only the British, but their successors the Americans as well until the beginning of the twentieth century.

As both the British and the French developed stronger settlements and greater trade with the Indians, various tribes, mainly because of these trade patterns, allied themselves with one or the other of the European
rivals. Those that supported the French had a stern lesson when, in 1763, the fight over the Ohio Valley lands and fur trade was decided in favor of the English. French removal from the continent as a result of their defeat in the Seven Years' War left their Indian allies forced to seek some sort of accommodation with the victors.

More than anything else at the close of the war the British wanted peace. The fighting had been long and expensive. The Chancellor of the Exchequer needed time to restore order to his accounts. However, the formulae that were employed to ensure peace contributed directly to the start of one war and indirectly to another.

In seeking ways to economize after the peace the British decided that Indian presents and supplies, distributed lavishly during the conflict, would have to be stopped. This change might have been good business as far as balancing accounts was concerned, but it was bad policy in dealing with the Indians who had come to expect these presents as their due. To complicate matters, the French had warned the Indians that the British, should they win the war, intended to remove them by starvation. The French prediction seemed to be true when the supply of presents suddenly dried up. Led by the Ottawa chief Pontiac, by May of 1763 the Indians of the Northwest were busy undoing what the British had accomplished during the
Seven Years' War. Within two months the entire West, save for three forts, was in Indian hands. It was not until October of 1765 that the Indians were subdued, by which time the folly of saving a few pounds on presents was sadly apparent.¹

The other war to which the peace in 1763 contributed was the American Revolution. With the French threat eliminated, American speculators and settlers were more than anxious to cross over the Appalachians. Many of the most influential colonists derived a good portion of their income from dealing in land, and they had long lusted after the rich Ohio bottoms. In addition, the pioneer types, restless to move onto more fertile acres, eagerly welcomed the new opportunity to settle the region which soldiers and traders had long touted as the most productive they had ever seen.

The Proclamation of October 7, 1763, however, thwarted their designs. Planned as a measure to cut costs by preventing Indian discontent, it prohibited settlement west of a line that followed the Appalachian highlands.

¹The best treatment of Pontiac's "conspiracy" is Howard H. Peckham, Pontiac and the Indian Uprising (Chicago, 1947).
from north to south. Even traders who carried on the valuable fur traffic with the Indians would have to submit to licensing and supervision. The plan had some obvious flaws. One was that the Indian discontent it set out to prevent had already caused a war without the knowledge of the proclamation's creators. The other was that the line drawn failed to take into account the realities of the situation. American settlement had already crossed the mountains. Hundreds of families were living west of the line before it was drawn. The job of policing such a demarcation was also clearly beyond the capabilities of either the military or the Indian Department. The Proclamation of 1763 and subsequent measures to derive revenue from the colonies to be applied to defraying the costs incurred during the fighting 1754-1763 are seen by most historians as the beginning of American resentment that was eventually transformed into the drive for independence.²

By the time the War for Independence occurred the British had managed to cement most of the Indians to them,

²This interpretation has come to be standard and is found in most texts that treat the period. It was best expressed in Lawrence Henry Gipson, "The American Revolution as an Aftermath of the Great War for the Empire," Political Science Quarterly, LXV (March, 1950), 86-104.
not so much by affection as by addiction. The Indians had for some time been dependent for their existence on the goods which the white trader supplied. Many could no longer hunt with the bow, but needed guns and flints, lead and powder. Since the British controlled access to these and other commodities upon which the natives had come to depend, the British also had their allegiance. It was for the same reason, British source of supply, that such a large number of traders and Indian Department personnel remained loyal during the conflict. Unfortunately for the Indians, however, most of them never received a just reward for their fidelity. The peace at the close of the Revolution left the Indians in the United States in direct conflict with the people to whom Great Britain consigned their land.3

The Peace of Paris in 1783 formally ended the contest between Britain and her rebellious colonies, but it by no means signalled an end to the fierce frontier fighting between Indians and Americans. Indeed, it became clear after the end of the Revolution that some of the Indians who sided with the British did so less out of

loyalty than a desire to preserve their lands and way of life. Some tribes remained determined to achieve that preservation after 1783.

Other tribes, principally the Six Nations, accepted the British offer of land in Canada, placing them among the first of the United Empire Loyalists.\(^4\) For most Indians, however, the acceptance of the British offer of land in Canada was an impossibility, and they determined to do what they could to retain their ancestral lands. The most bitter frontier fighting over these lands developed in the present states of Kentucky and Tennessee and the area known as the Old Northwest, that segment of land bounded by the Ohio River on the south and the Mississippi River on the west.\(^5\) The "western tribes"


\(^5\)There are numerous works which deal with border clashes between Americans and Indians in the years after the revolution. Most of these books are inadequately documented and contain many errors of fact and interpretation. However, a good idea of the frequency of such fighting can be gained from them. Among the better efforts are: Caleb Atwater, A History of the State of Ohio, Natural and Civil (Cincinnati, 1838); John B. Dillon, A History of Indiana, From its Earliest Exploration by Europeans to the Close of the Territorial Government in 1816 (Indianapolis, 1859); Timothy Flint, Indian Wars of the West (Cincinnati, 1833); Humphrey Marshal, A History of Kentucky (Frankfort, 1824); Henry Trumbull, History of the Indian Wars (Boston, 1846); Lucullus McWhorter, The Border Settlers of Northwestern Virginia (Hamilton, Ohio, 1915). A more reliable modern work is Reginald Horsman, Expansion and American Indian Policy, 1783–1812, (East Lansing, 1967).
that inhabited this region were already acquainted with
the story of the last of the Mohicans; however, the
version they knew was not written by Fenimore Cooper
but rather the bullets of the army and militia, the
bottles of the traders, and the bacteria of the invading
whites. Of these tribes the Shawnees were reputed to be
the most war-like. Their participation in the Revolution
was well known by those in the outer settlements. It
was the Shawnees who had suffered the retaliatory attacks
of George Rogers Clark and his frontier army. But this
sort of treatment at American hands had only served to
increase their determination to hold their lands. What
they received they returned in kind, with interest. 6

The Shawnees had originally been a southern tribe,
ranging as far south as Florida. In fact, the name
Shawanea means southern in the Delaware language. 7 Thomas
Jefferson, in his Notes on the State of Virginia, mentions

6 James Alton James (ed.), George Rogers Clark
Papers, Vol. III of the Illinois State Historical Library,
Virginia Series (Springfield, 1912), pp. 451-485; Jack M.
Sosin, The Revolutionary Frontier, 1763-1783 (New York,
1967), pp. 136-144.

7 Benjamin Drake, Life of Tecumseh and of his
Brother the Prophet with A Historical Sketch of the Shawnee
Indians (Cincinnati, 1841), pp. 9-41. For additional in-
formation on the history of the Shawnee tribe and vari-
atations on the name see Frederick Hodge (ed.), Handbook of
American Indians North of Mexico, (2 Vols., United States
Bureau of Ethnology, Bulletin 30, Washington, 1910), II,
pp. 530-538.
that they were living on the Susquehanna River at the time of Captain John Smith's landing in 1607.\footnote{Thomas Jefferson, \textit{Notes on the State of Virginia}, (New York, 1964), p. 190.} By the middle of the eighteenth century some of them were living in Pennsylvania's Wyoming Valley by the permission of the Delawares who then occupied the region and under Indian convention had the right to grant another tribe the privilege of living alongside them. The French had their aid in the Seven Years' War and they also contributed to Pontiac's efforts. After a battle with their landlords, the Delawares, a portion of the tribe removed to sites along the Ohio River in what is now the state of Ohio. A number of their villages or "chillicothes" were located in the Miami Valley, and it was at one of these that Tecumseh was born about the year 1768.\footnote{Drake, \textit{Tecumseh}, p. 15. Variations on the name Tecumseh can be found in Hodge (ed.), \textit{Handbook}, II, p. 714. Variations on the Prophet's name \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 729-30. Apparently the Prophet was originally known as Lalawethika or Laulewauiskau but adopted the name of Tenskwatawa or Elskwatawa after assuming the role of a prophet. Tecumseh's name is given as meaning either "shooting star" or "panther crouching in wait". The Prophet's original name signified a rattle while his later name was supposed to mean "the way" or "the open door".}

Tecumseh's youth has been the subject of much invention on the part of most of his biographers.\footnote{Herbert C. Goltz, "Tecumseh: The Man and the Myth". (unpublished M.S. dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 1966), pp. 17-38.} What
we know about that period from primary sources is enough to fill only a few pages. We might have had even less information about Tecumseh's early years had it not been for the narrative of Stephen Ruddell, a white boy who was captured by the Shawnees in a raid on a Kentucky Station in 1780, and who lived with the tribe for more than 15 years. Ruddell states that as boys he and Tecumseh compared ages and found that they were born the same year, 1768. While the Indians did not make birthdays the occasion that our society does, this information of Ruddell's should nonetheless give us an approximate birthdate for Tecumseh.11 Although some early writers thought that Tecumseh and his brother, Laulewausikau (The Prophet) were twins or even two of triplets, Ruddell felt that Tecumseh was about three years older than the Prophet.12

We know from what Ruddell said that Tecumseh excelled at the games the Indian boys played, and that at an early age he began his training at the skills that were to be useful to him later as a warrior. Ruddell also mentioned Tecumseh's participation in some skirmishes with

11State Historical Society of Wisconsin (Madison), "The Account of Stephen Ruddell," Draper MSS, Tecumseh Papers (1YY-13YY) 2Yy, pp. 120-123. (Hereafter given as Draper MSS, 2Yy120-123).

12Ibid., Goltz, "Tecumseh", p. 23.
the whites in the early 1780's. Unlike other writers on Tecumseh, Ruddell did not attempt to pinpoint any one skirmish as Tecumseh's first. However he does relate the story of a rather extraordinary performance by the young Indian after the capture of an Ohio River flatboat. This mode of striking at the white invaders of Indian country was widely practised by the Ohio tribes after the Revolution. Often they would use a white captive who had become as "savage" as themselves to stand on the bank and cry for help. When the luckless pioneers were close enough the Indians would launch their canoes from the shores and plunder the boat. In this particular instance all the passengers save one were speedily dispatched. The last was reserved to torture, providing some hours of entertainment for a people who were themselves tortured.

According to Ruddell, Tecumseh made no sound during the slow death of the captive, but after death released the white man the young Tecumseh rose and delivered a speech so powerful in its opposition to torturing helpless captives that the band resolved thereafter to kill their prisoners more rapidly. A great many other tales of Tecumseh's early fights with the Americans exist, but none enjoy the authority of Ruddell's.13

Tecumseh would have been about 20 years old when the Americans decided to launch their first expedition into the Ohio to clear the region of Indians and make it safe for survey, speculation and settlement. Before that first attempt the American government, under the Articles of Confederation, had simply not had a military force sufficient to oppose the Indians. The central government could levy no taxes, and without the requisite funds could neither raise nor equip a suitable army. Requests to the states for funds for that purpose fell on deaf ears. Settled Eastern states had no interest in spending their money on ridding more westerly areas of Indians. To do so would not only be expensive but would result, if successful, in draining off valuable craftsmen and laborers to frontier regions where wages were higher and living costs lower.

Nonetheless, the Confederation government had attempted to legislate for the future of this frontier area. The two pieces of legislation which are considered the monuments of the government under the Articles of Confederation, the Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, so long as the British and the Indians held the land, were monuments of paper only. For while they provided for survey and orderly government respectively, neither could be attempted until the
land was cleared of hostile Indians.  

This task was made even more difficult by the interposition of the British Indian Department, which via its agents, men like Alexander McKee, Matthew Elliott and the Girty brothers, did all that it could to see that the Indians of the Northwest forgot the petty disputes which often had them fighting each other and paid attention to the greater threat the Americans posed to them all. These men had been instrumental in welding the Indians into a sort of loose military confederation.  

Joseph Brant, the educated Mohawk chief, also aided them in convincing the Iroquois, the Wyandots, the Shawnees, the Potawatomis, the Delawares, the Miamis, the Ottawas and the Chippewas to sell no more land to the United States, and even to insist on the creation of an Indian buffer state in the Northwest which would be safe from


15 Elliott and the Girty brothers have found biographers. There is still no biography, however, of Alexander McKee. See Reginald Horsman, Matthew Elliott British Indian Agent, (Detroit, 1964) and Consul W. Butterfield, History of the Girtys, (Cincinnati, 1890).
further white incursion.\textsuperscript{16}

Needless to say, the Indians would not have been the only beneficiaries of such a plan. The fur traders had long pressured London to move in that direction to save the area from the plow, and the British military knew well the value of holding the Western Posts which had legally been ceded to the United States at the peace in 1783, but had never been relinquished. The pretense given for retaining these posts was that the Americans had failed to compensate the loyalists.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{16} The activities of the British Indian agents in the post-Revolutionary War period are discussed in: Horsman, Matthew Elliott; Reginald Horsman, "The British Indian Department and the Abortive Treaty of Lower Sandusky, 1793," Ohio Historical Quarterly, LXX (July, 1961), pp. 189-213. Collections of some of the papers and letters of these agents can be found in the Public Archives of Canada, RG10 and MG19, which deal with Indian and military affairs. The Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, (MP&HC), (40 Vols., Lansing, Michigan, 1877-1929) and the Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, (31 Vols., Madison, 1854-1931) also contain a good deal of primary material on these men.

Before the ratification of the new Constitution of the United States in 1789, the weak American army could not possibly have moved against the British-held posts or Indian held land with any hope of success. However, the new taxing power which that document granted to the central government was soon employed in building a stronger fighting arm, and the selection of the Northwest as a target for its first use did not come far behind.

The man chosen to lead the new army against the Ohio Indians was General Josiah Harmar, a veteran of the Revolutionary War familiar with frontier fighting. Harmar's preparations were hastened by the sporadic frontier skirmishing that increased in 1788. With the confidence of a seasoned campaigner, the General spent 1789 laying the groundwork, and building forts that would serve as his source of supply and route of retreat for his campaign of 1790. His advance that spring was cautious, but step by step Harmar moved deeper into Indian strongholds. What was most bothersome about the advance was that the Indians could not be brought to battle. If they melted before him they would surely reappear to maraud the settlers. Only by defeating the Indians in a decisive battle could the surrender of the land be obtained.
As cold weather approached in October, Harmar, realizing the folly of proceeding deeper into Indian territory, ordered a retreat. A portion of his militia prevailed upon him, however, to allow them to slip back and set an ambush for the Indians who they knew were following the army. The surprise was on them, however, and in two separate engagements nearly 200 of them lost their lives, a catastrophe in terms of warfare of the day, indeed even in terms of a modern clash with guerilla forces.18

Harmar's defeat left the situation even worse than it had been before his expedition. It was clear now that a good deal more strength would be needed to overthrow the Indians. Their victory had left the momentum in their hands, and worse, it had emboldened them and their quieter allies, the British, to publicly demand that the Northwest be set aside as an Indian state, free for all time from interference by the Americans. The American public, however, that a few months before had sought only land, now sought revenge as well. Within a year the army prepared another attempt to "liberate" the Ohio lands.

18This campaign seen from Harmar's point of view is presented in Gayle Thornbrough (ed.), Outpost on the Wabash, 1787-1791: Letters of Brigadier General Josiah Harmar and Major John Francis Hamtramck, (Indianapolis, 1958). Additional detail can be found in Horsman, Expansion and American Indian Policy, pp. 87-88.
The second Ohio campaign was led by the aging and
gouty Arthur St. Clair, Governor of the Northwest Territory. The reasons for his appointment to so arduous an assignment at his age, and worse, his physical condition (he could walk only with difficulty, and had to be lifted to his saddle) are hard to understand. He was unable to inspire or command his men. He held insufficient drills and inspections; discipline was almost non-existent. The militia, historically unwilling to submit itself to the rigors demanded of the regulars, practically dictated the terms of their service with the threat to pack up and leave if they were not pleased.

The Indians, accompanied and advised by agents of the British Indian Department, soon realized how best to approach the soft underbelly of this expedition. On the night of November 3, 1791, with few guards posted and tents irregularly pitched, and also with a 'roaring' bonfire blazing in the middle of the camp, the soldiers retired for the night. A few at a time the Indians penetrated the defenses of the camp so that by dawn they had infiltrated the entire encampment. Just before the light, with hellish shrieks and with the sulphurous smell of burnt black powder issuing from their guns, they played an early reveille. Before they finished they claimed over 900 casualties. The number might have been smaller had ample precautions been taken, or had some drill taught the men
how to act under fire. Instead, however, the confused soldiers stumbled from their tents to the light of the fire, thus perfectly illuminating themselves as targets for their assailants. The retreat of the remnant that managed to break out of that deadly circle differed most noticeably from their advance in speed. They covered in 24 hours what had earlier taken ten days to march. Even St. Clair, whose bulk should have given him ample concern over being struck by a ball, managed to keep pace with his terror-stricken troops on the return to civilization.19

The losses of that night affected thousands of frontier families. Those who had not lost someone themselves knew others who had. The drive to rid the Ohio Valley of its original inhabitants now came to resemble a crusade, but it would be another three years before the blood of those fallen with Harmar and St. Clair could be avenged. For a while it appeared that concessions would have to be made to the British and the Indians, at least until a force sure to win against them could be fielded. The British took advantage of these victories by renewing their demand that the United States create an "Indian Buffer State" in the Old Northwest.

Writers have not always agreed on what motivated the British to demand the creation of a buffer state and also to attempt retention of the Northwest Posts. Some have held it was the lucrative fur trade that they were trying to protect and monopolize. Others felt that the British sincerely thought that if their presence were removed from the Northwest, Indian war with the Americans would surely follow. It has been just as convincingly argued that it was the concern of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe of Upper Canada to interpose a cushion of Indian land between his colony and the United States. This cushion would absorb initial impact in case of war, or barring war, would keep the Indians free of pressure for their land and thus happy and less likely to start war themselves. Probably all of these elements played a part in the creation of what became official British policy.

John Graves Simcoe had come to Canada shortly after the division of the colony into Upper and Lower Canada provided for by the Constitutional Act of 1791. It was his dream to create a colony in the Canadian wilderness that would be a model in miniature of aristocratic Britain. His plan was off to a good start with the population of the province by Loyalists from the American colonies, men whom Simcoe thought shared his ideas about the dangers of "republicanism". Nothing, he thought, so threatened the success of his pet colony as war. For this reason he
decided to fortify Upper Canada as best he could to discourage an attack on the part of the Americans. Just as frightening, however, was the idea that the Indians, discontented with the British abandoning them at the close of the American Revolution, and frustrated by American demands for their land, might somehow turn against Upper Canada. To prevent this danger, Simcoe felt it would be necessary to ensure that land be set aside for them, good land where they could live life as they had known it, and where they could make a livelihood by trapping and hunting and trading with the whites.

Simcoe sought an insurance policy for peace, but as S. F. Wise has neatly pointed out, it was his very inflexibility on the point of the creation of the Indian buffer state that nearly led to another Anglo-American conflict.20 Such a conflict would, of course, have left Upper Canada in a most vulnerable position.

The responsibility for making the buffer state a reality fell upon British diplomats in Philadelphia who tried to convince the Americans that their own best interests would be served by allowing the Indians continued occupancy of the land; the British Indian Department

20Wise, "Indian Diplomacy".
which had the responsibility of convincing the Indians to hold out for the creation of such a state in their peace talks with the Americans; and the British military which began to rebuild and garrison some of the older forts in the Northwest that had been abandoned after 1783.21

In the years between St. Clair's defeat and the eventual American victory over the Indians at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794, three separate councils were held by the Americans and the Indians ostensibly to reach some sort of compromise without further fighting. The British and the Indians were so sure of their superiority, however, that they were unwilling to make concessions. The Americans, for their part, had such complete confidence in their impending victory that to them the talks were more a device to prevent further hostile action until they could field their third force, than they were any step in the direction of peace. In fact, it was rather to General Anthony Wayne's disappointment that the last of the talks, that held at Lower Sandusky in 1793, was so long in failing. The final break-off of negotia-

21 For the diplomatic correspondence between the United States and Britain during this controversy see W. R. Manning (ed.), *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, Canadian Relations 1784-1860*, (3 Vols. Washington, 1940), I. Information on British plans to re-establish forts in the Ohio country can be found in Lord Dorchester to Lieutenant Governor John G. Simcoe, 17 February, 1794 and Simcoe to Dorchester, 14 March, 1794 cited in E. A. Cruikshank (ed.), *The Correspondence of Lt. Governor John Graves Simcoe*, (5 Vols. Toronto, 1923-1931), II, pp. 154, 179-180.
tions came in the latter part of August, after which it was too late to take an expedition into the Indian country. However, Wayne used the upcoming fall and winter to good advantage, drilling his already well trained troops for the battle of the summer of '94.22

Word of Wayne's preparations was constantly reaching civil and military officials in both Upper and Lower Canada. The agents of the Indian Department, in the field with their charges in Ohio, received intelligence on "Mad Anthony's" movements as well. There was no question in their minds that a battle was shaping up, and their activities in the winter and spring of 1794 were directed toward assembling as many Indians as possible in the vicinity of the Glaize, the junction of the Maumee and Au Glaize Rivers. Their task was not a simple one. It was one thing to incite the Indians to a war pitch, but quite another to keep them at it without having them begin to fight prematurely. Worse still, the Indians tended to quit if not allowed to vent their hostile feelings.23


Lord Dorchester added more fuel to the fire of Indian discontent when, in February of 1794, he told a delegation of Indians of the Seven Nations that it would not surprise him to see war between the United States and England within a year. When that war did come "a line must be drawn by the warriors." Whatever Dorchester may have meant by this, the Indians found him clear enough. They were being enlisted on the British side for the impending war. To the Indians, Dorchester's talk also meant full British support for them in terms of supplies, weapons, and military aid. Whatever doubt the Indians may have had was dispelled two months later when Lieutenant Governor Simcoe arrived at the Glaize and delivered a similar talk to the Indians assembled there. Soon thereafter another proof of British intent was given the Indians: Fort Miami, in ruins since Revolutionary War days, was reconstructed and garrisoned only a mile from the headquarters of Alexander McKee, the Superintendent of Indian affairs.

24*bid.*, pp. 149-150.

25*MP&HC*, XXIV, p. 656.

26Simcoe to Baron Corondelet, 11 April, 1794, Thomas Duggan to Chew, 16 April, 1794, Simcoe to Col. England, 18 April, 1794, Simcoe to Dorchester, 30 April, 1794, Cruikshank (ed.), *Simcoe Correspondence*, II, pp. 200-201, 209, 211-212, 225-226.
By spring, McKee and Elliott had their hands full trying to convince the often fickle Indians to remain in the area of the Glaize, ready to counter Wayne when he appeared. Both men had had long experience with Indians. Both had traded with them in the American colonies before the war. Both had been incarcerated by the Americans as traitors once the Revolution had begun, and both had made their escape to British lines and served with the Indians for the duration of the war. Both had married Shawnee women and raised half-breed families by them. There were few men anywhere who knew more about dealing with Indians, but even they were unable to prevent hundreds of the 1,500 to 2,000 Indians who had converged on the Glaize by June from wandering off before Wayne ever began his move.²⁷ The westernmost tribes, those least threatened by American action, were the first to drift away with vague promises of returning if and when the fighting started.²⁸ Other Indians were disillusioned with what seemed to them rather incomplete cooperation from the British military which was loath to grant them the number of weapons, especially heavy guns, they requested. Little Turtle, the famous


²⁸McKee to England, 10 July, 1794, Cruikshank (ed.), Simcoe Correspondence, II, p. 315.
Miami chief who had directed much of the Indian fighting in the previous two engagements with the Americans, finally told the British that if they were not willing to help the Indians, the Indians would not attempt to stop the Americans.²⁹

Clearly British reluctance to become fully involved in the oncoming fight was becoming apparent to some, if not all of the Indians. Yet the goal of that fight, control of the Ohio lands, was too great to allow the Indians to make good Little Turtle's threat of leaving. In spite of the petty bickering between the various tribes and the growing realization that the British were not as fully committed to the cause as their earlier talks had indicated, somehow the loose confederation remained intact. At the time of Wayne's advance some 1300 warriors were still in the field, principally from Ohio Valley tribes: Ottawas, Potawatomis, Delawares, Shawnees, Miamis and Wyandots. A few Six Nations warriors arrived after the battle was over.³⁰

These tribes skirmished with Wayne's supply train at the end of June and lost nearly 20 men. This number is

³⁰McKee to Chew, 27 August, 1794, Ibid., III, pp. 7-8.
minute compared with American losses in the two earlier expeditions, but it was enough to make the Indians afraid of Wayne. It was the first time they had been handed anything like a defeat by the Americans; their confidence began to slip.\textsuperscript{31} By the middle of August, Wayne was ready for his final thrust. On the 13th of that month he sent a last note to the Indians advising them to come to terms. After delaying for four days the Indians finally gave answer and the following day prepared to fight.\textsuperscript{32}

Part of the Indian preparation for a fight included fasting a day in advance. Accordingly they took up the fast on the 18th. Wayne, a keen student of Indian fighting methods, may well have known of this practice. Whether he did or not, he did keep the Indians waiting two more hungry days before appearing at their front. By this time many of the starving "savages" had gone off to visit the British fort where food was available.\textsuperscript{33} Those that remained were so weakened by hunger that they were far from fighting form. A three hour battle fought through the tangle of trees uprooted by a tornado years before was

\textsuperscript{31}McKee to Chew, 7 July, 1794, \textit{Ibid.}, II, p. 312.

\textsuperscript{32}Wayne to the Western Indians, 13 August, 1794, Wayne to Christopher Miller, 13 August, 1794, McKee to England, 17 August, 1794, \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 371-374, 387.

\textsuperscript{33}Isaac Weld, \textit{Travels}, as cited in Cruikshank (ed.), \textit{Simcoe Correspondence}, III, p. 11.
the conclusion to three decades of American pressure to obtain title to the Ohio lands. 34

There is some evidence that Tecumseh participated in the fight against Wayne. Stephen Ruddell, the white boyhood friend of Tecumseh, wrote that Tecumseh took a conspicuous part in the fight and even at the time when other Indians were retreating he along with some others charged a group of Americans who had a field piece, cut the horses loose and rode off. 35

Driven from the field, the Indians fled in the direction of Fort Miami, where to the surprise of some, and perhaps confirmation of earlier suspicions of others, they were not admitted. Some were even killed within pistol shot of the fortifications. Major William Campbell, the commander of the fort, showed more prudence, if not more humanity, than had either Simcoe or Dorchester in the months past. Perhaps he felt the slaughter of a few more Indians was a small price to pay for averting another war between Britain and the United States. That night he wrote,

It has been a great relief to my mind that the Battle did not happen so near this Fort, so as to commit me. You may imagine that we shall not sleep very soundly tonight . . . Would to God the Governor himself were here. 36

34McKee to Chew, 27 August, 1794, Ibid., pp. 7-8.  
Major Campbell's tortured sleep was not much of a price for the British to pay for their indiscretions of the past few years. When their losses in the fight over the Ohio were totalled it was clear they had forfeited next to nothing. Governor Simcoe's fears of Indian reprisal on Canada were never realized, no matter how richly they may have been deserved. The British fur traders were allowed continued access to deal with American Indians under the terms of the Jay Treaty signed the same year. This agreement provided that the Western Posts, legally belonging to the Americans since 1783 be given to them, in fact, by July, 1796.\textsuperscript{37} The only other losses suffered by the British were a few militia casualties in the actual battle.

American gains also outweighed losses. Only about 50 men had been killed on their side in the Battle of Fallen Timbers, which, considering the hundreds of lives invested in the past, was not a great sacrifice.\textsuperscript{38} In addition, the Treaty of Greenville, which the Indians were forced to sign the following spring, ceded some 50,000


\textsuperscript{38}In Alexander McKee's initial report of that battle found in Cruikshank (ed.), \textit{Simcoe Correspondence}, III, pp. 7-8, he reported that the Americans had lost between 300-400 men. However this was greatly exaggerated. \textit{American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs}, (2 Vols., Washington, 1832-1834), I, p. 494, lists American casualties at 44 dead and 89 injured. Most works agree that American losses in the engagement were under 50.
square miles of the most fertile land in the nation along with promises of pacific behavior in the future.\textsuperscript{39}

Clearly it was the Indians, and only the Indians, who had suffered irreparable damage. They had attempted to keep what was rightfully theirs. Some of their leaders had progressed to the realization that the land could not be held by individual tribes acting alone, but only by moving in concert with one another. Their defeat came not only because of their military and technological inferiority but because of a reluctance on the part of their British allies to provide the support they had promised. The surrender of the Indians' land and their subsequent exposure to the worst influences of the whites produced a steady decline in their social stability until, a decade later, alcohol and disease, lack of game and fur-bearing animals brought them to a low ebb in their history. But not all the lessons of the struggle to retain the Ohio lands were to be lost. After 1805, Tecumseh and his brother, the Shawnee Prophet, would again call upon the tribes to refuse to sell any more of their land to the Americans, and again raise the cry of unification to resist white encroachment, eventually uniting segments of most the tribes of the Old Northwest and some from the South as well into a confederation that would one day again face the Americans on the battlefield.

\textsuperscript{39}Anthony Wayne to Timothy Pickering, 22 September, 1795, Knopf (ed.), \textit{Anthony Wayne}, pp. 447-453.
CHAPTER TWO

THE EVOLUTION OF THE PROPHET'S REVIVAL

The delivery of the Northwest posts to the Americans, as agreed under the conditions of Jay's Treaty, was completed in July of 1796. Former British posts now began the transition to American forts in the Old Northwest.

The year 1796 marked other transitions as well for both Upper Canada and the United States. In that year John Graves Simcoe returned to England, and George Washington approached the end of his term. Reflecting the stability of the colony and the nation, however, most aspects of life continued as they had before the changes. Fort Malden at Amherstburg replaced Detroit as the British fort, and at the new location it was "business as usual" for the traders, the military and, for a time, the Indian agents. However, the following decade saw a decline in dealings between the British and the Indians at Malden and a decrease in trading, both changes being directly related to expanding American occupation of more and more land of the Old Northwest throughout the decade. Also, as the Battle of Fallen Timbers receded into the past, the British, always cost conscious, realized that maintaining relations with the Indians as they had been before 1794 was expensive. It was also unnecessary. One of the main reasons for British generosity to the Northwest Indians before that
time had been the hope that their resistance to the Americans would help establish the buffer state that was to protect Upper Canada. The buffer state idea was now dashed, the forts were in American hands. Instead of an asset, the Indians slowly came to be considered a liability. Before the turn of the century McKee had died, and Elliott, as a result of jealousies between the military and the Indian Department, had been accused of "irregularities" with Indian Department supplies and dismissed. With their disappearance from the Indian Department the Indians lost two dedicated friends. By 1804, Thomas McKee, Alexander's son and Elliott's successor at the post at Amherstburg wrote that as he understood it, government policy was to have "as few Indians come to the Post as possible in order to lessen the expenditure of Provisions". ¹

While it is fair to point out that the Indians were disillusioned by lack of British support after Fallen Timbers, and that the British, seeking peace not war, had less contact with American tribes after the dream of forcing American recognition of a buffer state was shattered, it should also be pointed out that these things did not necessarily mean that contact between the two parties

¹Thomas McKee to Prideaux Selby, 12 August, 1804, MP&HC, XXIII, pp. 31-32.
was broken off, but rather gradually curtailed. The British continued to feel some responsibility for the welfare of the Indians, supplying them in the years after Fallen Timbers with enough provisions to keep them from starvation as well as supplies and hardware to enable them to support themselves by hunting and trapping.² Aware of the bounty of His Majesty that awaited them at British forts, the Indians made periodic visits to procure their dole just as they had done in the past. In addition to this contact with the British, on British soil, the Indians were regularly visited within the boundaries of the United States by British based traders who often served as informers, and by members of the Indian Department themselves.³


³Thomas Duggan to Alexander McKee, 18 August, 1796, Cruikshank and Hunter (eds.), Russell Papers, I, p. 27; Russell to Robert Prescott, 21 August, 1797, Ibid., pp. 258-260; Speech of the Shawanoe Chiefs in behalf of themselves and the other confederated tribes of Indians to His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, 2 April, 1800, British Military Correspondence (Captured), p. 487; Thomas Duggan to Prideaux Selby, 6 July, 1801, MP&HC, XXIII, p. 5; Lt. Robert Cowell to James Green, 10 February, 1802, Ibid., p. 9; List of the number of Indians visiting St. Joseph, September 1803 to March 1804, Ibid., p. 25; Capt. Alex Clerk to Lt. Col. James Green, 26 January, 1804, Ibid., p. 23; Minutes of an Indian Council at Amherstburg, 8 June, 1805, Public Archives of Canada (PAC), Claus Papers, MG19 F I, Vol. 9, pp. 109-116.
All of this was done with only slight objection on the part of American authorities. When considering the delicate situation of 1794, one is puzzled at first by the lack of hostile communications between the Americans and the British in the 1796 to 1800 period. There are, however, several possible explanations for the tolerant, if not cordial, relationship between the two North American powers. One is that the American government was headed during that time by the Federalists, notorious for their hatred of France and admiration of Britain. The Federalists saw pacific relations with Britain as a requisite for increased trade with the former mother country, trade that the United States very badly needed.

Another reason for improved Anglo-American relations was doubtless the fact that persistent rumours were reaching both the British and American military that the French and Spanish were intriguing with the Indians of the South, perhaps plotting attacks on forts in Canada and the United States.⁴ Nothing makes friends of enemies faster than a

⁴Matthew Elliott to Sir John Johnson, 23 June, 1797, Cruikshank and Hunter (eds.), Russell Papers, I, p. 194; Russell to Prescott, 21 August, 1797, Ibid., pp. 258-260; Joseph Brant to D. W. Smith, 3 April, 1796, Ibid., p. 2; Capt. Mayne to Russell, 18 July, 1797, Ibid., p. 231; Capt. Thomas McKee to Claus, 3 January, 1803, Claus Papers, MG 19 FI, Vol. 8, p. 236; Timothy Pickering to Andrew Ellicott, 8 August, 1797, Manning (ed.), Diplomatic Correspondence, I, pp. 126-127.
common threat. Preparations on both sides of the border were made in earnest. Upper Canada mustered some 2,000 troops and joined the Americans in a flurry of diplomatic activity to discourage any possible attack. Both states were also concerned over what President Russell, the Administrator who succeeded Simcoe, called the "discontent and wavering" of the Kentucky people, long courted by Spain to secede from the United States to form a new power in the South and West which would be directed by the Spanish.  

When to the above causes is added the fact that the Americans entered into a two year undeclared naval war with France in 1798, it becomes plain why the United States was willing to seek the aid and friendship of a nation that a short time previously had been her enemy.

As promising as this development was, however, it was not of great duration. By 1800, the threat of war with France had blown over, and the party that had campaigned in the elections of that year on a war scare theme, the Federalists, looked more than foolish to many Americans. The presidential election was decided in favor of Thomas Jefferson, whose anti-British sentiments were an open

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secret. Also by 1800, it was clear that there would be no attack on either the United States or Canada from Spanish territory. Reports of Spanish intrigue with the Indians continued to come in, but they could be tolerated if they embodied no immediate threat to peace and security. A further irritant to Anglo-American relations developed over the share of the American Indian trade which was going to British traders. The provisions of Jay's Treaty had allowed these traders continued access to the American Indians, but the complaints of American traders coupled with American fears of undue British influence over the Indians on account of Indian dependence on British goods prompted the application of duties to goods being brought in by traders from Canada. 6

Jeffersonians were prone to refer to the 1800 elections as the "Revolution of 1800". Scholars have since shown that the word revolution can hardly be applied to the changes instituted by the Jefferson administration. However, in terms of dealing with the Indians something of a revolution did take place. The Americans implemented a policy of civilizing the Indians. Jefferson himself had

long felt that the natives of the country would be best served by giving up their semi-nomadic existence in favor of a more civilized way of life. Indian women should be taught weaving and spinning and other household arts, while the men were to become husbandmen and planters. In addition to guaranteeing the Indians some more dependable source of food than that provided by hunting and gathering, this plan had the advantage of freeing hundreds of thousands of acres of wild land for settlement since the Indian would no longer be dependent on them for his supply of game. Jefferson therefore instructed his Indian agents and territorial governors to approach the Indians with this proposal and to attempt to convince them to adopt a civilized mode of life wherever possible.  

The President's regard for the Indian prompted him to advise fairness in all America's dealings with them, and for a time this maxim was adhered to. However, in this matter of principle as in many others, Jefferson was forced by necessity to compromise. By 1803, he was advising

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that Indian land was badly needed, and suggesting that William Henry Harrison, Governor of the new Indiana Territory created in 1800, and also Superintendent of Indian Affairs, have his agents run the influential chiefs into debt so that these obligations could be used as a lever with which more land could be pried from the tribes.\(^8\)

The Indians, for their part, considered that the Treaty of Greenville insured them from further loss of land. Article V, in fact, guaranteed them the right to keep all land not included in the treaty. The only stipulation attached to that guarantee was that when the Indians wanted to sell any more of their land they could sell only to the United States. As far as the Indians were concerned then, the Treaty of Greenville established an inviolable line between themselves and the Americans.\(^9\) But white attempts to obtain land outside the boundaries of the Greenville cession began almost before the ink on the treaty was dry, and these pressures invariably led to friction between the races. On the other hand, the settlers were irritated by the provision of the treaty which

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allowed the Indians to use portions of land within the
cession that were not yet occupied by whites. They were
nervous about parties of Indians moving in their vicinity,
even if they were only there to farm some of their old
fields and hunt and fish in favorite areas. One can under-
stand their exposed feeling, especially since there was no
sure way to tell a friendly band of Indians from one that
was bent on depredation.\textsuperscript{10} It must be said, however, that
when incidents did occur both sides appeared anxious to
have them resolved pacifically and speedily.

The most common method for re-establishing the
peace after any violence was to call the Indians in to
council to extract promises of peaceful behavior and de-
mand the delivery of the guilty parties. In very few
instances were the same sorts of conditions met by the
whites when they were the cause of the initial trouble.
Governor Harrison often complained of the difficulty in
obtaining justice in the case of white injury to Indians.
His concern, however, was that the Indians might refuse
to cooperate with his justice if they found that the
same treatment was not accorded the settlers.\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{10}\textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{11}Harrison to Dearborn, 15 July, 1801, Esarey
(ed.), \textit{Messages}, I, pp. 25-31; Harrison to Dearborn
October, 1802, \textit{Ibid.}, p. 60.
Tecumseh as chief of one band of Shawnees is recorded as having taken part in such a council at Urbana, Ohio Territory, in 1799. No copy of the speech he delivered on that occasion has been preserved, however, the French translator at the talks complained that he could not follow the "lofty flights" of Tecumseh's oratory even though he knew the Shawnee language as well as his mother tongue. This council, like the ones that followed it, concluded with assurances for the peace being given by reasonable men on both sides. But reasonable men can do little to stop irrational violence, and unfortunately the clashes continued. As the months and years passed, pressures on the Indians to part with their lands increased proportionately to the increase in the number of settlers pouring into the lands the tribes had already surrendered. These renewed efforts to obtain Indian land made it ever more difficult to maintain the peace.\textsuperscript{12}

By 1802, as the Indians became more and more restless, Harrison's complaints about British instigation of violence by the Indians began to appear on the desk of Secretary of War, Henry Dearborn, the American official then responsible for Indian affairs. Blind to the fact

\textsuperscript{12}Drake, \textit{Tecumseh}, p. 84.
that his demands for more land beyond the Greenville
cession had offended and angered the natives, Harrison
could see only intrigue by British agents as the cause of
his Indian problems.\textsuperscript{13} He knew that the Indians were
sending deputations annually to visit the British in
Canada, but he did not know what was said at those talks.
British records reveal that the Indians were indeed dis-
contented with their lot. Some openly proposed that the
British join them in the war they were ready to fight to
regain their lands.\textsuperscript{14}

The officers of the British Indian Department,
however, in these years never encouraged this kind of talk.
Though the United States was not as friendly with Britain
as it had been a few years before, there was still no
cause for involvement in what was clearly an internal Ameri-
can matter. In spite of sympathies which were still ob-
viously pro-Indian, the officers counselled tribesmen that
patience was the only practical course. The British were

\begin{quote}
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\textsuperscript{13}Harrison to Dearborn, 15 July, 1801, Esarey (ed.),
\textit{Messages}, I, pp. 25-31; Harrison to Secretary of War, 19
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\textsuperscript{14}Minutes of an Indian Council at Amherstburg, 8
June, 1805, Claus Papers, MG19 FI, Vol. 9, pp. 109-116;
Minutes of Indian Council at Amherstburg, 28 June, 1806,
\textit{Ibid.}, Vol. 9, pp. 139-142.
\end{quote}
willing to give food and supplies to the American Indians to help them in their distress, but under no circumstances could they consider taking up the tomahawk themselves, nor would they recommend the Indians doing so. Peace under difficult conditions was still preferable to war.\textsuperscript{15}

Even with this kind of advice however, Indian war nearly came on several occasions. Near Chillicothe, Ohio in 1803, a white settler, Thomas Herrod, was found shot and scalped a short distance from his home. This action was considered reason enough by some of Herrod's neighbors, in typical frontier fashion, to kill the most convenient Indian they could find. This bloody exchange soon had both sides on edge. The Indians packed their camps in preparation to move west, and the whites loaded their wagons, some coming to the towns for protection, others readying to leave the territory.

Fortunately for all concerned, there were some men with enough foresight to see the result of leaving this panic unchecked. Led by a desire to preserve the peace, these men took their lives into their hands, rode into the Indian country and held talks with Tecumseh's band of Shawnees. Although they were assured by Tecumseh that his people knew nothing of the murder of Herrod, they were so

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Ibid.}
impressed with Tecumseh that they finally persuaded him to accompany them back to Chillicothe to repeat his assurances to the citizens there. Col. John M'Donald, an eyewitness to Tecumseh's talk in Chillicothe later claimed,

From the confident manner in which he spoke of the intention of the Indians to adhere to the Treaty of Greenville, and live in peace and friendship with their white brethren, he dispelled, as if by magic, the apprehensions of the whites ... 16

By 1803 then, it was clear that Tecumseh was well established as the leader of one band of the Shawnee tribe. He was known to the settlers of the area as the spokesman for that band, and was no doubt valued by his band for his obvious talents in dealing with the Americans. But care must be taken not to read into this local importance anything greater. Tecumseh was still unknown to the majority of white settlers in Ohio and the Indiana territory. There is no positive way of assessing how widely he was known to the other Indians of the Northwest, but there is no evidence to suggest that he was better known than leaders of other bands. The movement that would promote Tecumseh to international fame was yet to begin, and when it did, not Tecumseh but his one-eyed brother, Elskwatawa, the

Prophet, conceived of and directed it.

The year 1803 marked a turning point for the Old Northwest. In that year Ohio, the first of the territories created out of that mass of land became a state. At the same time the United States added Louisiana, a territory roughly again as large as the country itself to its boundaries. By the end of 1803, Lewis and Clark were preparing to explore the new possession, thereby marking the first phase of the trans-Mississippi frontier and the last phase of the old frontier east of the great river. For the Indians of the Northwest time was running short. Pioneers by the thousands were pressing into the Territory of Indiana and the new state of Ohio. American officials were busy demolishing the wall of protection the Greenville Treaty had given the natives by making piece-meal purchases of smaller tracts adjacent to those already in their possession. Hard pressed by poor hunting and trapping and hard winters, the Indians were forced time and again to exchange land for provisions and a tiny annuity.17

American Indians had been subjected to pressure for their land before. In fact the pattern of reaction between whites and Indians was largely set by white demands for land and Indian responses to them. Inevitably, initial friendliness gave way to distrust and suspicion as

the whites began helping themselves to Indian acreage. Eventually, there were armed clashes between the races, and in every case the whites were the victors in the long run. Their superior technology and organization spelled defeat for the Indians before the battles were ever begun.

Interestingly, in the final stages of Indian resistance to white demands for Indian lands, there often occurred a curious phenomenon. Overawed by white force and bereft of the means for further resistance, the Indians sometimes turned to the supernatural for aid. Prophets arose, and the doctrines they preached were remarkably similar. Most called upon their followers to purify themselves of the ways of the whites. They called for a return to an Indian religion. Only when this purification was accomplished would the Great Spirit be pleased with them. Then he would cause the game to return in plenty, he would restore the lands to the Indian and he would drive the whites back to the sea whence they had come. 18

Such prophets and such religions have appeared from the East Coast to the West. A number of such Indian revivals are documented. One of the earliest about which we have any amount of information was the revival of the

so-called Delaware Prophet in 1762. His revival laid the basis for Pontiac's successful confederation of tribes the following year. This Delaware Prophet travelled amongst the tribes of the Great Lakes, persuading the Indians that he was appointed by the Great Spirit to point out to them the offences by which they had incurred his displeasure as well as the means by which they might once again come into his favor, with all the attendant blessings that such favor would bring. 19

The revival led by the Shawnee Prophet, Tenskwatawa, beginning in 1805, then, was not a completely new phenomenon to the Indians of the Old Northwest. And the position of the Indians at that date in relation to the whites was analogous to that of the Delaware Prophet's contemporaries in 1762. For by 1805, the Indians of the Old Northwest were witnessing another stage of the white take-over of their land. Their attempts at armed resistance had failed in 1794 at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, and since that time they had been losing their land piece-meal to the land-hungry American government at the same time as they were losing their societal structure. The alcohol and diseases

of the whites were finishing the job of decimating the
Indians that had been begun with bullets. The Indians
had tried both war and peace and had failed at both.
Only the supernatural could offer an answer to the prob-
lems they themselves could not solve.

In 1805, then, Tenskwatawa, or the Open Door,
began preaching to his fellows on the basis of a revela-
tion he claimed to have from the Great Spirit. The exact
details of that revelation are unknown to us. One tale
is that suffering from some form of epilepsy, he went into
a violent fit and apparently died. It was only while he
was being prepared for his funeral that he recovered and
amazed his friends with the story of his visit to the
Great Spirit who revealed to him his displeasure with the
conduct of the Indians, and who prescribed a remedy for
their situation. This interpretation of the Prophet's
"conversion" is supported by a talk that the Prophet sent
to the tribes at the northern end of Lake Michigan in

20Elmore Barce, "Tecumseh's Confederacy, Results
of the Treaty of Fort Wayne," Indiana Magazine of History,
advice there are no forms of epilepsy which leave the
sufferer in a trance-like or comatose state. Other
diseases which produce comas would likely also cause death,
diabetes for example. The most likely cause of the coma
is self-hypnosis. As practiced by modern gurus such
hypnosis can slow the pulse and breathing rates so dras-
tically as to give the appearance of death.
1807, in which he said that he was "sleeping" when the Great Spirit said to another

I have closed my books of accounts with man, and am going to destroy the earth. But first I will awaken from the sleep of the dead the first man I created. He is wise and let us hear if he has ought to say. He then awoke me and told me what he was about to do. 21

Another authority contended that the conversion was by no means so spectacular, but rather that the Prophet was a shrewd fellow who had "marked" the influence over the Indians enjoyed by the medicine man of the tribe. When that aged sachem sickened and died, the Prophet, feigning inspiration from the Great Spirit, adroitly took on himself the mantle of the deceased. Whichever of the above accounts of the event comes closer to the truth, it cannot be said that the Prophet's conversion was not convincing. As later events would prove, he played his new role as religious leader well and to great effect. 22

In any case, it was only a matter of months before runners were circulating among the neighboring tribes with messages sent by the Prophet as well as a list of command-

21 Substance of a Talk by the Indian Chief Le Maigonis, as Coming from the First Man God Created Now in the Shawnee Country Addressed to all the Different Tribes of the Indians, 4 August, 1807, MG19 F11, pp. 13-16. This is the only copy of the commandments sent by the Prophet to the various tribes found to date in primary sources.

22 Drake, Tecumseh, pp. 86-88.
ments that the Indians were to follow if they were to please the Great Spirit. The Prophet ordered them to stop drinking the white man's liquor, stop beating their wives, to revert to the clothing, implements and weapons Indians used before the whites arrived on the continent. Nor were they to eat the flesh of domestic animals. This offended the Great Spirit. If these rules were followed the original fertility of the land and the original abundance of game would be restored, and the Indians would prosper once again.

Some secondary accounts of these commandments also include references to Great Spirit's driving the Americans back to the sea in terms reminiscent of the talk of the Delaware Prophet. The number of such references indicates that especially in the period closer to the War of 1812 this philosophy may have been included by the Prophet. However, only one transcript of such a talk has been located and this mentions no violence to the whites. It does say however,

I am the Father of the English, of the French, of the Spaniards and of the Indians . . . But the Americans I did not make. They are not my children but the children of the Evil Spirit. They grew from the scum of the great water when it was troubled by the Evil Spirit and the froth was driven into the woods by a strong east wind. They are very numerous but I hate them. They are unjust—they have taken away your lands which were not made for them.23

23Prophet's Commandments, MG19 F11, pp. 13-16.
Certainly this message from the Great Spirit would not need much addition or modification for hearers to assume that divine help would be available to the Indians who wished to drive the hated Americans off their lands.

Circulating with these commandments were stories of the powers granted to Tenskwatawa by the Great Spirit. It was rumored that he could cause pumpkins to grow as large as houses and ears of corn big enough to satisfy the hunger of 12 men. Whether these stories were taken literally by the Indians cannot be told. But the allegiance granted by segments of some tribes to the Prophet speaks loudly enough for their faith in him. Although the evidence for these stories is secondary, it is close enough to the events to show what the Americans at least thought was being said by the Indians.

The most startling example of excess in the frenzy to please Tenskwatawa can be found in the Delaware tribe's "inquisition" of late 1805 and early 1806. During that time the Delawares executed at least five of their people, two of them chiefs who had served the tribe well in the

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24 Moses Dawson, A Historical Narrative of the Civil and Military Services of Major General William Henry Harrison, (Cincinnati, 1824) p. 82. This work was written in conjunction with Harrison and had his approval.
past. The Prophet had instructed the Indians to rid themselves of their old medicine bags and amulets. These, he reasoned, were bad medicine, symbols of a false religion. Those who believed him also sought the total compliance of their fellows. The oldest chief of the tribe, Teteboxi, signatory of the Greenville Treaty and war chief in the Ohio Battles, unwilling to part with his religion of a lifetime, was the first to be killed. In deference to his age and station he was tomahawked in an unsuspecting moment, but not until after he had collected wood for his own cremation pyre.

Also sacrificed was Billy Patterson, a firm defendant of Indian rights and advocate of Indian retention of Indian land, a correspondent of Thomas Jefferson and a confirmed Christian. He reportedly died amidst the flames singing hymns to the end in the fashion of the best Christian martyrs. Some saved their lives by making false confessions of the evil uses to which they had put the bad medicine, reminiscent of the confessions of accused New England witches.²⁵

²⁵Drake, Tecumseh, pp. 87-89; Dawson, Harrison, p. 83; Billy Patterson to William Wells, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 121-123.
Word of these disturbances soon reached Governor Harrison via the traders and agents who lived with the Indians and who served him as informers. As soon as weather conditions allowed, the Governor addressed a message to the Delawares shaming them for listening to the Shawnee Prophet. Entitled a "Speech of Governor Harrison, delivered to the Delaware Indians, on the delusion which prevailed among them with respect to sorcery," it was used by Harrison to embarrass them by recounting how renowned they had been among all the other tribes for their wisdom in peace and power in war in contrast with their recent actions. Harrison wrote,

From what cause, then, does it proceed, that you have departed from the wise councils of your fathers, and covered yourselves with guilt?... who is this pretended prophet who dares to speak in the name of the Great Creator? Examine him. Is he more wise or virtuous than you are yourselves, that he should be selected to convey to you the orders of your God? Demand from him some proofs at least of his being the messenger of the Deity. If God has really employed him he has doubtless authorized him to perform some miracles, that he may be known and received as a prophet. If he is really a prophet ask him to cause the sun to stand still—the moon to alter its course—the rivers to cease to flow—or the dead to rise from their graves. If he does these things you may believe that he has been sent from God.

Harrison finished his letter with an admonition to drive the Prophet from their midst and return to their
old ways so that their old men and women could sleep at night without fear of being burnt at the stake by their own tribesmen. Muscle was added to this advice with the thinly veiled threat that compliance was expected if the Delaware nation hoped to remain friends with the "Council of the Seventeen Fires", the United States. He also requested that the Indians send their assurances of good conduct for the future with his messenger when he returned.26

Harrison had done the best he could to handle the situation. He had given the Indians criteria that were a completely logical guide to establishing the validity of the Prophet's claims. He had no way, of course, of knowing in advance of the stories of the sachem's horticultural feats. Nor apparently did he know that an eclipse of the sun was going to take place on June 16, 1806. Once Harrison had told the Delawares to ask the Prophet to perform a miracle like stopping the sun as proof of being sent by the Great Spirit, he could not very well withdraw his suggestion. While there is no documentary evidence that the Prophet knew in advance of the eclipse of the sun on that June day, it is reasonable to suppose that even without foreknowledge he could have hastily taken advantage of that phenomenon to satisfy Harrison's demands that he perform some miracle. According to

26Harrison to the Delawares, early in 1806, Ibid., pp. 182-184.
Anthony Shane, a half-breed who lived with the Shawnees and who often served the Americans as a messenger and interpreter, the Prophet told him in 1807, "I can bring darkness between him [the President] and me--nay, more, I can bring the sun under my feet, and what white man can do this?" \(^{27}\)

This feat armed the Indian revival with still another weapon. To the stories of the Prophet's achievements that were already circulating could be added this latest miracle, done at the request of the Governor himself. One can only imagine Harrison's chagrin when he found how his advice to the Delawares had defeated his efforts to see the Prophet undone at an early date. Certainly it would be much more difficult to prove the shaman an imposter after that. But even a man as distrustful of the Indians as Harrison never foresaw the eventual dimensions the revival begun by the one-eyed Tenskwatawa would attain.

American officials were aware of the Prophet's movement by the beginning of 1806. The first mention of him seen by this writer in British sources comes in 1807. \(^{28}\) However, it is probable that some of their agents knew of him some time before that. The British Indian Department at

\(^{27}\) Drake, Tecumseh, p. 93; Draper MSS, 3YY58.

Amherstburg, as mentioned above, had strong ties with the Shawnee nation by marriage and could have received some information through these channels. In addition the Northwest tribes visited Port Malden annually for talks with the Indian Department and to receive presents. One of the best sources of information the British had about events in the United States were such councils with the Indians. So important a development would likely have been discussed on such occasions. Furthermore, the British still had traders operating in the United States, many of whom served as agents in disguise. One such man was Frederick Fisher. Fisher had served the Indian Department as an interpreter in the 1790's and was living as a trader at Greenville in 1806. It was Fisher who often relayed the messages of the British to the Prophet in the years that followed. He too might well have informed the British about the evolution of the Prophet's revival.29 The attraction of a man like the Prophet, influential with thousands of Indians who flocked to his camp to

29Frederick Fisher, a trader by profession, had served the British Indian Department in the capacity of interpreter occasionally since the 1790's. In 1797 he was re-appointed at a time when many Indian Department men were losing their jobs in the contraction of the department after the surrender of the Northwest posts. In 1806 he was in the Ohio country. It was Fisher who delivered the 1808 invitation of the British to the Prophet to come to Malden for talks. See Horsman, Matthew Elliott, pp. 168-169.
hear his preaching and participate in the ceremonies of worship and games that continued there, was of sufficient interest to the British that one of the three channels mentioned above would probably have relayed the information long before the end of 1806. By early 1807, the Prophet was so well known throughout the entire Northwest that American agents as far away as Michilimackinac were complaining of the influence he had with the Indians in that quarter.  

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What is especially interesting, however, is that Tecumseh was not mentioned in British sources until 1808, three years after the inception of his brother’s religion, and even then he was referred to only as the brother of the Prophet.  

31 It was the Prophet who drew the faithful of the surrounding tribes by the hundreds and thousands; it was the Prophet who performed the miracles, accounts of which were broadcast for hundreds of miles; and it was the Prophet who was in control of the religious organization he had founded.

This is not to say Tecumseh was inactive. There is record of Tecumseh’s having opposed the murders of the


31 Harrison's first reference to Tecumseh was Harrison to Dearborn, 19 May, 1808, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 290-291; the first recorded British reference was June 11, 1808, the entry for that date in the Diary of William Claus as printed in the MP&HC, XXIII, p. 53.
Delawares, yet the murders went on until the frenzy had worked itself out.\textsuperscript{32} Had Tecumseh been in command of the Indians drawn to Greenville by his brother, as many of his biographers claim, his opposition to the murders among the Delawares should have stopped them. But the Prophet, not Tecumseh appeared to be in control in 1806.

That situation, however, began to change in the following year, 1807. By the end of that year Tecumseh, as primary sources prove, was forming a movement that was a kind of tangent to the revival begun by his brother. Both movements had as their goal the retention of Indian land by Indians. But whereas the Prophet taught that purification and a return to the Indian way of life as practiced before the advent of the Europeans on this continent would bring the intervention of the Great Spirit to drive the whites back, Tecumseh argued that the Indians could also achieve their goals by unification. He presented the Indians, and by 1807 the whites as well, with his plan for a confederation of tribes that would consider all Indian land to be the joint property of all Indians. None could be sold without the consent of all.

Nothing in American correspondence indicated that United States Indian Officials had the slightest understanding of the fact that the revival being preached by Tenskwatawa

\textsuperscript{32}Anthony Shane told Benjamin Drake that Tecumseh was opposed to the murders of the Delawares, Drake, \textit{Tecumseh}, p. 91.
and the confederation advocated by Tecumseh were in direct opposition to American Indian policy as enunciated by Jefferson. It was the President's hope to civilize the Indians, but the Prophet demanded a return to a life untainted by contact with the whites. The second half of Jefferson's policy was to extinguish Indian title to the land, but Tecumseh's notion of confederation and refusal to allow any tribe to sell land without the consent of all tribes directly contradicted the American practice of dealing with tribes and sometimes even portions of tribes for land on the principle that their occupation of a particular tract could be equated with ownership.

Understandably, at the time, the Indians, the British and the Americans seemed equally unable to distinguish between what Tecumseh was saying and what was being taught by his brother. The two were simply arguing the use of different means to reach the same end. In fact, with the exception of Harrison's interference in the Delaware "inquisition," there is evidence that neither the British or the Americans considered what was happening at Greenville important enough to warrant any particular attention on their part. Until the Chesapeake-Leopard affair the Americans seemed to consider the gathering at Greenville a minor matter; they even ignored Tecumseh's talk of confederation, while the British sources fail to make mention of either of the brothers.
CHAPTER THREE

THE EVOLUTION OF THE NORTHWEST INDIAN CONFEDERATION

The pilgrimages of the faithful to the Prophet's camp caused the settlers along their route and the governors of the territories and state through which they passed a good deal of discomfort. Governor Harrison of the Indiana Territory took some pleasure from the fact that local Indians paid much less attention to the Prophet than did those who lived at some distance. He reasoned that the Indians at hand could see what a sham the Prophet was, whereas those in more remote regions had only the wondrous stories of the Prophet's runners on which to base their estimates of the new voice of the Great Spirit. Harrison's informers told him that during 1806 the Prophet's following had been nearly halved as a result of disillusionment.¹ But while the number in attendance on the Prophet may have decreased, this loss was more than compensated for by the arrival of hundreds of others who came to see and hear the oracle.

This influx of strange Indians into the country around Greenville made the maintenance of the peace ever more difficult because these pilgrims often came ill-equipped and

¹Dawson, Harrison, p. 81.
ill-provisioned. Settlers and officials knew that their need for food, if not satisfied by government stores as it sometimes was, would be answered by foraging and theft. When such things occurred Americans were quick to reply. Violence begot violence. As a result, Tecumseh, as the village chief, was called into council in 1806 to discuss existing excesses and give assurances of pacific behavior.

A clipping from the *Virginia Argus* of September 6, 1806, has been preserved in the Draper Manuscripts in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. It is the earliest printed mention of Tecumseh found to date. The article records the talks the Americans held at that time with him and two other Shawnee leaders. The full text of the council was not preserved, but a summary of the Indians' denial of hostile intentions and promises to live in peace were. In addition the Indians asked Governor Kirker of Ohio, who attended the talks, not to listen to those among the whites who wanted war, for which, in turn, they promised to ignore any Indians who made similar talk to them.²

Once again, as earlier in the decade, Tecumseh was performing one of the duties of a village chief. It is important to note, however, that he received no special attention in the newspaper story. No indication is given that

²Draper MSS, 3YY60.
he was any more significant than the other two chiefs who appeared at the same time, nor is his relationship to the Prophet mentioned. If Tecumseh had powers other than those of a chief of a small band at this time, they were well hidden from the Americans at the council. The relatively minor role he played on this occasion and the subservient attitude which the article ascribes to all three chiefs do not preclude the possibility that Tecumseh may already have been thinking about, or even organizing the confederation of tribes that would eventually grow out of his brother's revival movement. Contrary, however, to what many of the chief's biographers have written, there is no documentary indication that Tecumseh had yet made any moves in that direction. Another full year would pass before he publicly told the Americans of his plans to organize the tribes of the Northwest and beyond into a confederation that would hold all Indian land in common for the purpose of stopping its sale to the Americans.

By the time that year had passed Indians within an uneven radius of nearly 600 miles had been visited by the Prophet's runners. Harrison's information was that these messengers had called on tribes from the Great Lakes to the north and the Gulf of Florida to the south. His fear was that in addition to carrying accounts of the Great Spirit's revelation to the Prophet, the runners might also be circu-
lating war belts inviting the tribes to ally against the Americans. The chiefs of tribes in his own territory gave Harrison little concern. Most of these were men who had led their people since before Fallen Timbers. They knew well the futility of further resistance to the "Long Knives." The Governor thought they could be counted on to restrain their spirited young braves. However, encouraged by the Prophet's vision of regaining their lands, the warriors of the tribes had become increasingly disillusioned with their old village chiefs. They had seen them defeated, seen them sell land for a pittance, seen them prosper through their cooperation with the conquerors. Harrison became aware of the Prophet's campaign to displace these chiefs, in fact, he saw some of the Delaware murders discussed above as part of a broader drive to substitute allegiance to the Prophet for allegiance to the old chiefs. In July of 1807, he wrote the Secretary of War, Henry Dearborn, that the headmen of the Delaware and Miami tribes were still friendly to the United States, but that if machinations of the Prophet to remove them were successful, "I cannot answer for the fidelity of the rest of the tribe."

The matter of allegiance to the old chiefs was more crucial than Harrison ever realized. As the months and years


4Harrison to Dearborn, 11 July, 1807, Ibid., pp. 222-225.
passed, the contest between these headmen and the Prophet and his brother intensified. Entire tribes were split because of adherence to one or the other of the parties. By the time the War of 1812 came, these tribes were so badly fragmented that in some cases the same tribe had warriors in both camps. Most of the Northwest tribes had segments that refused to fight at all, which amounted to tacit support for the Americans, while other segments allied with the British. Before that time came there would be many another clash between the chiefs and the brothers.

The traditional authority of the chiefs may have prevented some of their tribesmen from conversion to the Prophet's religion, but not enough to suit the Americans. In the spring of 1807, United States officials again exchanged letters about the numbers of natives gathering at Greenville on the very site where the Indians had signed the surrender in 1795. The camp there was visited briefly by Richard McNemar, a Shaker missionary. McNemar told of meetings in a central lodge about one hundred and fifty feet long. This lodge was surrounded by smaller wigwams in which the Indians lived. The white preacher was struck by several aspects of the religion practiced by his red counterpart among which were lengthy sermons (during which the Indians gave "loud assent" to what was said) and confession. The adherents to the faith were ordered to confess, either to the Prophet himself or one of his four assistants, all the
sins they had committed since the age of seven. These admissions, M'Nemar reported, were accompanied by much crying and trembling.\textsuperscript{5}

Another account of the activities at the Prophet's village and at other villages where the Prophet had large followings mentions the considerable time that was spent not only in religious services but in exercises which bore, to white eyes at least, a threatening resemblance to war games. According to the Prophet's commandments to do away with the tools of the whites and use those things which the Great Spirit had provided for Indian use, many disciples discarded modern weapons in favor of those they could make themselves. Reports of their carving war clubs exist, but complete dependence on these backward tools of death was too impractical to become a reality.\textsuperscript{6} American and British officials continued to list powder, flints and lead among the supplies granted annually to the Indians. In 1808 the Prophet himself requested ball and powder from Governor Harrison.\textsuperscript{7}

Of course not all the Indians who came to see the Prophet stayed at his camp for more than a short time. The


\textsuperscript{6}Prophet's Commandments, MG19 F11, pp. 13-16.

\textsuperscript{7}Prophet to Harrison, 1 August, 1808, Esarey (ed.), \textit{Messages}, I, pp. 299-300; Dawson, \textit{Harrison}, p. 108.
number that actually visited can never be accurately totaled. However, some estimate may be had from the fact that over 1,500 had passed through the Fort Wayne area alone before April 7, 1807, the bare beginning of the travel season in that country.

The American agent at Fort Wayne, William Wells, was frightened by the numbers passing through, as the Indians he saw were poorly clothed and near starving. To provide for the safety of the country below, Wells was forced to advance them food and other supplies. The thought of even greater numbers converging on Greenville gave him grave reservations about their keeping the peace. Wells was aware of Indian life in all its aspects as he had lived with the "Lake Indians" for many years. Indeed, on more than one occasion Wells's superiors found him suspect because of his sympathies with the Indians. He had married the sister and later the daughter of Little Turtle, the celebrated Miami chief who had engineered the defense against Harmar and St. Clair. Wells was, therefore, an authoritative source on Indian matters in the Northwest. To him the implications of the inundation of the region with Indians who were "religiously mad" were most serious. His recommendation to Harrison was that the Prophet be removed immediately from the lands of the United

8 Dawson, Harrison, p. 91.
States to some area not yet ceded by the Indians. He found a willing listener in Harrison who shared his sentiments and passed the advice along to the Secretary of War and also to the Delaware tribe who had title to the land on which the Prophet was operating.

Wells, on his own hook, also took the liberty of sending a half-breed, Anthony Shane, who had long lived with the Shawnee, to the Prophet's village to demand that the chiefs there come into Fort Wayne for a council. Ostensibly the purpose of this was to read a talk from President Jefferson to the Indians. This directive, however, was rejected out of hand by Tecumseh, who exhibited for the first time that cool indifference to American demands that was to become characteristic of him. He told Shane that if a talk was necessary Wells knew where the Indians' fire was lit and could come to them. Then, as if he had hit on an even better rebuff, Tecumseh haughtily added if any such talks were necessary, a more important man than Wells would have to make the American presentation.

This reply had a double effect. First it announced the liberation of the Indians gathered at Greenville from the position of subservience into which the defeat at Fallen Timbers had placed them more than a decade earlier.

9Tbid.
11Drake, Tecumseh, pp. 92-93.
At the same time it was another blow in the battle between the two brothers on the one hand and the old chiefs on the other, for such an insult to Wells was an insult to Little Turtle as well. No man better epitomized the sort of chief the Greenville Indians so hated, for the Turtle by this time was a pawn of and informer for the Americans, willing to cooperate, to sell land, to beg for annuities, to adopt civilized ways. In reward the Americans built him a house and saw to his welfare. He fattened at the government pap and ironically died suffering the disease that had so disabled his opponent St. Clair, gout.12

Although Tecumseh ignored Wells's invitation he did accept two others to parley with the Americans in the summer of 1807. The first of these talks had as its cause an event which, though it occurred over 500 miles from Greenville, was to play an important role in determining the fate of the Indians gathered there as well as of the parties immediate to the incident. It was the attack on the American frigate Chesapeake by the British frigate Leopard.

American reaction to what they considered an unprovoked and illegal attack was swift and violent, especially in the new West. Developing frontier regions had always

been the most actively nationalistic because they had the most of any region to gain from a strong central government. Unable to finance their own defense and improvements in communications necessary to their survival, they traditionally looked to the national government to provide them. Furthermore, the West had long suffered from Indian violence which it was sure was instigated by the British. To the politicians and pioneers of the Northwest, British hostilities on the coast were a signal for war to begin on the fringes of their settlements.13

Governor Harrison had often warned the national government about the conniving of British agents in the Northwest. His feelings regarding the Chesapeake-Leopard affair perhaps express those held by many a frontier resident.

The blood rises to my cheeks when I reflect on the humiliating, the disgraceful scene, of the crew of an American ship mustered on its own decks by a British Lieutenant for the purpose of selecting innocent victims of their own tyranny! . . . The unheard of outrage has made an impression on the American mind . . . We are indeed, from our situation, peculiarly interested in the contest which is about to ensue; for who does not know that the tomahawk and the scalping knife of the savages are always employed as the instruments of British vengeance. At this moment, fellow

citizens, as I sincerely believe, their agents are organizing a combination amongst the Indians within our limits, for the purposes of assassination and murder; and if there their worthy allies are not let loose to slaughter our women and children, it will not proceed from the humanity and mercy of a nation which boasts of her attainments in every art and science.

Referring to the American Revolution and the lesson he felt the British should have learned on that occasion, Harrison predicted that "another Washington will arise to lead our armies to victory and glory, and the tyrants of the world will be taught a useful lesson that a nation of Free men are not to be insulted with impunity."\textsuperscript{14} In light of the outcome of the War of 1812 his prediction seems something less than prophetic, but it was what the moment demanded.

When Harrison and all the other politicians of the West had issued their last bit of rhetoric, the real work of preparing for imminent hostilities still remained. The problem for the frontier, simply stated, was to find some way of securing the allegiance, or failing that, at least the neutrality of the American Indians.

One of the first American officials to act on the need for agreements with the Indians was Harrison. Shortly

after his inflammatory address to his legislature he sent a
talk to the chiefs and headmen of the Shawnee tribe. In his
remarks he reminded them of the years of peace they had en-
joyed since they had let go the hand of their British Father
and clasped that of the Americans. He asked them to think
back a few years to the thorny paths through which the
British had led them, and the torn flesh they had suffered
as a result of that old alliance. In signing the Treaty of
Greenville the Indians had promised never to lift the toma-
hawk against the Americans again. The United States,
Harrison added, had always kept its part of the bargain;
yet, "have you [the Indians] not always had your ears open
to receive bad advice from the white people beyond the lakes?"15

Harrison also rebuked the chiefs for their tolera-
tion and even support of the Prophet who he thought was
serving the British. The Great Spirit, he told them, had
opened their ears to their true friends, the Americans. Of
late, however, they had been listening to a deceiver.

My children, it must be stopped. I will
no longer suffer it. You have called in
a number of men from the most distant
tribes to listen to a fool who speaks
not the words of the Great Spirit but
those of the Devil and of the British
agents.16

15Harrison to the Shawnee Chiefs, August 1807,
Ibid., pp. 249-251.
16Ibid.
The reaction of the Shawnee chiefs, Tecumseh included, is not recorded, but the Prophet sent a brief reply at the end of August, denying Harrison's allegations and asking the Governor in typically picturesque Indian language not to listen to any more "bad birds."17

Another American attempt to sound out the Northwest Indians came in September of 1807, when Governor Kirker of Ohio acted on the rumor that the Indians at Greenville, who numbered something over 700 according to his reports, were armed with new British guns and were plotting an attack. Like other American officials he thought that to indicate knowledge of an Indian plan in advance of its execution was to forestall it. Probably for this reason the Governor felt safe in dispatching a commission to travel to Greenville and hold talks with the Indians there. Then, as now, diplomacy was a sensitive game. Had the Governor known of Tecumseh's demand for the Americans to treat with him at his own camp he would likely have made a counter-demand for the Indians to come to him. There is no indication, however, that the Governor of Ohio had any idea what Tecumseh had told Anthony Shane a few weeks earlier.

17 The Prophet to Harrison, August, 1807, Ibid., p. 251.
The commissioners left Chillicothe on September 8, and four days later reached the historic treaty grounds where the Prophet now held his revival. Their visit, motivated by fear of war stemming from the Chesapeake affair, coincided with the zenith of American demands for retaliatory measures. With stories of Indians armed by British agents circulating wildly, there could have been little doubt in the commissioners' minds that war was not far off. On the day of their arrival the Indians assembled to listen to their talk. The commissioners demanded to know the purpose for which the Indians had been assembling in such large numbers at Greenville. Like Harrison, they also reminded the Indians of the good treatment they had had from the Americans and the ill use the British had made of them. In case of war they instructed the Indians to remain neutral.

Rather than attempt an immediate reply the Indians asked for the talks to be adjourned so that they could draft an answer. By fate, the interpreter for the talks was Stephen Ruddell, the white who had lived with Tecumseh's band of Shawnee for over 15 years. By this time Ruddell had returned to the whites and become a Baptist preacher. To Ruddell it seemed that Tecumseh was very much taken in by his brother which bothered the preacher because he regarded Tecumseh as by far the more noble of the two.
The talks were resumed according to schedule on the thirteenth. The first to speak on that occasion was Blue Jacket, famous Shawnee leader of the resistance to Harmar, St. Clair and Wayne. He was an outspoken advocate of Indian union and one of the few older chiefs who remained hostile to the Americans. He told the commissioners that eleven days before, talks had been held with the Wyandots whom he referred to as "Grandfathers," indicating great respect among the Shawnees for that tribe. Blue Jacket said the Wyandots had discussed relations of the Northwest Indians with the three white nations that had controlled the region, the French, British and Americans. French rule had ended more than four decades before and was remembered by the Indians as a sort of "golden age." The Wyandots asked the Shawnees to recall the British treachery after the Revolution and again after the Battle of Fallen Timbers, when the Indians, pressed up against the walls of Fort Miami, were supposedly told "I cannot let you in; you are painted too much, my children." The Wyandots, Blue Jacket said, had asked the Indians at Greenville to unite with them in considering what pain they had had from interfering in the wars of the whites. In addition these wise "grandfathers" were supposed to have commended the Greenville gathering on its efforts to unify all Indians in serving "the SUPREME RULER."

While this support could be interpreted as a promise to consider neutrality, it was still not enough to satisfy
the commissioners. Their next question was why the Prophet had chosen this particular site, well within the possessions of the United States, as a location for his revival. The Prophet answered that it was not because the land was valuable or pretty but because it had been revealed to him as the proper place to establish his doctrines. Furthermore he assured the commissioners that these doctrines were not his own, but those of the Great Spirit, and his future conduct would prove to the whites the sincerity of his professions. As another sign of good faith he promised to send six chiefs to accompany the commissioners back to Chillicothe to repeat assurances to the Governor. Four of them actually went.¹⁸

Tecumseh, Blue Jacket, Roundhead and the Panther spent about a week in Chillicothe during which time they held public councils with Governor Kirker. Each of the Indians gave his word that the assembly at Greenville had no hostile intent but was dedicated rather to enlarging that religion which they had adopted. By the end of the talks the commissioners were clearly won over by the sincerity of the practitioners of the Prophets' religion. They had even formed rather favorable opinions of the Prophet himself. However, they must have had some reservations about one of the speeches made by Tecumseh.

Enlarging on the history of American-Indian relations given by Blue Jacket at the first meeting with the commis-
sioners at Greenville, Tecumseh took upwards of three hours
to relate what he knew of American treaties with the North-
west tribes. Each agreement mentioned he attempted to de-
molish. Most of them he denounced as being void because of
the unfair conditions they placed on the Indians. A witness
to the talk remembered Tecumseh's delivery as being at once
rapid, impassioned and bold. Far from the "hat in hand"
attitude the Indians had taken to American bullying in the
past, those present remembered this talk because of its
defiance. For the first time Tecumseh told the whites of
his plan to form a union of all the tribes which would have
as its main purpose the prevention of further land sales to
the Americans. No tribe agreeing to the confederation would
sell any land without the consent of all the rest of the
tribes. Current occupants of land, from whom the Americans
always bought title, were in the future to have no more
right to sell the land they used than any other tribe. At
the same time Tecumseh was careful to point out that this
new policy embodied no threat to the peace. The Indians
wanted only their land, not war.19

Whatever Kirker thought of Tecumseh's idea of with-
holding Indian land from sale, the chiefs' assurances of

19 Ibid.
peaceful behavior were sufficient to cause the Governor to disband the militia he had called up in the wake of the reports of the British arming his Indians. No record exists of exactly how Kirker felt about Tecumseh's defiant talk. But since most of Ohio was already out of Indian hands the projected confederation did not mean as much to him as it did to Harrison in the Indiana Territory where Indians still held title to the major portion of the land. Unfortunately we do not know if Kirker communicated the content of Tecumseh's talk to Harrison. We do not even know if Kirker took Tecumseh's talk seriously enough to inform his superiors in Washington about this new development in Indian relations. In any event the report of the commissioners was published in the United States Gazette for 1807, so War Department officials could have been informed by that means eventually.  

The second council in which Tecumseh participated in the autumn of 1807 took place in a maple grove outside of Springfield, Ohio. This one was called to attempt a solution to the murder of a white settler named Meyers whose scalped body had been found a short distance from his home near Urbana. The evidence about the scene indicated that the murder had been committed by Indians not generally found in that area. Naturally this conclusion pointed the finger

\[\text{\textsuperscript{20}}\text{ibid.}, \text{p. 97.}\]
of suspicion at the Prophet whose religion was drawing strange Indians to the vicinity by the hundreds. However, Indians from Greenville were not the only ones called in to parley. Others came from further north and represented tribes that were hostile to the Prophet. Both parties of Indians obviously emphatically denied having any knowledge of the murderers. When it became clear to the whites that an impasse had been reached, the council rendered the decision that the murder was the work of an individual with no connection to either party of Indians at the talks.

Once again, however, Tecumseh took the opportunity presented by the calling of the council to announce his plan for an Indian confederation. From the notices of the council that have been preserved it appears that the Americans took as more significant the fact that the Indians promised peace. No reaction to Tecumseh's talk of confederation appears in accounts of the talks.\textsuperscript{21}

Whatever Tecumseh's talk of peace may have done to calm the Governor and residents of Ohio, Governor Harrison was unable to share their tranquility. Harrison's official biographer, who wrote in conjunction with the Governor, says that during the summer of 1807, the Prophet was operating "powerfully" on the Indians not only in his own vicinity but also at a great distance. Secret councils gathered in

\textsuperscript{21}\textit{Tbid.}, pp. 98-99, Draper MSS 3YY135.
all quarters, the subjects of which could not be determined by the Americans, and Harrison thought, were not made known to any Indians who were suspected of American sympathies. 22

In July, before presenting his message to the legislature Harrison wrote the Secretary of War that he feared the Prophet is an engine set to work by the British for some bad purpose ... McKee, the British Indian agent, was lately seen to pass up the Miami of the Lake to Greenville where the Prophet resides and there has been a considerable collection of Indians for many weeks.

Stories that the Prophet was having his opponents slaughtered again began circulating anew, and Harrison was especially concerned for the safety of five cooperative Delaware chiefs. 23 These thoughts could well have been in his mind when he drafted his talk on the Chesapeake crisis in August.

The Governor was also made uneasy by the imperfect state of his defenses. On August 17 he pleaded with his legislature for additional funds for the militia, some of whom he said were carrying guns "that would do less harm than the sticks carried by others." 24 The myth of the well-armed frontier marksman seems weakened by this sort of evidence.

22 Dawson, Harrison, p. 93.
At the end of the month the Prophet's reply to the letter Harrison had sent earlier to the Shawnee chiefs and headmen reached the Governor. In it the Prophet denied every charge Harrison had made. He had not called the Indians to see him. "They came for themselves to hear the words of the Great Spirit." He had not been in touch with the British and avowed that he "never had a word" with them. But Harrison was far from convinced. Least of all did he believe the Prophet's earnest claim that "it is the least of our idea to make disturbance, and we will rather try to stop any such proceedings than encourage them." He reflected his distrust in another letter to the Secretary of War on August 29, which ran in part:

Since my last I have made every exertion to ascertain the real disposition of the neighboring tribes and the cause of the stir and commotion which have existed among them for some time past. The avowed object of the latter is to cement a more perfect union and friendship among themselves as they have often been advised by the United States but to which I am persuaded they were stimulated in the present instance by British influence. I am confident, however, that the ultimate object of the British (which no doubt is that of forming a general confederacy against us) has not yet been communicated either to the Miamis, Weas, Delawares or even Kickapoos. The Shawnee are certainly devoted to the British as are a part of the Potawatomies, Chippeways and Ottawas.


It was some months before Harrison and the Prophet met face to face. When that happened the mystic worked the same magic on the Governor as he had on the commissioners from Ohio. But in the meantime, Harrison's efforts were directed at getting to the bottom of what was going on at the Indian gatherings at Greenville and at documenting British intrigue in his territory.

At the end of August, Harrison received a letter from William Wells at Fort Wayne which warned again of danger brewing at the Prophet's encampment. Wells wrote that two "confidential Indians", whom he had dispatched all the way to Mackinac, had returned with stories that the Prophet had promised those Indians that the Great Spirit would destroy every white man in America within a few years. The Indians at Mackinac were busy preparing their war clubs for the great day. Wells also complained that Little Turtle, his father-in-law, was purposely being kept uninformed as to new developments with the Indians. It was Wells's opinion that nothing would have a better effect than an immediate American "show of resentment" against the Indians of the Prophet's band. "He [the Prophet] should be punished for his insolence."27

The Governor, ever proud of his military expertise, was not one to disagree with Wells's recommendations. He

wrote the Secretary of War, "The habits of my early life are not, however, so far obliterated as to make this duty preparing the militia irksome or unpleasant . . . ."28

At this point the Americans were concerned about the threat the Indians with the Prophet posed to the peace of the region. There is no indication that they had considered the fact that the gathering at Greenville might also pose a threat to American policy of extinguishing Indian title to land. Yet Tecumseh had told American officials on two distinct occasions that his intentions were to form a confederation of tribes that would resist further sales to the United States. The Americans had listened to Tecumseh, but they had clearly not heard what he had said. There is a great difference between being aware of a development and understanding the significance of it. The significance of Tecumseh's plans had undoubtedly slipped by those who listened to him.

By September, Harrison had begun to send spies into the Indian country to nose about. He thought this plan would put him "in possession of the intentions of the British in this quarter, at least so far as they are known to the Indians." He also echoed Wells's earlier demand that the Prophet be removed outside the boundaries of the United States.29

28 Harrison to Dearborn, 29 August, 1807, Ibid., pp. 243-244.
29 Ibid.
He told the Shawnee chiefs that he had heard bad news. "That very spot where the Great Spirit heard his white and red children encircle themselves with the chain of friendship—that place has been selected for dark and bloody councils." He appealed to the chiefs to drive the Prophet out. "Let him go to the lakes; he can hear the British more distinctly."30

For all of Harrison's accusations of British intrigue with American Indians his correspondence failed, until the end of 1807, to document any of those charges. From the British sources that are available to the modern historian we know that in fact Harrison's suspicions were amply justified. Although after Fallen Timbers British contact with American Indians diminished and the Indian Department was allowed to deteriorate, there was still some contact between British agents and American Indians. After the Chesapeake affair, common sense alone would indicate, given the rabid response of the American West to the incident, that the British would step up their efforts to impress the Indians with their friendliness and also to observe them closely.

Planting agents and spies among the Indians was not a new trick for either the Americans or the British. As

30 Harrison to the Chiefs of the Shawnee Tribe, August, 1807, Ibid., pp. 249-251.
pointed out above, agents and traders living with the Indians had long merchandized information to the whites at the same time as they exchanged trade articles for furs with the Indians. Modern refinements of espionage now practiced were unknown then, however, and it was inevitable that some of these undercover men would be caught.

Perhaps the most amusing discovery of a British spy occurred in October of 1807. Harrison had mentioned the operations of British "agents" in his August address to the legislature and had long been anxious to apprehend one. Finally his luck improved. Captain William Hargrove, who headed the territorial scout service commonly known as Hargrove's Rangers, wrote Harrison that they had arrested a man they suspected of being a British spy. The suspect himself was sent along to Harrison so that he might have the satisfaction of interrogating the fellow. Never identified by name, the accused spy attempted to justify his presence by claiming to have been captured by the Indians some two years earlier. Harrison's inspection must have been minute, for two points about the man's appearance indicated to him that the story was a fabrication. "He is evidently not what he claims to be. A prisoner for two years among the Indians would not have such clean underwear beneath his buckskin suit. Then his hair has been recently cut by a barber."31

Faulty preparation won the spy a trip to an American military prison at Cincinnati where Harrison hoped he would be "summarily dealt with."\(^{32}\)

After that the prisoner (for if he had not been an Indian prisoner, he was now an American captive) disappears from the record. He may have been executed; if not his incarceration doubtless gave him ample time to reflect on the wisdom of a spy's adopting a more appropriate, if less comfortable cover.

Harrison's spies were little more professional than the captured bungler. Two of Hargrove's scouts were each supplied by the Governor with a new axe, rifle and ammunition, "... the equipment that most newcomers bring to the territory." The plan was to have them enter the wilderness, fell some trees, build a cabin and begin to hunt in the vicinity of the Indian camps. "In doing this they will have a pretty good idea of what the Indians are doing around them."\(^{33}\) One might also suppose that it did not take the Indians long to have a "pretty good idea" what the two were up to either.

While both British and American agents had been in contact with American Indians before the Chesapeake affair, these contacts were stepped up after that incident. A

\(^{32}\)Harrison to Hargrove, 4 November, 1807, \textit{Ibid.}, p. 271.

\(^{33}\)Harrison to Hargrove, 28 October, 1807, \textit{Ibid.}, p. 270.
British brigade major, whose name is illegible in the manuscripts, wrote to Lieutenant Colonel Grant, who commanded Fort Malden, about calling the Indians in to the fort.

I am commanded by his Excellency the Lieutenant Governor to inform you that he has ordered the Deputy Superintendent General, to call a meeting of Indians at Amherstburg.

The expediency of the present moment not only requiring this measure, but that all means should be used to conciliate and attach them to the King's interest. To this end His Excellency has no doubt that you will contribute everything in your own power, but use your influence with others who can lend aid. He desires that you will give every support to the Deputy Superintendent General, and be supplied with everything which will be necessary against the meeting of the Indians. 34

But while British officialdom in Canada was doing its best to gather any potential allies, they seemed unaware of the Prophet's existence until near the end of 1807.

We have no trace of communication about the Prophet between British Indian agents and their superiors before that time either, although correspondence between Governor in chief Sir James Craig and the Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, Francis Gore, indicates that Matthew Elliott may have been acquainted with the Prophet at an earlier date.

34Brigade Major (illegible) to Lieutenant Colonel Grant, 7 October, 1807, British Military Correspondence (captured), p. 494.
On December 6, 1807, Craig wrote to Gore. His letter indicated that he had heard something of the Shawnee Prophet, probably in an earlier letter from Gore. He wrote,

I shall be very glad to receive some information as to the history of the Prophet, as he is called, and the extent of his influence among the Indians; if this is great and some of our Indians [sic] Department can enter into an intercourse with him, it might be worthwhile to purchase it though at what might be a high price upon any other occasion. 35

Gore responded on January 5, 1808.

The speech of the Prophet, as he is called, and which I presume you have seen, is the only Document by which any judgment can be directed in forming an opinion as to his motives and designs. It is however certain that he discovered a spirit of Hostility against the United States and from his lately having sent Messengers to Amherstburg to request clothing for a few of his People (which was immediately delivered) it may fairly be presumed that he has a reliance on our friendly disposition towards him. My information states that many of the Indians, especially those about St. Joseph's, who have had a meeting with him, now pay him little or no regard. It is notwithstanding believed that there are about Eight hundred or a Thousand over whom He has considerable influence. I understand Captain Elliott is personally acquainted with the Prophet, having been in service with his Nation (The Shawnese). Mr. Elliott is shortly expected here to attend his legislative Duty. I shall endeavor to find

out from him how far he thinks the purchase of this man is worthy of further consideration of which I shall acquaint your Excellency. 36

By the end of 1807 then, both the Americans and the British had an appreciation for the fact that should war come between the United States and Britain the Indians of the Northwest would be instrumental in deciding the outcome of that conflict. Both white powers were, by the end of that year, determined to arrive at some arrangement with the Indians, whether it be neutrality or active assistance, that would assure their side the advantage in case of hostilities.

But there is a considerable difference between deciding to arrange an Indian alliance and actually bringing it into existence. The pathways to such an alliance were fraught with pitfalls. Both sides realized that if the Indians were not carefully and properly approached, the approach itself could lead to unwanted and unnecessary frontier fighting. In the year that followed, both the Americans and the British therefore evolved what they considered well-reasoned policies for dealing with the Indians. Once implemented, those

36 Gore to Craig, 5 January, 1808, Ibid., pp. 34-37. The speech of the Prophet to which Gore refers has not been located. It would be interesting to know its date as only a few months before Gore wrote this letter the Prophet told Harrison he had had no contact with the British.
policies remained in effect until the outbreak of war in 1812. And in fact, the success of those policies could only be assessed by which side the greater number of Indians turned to when the fighting began. By 1808 the competition for Indian allies was on, and the confederation Indians at Greenville figured prominently in that contest.
CHAPTER FOUR
BRITISH AND AMERICAN APPROACHES TO THE
PROPHET AND HIS FOLLOWERS

Winter in 1807 came to a frontier on the edge of war. The Chesapeake-Leopard affair of that year provoked a storm in the West, a demand for retribution against Britain directed at her soft underbelly in North America, Canada. As winter imposed its quiet on that agitated region both American and British officials continued preparations for the fighting that could well have come with the melting of the snows.

It was time, Westerners felt, for Britain to be taught a lesson in respect for the United States. Their statements to that effect were widely circulated. Both the British and the Americans thought they knew where the other stood in respect to a possible war. The unknown factor was the Indian. As a result, during the winter of 1807-1808, Indian agents of both nations tried to “feel out” the natives of the Old Northwest.

William Henry Harrison, who had addressed his legislature with such boldness the past fall about war with Britain, was one of those attempting to make an inventory of the tribes in his vicinity to see whose allegiance or, failing that, neutrality could be depended upon.
In February 1808, he wrote the Secretary of War, Henry Dearborn, that for the moment all the natives of his immediate area were peaceful and seemed as friendly as ever. He had, however, "no faith in the pacific declarations of those in the neighborhood of the Great lakes." If they did not take up the hatchet in the event of war with Great Britain, fear, he thought, not love would restrain them.¹

Harrison's concern grew out of experience. He knew those Indians had been playing British agents against their American counterparts for better than a decade. The real loyalty of those tribes remained carefully concealed until the Indians were ready to strike. Dearborn counselled Harrison that "prudent" measures would have to be taken in the handling of those Indians if they were to be kept neutral. It was an axiom with the Americans that to gain the cooperation of the Indians they had to appear self-sufficient. Therefore the Secretary also cautioned against letting the Indians think that the United States was anxious to "cultivate" peace. Rather, they must be told that their very existence depended upon their neutrality in case of war.²

¹William Henry Harrison to Henry Dearborn, 18 February, 1808, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 283-284. The tribes Harrison was referring to were the Potawatomis, Chippewas, Kickapoos, Sauks and Winnebagos.

At the same time the Indian Department in the Canadas was laying strategy that was intended to insure that those same Indians would not remain quiet if and when fighting began. On December 28, 1807 Sir James Craig, Governor-in-chief, wrote Lieutenant Governor Francis Gore of Upper Canada,

With respect to the Indians . . . It may be depended upon to a certainty that if they are not employed by us they will act with the enemy . . . I cannot but think that the long subsisting ties which have existed between us, together with the protection we are capable of affording them . . . the means with which we have it in our power to supply them, to enable them to protect themselves against the obvious views of the Americans . . . must operate as a powerful motive to keep them bound to us.

Communications must be constant, these topicks must be held up to them, not merely in Great Councils and public assemblies, they should be privately urged to some of their leading men, with whom endeavors should be used to lead them to confidence in us, two or three gained over to us will be more avail than all that can be said in a council.³

William Claus, Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and a grandson of William Johnson, wrote to Gore on February 27, 1808, that he had already brought some of the Northwest Indians in to talk. In his letter he related

³Craig to Gore, 28 December, 1807, MP&HC, XXV, pp. 232-233.
how he informed them of the worsening relations between the British and the Americans and then sought discreetly some indication of support from them in case of war.

The trick, of course, was to bring in the "right" Indians, speak to them in small groups and divulge only as much information as that group could be trusted with. It was Claus's job and that of his agents to distinguish an Indian who could be trusted from one who could not. Only the so-called "confidential Indians" could be given any indication of British plans for war. The Indian who could not be discreet about British promises of aid in wartime might badly damage the British effort either by leaking that information to the Americans, or worse, by stirring other Indians to premature hostilities against the Americans which might tip the author's hand.

It was not the policy of the Indian Department or the British government to cause war, but rather to be prepared for it should it come. Only Indians who understood that could be allowed to hear promises of aid if and when war started. It was the intention of the British, then, that these "confidential Indians" would serve as propagandists amongst their tribesmen in the interval before war, moving

4 William Claus to Francis Gore, 27 February, 1808, MP&HC, XV, p. 44.
their fellows into a position sympathetic toward their
"Father the King" while at the same time keeping tempers
cool enough to prevent untimely fighting.

Just exactly how difficult a task this was is illus-
trated by a letter from Claus to Gore written in February,
1808, in which he complained that while Indians from seven
tribes were present at Amherstburg, "I cannot find a chief
that I can place any confidence in." Claus's solution was
to send a messenger off to the Shawnees. "They are men that
can be depended upon . . ."5

The Deputy Superintendent was interested in parti-
cular in seeing the Shawnee Prophet as well as the chiefs
of other Shawnee bands. When two weeks had passed and the
Shawnees had not yet arrived, Claus correctly supposed that
the delay might be due to some "difficulty in persuading
the Prophet—(Lau-be-was-i-kaw) also (Els-qua-a-tawa) to
come in."6 In fact, nearly another month passed before the
Shawnees did come for the talks, and then they came without
the Prophet.

5Claus to Gore, 14 February, 1808 (PAC), British

6Claus to Gore, 27 February, 1808, MP&HC, XV, p. 44.
A message from Frederick Fisher to Claus on March 25, indicated the reason the Prophet failed to respond to the British invitation was two-fold. Firstly, he was involved at that time in plans to move his following from Greenville to a new location at the confluence of the Tippecanoe and Wabash Rivers. There, Fisher reported, he was to receive delegations of representatives from about thirty tribes to the south and southwest. Secondly, he was personally at odds with the Shawnee chiefs the British had invited and was loath to travel with them to Upper Canada. To these chiefs, who represented traditional authority within their tribe, the Prophet was an upstart and usurper. Furthermore, the talk of the Prophet's brother that the old chiefs were selling the birthright of all the Indians for a few piddling favors from the Americans did nothing to bring the Prophet into any closer relationship with the headmen. Still the Prophet assured Claus, through Fisher, of his "friendship." Had the British Indian Department realized how poor relations were between the Prophet and these chiefs they would likely have attempted to bring him separately rather than risk increasing dissention within a tribe as useful as the Shawnee had been.

7Claus to Prideaux Selby, 3 May, 1808, MP&HC, XV, p. 49.
8Ibid.
In those first days of jockeying for position among the tribes it was important to the British not to unduly offend any tribe or band. The Shawnee had been faithful British allies in the past, and the main body of that tribe, under the leadership of Black Hoof, had been a prime object of Indian Department concern. However, the number of Indians of diverse tribes attracted to the Prophet made that "splinter band" of the Shawnee too important to be overlooked. It was imperative for the British to be aware of every development among the Northwest Indians, and in the spring of 1808, they were especially interested in the move the Prophet was making to the Wabash. Learning that the Prophet was estranged from the chiefs of his own and neighboring tribes who had "sold out" to the Americans certainly must have given the British some hope that he and his movement would prove useful to them. It must have been with some pleasure that they speculated on the number of Indians making pilgrimages to see him.

The Americans were not as well pleased. They, like the British, were aware of the traditional attachment of the Shawnees to the King. By 1808, the Americans received

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9For a sketch of the life of Black Hoof see Benjamin Lossing, The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812, (New York, 1869) p. 548. Also Drake, Tecumseh, pp. 41-45. During the war of 1812 Black Hoof kept the majority of his tribe friendly to the United States.
intelligence that the "Lake Indians" whom Harrison so distrusted were attending the Prophet.\textsuperscript{10} This not only made Harrison uneasy but also bothered the chiefs of the tribes loyal to the Americans. With the Prophet and his followers now located adjacent to them, the Miami and Delaware headmen feared that their people might be won over to the Indian revival. Together the chiefs of those tribes called on the Prophet to demand that he leave the area. According to the account Harrison received, the Prophet would not even stoop to talk to them, but sent his brother instead. Tecumseh's threats were sufficient to "drive back the chiefs with some indications of apprehension and terror."\textsuperscript{11}

Whereas the Miami and Delaware chiefs had been motivated by a threat to their leadership, Harrison was moved by fear of war. This had induced him in the spring of 1808 to supply food to the very Indians whom he feared, the "Lake Indians." They had been coming to see the Prophet in his new location in unprecedented numbers. However, they had neglected to make proper preparations for their trek so that by the time they reached the vicinity of Fort Wayne they were in a near-starving condition. Harrison knew the alter-

\textsuperscript{10}Harrison to Dearborn, 19 May, 1808, Esarey (ed.), \textit{Messages}, I, pp. 290-291.

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid.
native to feeding them was to have them begin raids that
could easily lead to a state of war on the frontier, and
so, almost against his will, he gave instructions to the
agent at Fort Wayne to provision them.\textsuperscript{12}

Even more frightening were the reports reaching
Harrison of what was going on in the Prophet's camp once
those Indians arrived. A recent visitor to the Prophet's
town, whom Harrison described as an "intelligent man", told
the Governor that the Indians there were indeed religious;
that they spent considerable time praying and performing
other religious duties. But interspersed with them were
games of war: shooting the bow, throwing the tomahawk and
practicing with war clubs. The Governor had long suspected
British intrigue among those Indians. To him these war games
proved it, and moreover, made it imperative that the United
States restrain those Indians during the present crisis in
Anglo-American relations.\textsuperscript{13}

To Harrison's way of thinking, the solution was to
seize the Prophet so that he could be "conveyed to the
interior of the United States until the present appearance
of war is removed."\textsuperscript{14} Dearborn never acted on this advice.

\textsuperscript{12}Harrison to Dearborn, 14 February, 1809, Carter
(ed.), Territorial Papers, VII, Territory of Indiana, 1800-
1810, pp. 640-641.

\textsuperscript{13}Harrison to Dearborn, 19 May, 1808, Esarey (ed.),
Messages, I, pp. 290-291.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid.
The Prophet, his brother and disciples were destined to remain in their new location until dislodged by the Battle of Tippecanoe three years later.

Meanwhile, in Upper Canada, William Claus had heard of the attempt by the Miami and Delaware chiefs to have the Prophet's band removed. His intelligence, while impressive, was often incomplete. "I cannot find out that any communication has been made to any of the Indian Nations by the American Government respecting the differences between Great Britain and America."\(^5\)

For his part, however, Claus was making sure there was communication between the American Indians and the British. The Shawnee chiefs he had sent for had arrived and met with him for talks on March 25, of course without the Prophet. The three chiefs, Captain Johnny, Blackwood and the Buffaloe listened to Claus's explanation of relations between the British and the Americans. What he told them was likely typical of what other "confidential" chiefs heard.

Brothers—you must long since have heard that there is a difference existing between the King and the American Government, which the King is much inclined should be made up.

It is well known to you my friends that the King of England is the only King on the other side of the Sea, that has been able

\(^5\)Claus to Gore, 27 February, 1808, \textit{MP&HC}, XV, p. 44.
to stand fast & it is well known to all the world, that nothing can move him. He is always inclined to peace but he will never allow any Nation to do anything to hurt his people & allies, which you are without resenting it. This the Americans are attempting to do (here the business of the Chesapeake was repeated) He has now a person with that Government to try if Peace can be preserved between the two Countries. And if not you may expect to hear from us & I have not a doubt but your ears will be open to hear his words as his have always been to you and your wants, and that you will do what may be required of you, more particularly when by doing so, you may (besides your regard for the King) probably regain the Country taken from you by the Americans.

You must see every day that what little is now left you is going very fast. The Country that the Governor of Detroit bought last fall, takes in all the ground from the Glaize to the White Rock on Lake Huron as the boundary, which will contain upwards of five millions of Acres, for which the Indians will not receive three coppers an Acre.

Should unfortunately any disturbance take place between the King & Americans your friend Captain Elliott will send word to you: and tell you my friends I expect you will shew yourselves, what you always have done, Good & Faithful friends to the King of England.\textsuperscript{16}

Mention of Elliott at this juncture is important, for while he was clearly again in the active service of the Indian Department he had not yet been officially reappointed to any position in it and would not be for several months.

the fact was, however, that the Indian Department had no one else whom they could trust to carry on the delicate negotiations necessary at this point. The present superintendent at Amherstburg, Thomas McKee, was hopelessly addicted to the bottle and often incapable even of getting out of bed. Both Claus and Gore realized that they had only Elliott to turn to. His service with the Northwest Indians until his dismissal in 1797 had won him their lasting trust. That trust could now be exploited, and thus Claus had begun to ask Elliott to perform various tasks for the department while at the same time pressing Craig to ease McKee out of his position so that it could be given back to Elliott. By June 4, Craig finally gave Gore permission to make Elliott Superintendent at Amherstburg.17

Also at the beginning of June, Claus noted in his diary that for the entire month past he had been receiving Indians from the United States at Fort Malden. Apparently the British plan of inviting American Indians in for talks was working well.18 However, Claus was still waiting for a visit from the Prophet.

He wrote Gore that on May 12 he had,

17 Horsman, Matthew Elliott, pp. 161-170.
18 Claus's Diary, 29 May, 1808, Claus Papers, MG 19 F9, p. 203.
sent off a messenger to the Wabashe to invite the prophet in with some Chiefs & young men of each Nation that will be with him, I expect they will be here in the first week in June, I mentioned to the Asst. Secy. of Indian affairs in my letter to him of the 3rd Instant, that I had received a message from the prophet assuring me of his friendship, & I should have added, that he was ready to come in whenever I sent for him.\(^{19}\)

However, when the delegation from the Prophet's town arrived on June 8, it included only Tecumseh and five other Shawnees. Until he arrived in Amherstburg, the British had apparently been unaware of the existence of Tecumseh. At least he had not been mentioned by them in any of their correspondence. There is no indication that they had heard of his plans for uniting the tribes or resisting American pressure for more Indian land. In the aftermath of the Chesapeake affair, the British Indian Department were acting as brokers in promises of aid to the Indians in return for all alliances in case of war. The Indians they were concerned with in particular were those who held some power within their tribes. To the Indian Department it was the Prophet, not one of his relatives, they wanted to see. However, during his stay of more than a month Tecumseh managed to enunciate his aims clearly.

\(^{19}\)Claus to Gore, 22 May, 1808, MP&HC, XXIII, pp. 61-62.
enough to dissipate British disappointment at the failure of the Prophet to appear.  

Since Claus was not at Fort Malden when the Shawnees arrived, they decided to return to the American side of the river and visit Claus a few days later. On June 13, they came back. Claus, according to his diary, talked to them for three hours. Many a riddle about the relationship between the emerging confederation of Northwest Indians and the British could be solved if we knew exactly what was said on that occasion and at subsequent meetings between Tecumseh and Indian Department officials during that visit. The tantalizing entry in the Claus diary that the "purport" of what was said was "taken down separately from here," remains just that.  

To date that document has not been located. We might surmise that Claus initially told Tecumseh and his friends at least as much as he had told other "confidential" Indians: that there might be war, and in case of war the British were interested in an alliance with the Indians. This alliance was also essential to Indian survival. In case of victory the British would be willing to secure land for the Indians permanently. What we do not know was how specific the British

20Claus's Diary, 11 June to 11 July, 1808, Ibid., pp. 53-57.

21Ibid., 13 June, 1808, p. 53.
were with Tecumseh about exactly what sort of help they were willing to offer.

We do know, however, something of what Tecumseh told the British during his visit. He remained in the Amherstburg vicinity for over a month. The reason was that Claus asked him to stay on to meet Gore, who was supposed to be there within a fortnight.\(^{22}\) Gore, in a letter to Governor in chief James Craig, recorded some of the substance of Tecumseh's talks.

Owing to poor communication the Lieutenant Governor's timetable did not exactly mesh with Claus's. Several times the harried Deputy Superintendent made trips up the Detroit River to welcome Gore only to find that his excellency was nowhere near Amherstburg. Claus commiserated with himself in his diary, noting that on one such trip the temperature reached 99° in the shade and 108° in the sun.\(^{23}\)

Finally, however, on July 29, the Lieutenant Governor arrived at Peach Island (Isle aux Peches). Claus once again travelled upriver to meet him. The two shared a canoe down to Amherstburg. On the way they passed the American fort at Detroit. "...gave three cheers past the American Garrison but they had not the common civility

\(^{22}\textit{Ibid.}, 15\ June, 1808, p. 54.\)

\(^{23}\textit{Ibid.}, 26\ June, 1808, p. 55.\)
to show a color."²⁴ Perhaps if the Americans had known exactly who was in that canoe and what Gore's mission was they might have shown a good deal more than a "color."

On the first of July, Claus sent a messenger over to the American side to tell Tecumseh and his fellows that the Lieutenant Governor had arrived. On July 11, at a meeting carried out with no small degree of ceremony, Gore addressed the hundreds of Indians gathered at the fort. In accordance with British policy he stressed British friendship for the Indian but avoided any talk of war that might have excited the Indians unnecessarily. Once he had delivered his talk in English he left the council house where Claus and Elliott "explained" the speech which took upwards of two hours. Before Gore left he also took time to obtain information about Tecumseh which he later relayed to Craig. He wrote the Governor-in-chief that

The Prophet's brother, who is stated to me to be his principle support and who appears to be a very shrewd intelligent man, was at Amherstburg while I was there. He told Col. Claus and Capt. Elliot that they were endeavoring to collect the different Nations to form one settlement on the Wabash about 300 miles southwest of Amherstburg in order to preserve their country from all encroachments. That their intention at present is

²⁴Ibid., 29 June, 1808, p. 55.
not to take any part in the quarrels of the white people: that if the Americans encroach on them they are resolved to strike—but he added that if their father the King should be in earnest and appear in sufficient force they would hold fast by him.25

This last sentence provides by deduction as good an indication as we have of what Tecumseh had been told in the talks by the Indian Department during the month past.

Gore's words "shrewd" and "intelligent" were well chosen. Not only did Tecumseh tantalize the British with exactly what they had wanted to hear from an Indian, that is that he was not about to begin a fight with the Americans just because the British indicated they might be willing to give support some time in the future, he also reminded those officials of an episode in British-Indian relations that they would gladly have forgotten. That episode followed the Battle of Fallen Timbers, when the King's soldiers shut the door of their Fort Miami against the Indians seeking refuge from Wayne's army. Tecumseh made sure the British knew the Indians still remembered the "number of chiefs who fell as a consequence of that fort being shut against them."26

If the British were embarrassed at the reminder they must nonetheless have been heartened at finding an Indian whose interests and plans fitted so closely into their own. So much the better if the same man was the

25Gore to Craig, 27 July, 1808, (PAC), RG10 F11 (pages unnumbered).
26Ibid.
brother of the Prophet who was drawing pilgrims in the thousands to the site of his Indian revival. If Craig had considered the "purchase" of the Shawnee Prophet in the winter of 1807-08, knowing what little they did about him at that time, one must wonder how much more attractive the purchase of Tecumseh must have seemed to them after his talks at Fort Malden in June and July.

While some of the Shawnee from the Prophet's town were with Tecumseh talking to the British, others were seeking help from the Americans. In the fall of 1807, Harrison had sent a letter to the Indians with the Prophet, then at Greenville, that could only be described as threatening.27 The Prophet immediately replied with surprise and disappointment that the Governor would think ill of him.28 Now, in the early summer of 1808, the Prophet sent another note to Harrison reminding the Governor of his determination to live in peace with both red and white, saying "As proof of our sincerity we have brought our women and children to reside near you." This of course was precious little comfort to Harrison who would have preferred to have them all located some distance across the Mississippi.

The Prophet had a second motive for this message. "In consequence of our removal to Tippecanoe", he wrote,


28Prophet to Harrison, August, 1807, Ibid., p. 251.
"we are in great distress. We hope that you will assist our women and children with a little corn. We are planting now and hope to have plenty when it is ripe."\(^29\)

So while Tecumseh and others of his band were busy talking of war at Fort Malden, the Prophet was telling Harrison "... we ought to live in peace upon the land he [the Great Spirit] has given us. This is our positive determination and we are resolved not to listen any longer to bad [British? ]advice ... The Great Spirit has told us not to lie you must know that I did not make my own Head and Tongue ... I cannot lie without offending him."\(^30\)

It is safe to assume that both the brothers knew they were playing a double game. Any doubts we may have about the Prophet's sincerity are removed by a message he previously sent to Claus through Frederick Fisher, the half-breed British Indian agent and trader operating in his vicinity, in which he assured Claus of his "friendship" toward the British.\(^31\)

Obviously unaware that Harrison had recommended his capture and detention, the Prophet informed the Governor that he was planning a personal visit to Vincennes "to


\(^{30}\)Ibid.

\(^{31}\)Claus to Selby, 3 May, 1808, \textit{MP&HC}, XV, p. 49; Claus to Gore, 22 May, 1808, \textit{Ibid.}, XXIII, pp. 61-62.
remove every bad impression you have received against me." 32  

Harrison replied to the Prophet in language that indicated he still had not changed his opinion of the man. "I have heard a very bad report of you." 33 Yet the Prophet's message with its protestations of innocence and promise of a visit softened Harrison a bit. Indians he interviewed who had known the Prophet even began to make the Governor think that the man might possibly be put to some good use for the United States. 34  

To the Indians with the Prophet Harrison wrote in reply that they must remember the misery they suffered when they followed the British. He prevailed upon them to be wary of the British agents he knew were circulating among them.

33 Harrison to Prophet (no date but in direct answer to Prophet's message of 24 June, 1808), Ibid., pp. 292-294.  
34 Typical of the Indian testimonials in favor of the Prophet was this one given to Harrison in June of 1808: "I have listened to that man upwards of three years and we have never heard him give any but good advice. He tells us that we must pray to the great spirit who made the world and everything in it for our use. He tells us that no man could make the Trees and plants and the animals but that they must be made by the great spirit to whom we ought to pray and obey in all things. He tells us not to lie to steal or drink whiskey not to go to war but to live in peace with all mankind. He tells us also to work and make corn . . .", Ibid., p. 295.
It was by their persuasions that you took up the tomahawk in the 1790's but they abandoned you as soon as distress came upon you and left you at the mercy of those very enemies you had provoked to gratify their revenge and malice. How different has been the conduct of the chief of the 17 Fires toward you. Like a true father he watches over your happiness and gives you the same advice that you say you have received from the Great Spirit that is to have pity on your women and children and live in peace with all mankind. War he detests and never engages in it, but in his own defense nor will he ever condescend to ask assistance of his children confident in his own strength... If any of the nations which reside beyond the Great Lake waters should provoke him to war he is sufficiently able to punish them. He wants the aid of no power on earth and relies on his own strength and the favor of the Great Spirit who always takes the side of the injured.35

Harrison, in this instance, was not only reminding the Indians of the same thing Tecumseh would bring to the attention of the British, namely the British abandonment of the Indians after the Battle of Fallen Timbers, he was also following the instructions of the Secretary of War by indicating to the Indians that the United States was sufficiently strong not to have to be "anxious" for peace.

Neither Harrison nor the Prophet had been completely honest with each other in this exchange of messages. Harrison's letter continued, "The mild religion which we possess will not permit us to use any other means than

35 Harrison to the Prophet (no date), Ibid., pp. 292-294.
argument and reason to induce others to adopt our opinions.\footnote{36 One can only wonder how differently this message might have been phrased had he known where Tecumseh was and what he was doing that very month.}

Yet, for a time, each deceived the other, Harrison perhaps ending more the dupe than the Prophet. Before the summer was out, Harrison had been convinced by his face to face talks with the Prophet and some of his followers during the last two weeks in August that the Indian revival religion preached at Tippecanoe could be a useful tool in maintaining the peace while the government continued to strip the Indians of their land. The Prophet, as Harrison understood it, taught the Indians that it was the will of the Great Spirit that they grow corn, stop drinking, fight with neither red nor white and turn a deaf ear to the British. All of the above appeared to dove-tail nicely into President Jefferson's overall plan of civilizing the American Indian. But in fact, that apparenty was deceptive.

Harrison was seeing only the tip of the iceberg as far as the Prophet's revival was concerned. It was true that the Prophet preached against alcohol and prevailed upon his followers to grow corn. But he did so because both of these things were part of a return to the life the Indians had lived before contact with the whites. Far from

\footnote{Tbid.}
wanting to civilize the Indians, the Prophet sought to remove from his people those vestiges of the white man's life which had corrupted the Indian and caused him to fall from the favor of the Great Spirit. Harrison, probably being unaware of the full program of the Prophet as revealed in his commandments referred to above, understandably thought that raising corn was a step in the direction of Indian reliance on agriculture. He could also be excused for thinking that a sober Indian was further along the road to civilization than a drunken one.

Of course, the closer the Indians got to being "civilized" the less land they would need to support themselves and the sooner the United States could extinguish Indian title to what would then be only useless surplus to the tribesmen.

After the Prophet had left Vincennes, Harrison wrote Secretary of War. Dearborn, that he was unable to tell if the Prophet was a tool of the British, but that the man seemed candid to him in his avowal that he was not influenced by them, and that his sole aim was to retrieve the Indians from the bad habits into which they had fallen. The Governor admitted that the Prophet had been remarkably successful in curbing the Indians' use of alcohol and had had similar success in convincing them to cultivate crops. However, he reserved judgment on what success the Prophet
might have in inducing the Indians to "lay aside their passions for war." His conclusion was a monumental misjudgment. "Upon the whole sir, I am inclined to think that the influence which the Prophet has acquired will prove rather advantageous than otherwise to the United States." 37

The Prophet would doubtless have been elated to know how convincing Harrison had found him. By the end of that summer, Harrison told the territorial assembly in his annual address that the Indians of Indiana Territory were at length convinced by good treatment from the Americans that they must live in peace. The influence of the British, about which he had warned that body only a year before, he now assured them was no longer a danger. Whereas only months before he had recommended to Washington that the Prophet be seized, now talks with him had convinced Harrison that for the time being, at least, the man could be trusted. "I pronounce with confidence that at no anterior period have our relations with neighboring tribes been placed on better footing ... our Indian frontier will be free from those alarms and apprehensions which have had so much effect in retarding its settlement." 38

37Harrison to Dearborn, 1 September, 1808, Ibid., p. 302.

Unfortunately, peace with the Indians clearly meant only one thing to Harrison: a chance to get more Indian land. War meant settlement would be retarded, peace meant it could be advanced. To his mind there was nothing sinister in treating with the Indians for their land. Nor did he see that such dealings increased the probability of war. Instead he wrote,

We can challenge the world to produce a similar instance of a great and powerful nation respecting on all occasions the rights of its weaker neighbors, and acquiring by fair equal and reciprocally advantageous treaties that extension of territory which all other nations have been accustomed to seize by violence.\textsuperscript{39}

Had the Prophet's promises of peace been made in earnest they would nonetheless have been threatened by the Americans' determination to use that peace to seize Indian land. That the Prophet wanted peace, however, was only a half-truth. He certainly did not want war in 1808.

Peace was perfectly acceptable to the Indians under the two brothers if that peace meant the Indians could retain their land. By the end of 1808, the position of Tecumseh and the Prophet was perfectly clear. The Prophet's instructions to his followers directed that the Indians return to the "old" ways of life, that they throw off the ways of the white man. To do this it was obviously necessary

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., p. 307.
for the Indian to have wild land, untouched by settlement. The Prophet's message was that only when the Indians had adopted this style of life would the Great Spirit be pleased with his red children again.40

Tecumseh took a slightly different approach to the same problem. While the Prophet relied on the eventual intervention of the Great Spirit, Tecumseh sought more immediate temporal help.

In 1808, two possible sources of that aid existed: the followers of his brother and British support. If those followers could be expanded and re-shaped into a military and political confederation of tribes, initially from the Northwest, and later to include all tribes in the trans-Appalachian region and perhaps even some west of the Mississippi, their refusal to sell land to the Americans might slow the advance of settlement into the Indian country. Tecumseh was practical enough to know, however, that confederations of tribes had existed before for the same purpose. He himself had participated in the last of the battles over Ohio, the Battle of Fallen Timbers. In that clash the confederated tribes of the region had been

40 Substance of a Talk by the Indian Chief Le Maigonis, as coming from the First Man God Created Now in the Shawnee Country Addressed to all the Different Tribes of Indians, 4 August, 1807, MG 19 F11, pp. 13-16.
defeated and shortly after their union disbanded. Successful resistance to American land pressures was obviously going to require more than the Indians offering a united "No" to American attempts to treat for land.

That something more, by 1808, the second source of aid, was the British. With Tecumseh the broker of British promises of support in case of war, the gathering at Tippecanoe now had something to offer Indians who previously had not found the Prophet's religion alone to be sufficient. British support would allow the impatient Indians a chance to play a more active role in retaining their land.

Unaware of what the British had told Tecumseh and other "confidential" Indians, the Americans continued, in the fall of 1808, with their pacification program, hoping to keep the Indians neutral if war broke out. Like the British, the Americans were aiming at preventing the Indians from enlisting on the side of the enemy, but they intended to accomplish that goal by intimidation. To that end the militia was ordered to organize and equip up to the number of 100,000 men. This show of strength was designed to impress the Indians with the tremendous force the United States could muster and unleash at need. Further, the chiefs of the Western tribes were ordered sent to Washington to hear Thomas Jefferson, nearing retirement, warn them against war
for the last time. 41

In December the President delivered his talk to the
Miamis, Potawatomis, Delawares and Chippewas. He reminded
them of the pain they had suffered in the past as a result
of listening to the British, by accepting from them their
tomahawk (invitation to war) and liquor. "The course they
advise has worn you down to your present numbers, but tem-
perance, peace and agriculture will raise you up to what
your forefathers were . . ." After repeated assurances that
the Americans had the best interests of the Indians at
heart, he dismissed the chiefs. 42

Winter had again settled in on the frontier by the
time those chiefs returned to their villages, another winter
of reflection on the part of all three principals in the west.
The British Indian Department tried to analyze its talks
with the Indians over the season past. The Indians under the
two brothers continued their religious exercises and also
continued to send messengers to other tribes to carry talk of
confederation and revival of the old Indian ways. The Ameri-
cans meanwhile reflected on how to obtain another huge tract
of Indian land while still keeping the Indians at peace.
That reflection culminated in the Treaty of Fort Wayne the
following year, a treaty that gave the Indian confederation
its first real test.

41Dawson, Harrison, p. 113.

42Thomas Jefferson to the Miamis, Potawatomis,
Delawares and Chippewas, December, 1808, Esarey (ed.),
Messages, I, pp. 328-332.
CHAPTER FIVE
THE TREATY OF FORT WAYNE

About 5,000 Indians visited Amherstburg in the fall of 1808. Clearly the British policy of demonstrating to the red men that they had friends in Canada was beginning to pay off. During the previous seasons they had been attempting to convince "confidential Indians" to argue quietly the British case with their tribesmen. Now Indian interest in the British was pleasing proof that the new policy was working.\(^1\)

In fact, if anything, it was working a bit too well. By February of 1809, the veteran British Indian agent, Matthew Elliott was predicting to Lieutenant Governor Francis Gore that with one regular regiment "The American Post of Detroit, and the Country between it and the Ohio would soon be in our possession . . ."\(^2\)

Elliott's prediction points up, however, one of the most crucial problems faced by the British Indian Department in the years before the War of 1812; the problem of applying in North America, policies made thousands of miles away in London. To defend Canada the British knew some sort of

\(^1\)Claus to Selby, 18 January, 1809, MP&HC, XXIII, p. 67.

\(^2\)Gore to Craig, 20 February, 1809, Ibid., XV, p. 53.
alliance with the Indians was essential. The Indians, however, were not likely to appreciate the complexities of formal diplomacy which, for the time, served to preserve a fragile peace between the Americans and their old mother country. Any alliance made with the Indians, therefore, had to be constructed with utmost care to prevent British talk of friendship from being construed by the tribes as an invitation to begin war with the Americans.

It was the British Indian agent who, in the final analysis, was entrusted with interpreting and implementing this delicate policy. Elliott's expressed optimism about capturing American territory, however, was fair indication that he might have been a bit more anxious for war than his superiors would have liked. No matter how much the Indians might have wanted to see the Americans removed from the country between Detroit and the Ohio, and regardless of how sympathetic Elliott must have been toward them, such a move would clearly mean war and therefore failure of present British strategy regarding the United States. For a nation already at war in Europe, that prospect was less than attractive. British policy, as intended in London at least, was not aimed at causing a war with the United States, but rather at being prepared for war should it be forced upon them. Any Indian action which might prematurely embroil the British in a North American war was obviously anathema
to Whitehall.

The dilemma was deepened because the British had no effective way to guess as to how an agent might choose to implement his instructions. These circumstances meant that British Indian policy was made as much in the bush of North America as it was in the offices at Whitehall. It was also being made by men whose interests were closer to those of the Indians than to their employers, by men who were often of Indian blood or who had Indian families. Thus it was conceivable that a British agent could talk of capturing American land (and thereby risking a war) while at the same time his ultimate superior, Viscount Castlereagh, Secretary of War and Colonies, was writing of a possible amicable settlement with the Americans.\(^3\)

In Castlereagh's thinking, an alliance with the Indians was not to preclude the possibility of peace with the United States. Friendship with the Indians was insurance.

Under an undefined relation with the United States of America, . . . attention must be kept up to conciliate the Indian Tribes upon the following Principle; that if in a contest they are not employed to act with us, they will be engaged to act against us & that we are to consider not so much their use as allies as their Destructiveness if enemies.\(^4\)

\(^3\)Viscount Castlereagh to Craig, 8 April, 1809, *Ibid.*, XXIII, p. 69. Castlereagh was Secretary of War and Colonies, until September, 1809. He was succeeded by Lord Liverpool.

\(^4\)Ibid.
Just as the British were having problems directing Elliott, the Americans were experiencing similar difficulties with some of their agents. One of the most important requirements for an agent was that he have fluency in some Indian languages. This competence, however, could be obtained only by a lengthy residence with the Indians. The result of such long stays, either voluntary, as with traders, or involuntary (some agents were ex-Indian captives) was often that the agent, in fact, became an Indian. He also tended to identify himself very closely with the tribesmen, seeing his charges as people, instead of pawns on an international chess board. One cannot help but wonder how much more humane both British and American Indian policy might have been if its formulation as well as its implementation had been left to the agents in the field.

William Wells, the American agent at Fort Wayne between 1799 and 1809, was in some ways comparable to Matthew Elliott, his British counterpart. Wells, the son of a prominent Kentucky pioneer family, was captured by the Indians as a child and raised with the Miami tribe. In the first two battles over the Ohio country he participated, as Elliott did, on the Indian side. However, by the time of "Mad Anthony" Wayne's advance in 1794, he had been persuaded, perhaps by white relatives, to switch sides. He served Wayne in the capacity of "Master of Spies." Somehow the Indians
retained their affection for him even after their defeat, and were pleased to see him appointed as the agent at Fort Wayne. 5

Like Elliott, Wells was attacked for his rather casual bookkeeping, which allowed him to make a small fortune out of the agency. This was not uncommon for the day. By far the weightiest complaint voiced against him by his superiors was that he had lived with the Indians so long that he had imbibed their prejudices. Criticism of him on this head continued until his death, which occurred in 1812, when he was bravely attempting to lead the garrison at Fort Dearborn (now Chicago) to safety. Rumors often circulated, reaching the Secretary of War and even the President, that Wells advised the Indians against the very agreements the government wanted them to make. While no real proof can be found for these claims, their very frequency makes it appear they had some basis in fact. 6

5 A brief biography of William Wells can be found in Bert J. Griswold (ed.), Fort Wayne, Gateway of the West, 1802-1813 Garrison Orderly Books and Indian Agency Account Books, (Indianapolis, 1927), pp. 30-33.

One part of the problem was Wells's genuine sympathy for the Indians. The other part was that, like his British counterpart, Wells was not always fully informed as to minute changes in his country's Indian policy. But whereas it might have taken a few weeks for American officials to reach Wells, it often took months to transmit policy alterations from London to Quebec to York to Amherstburg and then finally to the British agent operating in what was, by 1809, hostile territory. These delays meant that American, but even more so British, agents were forced to operate to a considerable extent by their own lights, and often with only a general notion of the policies formulated by their respective governments. When to this shortage of instruction were added the agent's sympathy for their charges and the temptation to use their official position for personal aggrandizement, the result was often that the policies they put into action varied significantly from what had been intended by the authors of those policies.

William Wells's interests were allied with those Indians who had made their peace with the Americans at Greenville in 1795. Danger threatened those Indians from two sides in 1809. On one hand it came from the Americans

7Griswold (ed.), *Fort Wayne*, p. 31.
who wanted more land from those tribes. On the other hand, it came from the Prophet, Tecumseh and their followers whose radical opposition to the Americans could easily lead to war. Wells then was equally at home warning the peaceful Indians about the Americans' land schemes or warning the Americans about the machinations of the Prophet.

In April 1809, Wells wrote Harrison that the Prophet had the Indians in his vicinity highly agitated. Apparently he had revealed to them his plans to kill all the whites from Cincinnati to the mouth of the Ohio. Those Indians who were not willing to cooperate the Prophet pledged to destroy. No mention was made of Tecumseh in this correspondence. Wells interpreted these rumors of massacre for Harrison in light of what he knew. It seemed to him that it was the Prophet, not the Americans, who should have been worrying. He had heard that an unduly large number of the Indians staying with the Prophet had died the previous fall and winter. The cause of death does not appear in his letter. Many of those Indians were Chippewas and Ottawas.⁸

From what he could gather, those tribes were now contemplating an attack on the Prophet. It must have seemed to them that he was personally responsible for the deaths. There was logic to the conclusion. After all, if the Prophet

⁸Wells to Harrison, 8 April, 1809, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 337-339.
could stop the sun; if he could grow ears of corn big enough to feed 12 men and pumpkins the size of a hut; if he could promise the intervention of the Great Spirit to save the Indians from the whites, then surely he should have been able to prevent the deaths of so many of his friends.

As a result of the deaths, and also of the rumors of attack by the Chippewas and Ottawas many of the Prophet's followers, Wells understood, were leaving him. A man who had recently passed through the Prophet's village told the agent that there were only 80 to 100 warriors there. Such a small force could hardly contemplate the massacre of Vincennes alone much less the entire southern Ohio valley. Even the Indians the Prophet had with him were reported to be in a miserable starving condition as a result of the hard winter past. In light of this information the rumor of the Prophet's attacking the Americans seemed most unlikely to Wells.⁹

Harrison, however, was not content to accept Wells's assessment of the situation in the Prophet's camp. In re-laying the agent's intelligence to the Secretary of War he made one important shift of emphasis. While he admitted that the Prophet had only 80 or 100 men with him, he stressed his own notion that within a distance of 40 to 50 miles

⁹Ibid.
there were at least four or five times as many warriors ready to help execute the evil plot. Harrison was also suspicious that the Indians had made up the story of a possible attack on the Prophet to hide the fact that armed Indians were on their way to join those at Tippecanoe to help "fall upon our settlements." Rather than take chances Harrison decided to equip and muster two companies of militia and to deploy them outside Vincennes to protect the town. He also dispatched scouts to range in a circle beyond the militia to take notice of any unusual activity among the Indians and to alert the town if necessary. Furthermore, he sent messages to the neighboring tribes reminding them of an article in the Treaty of Greenville which prohibited any tribe which signed the document from allowing hostile Indians to pass through their lands. With these preparations made, Harrison then braced himself to receive the onslaught.

However, word of an alleged murder a few days later, as he wrote the Secretary of War, "in a great measure dissipated" all his anxiety. This information came from two traders who had spent the winter with the Potawatomi a "few leagues below the station of the Prophet." Their intelligence agreed with that submitted earlier by Wells. They

10Harrison to Eustis, 18 April, 1809, Ibid., pp. 340-342.

11Ibid.
reported that the Prophet was universally feared and hated by the neighboring tribes. Only belief in his supernatural powers kept those tribes from trying to destroy him. However, they told Harrison, notwithstanding those powers, three young men of the Ottawa and Chippewa tribes had decided to put the Prophet to the test. They slipped into his camp and there, "within ten steps of his tent," murdered a woman, afterwards making a successful escape. The nearby tribes, now disabused of their former notion of the Prophet's power, were, they told the Governor, preparing to attack the imposter, Harrison was convinced the fight would come shortly.\textsuperscript{12}

Whatever his relief, the Governor must also have felt a twinge of embarrassment. After all, he had called out two companies of militia to meet an imaginary threat, and now, apparently, there was nothing for them to do. He decided finally, that instead of disbanding them he would exert himself "to improve the time they may remain in service in teaching them such of the military evolutions as suits the service they are likely to be employed in."\textsuperscript{13}

Unfortunately it was only a matter of a week before Harrison was again asking the Secretary of War to believe that Vincennes was once more in immediate danger from the Prophet's Indians. He was now convinced that the Chippewas

\textsuperscript{12}Harrison to Eustis, 26 April, 1809, \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 342-343.

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Ibid.}
and Ottawas were not at all unhappy with the Prophet. On the contrary, he had heard that their young men had not killed the "squa" but rather that, already dead of natural causes, the Indians scalped her in order to carry out their elaborate deception.

Furthermore, Harrison was now convinced that the Prophet had 350 warriors, well armed and "tolerably supplied with ammunition." Of course, the Governor found this good cause to keep the militia under arms a bit longer.\(^{14}\)

Nevertheless, only two weeks later Harrison changed his mind again. This time he wrote the Secretary of War that there no longer existed the "least probability" of any attack by the Prophet's party. The Governor had had word that the Indians with the Prophet had dispersed "with manifest indications of terror and alarm." While he admitted he did not know exactly why this had happened, he speculated that the causes were likely his military preparations, the failure of the Prophet to raise as many men as he needed or perhaps the fact that the Tippecanoe Indians were short of provisions. Wells's original assessment of the situation, it would seem, had been correct.\(^{15}\)

In the same letter Harrison also asked permission to purchase more Indian land. The answer of the Secretary of


War was that land should be purchased only when doing so would "excite no disagreeable apprehension and produce no undesirable effect . . ." Given Tecumseh's announced intention to retain Indian land for Indians, any attempt Harrison might make to buy such land could easily produce exactly the result which the Secretary of War was warning against.

Perhaps the Governor was not well acquainted with Tecumseh's program of common Indian ownership of all Indian land, or perhaps he did not think the Prophet's band strong enough to produce any "undesirable effect" should their wishes be ignored. Whatever the case, Harrison's decision to seek some three million acres of Indian land in the late summer of 1809, was going to assure him of a firm acquaintance not only with Tecumseh but with his confederation plans as well.

Regardless of what Harrison may have known or thought about the connection between the Prophet's Indians and his own land purchases, he had shown he was concerned about the physical threat those Indians posed to his settlements. He was also worried about the influence he was sure the British were exerting on the band at Tippecanoe as well as the other tribes more remote from the white settlements. By the middle of June, Governor William Hull of the Michigan Terri-

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16 Eustis to Harrison, 5 June, 1809, Ibid., p. 347.
tory was troubled in the same way for he wrote to the Secretary of War, that the Prophet was having a bad influence on the Indians of his territory. He was sure that the British were behind it all.\textsuperscript{17}

Harrison met the Prophet at the end of June and came to a similar conclusion about British influence behind the brothers. Their talk convinced him that the rumors of war and of attacks on Vincennes were more than mere gossip. He claimed that the Prophet admitted having been invited to go to war by the British as early as the previous fall.\textsuperscript{18}

While the British clearly had proposed alliances with the Indians and indicated a war could erupt, they surely had made no attempt, in the fall of 1808, to instigate open fighting between the Indians and the Americans. The Prophet may have thought that by telling tales on the British he was going to be able to win Harrison's confidence. There must also have been some real friction between the Prophet and the Ottawas and Chippewas as he told Harrison in his June meeting that those tribes were planning an attack on the Americans, and that he had been solicited to "join their league."\textsuperscript{19} This statement could hardly be construed as a

\textsuperscript{17}Gov. William Hull to Eustis, 16 April, 1809, \textit{American State Papers, Class II; Indian Affairs}, I, p. 799.

\textsuperscript{18}Harrison to Eustis, 5 July, 1809, Esarey (ed.), \textit{Messages}, I, pp. 349-355.

\textsuperscript{19}Ibid.
favor to those Indians.

The previous meeting between Harrison and the Prophet had resulted in the Governor's being convinced that the Prophet might be useful to the Americans. Since that meeting, however, Harrison had had ample indication that those earlier expectations were overly optimistic. This time he was not willing to take the Prophet at his word. The intelligence about the British and the "Lake Indians" that the Prophet thought might dazzle Harrison, the latter viewed with suspicion. Why had the mystic not told American authorities about those war plans when they were being circulated in 1808? What were the Prophet's motives in communicating them now? While he remained unconvinced of the Prophet's innocence, Harrison's conclusion was that "the late combination was produced by British intrigue and influence in anticipation of war between them and the United States."20

Conniving British agents and savage, bloodthirsty Indians always figured in Harrison's letters as simple cause and effect. He never seemed to find the flaws in his own government's policies. He never seemed to grasp the fact that American pressure on the Indians for their land was the very cause that was throwing the Indians into the

20 Ibid.
waiting arms of the British. Even when the Indians bluntly
told him as much the lesson had no effect. In the same
letter in which he told Eustis about his interview with
the Prophet, he also reported what another Indian had told
him.

You call us your children why do you not
make us happy as our Fathers the French
did? They never took from us our lands,
indeed they were in common with us--
they planted where they pleased and they
cut wood where they pleased and so did
we--but now if a poor Indian attempts to
take a little bark from a tree to cover
him from the rain, up comes a white man
and threatens to shoot him, claiming the
tree as his own.21

By the middle of July, Harrison had received approval,
from President Madison through William Eustis, of his request
to treat with the Indians for more land.22 The Delawares,
Miamis, Potawatomis and Eel Rivers met with Harrison at
Fort Wayne. There, by September 30, they agreed to part
with large cessions in southern and eastern Indiana. Back
in Vincennes on October 27, Harrison got the Weas, a branch
of the Miami tribe, to approve what their brothers had done at
Fort Wayne. Early in December he dealt with the Kickapoos
for a smaller piece of land northwest of the Wabash.23 In

21Ibid.

22Eustis to Harrison, 15 July, 1809, Ibid., pp. 356-
357.

23Journal of the Proceedings at the Indian Treaty at
Fort Wayne and Vincennes, 1 September to 27 October, 1809,
Ibid., pp. 358-378; Harrison to Eustis, 10 December, 1809,
Ibid., pp. 396-397.
all the Indians surrendered over three million acres of land in exchange for a cash payment of $7,000 and annuities totalling $1,750 per year. Contrary to the plan outlined by Tecumseh, the Indians treated with the Governor as individual tribes. According to Harrison's "Journal of the Proceedings," not one Indian speaker mentioned the concept of common Indian ownership of all Indian land.

It is important to note that neither the Prophet nor Tecumseh, nor, in fact, any of their band is recorded as having attended this treaty at Fort Wayne. Harrison made an effort, in arranging the negotiations, to include all tribes having any historical claim to the land, either by original possession, conquest or prolonged residence. Under these conditions the Prophet's band could hardly have been included. These men came from a number of tribes in the vicinity but represented no power in any of them. In most cases they represented factions unable to agree with their own tribal authorities.

Even had the Prophet and his brother been leaders of a totally Shawnee band, it is unlikely that the Americans would have considered them owners of any part of the lands involved in the Fort Wayne cession. The Shawnees, all authorities agree, were latecomers to that part of the Ohio
valley. Harrison later claimed that the principal chief of the largest band of Shawnee, Hockingspomskon attended the treaty at Fort Wayne but offered no claim to the land in question.

Seen in this light, Tecumseh's plan of common Indian ownership of all Indian land assumes additional perspective. The Shawnee were to some extent a displaced people, Indians without land in Indian country. They occupied the land either at the pleasure of the tribes that "owned" it or by intimidating them. The more pressure the Americans applied to other tribes to surrender their land the fewer places there would be for those Indians who could not claim ownership of that land.

The fact that Tecumseh's ideas were not represented at the Treaty of Fort Wayne, however, did not mean that the Indians who were there surrendered their lands easily. Some


25 Harrison's Annual Message to the legislature, 12 November, 1810, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, p. 489. While Harrison claims that Hockingspomskon was a "principal" chief of the Shawnees I have been unable to find references to him in any of the works that deal with the history of the tribe. Most of them consider Blackhoof or Catahecassa to have been the principal Shawnee chief. See Hodge (ed.), Handbook, I, p. 212.
tribes did, but others held out for improved terms from Harrison. These bargaining sessions gave the Governor a chance to remind the Indians that it was the Americans who were their true friends and to impress upon them that their present unhappy state was a direct result of having listened to the British. It was British traders, after all, who had encouraged them to kill the animals of the forest for their skins only. Now the Indians needed the food those vanished animals could have provided. Their own improvidence had ruined the value of their land, which now was hardly able to support them. The best course of action left was to sell the land and let the money they received support them as the land had in the past.\textsuperscript{26}

Still some tribes resisted Harrison's appeals. The Governor prided himself that when buying from the Indians he never paid more than two cents an acre. Yet some of them discovered that the Americans were currently selling land for upwards of two dollars an acre to their settlers. Harrison recorded that the Indians who brought this information to the talks had just returned from a visit to the British at Fort Malden. British intrigue, the Governor was sure, was affecting his Indians even as he talked with them.\textsuperscript{27}


\textsuperscript{27}Ibid., pp. 369-373. Harrison wrote "During the whole of this day and the preceding one, parties of young men of the Miami Tribe were constantly arriving loaded with goods from the British Agents at Malden and charged also with strong remonstrances against the proposed Treaty."
This intrigue he countered with assurances to the other Indians present that he had their best interests at heart.

The proposition I have made you, I fondly hoped would have been acceptable to all. When then this disagreement amongst you. Is there some Evil spirit amongst us. That has set brothers against brothers and the children against the Father? . . . The wind I hear has blown from the North, no good has every [sic] come from that quarter.28

As an added inducement Harrison also assured the Indians that the Americans would not bother them for land again. This request would be the last.

This is the first request that your new Father (President Madison) has ever made you it will be the last, he wants no more of your land agree to the proposition which I now make you & send on some of your wise men to take him by the hand. He will set your heart at ease. He will tell you that he will never make another proposition to you to sell your lands.29

Of course the Indians had been told something similar when they signed the Treaty of Greenville 14 years before. Since that time American pressure for their land had never slackened. For those Indians who still held out Harrison had another means of forcing compliance. He skillfully played off those tribes who had agreed to sell against those that remained reluctant. It was customary, after

28Tbid., p. 367.

29Tbid., p. 368.
an agreement had been reached for the presents, foods and strong drink to be brought out. The tribes that had surrendered their lands were anxious, in fact impatient, for the revelling to begin. Arguments in the Indian camp between the two factions allowed the Governor, who had caused them in the first place, to pose as peacemaker. Finally Harrison managed to "mellow" the stubborn Indians with what he euphemistically called wine and the documents were "cheerfully" signed at last.\(^{30}\) Then the casks were opened and the nearly 1,400 Indians present began their celebration. Considering their numbers and the predictable effects of the whiskey which the Americans supplied in generous quantities, casualties were small. Only one man was mortally wounded, the result of a drunken fight.\(^{31}\)

In his report to the Secretary of War of November 3, 1809, Harrison made the curious statement that the Indians, in selling their land, had taken a great step toward civilization. This assumption he based on the fact that in the future they would have at least one constant source of income which would help them through the seasons when hunting was poor and supplies depleted. That source was their annuity.\(^{32}\)


At a price of less than two cents an acre it is questionable that even the Indians who sold the land benefitted by the sale. But it is certain that other Indians, who lived near the boundaries of the Fort Wayne cession, some of whom did not have any historic title to the lands on which they had settled, were in greater jeopardy than before the deal was made. They now had the dubious honor of being the next Indians the Americans would invite in to dispossess of their homes.

Among these Indians Tecumseh alone demanded a show of resistance to further sales. We have no idea when he first suggested such action to the Indians, but we know he had informed the Americans of his intentions more than two years before the agreement at Fort Wayne. We also have no yardstick by which to measure his success with the Indians. It is impossible to tell how many, of the thousands who came to Tippecanoe each year, were swayed by Tecumseh's appeals to unite in resisting American demands for lands. Nor can we demonstrate that Tecumseh's contacts with the British in 1808, and his knowledge that the British might be willing, if and when war came, to help the Indians regain their lost territory, made his message any more attractive to the

Indians who called on the Prophet.

But primary sources do indicate that in 1809 Tecumseh continued his move, begun by his visit to the British at Fort Malden in 1808, to reshape the Indian revival begun by his brother into a political, and eventually, military force, initially to retain Indian land and later to aid the British during the War of 1812. This move was an extremely delicate one, for it required that the followers of the Prophet alter their notion that the Great Spirit alone would cleanse the land of the whites. Instead Tecumseh was calling on the Indians to look for more temporal means of achieving the same end, namely their own strength coupled with that of the British. But at the same time Tecumseh could not risk "debunking" the Prophet. We have no solid evidence that the Indians who came to Tippecanoe came to see Tecumseh; we have every indication that they were drawn by the Prophet and his revival. Tecumseh's hopes for confederation were dependent, to a large extent, on the Prophet's continued success. The Indians who came to Tippecanoe were generally frustrated. They were frustrated at their inability to hold their land, at the disappearance of their game and their inability to support themselves. They were, as a result, a ready-made audience for what Tecumseh could tell them. They had probably turned to the Prophet and his promises of supernatural help because they thought they had exhausted all possibilities of helping themselves.
What Tecumseh could offer them, British help and a chance to fight for their land, certainly had an appeal, especially to the younger warriors. These young men, schooled with accounts of the past glories of their tribes, glories achieved by the very chiefs who were now counselling passive acceptance of every American encroachment, naturally grew impatient. They were easily detached from their chiefs.

Before the Treaty of Fort Wayne Tecumseh took his message not only to the Indians with the Prophet but also to other tribes in the Ohio Valley and even as far as New York. After the treaty, which accomplished exactly what Tecumseh and the Prophet wanted to prevent, he became notorious, not only among the Indians but among the Americans as well for his opposition to the cession and those who had participated in it.

During the summer of 1809 Tecumseh undertook at least two journeys to carry the message of the confederation beyond his immediate area. Other trips to various locations are rumored and often included in some of the lives of the chief. However research in primary sources supports only two of them.34

34 Published biographies of Tecumseh have him visiting such diverse places as the Gulf of Mexico, Green Bay (Wisconsin), Osage Territory (Arkansas and Missouri), as well as the two areas verified in primary sources, Ohio and New York. See Glenn Tucker, Tecumseh, Vision of Glory, (Indianapolis, 1956), pp. 130-133. This version of Tecumseh's travels adds thousands of miles to those found in primary sources.
The first of them took place "early" in 1809. This visit was to the Wyandots and the Senecas who had gathered near present day Sandusky, Ohio. Once the Indians had been called to the council, Tecumseh tried to induce them to move to Tippecanoe and join the followers of the Prophet. He argued that game was more plentiful there and thus they would be happier than they were at present. He pointed out that the country on the Tippecanoe was better than that they presently occupied. It was also, he reminded them, farther from the whites.

His appeal, however, was not as successful as he might have liked. He was speaking to Indians who had been at peace since Wayne's victory, Indians who had found a method, however unsatisfactory, for co-existence with the Americans. A chief of the Wyandots, The Crane, spoke to the council after Tecumseh. He told the Indians that he was afraid that Tecumseh was working for no good purpose at Tippecanoe. His advice was that the Indians at Sandusky should wait a few years to see if their brothers at Tippecanoe were still happy, and, if so, they would probably join them.\footnote{Drake, \textit{Tecumseh}, p. 110. Drake had this information from Anthony Shane, a half-breed who grew up with Tecumseh and who often served as interpreter for official talks with the Indians. He has left us one of our most valuable first-hand accounts of Tecumseh's life.}
The other journey in 1809 for which there is support in primary materials was one made to the Six Nations Indians of New York. Tecumseh was accompanied on this trip by his brother, the Prophet, by two other Indians, Fourlegs and Caraymaunce, and also by a white interpreter, Caleb Atwater. Atwater was later to become one of Ohio's early historians. For a historian, however, he recorded frustratingly little about this mission to the Indians of New York. He gave no specific dates; he mentioned only bits and pieces of the speeches he translated. He even failed to state generally what it was that Tecumseh was telling the Indians he addressed. One might suppose on the basis of what he told the Wyandots and Senecas that he made similar overtures to the Six Nations. It is also possible that much of what Tecumseh was telling the Indians was not for white ears and therefore Atwater might have purposely been excluded.

Atwater has left us, however, an interesting, if partisan, assessment of Tecumseh. It was his opinion that Tecumseh visited these and other tribes at the orders of the British. "... all his movements originated with the Canadian Indian Department." It was also Atwater's idea that British officers with whom he thought Tecumseh spent much time, had "enlarged his ideas very much ..." Of the Prophet, Atwater says only that he tried to dissuade the
Indians from drinking "ardent spirits." The single statement recorded as coming directly from Tecumseh, and which Atwater remembered interpreting to the Onondagas, was "that he (Tecumseh) had visited the Florida Indians, and even the Indians so far to the north that the snow covered the ground in midsummer." 36

The fact that this claim cannot be documented does not rule out the possibility of its validity. Neither, however, can it be regarded as simple truth. The Indians often tended to speak in a figurative rather than literal language. Tecumseh may have intended only to indicate that he had travelled a good deal. There can be little doubt that Tecumseh did more travelling to build support for the confederation than can be substantiated by primary sources, but until more information is unearthed none of his other rumored visits in 1809 can be regarded as fact. Still after all of Tecumseh's efforts, not one entire tribe was willing, in 1809, to declare itself fully in favor of his idea of confederation. Not one tribe was willing to declare itself opposed to the Treaty of Fort Wayne. The fact that so many Indians did join the British once the War of 1812 began is some indication that the apathetic posture taken by the tribes in 1809 may have been more a matter of prudence.

than politics. Nonetheless, the poor response given Tecumseh and the Prophet effectively limited the strength of the confederation and thereby prohibited it from affecting the formulation of American land policy. Had the Secretary of War been aware, when he responded to Harrison's request to treat with the Indians for more land, of a strong, cohesive confederation of Indians ready to violently oppose such a move, he would more likely have denied permission to the Governor. As it was, he told Harrison that such a treaty was permissible only if it would "excite no disagreeable apprehension and produce no undesirable effect."

The unfortunate result for the confederation, by the fall of 1809, was that it had held out hope to its militants for retention of Indian land, yet found itself not only powerless to effect this, but so weak as to be ignored by Governor Harrison. Tecumseh's ideas were not even mentioned in Harrison's "Journal" of the Treaty. All this left the brothers in an embarrassing position. The illusion of power created by the Prophet's miracles was in danger. It had already been damaged by the deaths of so many of his followers the previous winter. Clearly some reaction from the confederation to the Treaty of Fort Wayne was called for if that body was going to retain any credibility.

Even that reaction posed a problem, for it could not be directed against the real offenders, the Americans. Violence with them would mean not only the danger of premature exposure and a military defeat but also possibly
forfeiting the alliance with the British that Tecumseh arranged only a little more than a year earlier. Any retribution then, would have to be wreaked on the Indians who had participated in and signed the treaty. This was the decision Tecumseh finally made. 37

News of Tecumseh's intention to kill the chiefs who had signed the treaty eventually reached Governor Harrison. 38 It must have been especially frightening to him. Three years earlier he had had to deal with murders, instigated by the Prophet, of some Indians who refused to convert to his new religion. As a result of those murders many tribal leaders still feared the Prophet even though they may well have hated him. Now he was faced with the possibility of murders of those who rejected the aims of the confederation. Given the uneasy situation on the frontier such violence could lead to war among the Indians that could likely involve the whites as well. It was only a few months before that Harrison had been fretting over the possibility of the Prophet's Indians attempting a massacre of Vincennes. War amongst the Indians renewed that danger as well.

Tecumseh's threatened move against the Indian signatories of the treaty, it seemed, accomplished what

38Ibid.
his travels had been unable to. The Americans were forced by it to notice him and his confederation. Until this time Tecumseh had hardly been recognized by the Americans. When they did refer to him it was usually as "the brother of the Prophet." However in the few remaining years the Indian revival movement had to live, Tecumseh was destined to eclipse his brother with whom the movement had begun and who had supervised it through its first four years. Under Tecumseh's more aggressive leadership the movement finally gained the respect from American authorities that was prerequisite to achieving its goal of retention of Indian land, of preventing another Treaty of Fort Wayne. Unfortunately, the frustration among the Indians which led to greater support for the confederation also found another outlet. Before the end of 1809 Indian attacks on frontier settlements had begun. While there is no proof these attacks were incited by the brothers, they were eventually to force a confrontation between the confederation and the Americans, the outcome of which was by no means certain.
CHAPTER SIX
CONFRONTATION AT VINCENNES

By the fall of 1809 the residents of the Northwest frontier had been waiting for war for two years. Congress had spent the period making hostile noises while the State Department had in fact been seeking a diplomatic solution to the tangled set of problems left in the wake of the Chesapeake affair.\(^1\) While the diplomatic wrangling continued, so did the efforts of the Americans and the British to cultivate Indian allies.

American attempts tended to consist mainly of periodic warnings to the Indians that strict neutrality was the only permissible course. Statements of American strength were supposed to be the best possible defense. Whatever good these efforts may have worked, however, was more than undone by American land policy. Frustrated, particularly by the Treaty of Fort Wayne, at their inability to hold their land and perplexed at the failure of their remaining land to support them, many of the Indians of the Northwest became more and more disillusioned with American professions.

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\(^1\) Much of the British diplomatic correspondence dealing with the Chesapeake affair can be found in the collections of the Public Record Office (London), Foreign Office, Class V, Vol. 77 (hereafter given as F05/77); American diplomatic efforts to solve the problem are discussed in Samuel Flagg Bemis (ed.), *The American Secretaries of State and their Diplomacy,* (10 vols., New York, 1927-29), Vol. III.
of concern and friendship. They became instead increasingly impressed with the generosity of the British, who were dispensing presents, including arms and ammunition, to those who troubled to call at their forts.

British declarations of friendship, given the circumstances, were bound to be the more convincing. How long had it been since the British had taken any land from them?

The open-handed treatment of the Indian was intended by the British to demonstrate concern, to prove to the Indians that the British were real allies. Unfortunately too often the recipients of the arms found uses for them on the American frontiers that threatened to bring the United States and Britain to war. The frontiersmen and the territorial officials who had supported the Embargo and the Non-Intercourse Act, who had responded so rabidly to the attack on the Chesapeake, were getting, by the fall of 1809, a taste of the war they had been demanding. Indian raids in Indiana were a good deal more immediate and real to them than anything that happened on the Atlantic.

In the late months of 1809 and the early months of 1810, the Northwest frontier, responding to the Indian attacks, convulsed in panic. Often as not the particular Indians blamed for the disturbances were linked with the
Prophet.  

Such outbreaks discouraged settlers, and even worse, from the point of view of the territorial government, prospective settlers. These eruptions caused the depopulation of entire settlements as residents fled in terror from their indefensible homesteads. The thought of such exoduses plagued William Henry Harrison, anxious for the day when Indiana could enter the Union. However, before that goal could be reached, the territory had to achieve a minimum population of 60,000. Indian disturbances threatened to keep Indiana at the second territorial stage in perpetuity. That stage had been reached in 1804, and now, five years later, the Governor was faced with a declining rather than a growing population. Harrison's natural ambition cried out against these impediments.

His recommendation was that the Indians be forcibly removed to clear the region for settlement.  

But as the Secretary of War had indicated before the Treaty of Fort Wayne, the government would approve only the purchase of land, and then only when such purchases could be transacted

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in a manner that satisfied the Indians and would provoke no trouble.\textsuperscript{4} Implementation of this policy meant a sort of piecemeal removal of the Indians. Harrison and his fellow governors simply had to content themselves with methods such as strengthening their militia or planting informers among the Indians in order to keep them in check until they could be removed.

Harrison saw militia improvements not only as a means of intimidating the Indians but also of preparing for possible war with the British. He was especially impressed with the militia preparations undertaken in Kentucky. In April of 1810, he wrote the governor of that state that he approved of the way its "hardy sons" were being trained. However, he felt the lessons of the Greeks and Romans were not being paid sufficient attention. His letter to Governor Scott demonstrated not only his knowledge of military history but also the remarkable commitment of his time to neo-classicism.\textsuperscript{5}

Even more remarkable was an assertion Harrison made in the same letter. Instead of reflecting on ancient times,

\textsuperscript{4}Eustis to Harrison, 5 June, 1809, \textit{Ibid.}, p. 347.

\textsuperscript{5}Harrison to Governor Charles Scott, 10 March, 1810, \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 400-407; Harrison to Scott, 17 April, 1810, \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 407-417.
this statement was in a sense prophetic about the determination of Americans to keep and bear arms. He wrote, "The safety of a republic depends as much on the equality of arms and discipline amongst its citizens as the equality of rights." Before April was out, Harrison, prodded by increasingly frequent rumors of the Prophet's preparing for war, was going to find himself reviewing the condition of his own militia.

This was not the first time that rumors circulated about the Prophet's planning an attack on Vincennes. Nor was it the first time that Harrison believed them. What particularly disconcerted him on this occasion was that he heard the Indians were requesting the French inhabitants of Vincennes and environs to separate themselves from the Americans so that they could be spared.7

Of course, the Governor was convinced that the British were behind this latest threat. Some Indians were refusing to deal with American traders, yet they had ample supplies of powder and lead. Such stores could come from only one source, the British in Canada. Some of the Indians were even so bold as to antagonize the Yankee traders by

6Harrison to Scott, 17 April, 1810, Ibid., p. 411.
7Harrison to Eustis, 25 April, 1810, Ibid., pp. 417-418.
telling them that when their present stocks were used up
they knew where they could get more without paying for them.
Harrison wrote Eustis,

I think it is probable that the British
agents in Canada have anticipated the
orders of their government in their en-
deavors to set the Indians upon us. . . .
But in the meantime the report of the
Indians having meditated hostilities will
do us great injury by retarding the
settlement of the country. We lost sev-
eral hundred families last spring in con-
sequence of the hostile appearances they
exhibited and I am persuaded that similar
consequences will flow from those which
are now manifested. 8

The situation by May had even frightened the French
traders who normally lived in the Prophet's village. Harri-
son wrote that they were "more alarmed" than he had ever
seen them. Their flight from the village created a gap in
the Governor's intelligence from Tippecanoe. He found it
necessary to pay two men the unheard of sum of 12 dollars
per month to induce them to remain with the Prophet's
followers to garner the necessary information. Both men,
Michael Brouillette and Touissant Dubois, had served the
Americans previously as interpreters. 9

Harrison also depended on certain Indians for in-
formation. The Americans had always had some allies on the

8Ibid., p. 418.
9Harrison to Eustis, 2 May, 1810, Ibid., p. 419.
Indian side. Most of those he relied upon were village chiefs, whose authority was being eroded by the attempts of the Shawnee brothers to replace them with warriors. In addition to supplying intelligence, Harrison also expected these men to use their influence to steer other Indians away from the Prophet and to speak out publicly against him in meetings and councils when the opportunity arose. One such chief was the Potawatomi, Winamac, who was living at this time in the Prophet's camp along with a number of his tribesmen. Winamac's presence at Tippecanoe is an interesting indication that not every Indian there was converted to the Prophet's religion or Tecumseh's idea of confederation. We have no knowledge of what brought him there. Harrison, however, maintained that Winamac was determined to prevent hostilities or, if that proved impossible, at least to inform the Americans in advance what the Prophet was planning.10

In the middle of May Harrison received word from Winamac through the Potawatomi wife of one of the interpreters at Fort Wayne. This woman had stayed at the Prophet's town for several days on her way to Vincennes. While there she said she overheard warriors discussing a plan the Indians of that quarter had of going to war. This information was

10Harrison to Eustis, 15 May, 1810, Ibid., pp. 420-422. There were two Potawatomi chiefs named Winamac, both living at the same time, one friendly to the Americans, the other hostile. See Hodge (ed.), Handbook, II, pp. 956-957.
confirmed to her by some of her relatives who were currently living in the camp. The woman seemed to think war would come soon. Harrison doubted it. It appeared more likely to him that the Prophet would wait until after the "great council" of Indians was held toward the end of June. 11

Winamac himself promised to come to see Harrison as soon as that council was over to tell him what had happened. At present, however, he could do no more since his "attachment to the U. States was so well known that he was closely watched." 12

The Prophet was attended in May by large parties of Kickapoos and Winnebagos as well as small numbers of Shawnees, Potawatomis, Chippewas and Ottawas. Significantly, Harrison added to this list in his report to the Secretary of War of May 15, that there also were some twenty or thirty Creeks with the Prophet. This detail must have come from his informers at Tippecanoe. This is the first record that representatives of this tribe, which lived in the present-day states of Georgia, Alabama, the Carolinas and Mississippi, visited the Prophet. It was a clear indication that word of the Indian revival had spread far to the south. 13

11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
Harrison also had allies among the Delaware Indians. They were among the tribes that held claim to the land on which the Prophet was "squatting." In 1808, they had tried, and failed, to force him to abandon his camp at the Tippecanoe. They were the tribe that, in 1805 and 1806, had been subjected to the Prophet's inquisition for refusing to adopt his religion. At least two Delaware chiefs, Billy Patterson and Teteboxi, were assassinated by the Prophet's converts for their resistance to the new Indian revival religion.14 But while the tribe had some zealous converts to the Prophet's program, there remained a significant element within the tribe that was friendly to the United States. Harrison, in 1810, still depended on these men for intelligence on developments among the Indians.

A "young chief from the Delaware Towns" told Harrison in mid-May that a delegation would be sent from his tribe to the "great council" about to be held to try to dissuade the Indians there from listening to the Prophet. Harrison hoped to add force to the Delaware's talk by sending that tribe an address which promised inevitable destruction to any tribe that dared to take up the hatchet against the Americans.15

14These assassinations are discussed in Chapter 2, above.
Another ally Harrison had in his struggle against the hostile Indians was a Shaker missionary. This man, whose name has not come down to us, lived with his co-religionists about 20 miles north of Vincennes. By coincidence the Shakers had begun their wilderness experiment in communal living in the same year as the Prophet began preaching his Indian revival, 1805.\textsuperscript{16} The Governor thought the Prophet had been influenced by the Shakers since the "scoundrel affects to follow the Shaker principles in everything but the vow of celibacy..." The missionary himself assured Harrison that both he and the Prophet were under the same divine inspiration. Harrison noted with scorn that that was "by no means improbable." He also insulted the Governor, who had several children, by trying to convince him that the only reason the Prophet still allowed cohabitation was because of his savage background.\textsuperscript{17}

However much the remark might have caused Harrison's temper to flare, he managed to control himself. He wanted the Shaker to relay a message to the Prophet. The contents of that address have not been found to date. Later on, however, Harrison would have reason to rue Shaker contact with his Indians. In the council held between Tecumseh and Harrison in August of 1810, Tecumseh demanded to be told

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
how the whites could expect the Indians to trust them when they had killed Jesus Christ. Apparently the chief's comprehension of Shaker doctrine was a bit shaky.\textsuperscript{18}

In light of the immediate threat posed by the Prophet's Indians, simply sending messages to the Indians seems a weak response. In view of Harrison's own pronouncements about keeping up the appearance of strength, one might have thought that he would at least have called up the militia. The lives and property of his frontier residents were in constant danger. Yet Harrison hesitated. His fear of population decline for a time outweighed his concern for the settlers' welfare. Calling up the militia to defend these people was not an acceptable solution to him because "... any such steps taken by me would spread an alarm, that would greatly retard the emigration to this country and perhaps induce many to move off that are already settled."\textsuperscript{19} It was true that in the long run filling the country with settlers would make it a safe place in which to live. At the moment, Harrison refused to consider other methods to achieve that security. This refusal left him and his frontier people with an awful dilemma: To make the settlers safe in the long run meant purposely leaving them exposed to possible Indian attack in the short run. Defending them might make

\textsuperscript{18}Tecumseh's Speech to Harrison, 20 August, 1810, \textit{Ibid.}, p. 467.

\textsuperscript{19}Harrison to Eustis, 15 May, 1810, \textit{Ibid.}, p. 421.
them aware of their real danger and might panic them to the point of forcing them out of the territory. If no defense were offered, if the frontier had the appearance of calm, then more settlers would come, claim the land, and the Indians would eventually but inevitably be forced backward.

This policy was sure to result in some minor clashes, but Harrison was willing to pay that price. Rather than protect the pioneers, he chose to leave the militia at home. This decision resulted in considerable loss of property and, even more unfortunately, occasional loss of life. Had the general Indian attack, which Harrison periodically forecast actually come, his reluctance to provide support to the frontier would have been catastrophic. A month later he was finally forced to call up the militia anyhow.

In June of 1810, the tribe that had functioned as a sort of keystone of Indian resistance to the Prophet saw one of its bands join him. This tribe, the Wyandot, or Huron tribe, though small and with little military power, had been especially respected by the Indians of the Old Northwest. They were always addressed in council with the title "Uncle", denoting their venerated place among the tribes. It was the Wyandots to whom the Indians had given custody of their "Great Belt." This belt was a symbol of the unity among those tribes that had formed the confederation to resist the initial American drives into the Ohio
valley under Harmar, St. Clair and finally Wayne. The Americans, after the defeat of this confederation had similarly honored the tribe by giving them possession of the first copy of the Treaty of Greenville.20 Harrison later heard that the Wyandots who joined the Indians at Tippecanoe were from Sandusky, the very Indians who rejected Tecumseh's appeal in 1809.21

Harrison's information was that the Prophet, realizing the key position the Wyandots held, determined to bring them into the confederation he and Tecumseh were forming. The Prophet knew full well that other tribes out of their respect for the judgment of the Wyandots, would soon follow if they joined him. Therefore he dispatched messengers to that tribe demanding to know how they who held the "Great Belt" could sit by and watch the property of the tribes that belonged to that pact be usurped by the Americans. The Governor thought the messengers must also have played upon the desire of the Wyandots to see the tribes united once again. The final result was that at least one band of Wyandots were seduced into joining the gathering at Tippecanoe.

The version Harrison got of the Wyandots' reply to the Prophet indicated again that the major cause of Indian

20Harrison to Eustis, 14 June, 1810, Ibid., pp. 422-426; Charles J. Kappler (ed.), Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties, (Washington, 1904), II (Treaties), pp. 39-44.

discontent was American land policy. The Wyandots were supposed to have told the Prophet that efforts to take their land were forcing them to resist. "... they had as well die where they were as to be driven upon other Indians who would probably attack them."22

As they headed for the Prophet's camp the Wyandots tried to convert other tribes they visited on the way. They put pressure on the Miamis with the same arguments that had been so successfully presented to them. Rather than submit to charges of uniting with the Whites, the Miamis chose to join the Wyandots at the Prophet's Town. And in turn they pressured the Weas to come as well. Harrison wrote, "The effect has been that those who were before indifferent or inimical to the view of the Prophet are now hastening to him from every direction."23

Such conversions, of course, augmented the Prophet's force and, from Harrison's point of view, increased the probability of an Indian attack on the frontiers, or even on the towns. Rumors of war, of course, abounded.


23Ibid., The Weas like the Eel Rivers were a sub-tribe of the Miamis. See Hodge (ed.), Handbook, II, pp. 925-926.
One of the Indians upon whom Harrison had been relying for information, an old Piankashaw chief named Grosbless, warned one Frenchman to leave Vincennes, in fact to move across the Mississippi, "as he might soon expect troublesome times if he remained where he was." A few days later Grosbless came to Harrison to ask permission to move across the Mississippi himself. He told the Governor he had been hearing nothing but talk of war and wanted to take no part in it. He also informed Harrison that the Prophet was boasting he would "follow the footsteps of the Great Pontiac" in launching a surprise attack on Vincennes, entering the town in the guise of friendship, assigning four or five men to each house and in short order completing the massacre.24

Michael Brouillette informed Harrison that the Prophet had a force of 3,000 men within 30 miles of Tippecanoe. Such a force could easily accomplish the mass murder Grosbless said the Prophet was planning. Brouillette had not heard talk of an attack on Vincennes, but some of the Indians with the Prophet had told him the very least they would do was prevent a survey of the land west of the Wabash, which meant, of course, a sizeable portion of the Fort Wayne Cession. Unsurveyed, this land could not be opened to settlement, and

24Ibid., pp. 424-425. The Piankashaw had apparently been a subtribe of the Miamis at one time but became a separate people. See Hodge (ed.), Ibid., pp. 240-241.
therefore would be of little help to Harrison in his plans to increase the population of the territory. 25

Predictably, the Governor was sure that the trouble brewing with the Indians was instigated by the British. He suspected that the British did not yet want war but were likely willing to cause the United States some discomfort by stirring some ferment among the Indians. His first assumption was right; his second wrong. The British government deplored the excesses to which their potential allies seemed committed. These premature outbreaks could only damage the British cause. British agents had been given instruction to make every exertion to prevent them. 26

What Harrison thought remarkable was that the Indians could be seduced by the British, "from whose intrigues and bad advice they have formerly suffered . . . ", and at the same time be ripe to take up arms against the United States which had "upon all occasions manifested the strictest justice in their transactions with the Indians . . . ." 27

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25 Ibid., p. 425.


On June 15, the Governor was greeted with further bad news. The delivery of salt to the Indians, part of their annuity, while accepted by other tribes, had been refused by the Prophet's Indians. The master of the boat making the delivery reported to Harrison that on his way up river he stopped at the Prophet's village to unload his share. The Prophet instructed him to leave the salt on the bank since he would wait for Tecumseh's return from Detroit before deciding whether to accept or reject it. The Prophet directed the master, on his return trip, to take the salt back on board as they had decided to have nothing to do with it. While the crew complied, the Prophet seized several of them, the master as well, by the hair demanding to know if they were Americans. All insisted they were French. At the same time Brouillette was insulted with the epithet, "American dog." Shortly thereafter, on the instructions of a Potawatomi chief, Brouillette's house was plundered of tobacco and provisions.28

Indulging in some fanciful self-deception Harrison told the Secretary of War, "Brouillette is not known as an agent of mine by the Indians. He keeps a few articles of trade to disguise his real character." Within two weeks Brouillette found it prudent to leave the Prophet's town,

28 Harrison to Eustis, 15 June, 1810, Ibid., p. 426.
his 12 dollar monthly salary notwithstanding. 29

Also on June 15, a party of Iowa Indians passed through Vincennes. Harrison had ample opportunity to talk with their leaders as they stayed on for some time to enjoy the Governor's hospitality. They revealed that they had been travelling with a group of Sauks, Foxes and Winnebagos which numbered 1,100, all of whom were going to visit the Prophet and the British. There was no indication what part of them were warriors, but even if it was only a few hundred, the threat to Vincennes was measurably increased. 30

At first Harrison tried to keep the story of the salt boat and of the movement of hundreds of strange Indians quiet, but the talk spread by the members of the crew threatened to make rumor more dangerous than truth. Rather than allow these stories to run wild, he chose to gather the "public officers the merchants and other respectable citizens" to sound them out as to possible courses of action. Their advice was unanimous. They asked the Governor to call two companies of militia into active service and put all other units on the alert. 31

29 Ibid., pp. 426-427.
30 Ibid., p. 427.
31 Harrison to Eustis, 19 June, 1810, Ibid., p. 428.
Much as he disliked calling up troops, Harrison saw the necessity of it. He would rather have launched a cavalry sweep to drive the Indians clear out of the territory, but he had no such authority. He thought, too, of a simultaneous feint by several militia units in various parts of the territory for the purpose of frightening the Indians, but again, under the circumstances he was not authorized to order such a move. In the end he decided to call up the militia and, at the same time, to release false rumors of planned attacks that he knew would reach the Tippecanoe Indians. These rumors, he thought, might create as much panic in the Prophet's camp as an actual attack and would likely "break up the meeting." 32

However, the preparations made by the Indiana Territory to prevent the Prophet's attack proved to be unnecessary. Toward the end of June the "great council" to which Winamac had been referring was held. It took place at Parc-au-Vache on the St. Joseph River near the present-day city of South Bend, Indiana. Harrison heard that the Prophet intended to use this meeting to gain support for his idea of attacking the American settlements. If that, in fact, was his plan, he must have been sadly disappointed at the outcome of the meeting. The Indians Harrison had been depending

32 Ibid., p. 429.
upon performed admirably. According to Winamac they spoke out not only against the Prophet's talk of war but against the Prophet himself. The council, in the end, turned down the suggestion of war.  

Winamac, as he had promised, came to see the Governor after the council. He told Harrison that he had stopped at the Prophet's Town on his way to Vincennes where, he claimed, the Prophet tried to have him assassinated for the part that he had played in the outcome of the talks. He was sure the reason he was still alive was because the Prophet could not find the men to kill him.  

However, Winamac took pains to point out to Harrison that while the Prophet's plans were set back, they were by no means dashed. He was convinced that the Prophet's next move, having been rejected for the time being by the Indians of his own vicinity, would be to launch an appeal to the Indians of the South. So sure of this prediction was he that he told the Governor he could be considered a "man of no truth" if the Prophet did not undertake a visit to the Creeks and Choctaws sometime that summer. Harrison could easily have believed Winamac, especially in light of the intelligence he had had earlier about some Creek Indians already having visited the Prophet.

33Harrison to Eustis, 26 June, 1810, Ibid., p. 433.
34Ibid., p. 434.
35Ibid.
The Potawatomi's prediction was not far wide of the mark either, but it was Tecumseh, not the Prophet, who later undertook the journeys to the Southern tribes.

Harrison could not complete his report on the council at Parc-au-Vache without some mention of the British and their intrigues in the Prophet's camp. He had offered so many assessments of their role that he was bound to hit upon their exact position sooner or later. In this attempt he probably came closer than even he realized. Speaking of the British Indian Department in Canada he wrote,

I do not however believe that it was their intention that the Indians should commence hostilities, but in the event of war between their nation and the United States. But it is probable that having given the impulse, they have found it difficult to regulate the movements of their tawny allies.36

On the last day of June, the spy, Brouillette, filed a report with Harrison. He had, it stated, lived in the Prophet's Town for more than 13 months. During that time he had gathered a good deal of information, most of which the Governor already had. This final report tended to verify earlier intelligence, not only from Brouillette but from other sources as well. The Indians had asked the French to separate themselves from the Americans; the Prophet had tried to convince the other tribes to go to war; Winamac

36 Ibid., p. 435.
was the greatest obstacle to the Prophet's success with the neighboring tribes. However, one new bit of intelligence appeared in this report. Brouillette wrote that he was satisfied that the "Prophet has constant intercourse with some person or persons in or at or about Vincennes as he knows everything almost that transpires." 37

One of the most striking things about the report was that it did not mention Tecumseh or any of his activities. Given the length of time Brouillette lived at Tippecanoe he could hardly have failed to observe something of Tecumseh's comings and goings. Certainly no white man was in a better position to inform the Americans of what the chief was doing. Yet the spy took no notice of him at all.

The only other thing in the report that was "news" turned out to be good news. It was that Brouillette's earlier estimate of the Prophet's force being about 3,000 men was inaccurate. This figure had come, Brouillette wrote, from the Prophet himself. The actual number was closer to 650. Coupled with the recent defection of some tribes from the Prophet's standard at Parc-au-Vache this lower estimate of the Prophet's strength meant it was unlikely that the Tippecanoe Indians would be attempting any major attacks on

37 Brouillette to Harrison, 30 June, 1810, Ibid., pp. 436-437.
the settlements during the summer of 1810.\textsuperscript{38}

Harrison, as a result, had more to celebrate on that July 4th than he had hoped for a few weeks earlier. Still, he took time from his observances of the day to write a further report to the Secretary of War to inform him that Touissant Dubois, whom he had sent to the Prophet with a message, had returned. Dubois had warned the Prophet that, as a direct result of the hostile appearance he was exhibiting, the Americans were arming. Not only were the militia of the Indiana Territory and the State of Kentucky preparing for a contest, but some regular army troops were also on their way to the region.

Dubois also demanded to know the cause of the Prophet's belligerent attitude. The reply he received was that there had been no intention on the part of his movement to go to war with the Americans, that it was the Delawares and other Indians who had been bribed with whiskey to accuse him. The only ground for complaint that Dubois could extract from him was that the Indians' land was being taken from them unfairly, and that no sale of land should be considered valid until all tribes had agreed to it. This, significantly, is the first indication found in primary sources that the Prophet supported Tecumseh's notion of

\textsuperscript{38}Ibid., p. 437.
common Indian ownership of all Indian land.

Dubois suggested that the Prophet might like to present his complaint to Harrison. However, the Prophet refused to go to Vincennes as he said he had been ill-treated when he was there before.

On his return Dubois brought Harrison the encouraging information that the Chippewas, Ottawas and Potawatomis were deserting the Prophet. The Kickapoos were still in the camp in force, but some of them told him that they were beginning to regret having joined. The Miamis told Dubois that they still feared there might be war, and they wanted no part of it. In all, Dubois concluded, there could be little danger of war at present.39

The Frenchman also made a suggestion to Harrison as a result of his visit. He thought that the Kickapoos might be induced to quit the Prophet if the Governor would return to them a small tract of land taken after the Treaty of Fort Wayne. Such a return would, at once, be an indication of the concern of the American government for the Indians and be proof that the Prophet's charges of land-grabbing were false. Harrison, however, failed to see the value of such a gesture. He told Dubois that such steps "will never be taken by the government."40


40Ibid., p. 440.
His words were hardly out, however, when he wrote the Prophet promising the opposite. His message, written in French, was carried to the Indians by Joseph Barron, a French trader and sometime interpreter for the Americans. The talk began with accusations of the Prophet's stirring the Indians to war. Such action, the Governor wrote, was "folly." The Indians could not resist the "blue coats," not even with the help of the "red coats." The British, he maintained, were not even able to defend themselves. If they tried, Harrison predicted, within "a few months you would see our flags wave on all the forts of Canada."41

Yet, he continued, the Americans were always willing to forgive, and always willing to listen to the complaints of their red children.

... you say they [the Seventeen Fires] purchased the land from those who had no right to sell. Show the truth of this and the lands will be instantly restored. Show us the rightful owners of these lands which have been purchased. Let them present themselves. The Ears of your father will be open to their complaints and if lands have been purchased of those who did not own them they will be restored to the rightful owners. I have full power to arrange this business.42

Harrison also gave the Prophet the option of taking the matter to the President himself. He guaranteed a safe journey.43

41Harrison to the Prophet, 19 July, 1810, Ibid., pp. 447-448.

42Ibid.

43Ibid.
Delivering the talk appeared, for a time, to be the last thing that Barron was to do on this earth. When he arrived at the Prophet's Town Tenskwatawa accused him of coming as a spy. Dubois was a spy, Brouillette was too, the Prophet told him. (Harrison's confidence that Brouillette was uncritically accepted by the Indians must have been shaken when word of the encounter reached him.) The Prophet instructed Barron to look at the ground for the spot where he was standing was to be his grave. At that moment, however, Tecumseh came out from one of the lodges and assured Barron that his life would be spared. Barron then proceeded to read the message. He was directed by Tecumseh to tell the Governor that he, not the Prophet, would visit him in Vincennes in a few days to give answer to the proposition contained in Harrison's message.44

While Harrison awaited Barron's return he learned from some unidentified agent "in the Indian country" that portions of the Delawares, Miamis, Ottawas, Chippewas and Potawatomis were forming an alliance to "disperse the banditti, which the Prophet has collected at Tippecanoe."45 Doubtless organized by the village chiefs whose authority


was being eroded by the adherence of their warriors to the Shawnee brothers, this league was formed with the hope that the Indians currently at Tippecanoe could be intimidated into leaving. Already, the Governor was told by some friendly Potawatomis that the Winnebagos, one of the tribes most strongly represented on the Wabash, had agreed to depart as soon as their corn was ripe, probably in late October. The Delawares sent Harrison a message that they were determined to "put out the Prophet's fire this fall."  

Much to Harrison's disappointment, however, the Prophet did not appear to be intimidated by any of these threats. Two of his people visited Vincennes on July 21 and reaffirmed to Harrison their determination to continue gathering the Indians on the Wabash in compliance with the order of the Great Spirit. The Governor told the Secretary of War, "The encroachment of the Whites upon their lands is still the burden of their song."  

While the Prophet was not strong enough in the summer of 1810 to attempt war with the Americans, the sporadic raiding carried out by some of the Indians with him was in some measure effective in keeping the whites from settling land they claimed. On August 1, an account

46 Ibid., p. 450.
47 Ibid.
of another such raid arrived at Vincennes. It had taken place to the north in the Jeffersonville District. In the raid cattle and hogs were killed, property destroyed and the settlers threatened with death unless they moved out immediately.\(^{48}\) While there was no proof that the attack was launched by the Indians associated with the Prophet, Harrison heard, through a Delaware Indian, that the Prophet planned these raids to exasperate the whites to such an extent that they would begin to take revenge on any Indians. Once these indiscriminate attacks had begun, the Prophet would have the fuel with which to fire a general Indian uprising. Harrison agreed with the Delaware.\(^{49}\)

The following day, August 2, Barron returned from Tippecanoe with his message that Tecumseh and some of his "principal men" would be coming in a few days to talk with the Governor. Harrison, who had been expecting a visit from the Prophet had no choice but to deal with his brother instead. A few times before in his correspondence he had referred to "the brother of the Prophet." Never before had he called him by name. Only a few weeks before, when the salt had been refused at Tippecanoe, he had written the Secretary


of War that the Prophet had "sent" his brother to Detroit, as if the Prophet alone controlled the assembly of Indians. Now he was beginning to see that Tecumseh was a power in his own right. He wrote,

This brother is really the efficient man—
the Moses of the family. I have not seen him since the Treaty of Greenville and should not know him. He is however, described by all as a bold, active, sensible man daring in the extreme and capable of any undertaking. ⁵⁰

Barron reported that he had lodged with Tecumseh and that their talks lasted "through the night." The gist of Tecumseh's conversation was that the Indians had not intended to make war, but that it was impossible to remain friends with the Americans if they continued to push their settlements further to the west through Indian land. He told Barron,

The great spirit said he gave this great island to his red children. He placed the whites on the other side of the big water, they were not contented with their own, but came to take ours from us. They have driven us from the sea to the lakes, we can go no farther. They have taken upon themselves to say this tract belongs to the Miamis, this to the Delawares & so on, but the Great Spirit intended it as the common property of all the Tribes, nor can it be sold without the consent of all. Our father tells us that we have no business on the Wabash, the land belongs to the other Tribes, but the great spirit order'd us to come here and we shall stay. ⁵¹

⁵⁰Harrison to Eustis, 6 August, 1810, Ibid., p. 456. There is no proof that Tecumseh was at the Treaty of Greenville. Drake states categorically that he was not there. It is certainly possible that Harrison had never seen him before. Drake, Tecumseh, p. 83.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 457.
Tecumseh also told Barron that he intended to bring about 30 men with him but knowing how the young men liked such councils there might be as many as 100. The Prophet intervened telling Barron that he "might expect to see a great many more." 52

The notion of Vincennes being invaded by more than 100 warriors was hardly appealing to Harrison, especially in light of the planned massacre Grosbiles had described to him earlier. He therefore dispatched an Indian messenger to the Wabash to tell those Indians to bring "only a few of their young men." Later he sent Brouillette, the uncovered agent, to "enforce the necessity of their compliance." 53

While waiting for Tecumseh and his attendants to arrive, Harrison again turned his attention to the frightened population of the frontier districts. Troops were dispatched to troubled areas, marauders pursued and runaway settlers recalled if they had not left the territory entirely. He also continued to press Washington for the construction of posts on the Wabash to overawe the Indians. 54

By the time Tecumseh arrived, Harrison had even greater reason for wanting to see peaceful removal of the Indians from the Fort Wayne Cession.

The new purchase has recently been explored by persons from the two Carolinas who have

52 Ibid., p. 458.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
given it a high character, and I am assured that a very large emigration from those states, may be expected immediately, if the dread of the Indians does not prevent them.55

Dread, however, was something the Wabash Indians intended to maintain. Short of all-out war it was their most effective weapon in the battle to retain their land.

Details of Tecumseh's arrival in Vincennes are lacking. We know only that he appeared there on August 12, and, with the exception of two days, he and the Governor were "constantly engaged" in talks until the 21st. The Governor had the talks of two days recorded, all the others he simply summarized. The exact details, therefore, on most of what passed between the two men cannot be had. However, from their conversations Harrison thought he was able to form a much more complete idea of what the Indians at Tippecanoe were planning. He admitted to the Secretary of War that some of the information he had previously forwarded to Washington regarding the "designs of the Prophet" had been "vague and in some respects contradictory." This, however, he blamed on the fact that he had derived it from various sources "not always the most intelligent." Now, after his discussions with Tecumseh, he had the "honor" to forward

55Ibid.
information that was really authentic, coming as it did from the Prophet's brother "who as I have before informed you is the great man of the party." 56

Tecumseh's speeches of the first two days in Vincennes Harrison characterized as "sufficiently insolent" and his pretentions "arrogant." He wrote Eustis,

The facts avowed by Tecumseh in the broadest manner are: That it was the object of his brother and himself from the commencement to form a combination of Indian Tribes in this quarter to put a stop to the encroachments of the white people and to establish a principal that the lands should be considered common property and none sold without the consent of all. That it was their intention to put to death all the chiefs who were parties to the late Treaty, and never more to suffer any village chiefs to manage the affairs of the Indians, but that everything should be put into the hands of the warriors. That the Americans had driven them from the sea coast, and would shortly if not stopped, push them into the Lakes, that they were determined to make a stand, where they were. He still however with strange inconsistency asserted that it was not his intention to go to war, and that the persons who had given me that information were liars. 57

For the talks of August 20 and 21, we have the transcripts of Tecumseh's speeches, although not of Harrison's replies. Once again, however, we are forced to deal with the words of the Indian as filtered through an interpreter. The unnamed Frenchman Harrison hired to take down

56Harrison to Eustis, (enclosing Tecumseh's speeches of August 20 and 21), 22 August, 1810, Ibid., pp. 459-469.

57Ibid., p. 460.
the proceedings was, in the Governor's own words, "not very remarkable for clearness of intilect, although faithful in the highest degree and for knowledge of the Indian languages unrivalled." The Governor also added that the man spoke bad English.58

Tecumseh began his talk on the 20th with a short recital of Indian relations with the various white powers that had controlled North America. The French period he depicted as a sort of "golden age" during which time the Indians were not pressed for their land, but rather given many presents.

Their British father had not been as fair to the Indians. While they had been treated well, they were also misled.

... they changed their good treatment by raising the tomahawk against the Americans and putting it in our hands, by which we have suffered the loss of a great many of our young men ... Brother. Now we began to discover the treachery of the British they never troubled us for our lands but they have done worse by inducing us to go to war.59

On a previous day Harrison had listened to Tecumseh tell the story of the wrongs the Americans had committed against the Indians since the American Revolution. The Governor himself admitted that the list was far too long.

58Ibid.
59Ibid., p. 464.
On August 20, Tecumseh once again alluded to the same story. "Since the peace was made [Greenville, 1795] you have killed some of the Shawaneese, Winebagoes, Delawares and Miamies and you have taken our lands from us and I do not see how we can remain at peace with you if you continue to do so."

He also lectured the Governor on the obstructions he had been placing in the way of Indian unity,

You want by your distinction of Indian tribes, in allotting to each a particular track [sic] of land to make them war with each other. You never see an Indian come and endeavor to make the white people do so . . .

Then followed the real point of his talk, the reason for his presence in Vincennes.

I was glad to hear your speech you said if we could show that the land was sold by persons that had no right to sell you would restore it, that that [sic] did sell did not own it it was me. These tribes set up a claim but the tribes with me will not agree to their claim, if the land is not restored to us you will see when we return to our homes how it will be settled. We shall have a great council at which all the tribes shall be present when we will show to those who sold that they had no right to sell the claim they set up and we will know what will be done with those chiefs who did sell the land to you . . . I am a warrior and all the warriors will meet together in two or three moons from this. Then I will call for those chiefs that sold you the land and shall know what to do with them. If you do not restore the land you will have a hand in killing them.
Brother. I wish you would take pity on all the red people and do what I have requested. If you will not give up the land and do cross the boundary of your present settlement it will be very hard and produce great troubles among us. How can we have confidence in the white people when Jesus Christ came upon the earth you kill'd and nail'd him on a cross, you thought he was dead but you were mistaken. 60

Harrison's record of the council says only that the Governor had proceeded to make an answer and had been talking for 15 to 20 minutes explaining the "justice used by the U. States towards the Indians," when Tecumseh, apparently offended by something the Governor said, sprang to his feet along with a number of his men who brandished war clubs, spears and tomahawks. A guard moved up to protect Harrison while he waited for Tecumseh's ejaculations to be translated. No record is made of the Shawnee's exact remarks, except that his manner was "indecent." However, they were strong enough for Harrison, now well defended, to demand that Tecumseh return to his camp. He declared the council at an end and insisted that any further communication from Tecumseh be carried to him by one of the Wyandots or some other chief. 61

The following day, however, both Tecumseh and Harrison relented. Through Barron, Tecumseh sent an apology for his conduct of the previous day. Upon receipt of this Harrison agreed to meet him at a further session of the council. Tecumseh excused his outburst on the grounds of

60Ibid., p. 466.
61Ibid., pp. 467-468.
his having been deceived by some of the whites of the territory. He claimed he had been told that only half the people supported Harrison, that half were opposed to further purchases of Indian land, that even the government (which one is not clear) had not approved of the purchases. Tecumseh was also supposedly told that the Americans did not need more land as they already had more than they could occupy. This he had verified himself by sending scouts to check on the American settlements. He found "the lands toward the Ohio were not settled at all."  

At the beginning of the talks of August 21, Tecumseh told Harrison,

There are many white people among you who are not true Americans, they are endeavoring to fill the minds of the Indians with evil towards the United States ... the person that informed me was a man of sense.

Brother. This person came to our village shortly after the Treaty of Fort Wayne and said to us -- Lallowachika (The Prophet) and you Tecumseh you may believe what I say to you, it is not me alone who speaks to you. I am the agent of a large party of white people who are your friends and will support you. They send me here to inform you everything that, that man the Governor at Vincennes is doing against you; but you must observe great secrecy and by no means inform him of us, or we shall be hung. I was (continues

62 Ibid., p. 461. Tecumseh's story of being misled by some whites tends to confirm Brouillette's earlier report to Harrison that the Prophet was receiving information from someone in or near Vincennes.
the person) at the Treaty of Fort Wayne
and heard the Governor say that the
Prophet was a bad man... 

Brother. This man further represented to
us that you were yet to remain in office
two years and would be succeeded by a good
man who was a true friend to the Indians,
that you would offer us goods (annuities)
but by no means to accept of them, that in
order to induce us to take them you would
offer us horses with saddles and bridles
plated with silver, that all the goods and
even the provisions that you give to the
Indians is with the intention to cheat them
out of their lands.63

Tecumseh also told Harrison that he had been visited
by another American at Tippecanoe. This man warned the Indians
that the Governor was about to assemble another Indian coun-
cil at Vincennes for the purpose of taking more of their
land. His advice to Tecumseh was to go to Vincennes and make
objections to American purchase of Indian lands, "and not be
afraid to speak very loud to you—that when you wanted land
you was very smooth with the Indians, but at length became
very boisterous."64

Harrison was sure he knew who the culprits were.
"The person alluded to by Tecumseh as giving him the informa-
tion from the Treaty of Fort Wayne is beyond all doubt Wells!!"
The man who had advised Tecumseh to object to American land
purchases was a "scotch tory," William McIntosh. Harrison
thought McIntosh opposed settling the Fort Wayne purchase as
he and a small party owned considerable land themselves

63 Ibid., p. 468.
64 Ibid.
which they had bought from the "ignorant" French in the area "for a song." Of course their chances for profit would be reduced if the entire Fort Wayne cession were opened to compete with them.65

As interesting as Tecumseh's revelations of white complicity were, however, Harrison was more concerned with the matter of surveying the land of the new cession. Tecumseh, he thought, was off guard. His apology for the previous day's disruption and his excuses of being misled by whites

65 Ibid., pp. 461-462. There is no evidence that Wells had done what Harrison accused him of. However, in the case of McIntosh, Harrison may have been correct. In a letter to Eustis the following spring Harrison wrote, "I believe that I did myself the favor to inform you last fall that I had commenced a suit against a certain Wm. McIntosh a Scotchman residing at this place, for slandering me in relation to my management of the Indian Department. The accusations which he brought against me were of the most serious nature. 'Such as defrauding the Indians in the Treaties I have made with them, making chiefs to answer my own particular purposes. Excluding the real chiefs. By this and the conduct producing all the disturbances which have taken place in the Indian country, and the alarm produced in this etc.' The suit was tried in the Superior Court of this Territory on the 11th inst... the result is that after twenty-five witnesses were examined, the rascally calumniator begg'd for mercy, and his council labour'd only for a mitigation of damages. A select or special jury gave a verdict in my favor of four thousand dollars damages. A new trial was moved for on the ground of excessive damages, but refused by the court." Wells, interestingly enough testified in the Governor's favor in this case. Harrison to Eustis, 23 April, 1811, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 506-510.
Harrison took as signs of weakness. He therefore demanded to know if he might safely proceed with the survey of the land. But Tecumseh, for all of his apologies and explanations, was by no means prepared to cede what he had come to regain. He replied, "I want the present boundary line to continue, should you cross it. [sic] I assure you it will be productive of bad consequences." 66

66 Ibid., p. 469. Some fourteen years later, after Tecumseh had become a nationally known Indian hero, Harrison collaborated with Moses Dawson on the Governor's biography. At that time Dawson included another speech Tecumseh was supposed to have made during the 1810 Council at Vincennes. This story, like so many others about Tecumseh can be neither proved nor disproved. The fact that it came from Harrison would lend authenticity to it, yet Harrison failed to include it in his account of the council sent to the Secretary of War in 1810. Most biographers of Tecumseh have included it in their works because it included a bit of prophesy from Tecumseh about how he was to die. The story is that on the 21st, Tecumseh came to apologize to Harrison for his conduct of the previous day. He told Harrison again about the aims of his confederation and promised that if the Governor would never make another treaty without the consent of all the tribes, and if he would also give up the lands purchased lately at Fort Wayne that he would be a faithful ally to the Americans in the war that was coming with the British. Harrison replied that he would pass Tecumseh's views on to the President but that there was no possibility of their being agreed to. Tecumseh was supposed to have answered, "... as the great chief is to determine the matter, I hope the Great Spirit will put sense enough into his head to induce him to give up this land: it is true, he is so far off he will not be injured by the war; he may sit still in his town and drink his wine, whilst you and I will have to fight it out." Dawson, Harrison, pp. 157-159.
CHAPTER SEVEN
ATTEMPTS AT NEUTRALITY

As 1810 entered its final season it was apparent to all parties in the growing controversy in the Old Northwest that the Indians were dangerously near war with the Americans. William Henry Harrison wrote as much to his superiors in the War Department in Washington.1 British Indian agents were telling the same thing to their officials in Upper and Lower Canada, who in turn were passing the information on to London.2 Indians sympathetic to the Americans were warning them to be on their guard, while Indians partial to the British were making clear in talks with the British Indian Department that they were prepared to fight any time they received the signal from their Father the King.3

1Harrison to Eustis, 28 August, 1810, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 470-471.


3For talks of Indians partial to the British see the references under footnote 2 above. For warnings given to the Americans by tribes friendly to them see Harrison to Eustis, 24 December, 1810, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 494-497; General Clark to Eustis, 12 September, 1810, American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, I, p. 800.
From the inception of the British drive to regain American Indian support after the Chesapeake affair, their Indian agents had been cautioned that only certain reliable Indians were to be told of the possibility of war between Britain and the United States. Somehow what had begun as a confidential agreement with a few Indian leaders had become a matter of general speculation amongst the tribes. The policy of the British since the fall of 1807 had been to secure Indian allies on the American side of the border. This policy, however, developed in such a way that by 1810 it threatened to drag the British into a war which they were not convinced was necessary and certainly not prepared to fight. They desperately needed a new policy which would hold the Indians in check until they were required as battlefield allies. As Harrison had written, it was likely that having given the impulse, the British were now finding it difficult to control their "tawny allies."  

As early as July of 1810, shortly before Tecumseh and his followers arrived at Vincennes for talks with Harrison, Matthew Elliott had written to William Claus, the Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, that the Indians who were visiting him were unanimous for war. They were ready to fight at the signal from him. He advised them to

4Harrison to Eustis, 26 June, 1810, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, p. 435.
keep the peace.⁵

In September, the Wyandots, who had earlier petitioned the American Government about the intrusion of white settlers on their land, held a council at their village, Brownstown, about 18 miles below Detroit. Represented were chiefs of the Wyandots, Ottawas, Chippewas, Potawatomis, Shawnees, Delawares, Muncies, Senecas, Tuscaroras, Onondagas, Mohawks, Cayugas and Oneidas. In addition to the chiefs, nearly 2,000 of their tribesmen were present. The Governor of the Michigan Territory, William Hull, supplied them with provisions in the hope that these gifts would prevent them from crossing the river and making contact with the British Indian agents. Hull had heard, however, that the British were giving gifts to the Indians on their way to the council and, fearing the effect that the British might have on them, requested permission to call out his militia as a safeguard.⁶

Hull also stayed with the Indians for the first ten days of their meeting. During this time he compiled transcripts of the proceedings and sent copies to the Secre-


tary of War and John Johnston, the American Indian agent for the region. Johnston forwarded his copy to Harrison. None of these copies have been located. However, in a letter to Johnston, Hull recorded his general impressions of the council and also included copies of a few Indian speeches. We know from these that Hull strongly attacked Tecumseh and the Prophet. In a speech shrewdly calculated to rouse the animosity of the village chiefs, Hull pointed out that the aim of the brothers was to "destroy the authority of the Old Chiefs and assume power over all the nations and depend on his Young Warriors to support him . . . ."

The reaction of the Indians pleased the Governor immensely. He estimated his audience at that moment was about 500. "It is impossible," he wrote, "that stronger marks of contempt and indignation could have been exhibited—they rose up in a body and one spirit seemed to animate the whole—". Of course, Hull had touched on a sore spot with the tribal authorities, the challenge to their leadership raised by Tecumseh and the Prophet. He hoped that the effect of his address that day would be to persuade those chiefs to prevent their young men from listening to the Prophet, or attending him at his village.8

7For a biography of Johnston see Leonard Hill, John Johnston and the Indians, (Piqua, Ohio), 1957.
Replies to this talk by some of the chiefs present have been preserved. In them the Shawnee brothers are not mentioned by name but references to them are obvious. In one such talk the Shawnees were asked why they had discarded their "good old chiefs"; why they had committed management of their affairs to inexperienced young men; why had they not listened to the council of the Seventeen Fires.

We understand that our American Bretheren [sic] have received injuries—that these injuries may possibly produce war—under an event of this kind which may possibly take place, we have seriously considered [sic] what line of conduct will be proper for us—The representatives of all the Nations in the council on this subject are united—they have agreed to follow the advice of their Great Father of the seventeen fires—To take no part in quarrels in which we have no interest—not to waste our blood in fighting the battles of others, which can produce no good to ourselves, To remain quiet at our Villages and attend to our agriculture, hunting, and the welfare of our women and children . . . We call on the old chiefs to impress this advice on the young warriors, [emphasis in original] and we call on the young warriors to listen to the council of their old chiefs . . . 9

The decision of these Indians at this council to remain neutral might have been reassuring for Hull, but he must also have realized that they hardly spoke for all the Indians of the Northwest. In fact, as the tribal names indicate, many of the Indians present came from areas that

9 Indian Speeches at Brownstown, enclosure in Ibid., pp. 86-90.
were already well under American control, Indians whose quarrels with the Americans were more a matter of the past than the present. 10 Few chiefs from those regions then being contested by the Indians and the Americans could claim to represent their entire tribes, many of which were already badly fragmented, with portions supporting the Prophet and probably the British as well.

Furthermore, after talks in Brownstown were over, Harrison heard the unsettling story that Matthew Elliott had crossed the river and spoken to the Indians after Hull's departure. He was supposed to have been successful in persuading the Indians to resist further American pressure on them to obtain their land. 11

Whether Elliott did indeed speak to the Indians at Brownstown, or whether he counselled continued resistance to the Americans cannot be established. 12 American officials

10 The Six Nations were represented at these talks. These tribes had largely divorced themselves from the affairs of their Western brothers before the Indian defeat at Fallen Timbers. After this period they had sought peaceful (and often profitable) relationships with both the Americans and the British. Their appearance at this council was an unusual occurrence.


12 He was likely not there as he forwarded to Claus a report on the council given to him by an Indian.
were willing to believe that he had, owing to the frequency with which they thought the British gave that sort of advice. In fact, American officials were willing to believe almost anything about the British tampering with their Indians. Meanwhile, British diplomats in Washington were using their best exertions to convince the American government that they were neutral and certainly not in league with the Indians who had been causing disturbances on the frontiers. Eustis's response to the British assertions was pointedly sarcastic. "... it is to be presumed that when they [British Indian agents] become informed of the pacific disposition of their government, they will desist."13

13 See British Foreign Office correspondence in FO5/77 for British attempts to convince the Americans of their neutrality. Also see Augustus Foster, British Minister to the United States to James Monroe, Secretary of State, 28 December, 1811, Manning (ed.), Diplomatic Correspondence, I, pp. 608-609, which reads: "Sir: I have been informed by Mr. Morier (British Charge d'affaires in Washington) that so long ago as the 1st of last January in consequence of a written communication from Sir James Craig, His Majesty's Governor General and Commander in Chief, in Canada, dated the 25th of November 1810, acquainting him with his suspicions of the great fermentation among them to make an attack on the United States, and authorizing him to impart his suspicions to the American Secretary of State, he had actually done so verbally to Mr. Smith your Predecessor in Office, and on searching among the archives of this mission I have found the letter alluded to of Sir James Craig by which he did authorize Mr. Morier to make the communication in question, as well as a memorandum of its having been so made, as also an express declaration of Sir James Craig, that although he doubted there would not be wanting persons who would be ready to attribute the movements of the Indians to the influence of the British Government, yet that his department were actually making every exertion in their power to assist in preventing their attempts. (Continued following page)
In the spring and summer of 1810, British authorities had not yet instructed their agents to appeal to the Indians to observe real neutrality. In fact, their only instruction to that time had been to keep up a spirit of resistance among the tribes. But by the fall of 1810, even the agents who were implementing this policy were beginning to doubt its wisdom. Matthew Elliott was aware that any Indian disturbance could well implicate the British whether or not such an outbreak came at their instigation. Even the matter of provisions for the Indians, Elliott felt, needed review. Ball and powder given the Indians were essential to their survival, but at the same time they could be used against the Americans.14

13(Continued) This evidence, Sir, of a friendly disposition to put the United States Governt. on their guard against the machinations of the Savages, and even to aid in preventing the calamity which has taken place, is so honourable to the Governor General of Canada, and so clearly in contradiction to the late unfounded reports which have been spread of a contrary nature, that I cannot resist the impulse I have to draw your attention towards it, not that I conceive, however, that it was necessary to produce this proof to the United States' Government of the falsity of such reports, which the character of the British nation, and the manifest inutility of urging Indians to their destruction should have rendered improbable, but in order that you may be enabled, in case it shall seem fitting to you, by giving publicity to this letter to correct the mistaken notions on the subject, which have unfortunately found their way even among persons of the highest respectability only, as I am convinced, from their having been misinformed."; see also Eustis to Harrison, 10 May, 1810, Carter (ed.), Territorial Papers, Vol. XIII, Indiana Territory, 1810-1816, p. 20.

In November Tecumseh visited Elliott at Amherstburg. He came to tell the British what had passed at his talks with Harrison at Vincennes and also to probe the question of war with the United States. The talk he delivered to Elliott on that occasion left no doubt that he and his men were prepared to fight, indeed no doubt that the beginning of that fight could have been far off.

Father: We have a Belt to shew you, which was given to our Kings when you laid the French in their back. Here it is, Father; on one end is your hand, on the other, that of the Red people . . . and in the middle the hearts of both. This Belt, Father our great Chiefs have been sitting upon ever since, keeping it concealed, and ruining our Country. Now the Warriors have taken all the Chiefs and turned their faces towards you never again look towards the Americans, and we the Warriors now manage the affairs of our Nation; and we sit at, or near the Borders where the Contest will begin.

Father—It is only five Years ago that I discovered this Belt and took it from Under our Kings. You Father have nourished us, and raised us up from Childhood we are now Men and think ourselves capable of defending our Country, in which cause you have given us active assistance and always advice—We are now determined to defend it ourselves, and after rising you on your feet leave you behind, but expecting you will push forwards towards us what may be necessary to supply our Wants. 15

This talk, interpreted by James Girty, one of the notorious Girty brothers, took Elliott by surprise. His

15 Speech of Tecumseh at Amherstburg, 15 November, 1810, enclosed in Elliott to Claus, 16 November, 1810, Ibid., pp. 74-79.
answer was crucial. Not only had Tecumseh made it plain that he was ready for war, but he had requested supplies in that event. Elliott could not risk a direct reply to the request. Instead he told Tecumseh and the Potawatomis, Ottawas, Winnebagos and Sauks who were with him that he would lose no time in laying their request before their Great Father the King for his direction on the subject. More than that he could not safely promise.\textsuperscript{16}

He then wrote to William Claus, his immediate superior, urgently requesting instruction. He explained to Claus that the Indians' desire for war was so great that they might be witnessing the eve of war at that time.

\ldots I request that as soon as conveniently can be done, you will send me ample and explicit Instructions relating to my future conduct towards the Prophet & his Adherents. I am well aware that I cannot, and ought not, during the present circumstance of affairs do anything overtly but whether it would not be proper to keep up among them the present spirit of resistance I wish to be Informed.\textsuperscript{17}

Despite Elliott's plea for direction, however, he was going to have to wait not weeks, but months before receiving an answer. Claus relayed Elliott's letter to Gore who apparently did not share the sense of urgency felt by the Indian Department. In forwarding it to Craig, Gore wrote,

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{17}Ibid.
As I do not conceive that His Majesty's Interests will suffer by any waiting for your Instructions, I shall not give any directions to Captain Elliott to alter his conduct, or depart from the existing orders which guide him in his Intercourse with the Indian Nations.  

His letter was dated six weeks after Elliott's original appeal for instruction. The reply he received from Craig, to be discussed below, indicated that he was indeed labouring under a misconception.  

The responsibility for that misconception, however, must be placed on Craig himself. He was well aware of the possible consequences for the British of an Indian attack on the American frontier. He knew that the Americans would consider any such attack as having been inspired by the British. He was therefore concerned with avoiding the consequences which his own policy of keeping up a "spirit of resistance" among the Indians against the Americans would likely cause.  

On November 25, 1810, Craig wrote the British Charge d'affaires in Washington, John Philip Morier, that he suspected the Indians were planning to attack the Americans. To make it appear that the British were completely divorced from this potential attack he instructed Morier to relay the information that the American frontier was in danger to the American Secretary of State. While Craig's action may

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18Gore to Craig, 29 December, 1810, Ibid., p. 65.
be considered prudent in terms of preserving deteriorating Anglo-American relations, it certainly would have left the Indians in an exposed position had they carried out the anticipated attack. It was true that the British had told the Indians to avoid fighting with the Americans. But it was also true that in reminding the Indians of how poorly the Americans had treated them and at the same time showering them with presents, they had conveyed to the Indians the feeling that they eventually wanted them to fight. Inasmuch as some Indians had elected to begin fighting in 1810, British Indian policy had partially failed, and Craig wanted now to avoid the consequences of that failure by the most convenient means possible. He clearly wanted the Indians to observe a real neutrality until such time as they were needed on the battlefield. But he had not, by the fall of 1810, formulated his ideas on how such neutrality might be forced upon the Indians, and therefore had communicated no change in policy to Gore or to anyone in the Indian Department. It was little wonder then that Gore felt no urgency about Elliott's letter begging for instructions. It was February before Craig got around to putting his ideas about pressuring the Indians into a real neutrality into written form and sending them off to Gore.

Meanwhile Tecumseh was returning to his village after his talks with Elliott, and Harrison was appearing before his territorial legislature to deliver his annual address.
Whereas in preceding years he had only briefly mentioned the Indian threat to his frontiers, this time he spoke to the members at some length about the growing Indian menace in the Indiana Territory. The blame for this rested on the British, the Indians and also on what he branded "disloyal" elements within the population of the territory who were filling the Indians with misinformation and fomenting trouble.

It was clear, Harrison thought, that the Prophet would have little control over the Indians simply because he had attempted to assume a deific role. The fact was that he was being assisted by "the intrigues and advice of foreign agents, and other disaffected persons," who were "filling their minds with suspicions of the justice and integrity of our views towards them."

To justify his interpretation of the causes of Indian unrest, Harrison, of course, had to destroy the notion that the Indians were angered over the land deals into which he had pressed them. For this reason he was at pains to point out to his legislature that the Indians who had been party to Treaty of Fort Wayne had never been happier than they were at that moment. In a sense his assertion was true. The Indians who had sold the land were those village chiefs who were already in the American camp. The Indians who were upset came from the younger elements of the tribes,
elements which had disapproved of the sales from the first. Many of them had been or later became supporters of the brothers at Tippecanoe. To them the fact that the Americans had found Indian signatories and paid out monies for the land by no means gave the United States clear title. They agreed with Tecumseh that the land was the property of all the Indians and not susceptible to sale by the aging village chiefs, the defeated warriors of a generation past.

Harrison continued explaining to his legislature that for a period of eight months after the sale there had been no complaints at all. Only after the better part of a year had passed were the "pretensions of the Prophet with regard to the land made known."

A furious clamour was then raised by the foreign agents amongst us, and other disaffected persons, against the policy which had excluded from the treaty this great, influential character, as he was termed, and the doing so expressly attributed to personal ill will upon the part of the negotiator [Harrison]. No such ill will did in fact exist. I accuse myself, indeed, of an error in the patronage and support which I afforded him upon his first arrival on the Wabash, before his designs of hostility to the United States had been developed. But upon no principle of propriety or policy could he have been made a party to the Treaty. The personage called the Prophet is not a chief of the tribe to which he belongs, but is an outcast from it, rejected and hated by the real chiefs, the principal of whom [Hockingspomskon] was present at the treaty, and not only disclaimed upon the part of his tribe any title to the lands ceded, but used his personal in-
influence with the chiefs of the other tribes to effect the cession.\textsuperscript{19}

Ever fair, Harrison told his legislature that upon hearing of the Prophet's dissatisfaction, he sent for him to come in and explain the cause of his unhappiness. Instead of coming himself, however, the Prophet "deputized" his brother, Tecumseh, to bring the Indian's complaints to the Governor. Harrison's use of the word "deputized" is significant as it indicated that even after the 1810 Council at Vincennes, at which Tecumseh clearly demonstrated the extent to which he shared in the direction of the Indians at Tippecanoe, Harrison still chose to ignore the evidence and view the Prophet as the leader of the confederation.

Content with having obliterated the notion that the Indians in general were unhappy with the Fort Wayne purchase, Harrison identified the source of the contention of the confederation Indians that the land belonged to all Indians in common.

\[\text{No person who is the least acquainted with the history of Indian affairs upon our northwestern frontier, for some years past, can be at any loss for the source of all this mischief, or will hesitate to believe that the Prophet is a tool of British fears or British avarice, designed for the purpose of forming a combination of the Indians, which in case of war between that power and the United States may assist them in the defence of Canada, or as the means of keeping back our settlements,}\]

\textsuperscript{19}The entire transcript of Harrison's address to the legislature is printed in Esarey (ed.), \textit{Messages}, I, pp. 487-496.
and by rendering us suspected and hated by the natives, secure to themselves a continuance of the valuable fur trade which they have so long engrossed. 20

In a more optimistic vein, the Governor reminded the members that there were still many loyal Indians. Some tribes that had been attending the Prophet had recently defected from him, thus lessening his ability to launch an attack on American settlements. As a result, Harrison was of the opinion that the Prophet would be unable to commence hostilities. 21

However, the fact that the Prophet might be too weak to attack did not mean that the problems with the Indians were at an end. To reduce them Harrison suggested two courses of action. The first was that the legislature exclude from the Indian trade those people he had referred to as "disaffected." This was to be accomplished by the institution of licenses which would be granted only to traders who were able to demonstrate their loyalty. The second was that the legislature institute a legal penalty for those convicted of spreading false information or who "counter act the intentions of the government" regarding the handling of the Indians. 22

20Ibid., p. 490.
21Ibid.
22Ibid., p. 491. Harrison no doubt had the affair with William McIntosh in mind here.
As in earlier times, the root of Harrison's concern was the problem of attracting settlers to the Indiana Territory. Population growth was the only way in which statehood for Indiana could be achieved, but population would not increase until the Indian menace was ended, and the land occupied by the Indians had been surveyed, sold and settled. In formulating his argument for removing the Indians, Harrison produced one of the earliest clear statements of American Manifest Destiny to come from the frontier.

Are then those extinguishments of native title—which are at once so beneficial to the Indians, the territory, and the United States—to be suspended on account of the intrigues of a few individuals? Is one of the fairest portions of the globe to remain in a state of nature, the haunt of a few wretched savages, when it seems destined by the Creator to give support to a large population, and to be the seat of civilization, of science, and of true religion?  

In case the answers to those questions were not obvious to the Secretary of War, Harrison provided them himself in another letter written a few weeks later. On Christmas Eve, while Elliott was still waiting for a reply to his plea for instruction, and while the Indians were concerning themselves with the problems of survival through the winter season, Harrison wrote from Grouseland, his estate near Vincennes, that time was ripe to treat with the Indians for yet another tract. In particular he was interested in the

\[23\] Ibid., pp. 492-493.
land held by the Miamis along the Wabash. The tract Harrison was after included that portion occupied by the Prophet.

Ownership of this area would give Harrison a chance to do what its aboriginal owners had attempted without success: evict the confederation. The Governor feared that if Washington did not move swiftly enough to acquire the tract that the Miamis, part owners of it with the Delawares, might be won over to the confederation. If the Miamis subscribed to the notion of common ownership of Indian land, removing the assembly at Tippecanoe would be made immeasurably more difficult. 24

In the same letter Harrison informed Eustis that a Wea chief had been in to tell him that after Hull had left the council at Brownstown the previous autumn, Matthew Elliott had arrived and persuaded the Indians to resist further American pressure for land. Elliott was supposed to have told the Indians that the British and the French had settled their differences in Europe and were now to unite their forces to defeat the Americans and "dispossess them of the land they had taken from the Indians." Harrison was confident that if the Miamis were tricked into believing this, even they might resist his plan to buy more of their land. 25

24Harrison to Eustis, 24 December, 1810, Ibid., pp. 496-500.
25Ibid., p. 497.
A step of this sort would be of infinite prejudice to the United States. It would shut the door against further extinguishment of Indian title upon the valuable tract of country south of the Wabash, which is now embraced by our settlements on three sides. And upon the obtaining of which the public opinion in the Western country is so fixed... the tide of immigration from Pennsylvania and the State of Ohio rolls directly against it... our backwoodsmen are not of a disposition to content themselves with land of an inferior quality when they see in their immediate neighbourhood the finest country as to soil in the world occupied by a few wretched savages... without such further purchase Indiana cannot for many years become a member of the Union and I am heartily tired of living in a Territory.26

To add a touch more weight to his argument, Harrison wrote that the Wyandots and indeed the Six Nations were looking at the same land with an eye to settling on it. If they got it before the government, the situation would be further complicated.27

Something which had doubtless contributed to Harrison's determination to buy the land on which the Prophet lived was the continuing refusal of the brothers to allow the survey of the Fort Wayne cession. In October, he had sent his man, Brouillette, to the Prophet's camp ostensibly to explain the reason the Indians did not yet have an answer from the President to their propositions and demands

26Ibid.

27Ibid.
at the Vincennes council that summer. The explanation was that the President was still "absent from his seat of government." Of course, the real reason for Brouillette's visit was to gather intelligence. 

Brouillette's report satisfied the Governor as it indicated that the Prophet was not prepared, at least at that moment, to attack Vincennes. However, he was disturbed by the fact that the Prophet remained determined to allow no surveyors on the 1809 cession.

Harrison recommended to Eustis, as he had done previously, that a string of forts be built into the Indian country. These forts would have the dual purpose of making military action easier and intimidating the Indians. The Secretary of War, however, had another notion of how to deal with the confederation Indians. He wrote, "It has indeed occurred to me that the surest means of securing good behavior from this conspicuous personage & his brother would be to make them prisoners." Harrison, as we know, never acted on the suggestion.

28Harrison to Eustis, 10 October, 1810, Ibid., pp. 474-475. Brouillette makes no mention of Tecumseh being present. Harrison's later information was that Tecumseh left for Malden about October 29, 1810. See footnote 29 for reference.

29Eustis to Harrison, 26 October, 1810, Ibid., pp. 482-483; Harrison to Eustis, 7 November, 1810, Ibid., pp. 483-484.
A little more than a month after Harrison's suggestion to Eustis that the United States buy more Indian land, Sir James Craig received Gore's letter with Elliott's plea for direction. His reply marked a significant turning point in the history of British Indian policy, for it instructed the Indian Department to implement a policy of strict neutrality.

Craig wrote Gore:

A war, especially a war of such a nature, carried on so near our frontiers, must be attended with infinite inconvenience to us . . . it would subject us to a degree of vigilance, and a state of precaution to which our means are at this moment little adequate . . . it would expose us to a continual state of suspicion and irritation on the part of the Americans, which sooner or later would probably lead us into the being ourselves parties in the war, however much we might wish to avoid it. Such a war too must probably end to the disadvantage of the Indians . . . without [British] cooperation however favorably for [the Indians] a war might commence, there is little doubt that it would terminate in their destruction, or at least in their being reduced so far as to render them useless, should we unfortunately be compelled to call on them . . . Upon these considerations I think it would be expedient to instruct the officers of the Indian Department to use all their influence to dissuade the Indians from their projected plan of hostility, giving them clearly to understand, that they must not expect any assistance from us. The officers however should be extremely cautious in pointing out to them that this is for their own good only that this advice is given to them, and not from any diriliction['sic'] of that regard, with which we view their interests. 30

Gore must have been stung by Craig's letter, differing as sharply as it did from his own evaluation of the significance of the Indian problem and its possible consequences. He issued the orders to the Indian Department, however, as instructed. But even with the new orders circulated to the Indian agents, the problem of communicating them to the Indians in some form that would command their compliance remained. In February the Indians were in their winter camps where hunting and sugaring would detain them for some months. This was one reason why Craig's new policy change was, to all intents and purposes, a change on paper only.

The other reason was the very effectiveness of his previous policy of keeping the Indians unhappy with the Americans. The British agents had spent the better part of three years convincing key Indians that there would likely be a war. When that war came, those Indians had been told, in return for their support of the British they might expect to regain much of the land the Americans had taken from them. These "confidential" Indians were charged with the delicate task of winning their tribesmen over to the British side. This task alone was relatively simple. The problem was that Craig also expected these Indians to win converts to the British cause without exciting them to the point that they would commence hostilities against the Americans before war.

broke out between the two white powers. This responsibility turned out to be too great for those Indians. We have no way to measure their role in inciting the Indians of the Northwest to begin the raiding and marauding that was general on the frontiers of the Northwest by 1811, but given the level of irritation of the Indians provided by American land policy alone, it is clear that even the smallest hint of British help in case of war could have touched off the fighting. It is even possible that the fighting could have started spontaneously, without any prodding from the "confidential" Indians at all.

Craig's new policy, then, was admirable but useless. By the spring of 1811, too many Indians appeared convinced, by British talk, by British presents, and by shoddy treatment from the Americans, that their situation was intolerable and that one way to improve it was to fight. The talks they had had with British agents at Amherstburg in the fall of 1810 made their position perfectly clear. 32

From this point on, until the outbreak of war, the higher echelons of both the British and the American governments, that is to say the Secretary of War and the President on one side, and the Lieutenant Governor and the Governor in chief on the other, demanded that their subordinates maintain

32 Elliott to Claus, 16 October, 1810, MP&HC, XXV, pp. 272-273.
relations with the Indians that would prevent, rather than provoke, war.

The Americans had, since the war scare began, always counselled the Indians to stay clear of any disagreements between the two white powers. They gave this advice as they thought that Indians respected strength, and appeals for alliances in the case of war would likely make the United States look weak to the tribes. Such an appearance, it seemed to them, would only encourage the Indians to join the British. But the American policy of keeping the Indians neutral never had any greater chance of success than Craig's attempt at real neutrality in 1811. It simply could not co-exist with American land policy. Nonetheless, both sides tried to make these policies work.

In the spring of 1811, when the Indians came to Fort Malden for their supplies they found a different reception from what they had received in the past. Whereas the British had been admittedly liberal in their distribution of provisions and ammunition to the Indians, now they intended to use those supplies to bribe the Indians not to fight. Gore wrote Claus that he was to "diminish or withhold altogether the supply of arms and ammunition to such tribes as decide upon war . . ." Furthermore, he instructed that the Indians must have impressed upon them the "eventual misfortune to themselves from any attack on the whites . . ."
Matthew Elliott was also instructed to be "more than usually circumspect in his communication with the Indians, so as to leave no possible suspicion of favouring their projected hostilities against the United States."\(^{33}\)

However, Isaac Brock, Military Commander of Upper Canada, disagreed with Craig's new policy. Although he deplored the fact that the Indian agents had overly excited the tribesmen, he thought that withholding supplies to force them into neutrality was foolish. After so many years of work to gain Indian allegiance, Brock held the opinion that they should rather be supplied and encouraged. Failure to support them was to risk their loss as allies.\(^{34}\)

A number of American officials also disagreed with their government's policy of neutrality. However, the grounds of their opposition were far different from Brock's. To men like Harrison and Hull, General William Clark and Ninian Edwards, the policy of preventing clashes with the Indians meant they were prevented from dealing with the Indians according to their fashion. Instruction to avoid any incidents which might lead to hostilities meant that their

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

\(^{34}\text{Isaac Brock to Craig, 27 February, 1811, Ferdinand B. Tupper, Life and Correspondence of Major General Sir Isaac Brock, (London, 1847), pp. 94-96.}\)
latitude in punishing Indian offenders against American law was severely restricted. As a result they thought they would be forced to tolerate Indian insolence. Permitting such insolence, they were sure, would only encourage it until no control of the Indians would be effective.\textsuperscript{35}

And perhaps worst of all, the policy meant that Indians could not be forcibly removed from their land. On the one hand, then, Brock wanted the Indians kept happy until the British needed them, while on the other the American territorial governors, and military men, wanted the freedom to destroy those Indians sympathetic to the British before they could be used in war. The neutrality both countries were now requiring their Indian agents to follow would make the objectives of Brock and the territorial governors difficult to achieve.

Unlike the British, the Americans found their policy relatively easy to enforce. Offensive actions on the part of the territorial governors could be carried on only with the help of regular troops, since the territorial militias were poorly armed and numerically weak. Denying these regular troops was the only check necessary. Without access

\textsuperscript{35}General William Clark (sometimes Clarke) first acquired national prominence as one of the leaders of the famous Lewis and Clark expedition to the Pacific. In 1807 he was appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis. He became Governor of the Missouri Territory in 1813. Ninian Edwards was a Kentuckian who was appointed Governor of the Illinois Territory when it was created in 1809.
to them the governors would have to take care not to provoke the Indians.

Thwarted by his inability to strike out at the Indians, Harrison began rethinking some of the fundamental elements of American Indian policy. In doing so he found what appeared to him to have been a major mistake: the prevention of intertribal warfare. This policy had been one of the pillars of Thomas Jefferson's program to pacify the Indians. It was also an area in which Jefferson's administration had been remarkably successful. Harrison, however, was convinced that as war was a natural state of the Indian, he could not be happy without it. If Indians were not busy killing each other, he reasoned, they would be killing Americans. To keep them in a state of peace with each other was only to insure that they would unite against the Americans. What time did not permit Harrison to accomplish the War of 1812 did, by pitting Indians, even from the same tribes in some cases, against each other. 36

In enforcing the American policy of neutrality, the Department of War seemed not to realize that prohibiting

the governors from offensive action was by no means the
same as removing those irritations which were the cause of
Indian dissatisfaction. The effect of continual demands
for Indian lands has been discussed above. In addition to
this irritant there were others that kept the Indians
stirred up. One of the most important of these was the
policy of meting out white justice for offenses by Indians.
Demands that their tribemen be surrendered to face white
judges and juries created considerable resentment amongst
the Indians, especially since they were well aware that
there were two kinds of justice handed down in these courts,
one for the white man and another for the red. The signifi-
cance of the fact that the Americans made these demands on
them and the British, who had no political control over them
did not, could hardly have escaped Indian notice. These
examples must suffice to illustrate the point.

In the fall of 1810, Harrison demanded that Tecumseh
surrender to American authorities men living in his village
who had been accused of stealing horses and of murder. Tecum-
seh refused and insisted that these men ought to be forgiven
just as the whites who murdered Indians had been forgiven.
Harrison, of course, disagreed. It seemed to him that Indian
offenders could not be allowed to go unpunished, or before
long there would not be a law-abiding Indian left.\textsuperscript{37} In a

\textsuperscript{37} Dawson, \textit{Harrison}, p. 184.
later letter Harrison explained why he felt the way he did.

Encroachment upon the rights and property of those who will not resist is a characteristic of every savage. 'Sooner shall the lover stop short of the last favor' (I use the words of the late Prest. Adams) 'having obtained the rest' than an Indian cease to demand as long as there is a prospect of his demands being complied with. 38

On another occasion, when an Indian suspected of murder was sheltered by his tribe, Harrison paid an Indian to kill the accused and bring his scalp back to him at Vincennes. And again when Harrison demanded the surrender of an offender, the man's own tribe chose to kill him themselves rather than have to submit him to American justice. 39

Also at the time when the British were increasing their presents to the Indians, almost to the point of being lavish, American officials were being asked to reduce the expenses of maintaining their Indian departments. As early as January of 1810, Governor Hull was told by the Secretary of War, "Our expenditures in the Indian Department have so far exceeded every calculation of what would be necessary or expedient that a reduction of them generally is deemed absolutely indispensable." 40 In February of 1811, when Craig

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38 Harrison to Eustis, 23 April, 1811, Esarey(ed.), Messages, I, pp. 506-510.

39 Harrison to Eustis, 6 June, 1811, Ibid., pp. 512-517.

40 Eustis to Hull, 1 January, 1810, National Archives, (Washington, D.C.), War Department, Secretary's Office, Letters Sent, Indian Affairs, C:9-10.
was announcing his new policy of strict neutrality to his subordinates, Harrison was writing the War Department that if the government was not planning to extinguish Indian title to further lands "issue of provisions and occasional benefactions" might be reduced, and a "retrenchment of annual expenses of the Indian Department at this place might gradually be effected."

Only a few months later a rumor was circulating on the American frontier that the British were distributing four times as many Indian presents as they had in the past. One warrior alone was supposed to have received a fine rifle, 25 pounds of powder, 50 of lead, numerous blankets, shirts, cloth and other articles. British Indian Department requisitions do not support the notion that Indian presents were quadrupled, but they were significantly increased. That increase, coming as it did at the same time as the American cutback, must have impressed the Indians. To ask the territorial governors to administer policies like these, regardless

41 Harrison to Eustis, 6 February, 1811, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 504-505.

42 A short list of the value of Indian presents distributed in Upper and Lower Canada in the years 1806-1811 is in "Q" Series, MG 11, Vol. 314, pp. 256-258. More detailed information on the requisitions of the Indian Departments of Upper Canada can be found in "Q" Series, MG 11, Vols. 311-314 and Lower Canada Ibid., Vols. 108-114. Also a special requisition in case of war with the United States is reproduced in MP&HC, XXIII, pp. 70-72.
of how willing they were to do it, and at the same time to refuse them the support of regular troops was like inviting them to an evening of Russian roulette.

Nor were the governors' jobs made any easier by the continual encroachment of individual settlers on Indian land against the wishes of their government. The Wyandots were so angered by this situation that they threatened on one occasion to burn the unauthorized squatters out. The presence of the squatters certainly gave credence to the claims of the hostile Indians that the Americans were not honoring their treaty commitments.43

But while the hostile Indians were attempting to stir discontent, the tribes and bands of tribes loyal to the Americans continued to warn the Long Knives of the preparation of their bellicose brothers. In most cases the Prophet figured in their reports. In the spring of 1811, their information, forwarded to the Secretary of War by territorial officials, began to show a definite pattern. The factor of the American fur trading post at Chicago, Matthew Irwin, wrote Eustis that the Indians were assembling on a branch of the Illinois River "by the influence of the Prophet—the result will be hostile, in the event of a war

with Great Britain."

From the Louisiana Territory Eustis heard that the Iowas had sent in a talk part of which read, "I tell you this, although death is threatened against those who discover it: the time is drawing nigh when the murder is to begin, and all the Indians who will not join are to die with the whites."

In May, Harrison sent William Wells to talk to Tecumseh and the Prophet about the return of some stolen horses. Wells claimed that Tecumseh was open in announcing his intention to prevent "the encroachments of the white people." When Wells countered that the Indians would never be able to accomplish this, Tecumseh replied that Wells would live to see the day.

On other occasions in the spring and summer, Harrison was visited by Indians who warned him that the "pacific professions" of the Prophet and his brother could not be relied upon. These professions, they told Harrison, were intended to lull the Americans into a false sense of security.

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44Irwin Matthew to Eustis, 13 May, 1811, American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, I, p. 800.

45Clark to Eustis, 24 May, 1811, Ibid.

46Harrison to Eustis, 6 June, 1811, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 512-517.
One Indian informed the Governor that he had listened to the brothers talking for several years and had heard nothing but "war and hatred against the United States." The Indians at Prophetstown might return a few horses from time to time, but that was only a device to trick the Americans into thinking them cooperative.47

Significantly, the same Indian also told Harrison that Tecumseh was constantly warning his warriors that they would "defeat their own plans by their precipitancy." This is a clear indication that while Tecumseh understood well why the British wanted to prevent hostilities, he had not been successful in communicating that understanding to his followers. It is likely, however, that Tecumseh's reason for agreeing to the British strategy was that premature action on the part of his warriors would mean losing the advantage of surprise. According to the informer, Indians who listened to Tecumseh and the Prophet were told "to keep their secrets" even if they were not going to join the confederation. "... he always promised them a rich harvest of plunder and scalps, declaring that the first stroke would put them in possession of an ample supply of arms, ammunition and provisions."48

47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
In the same letter to Washington, Harrison wrote that he had had communications from St. Louis and from Chicago which indicated that the Prophet was brewing further trouble. From General William Clark at St. Louis, he heard that a war belt had been sent to the Indians there by the Prophet. His information was that the attack was to begin at Vincennes, no doubt just what Harrison wanted to hear. From Chicago, the half-breed interpreter, John La Lime, wrote that he had been convinced that the Indians there had actually "determined on going to war." Elsewhere in the Illinois Territory, near Cahokia, Potawatomis were supposed to have murdered a man and wounded a woman, taking her prisoner. 49

Clark, in a later communication, told Harrison that, while earlier it had appeared that the war belt circulated by the Prophet would not be accepted by the Indians near St. Louis, by the end of May the "Sacks had absolutely acceded to the hostile confederacy." 50

At home, meanwhile, Harrison continued to have plenty of problems of his own. He had employed surveyors to plot the land bought from the Indians in 1809, so that sale and settlement could begin. However, the men he hired were from Cincinnati and apparently not used to dealing with hostile

49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
Indians. Their work had hardly got underway when they were captured by a party of hostile Weas who left them tied up for the night but decided to release them in the morning. This experience so unnerved the team that they fled the territory without so much as a word to Harrison. The stories they were bound to tell in Ohio would do little to encourage emigration to Indiana. Harrison wrote,

I am still unable to determine whether I should consider this transaction a hostile act on the part of the Indians or not... I am convinced that the Weas would not have dared to interrupt him if they had not been encouraged to do so, and assured of support from above.

What he meant by the word "above" was not further clarified. The previous fall Harrison had assured the surveyors that they would be safe. One must wonder how he arrived at that conclusion.51

The murders, the taking of prisoners and the rumors all had a disquieting effect on the frontier. While the offenses of the Indians would certainly have justified his doing so, Harrison, as he had done previously, hesitated to call out the militia. He feared that such action on his part would only lend greater substance to the rumors of Indian war, so potentially damaging to the territory. Rather, he chose to take the calculated risk of exposing his people to the threat of danger in the hope that doing so might keep it from materializing.

51Ibid.
I have not made the least attempts to put this country in a state of defense and shall not do anything until every doubt of Hostile designs of the Indians is removed from the unfavorable effect produced by these alarms upon the emigration and the injury that the frontier people would sustain by the abandonment of their crops. 52

He was aware that "if the affair in Illinois is actually the commencement of general hostilities many families will be butchered . . .", but his instructions had been to avoid direct conflict with the Indians. 53 Nevertheless, his failure to provide defense can hardly be excused on account of those orders. Evidently, in his mind the possibility of adding new settlers to the territory was of greater value than protecting the life and property of those who were already there.

Finally, in June of 1811, a confrontation was precipitated between the Americans and the Confederation Indians at Prophetstown. This came about when the Prophet ordered the confiscation of an entire boatload of salt which the Americans had intended to distribute amongst the tribes of the region. The spring previous the Prophet had manhandled the crew of the salt boat and refused his allotment on the ground, as he later explained, that the Americans would interpret the acceptance of the salt as an agreement on the part of the Indians to surrender still more land.

52 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
This time the crew of the salt boat had been instructed to leave five barrels with the Prophet and divide the remainder amongst the Kickapoos, Shawnees and others. When they arrived at the brothers' camp, the Prophet announced that he was taking all the salt. Only a few days before, the Prophet had told Brouillette that he would take none of it. Harrison thought that this about-face must have been the result of the decision of a council "hastily" called to consider the matter.54

The Prophet sent a message to Harrison with the crew which was hardly calculated to ease the Governor's anxiety. He told him not to be alarmed as last year he had had no salt, and this year he was simply making up the difference. To make matters even worse, he excused himself on the grounds that he had more than 2,000 men to feed and was expecting Tecumseh to come with a good many more from "the lakes". All of these circumstances meant, of course, that he needed more salt. "From all I can collect," Harrison wrote Eustis, "I have not the least doubt but a crisis with this fellow is approaching . . ."55

His determination is, and (I have my information from so many different sources that it is impossible to disbelieve it) to come to this place with as many men as he can raise and if the land which was lately purchased is not immediately given up to commence the war.56

54 Harrison to Eustis, 19 June, 1811, Ibid., pp. 518-519.
55 Ibid.
56 Ibid.
Harrison was faced with a dilemma. No matter if he called up the entire militia he could not match the 600-800 men he thought the Prophet and Tecumseh had at their disposal.57 Furthermore, if the militia were called up, it would likely mean that the crops would be ruined from lack of care. Additionally, Harrison thought that, in view of the upset state of the frontier, the majority of the militiamen, not wishing to leave their women and children home alone and unprotected, would refuse to respond to the call in any event. It seemed to the Governor that the only reasonable solution to the problem was to call in the regulars from Pittsburgh. He requested that this be done and that he be given authorization to use them "as soon as it is ascertained he is decidedly hostile." To submit to the Prophet's insolence, he wrote, "will be the means of making all the tribes treat us with contempt."58

Then, without waiting for an answer to his request from Washington, Harrison undertook to deal directly with Tecumseh, not the Prophet, over the matter of the pirogue of salt. In the talk he sent to Prophetstown he accused Tecumseh of aligning the tribes to the north and west against the Americans. He was aware, he warned the chief, from information supplied him by other Indians, of Tecumseh's plans


to murder him. Harrison had always claimed the best way to prevent Indian mischief was to reveal foreknowledge of it, thus removing the advantage of surprise. He told Tecumseh that if any proof of hostility had been wanting, that proof had now been supplied by the seizure of the salt. This seizure had alarmed the settlements, and Americans, Harrison warned, were now arming themselves for protection. "You shall not surprise us as you expect to." 59

You talk of coming in to see me, attended by all your young men; this, however, must not be so, if your intentions are good, you have no need to bring but a few of your young men with you. I must be plain with you; I will not suffer you to come into our settlements with such a force. 60

The day after sending this "talk" off to Tecumseh, Harrison wrote a letter to Eustis, explaining what he had told the chief and informing the Secretary that the Prophet had sent a party of spies to Vincennes from his camp to examine the situation of the town. By luck, these spies had been discovered by a party of friendly Potawatomis who be-rated the culprits and, as Harrison heard it, so frightened their leader that he hid himself for some hours. 61

59 Harrison to Tecumseh, 24 June, 1811, Ibid., pp. 522-524.
60 Ibid.
61 Harrison to Eustis, 25 June, 1811, Ibid., pp. 524-526.
The absurdity of this encounter led Harrison to observe that "nothing but the great talents of Tecumseh could keep together the heterogeneous mass which composes the Prophet's force." But while Harrison was able to dismiss these spies with ridicule, he was not able to treat similarly the continued acts of hostility occurring on the frontiers.62

On June 27, Ninian Edwards, Governor of the Illinois Territory, wrote Eustis that the Indians were attacking his settlements again and that some casualties had been suffered. Harrison, not surprisingly, took the new disturbances in Illinois as a sign that the general Indian war was about to begin. Even worse, he considered, it was likely that the attacks in Illinois were merely a device to divert attention from Vincennes where he was sure the real massacre would commence.

If some decisive measures are not speedily adopted we shall have a general combination of all the tribes against us . . . every scalp taken from us with impunity will add to the number of the hostile party. Can the President want any further proof of the Prophet's designs against us?63

A few weeks before Harrison had been requesting the construction of forts for defense. Now he was advocating

62 Ibid.

63 Harrison to Eustis, 2 July, 1811, Ibid., pp. 526-528.
offense as the only reasonable move. "There is no safety in any defensive measures."\textsuperscript{64}  

As earlier, however, Harrison was unable to begin offensive action on his own without direction from Washington. His last instruction from the Secretary of War had been perfectly clear: clashes with the Indians were to be strictly avoided. The Governor felt restricted by these instructions. ". . . no two days pass over without some horses being stolen. I have hitherto prevented the thieves from being pursued knowing that it would inevitably lead to hostilities."\textsuperscript{65}  

The only bright spot Harrison could see was that Tecumseh had not been successful in his attempt to lead the "lake" Indians into his confederation, arriving with only a handful instead of the host which the Prophet had anticipated in his message sent to Harrison via the salt boat crew. The Governor also heard that the Wyandots and the Iroquois had told Tecumseh they would not join him until September. This could mean no attacks at all, or at least until the "roasting-ear season."\textsuperscript{66}  

At the same time, General Clark at St. Louis wrote Eustis that he had information to indicate the Prophet would begin an attack as soon as he felt himself strong.

\textsuperscript{64}Ibid. 
\textsuperscript{65}Ibid. 
\textsuperscript{66}Ibid.
enough. The raids by the tribes associated with the
Prophet in the St. Louis region were increasing to the
extent that Clark thought a "crisis is fast approaching."67

On that grand patriotic holiday, July 4, Tecumseh
sent Harrison a reply to his letter of June 24. In it he
promised to see the Governor in 18 days. In the meanwhile
he hoped that his message itself would "wash away all these
bad stories that have been circulated."

Brother, we cannot say what will become of
us, as the Great Spirit has the management
of us at his will . . . I hope that when we
come together all these bad tales will be
settled; by this I hope your young men,
women and children will be easy. I wish
you, brother, to let them know when I come
to Vincennes and see you, all will be set-
tled in peace and happiness.68

The man who carried the Governor's message to the In-
dians and returned Tecumseh's reply was Captain Walter Wilson.
He told Harrison that he had been well treated by Tecumseh,
who also seemed willing to comply with Harrison's request
that he bring only a few men with him when he came to
Vincennes. But the Governor placed little faith in this
assurance. He wrote Eustis that he was going to arrange to
have the river "well watched by a party of scouts after the
descent of the chief lest he should be followed by his

67 Clark to Eustis, 3 July, 1811, American State Papers, .
Class II, Indian Affairs, I, p. 800.

68 Tecumseh to Harrison, 4 July, 1811, Esarey (ed.),
Messages, I, p. 529.
warriors." Harrison still feared a massacre. He wrote that Tecumseh had modeled himself after the celebrated Pontiac, whose followers had conducted more than one successful slaughter of unsuspecting towns and garrisons.69

Tecumseh, Harrison thought, could not have had a better strategic location from which to launch an attack. Whether by canoe at high water, or by horseback, the Indians at Prophetstown were no more than twenty four hours from Vincennes. Furthermore, Tecumseh was located centrally to the tribes he wanted to unite. Defense for the Indians was simple since the country surrounding Tippecanoe was so thick as to be impenetrable by either cavalry or infantry.70

Harrison had neither the permission nor the force with which to attack Tecumseh. Had it been otherwise, Tecumseh might never have come to Vincennes for his second talk with Harrison. Without them the Governor could only sit in his town and wait. While he was waiting, Ninian Edwards in Illinois was writing that the Indians there were

69Harrison to Eustis, 10 July, 1811, Ibid., pp. 532-535.

70Ibid. Harrison disproved his claim of impene-
trability by his own march on Tippecanoe that fall, also his claim that Tippecanoe was only 24 hours away was non-
sense. The distance was over 140 miles.
continuing to commit murder on the frontiers, and families, terrorized, were abandoning the work of years, leaving all behind to flee to the east. With every family thus lost the territory was further weakened in manpower. To make matters worse, no arms were available in Illinois, and there were none to be bought. Despite American weakness, Edwards believed that the Prophet's power had to be contained, as he wrote:

I consider peace totally out of the question; we need not expect it till the Prophet's party is dispersed . . . if we do not make preparations to meet him an attack is certain; if we make preparations formidable enough to deter him, though no war actually take place we will have to encounter all the expense, inconvenience and injury to which a war with him would subject us; and there seems to be no reasonable ground to hope for a change for the better, whilst he is permitted to increase his strength with impunity.71

By the beginning of July then, American territorial officials in the Northwest were unanimous in the view that something had to be done. The Indians were undoubtedly preparing for war. They also were undeniably committing depredations on lives and property on the frontiers. The time had come for offensive action; appeasement to avoid hostilities was only making matters worse.

71 Edwards to Eustis, 6 July, 1811, American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, I, p. 800.
The weight of these letters appealing for military initiative on the part of the Americans finally persuaded Eustis to authorize, on July 17, the movement of some regular troops stationed at Pittsburgh to Louisville where they were to await instruction from Harrison. "... in case circumstances shall occur which may render it necessary or expedient to attack the Prophet and his followers." The only restrictions Eustis placed on Harrison's use of the troops was that he was to consult the Governor of the Illinois Territory, Edwards, before deploying them "so that his settlements too might be offered protection."72

Three days later, however, having had second thoughts, or perhaps further instructions from President Madison, Eustis wrote Harrison again countermanding portions of the earlier letter. On July 20, he pointedly told Harrison that it was still the wish of the President to keep peace with the Indians if at all possible. Murders and robberies were to be punished and settlements protected but "hostilities (of any kind or to any degree not indispensable required) should be avoided." To make the possibility of Harrison's initiating hostilities a bit more remote, Eustis ordered the troops to New Port, Kentucky, instead of to Louisville. Meanwhile,

Eustis told Harrison the President hoped that the Governor's "exertions and measures with the Indians will be such as to render their [the troops'] march to the Indiana Territory unnecessary."73

Meanwhile, on July 15, while Harrison was still waiting for Tecumseh and his men to appear, he wrote to his surveyor, Mansfield, expressing the hope that he had not abandoned his intention of completing the survey. He assured Mansfield that it was safe to come back and that the government would make short work of the Prophet. These new assurances of safety, however, were based on nothing more than his previous guarantees since Harrison had not yet received Eustis's letter promising troops.74

On July 28, almost two weeks later, the Earl of Liverpool, who succeeded Castlereagh as Secretary of War and Colonies, directed a letter to "The Officer Administering the Government of Lower Canada." Craig had resigned his post on account of poor health and had returned to England in June of 1811. His replacement, Sir George Prevost, had not yet taken over. The letter told the administrator that Craig's efforts to keep the Indians peaceful had received His Royal Highness's complete approbation. "I am to desire

73Eustis to Harrison, 20 July, 1811, Ibid., pp. 536-537.
that you will persevere in the attempt made by Him to re-
strain the Indians from the commission of any act of
Hostility on the American frontier."75 He could not, of
course, have realized how impossible such restraint was.

The day before Liverpool wrote that message, Tecum-
seh appeared in Vincennes. Harrison knew of his movements
for some days before he actually arrived. He also knew
that Tecumseh had with him over a hundred warriors, not
as great a threat as the six to eight hundred he expected,
but still a force to be reckoned with. The greater part of
them, Harrison thought were "rascals that will engage in
any mischief that their fears will permit them to undertake."76

The Governor apparently would have preferred to
fight rather than treat with the Indians.

If it was not for the solemn injunctions
of the President to preserve the peace
if possible he should not come here until
he had secured the right to do so by a
previous victory. But under the obliga-
tions imposed by your orders of November
last I shall bear with him as much as
possible until your final instructions
shall be received.77

To prevent a skirmish between the settlers and the
Indians from developing during Tecumseh's trip to Vincennes,

75 Liverpool to Officer Administering the Gov't. of
Lower Canada, 28 July, 1811, F05/92, p. 78.

76 Harrison to Eustis, 24 July, 1811, Esarey (ed.),
Messages, I, pp. 537-538.

77 Ibid.
Harrison kept Michael Brouillette riding through the settlements advising the inhabitants of the whereabouts of the Indians and telling them not to be alarmed.\textsuperscript{78}

On July 27, while Tecumseh was still about 20 miles from Vincennes, Harrison tried to stop him because of the number of Warriors he had with him. When demanded to explain why he had such a force, Tecumseh told the scouts to tell Harrison that he had brought only 24 men with him. All the rest had come of their own accord. However, Harrison had intelligence that indicated the contrary. He heard that the reason Tecumseh had taken eight days to cover the 75 miles between his town and Vincennes was that various bodies of warriors were late in rendezvousing with him at various places along the route. By the time they arrived in Vincennes, Harrison counted over 300 Indians, of which he estimated only 20 or 30 were women and children.\textsuperscript{79}

That number of warriors was at least, if not more than, a match for Harrison's soldiers. Yet the Governor had a maxim, not to show fear before an Indian. No matter how he felt about having that number of Indians inside the town before they arrived, he now felt compelled to appear confident of his strength.

\textsuperscript{78}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{79}Harrison to Eustis, 6 August, 1811, Ibid., pp. 542-546. In fact, the distance between Tippecanoe and Vincennes was at least double Harrison's estimate.
That his show of confidence was a front must have been apparent to Tecumseh, for he did everything in his power, it seemed, to lengthen the time spent as Harrison's "guest." Although, Harrison wanted the talks to begin immediately, Tecumseh refused to talk until late on the fourth day. Before coming to the talks Tecumseh sent to know if the Americans would be armed, and Harrison, perhaps to save time, perhaps to appear assured, gave him the choice. The result was that "20 or 30 dragoons, dismounted", protected the Governor, while Tecumseh and his men came with knives, clubs, tomahawks and bows. Thus the talks began.\(^{80}\)

Harrison led off the discussion by repeating what he had sent to Tecumseh earlier by messenger: that the people were alarmed and arming themselves for protection; he himself could negotiate no further on the matter of the Fort Wayne cession since the matter was in the hands of the President; if Tecumseh wanted more answer than that to his demands he would have to visit Washington himself. In addition to this, Harrison demanded from the Indians satisfaction in the matter of the stolen salt.

Tecumseh's reply dealt with the salt first. He professed confusion. The year before Harrison was angry because they had refused the salt, now he had the same reaction because they took it. Apparently it was impossible

\(^{80}\)Ibid.
to please the man. What the Indians had taken was only their fair share.

Tecumseh's comments on the other matters proposed by the Governor are not recorded. Harrison, in his account of the talks simply wrote that the chief made a "few other observations of no moment" and then requested that the talks be adjourned for the day. The Governor, of course, would have preferred to finish them at once but deferred to the Indians' request because of a "violent rain."

Continuing his game with the Governor, Tecumseh and the Indians did not arrive until two o'clock the following afternoon. Before Tecumseh spoke, a Wea chief gave what Harrison characterized as a "long unconnected speech in which he professed to give a history" of the Governor's dealings with the Indians. The talk included the accusation, familiar to Harrison by now, that he had forced some of the tribes at Fort Wayne to surrender land against their will. Instead of being trapped into a discussion of legalities which he could not possibly terminate with any satisfaction, Harrison chose an indirect answer by calling upon the friendly Miamis to agree with him that there was no substance to the hostile Wea's claim.

He then hurriedly changed the subject and addressed a proposition to Tecumseh. If he really wanted to show friendship for the Americans, he could simply surrender
the two Potawatomi with him whom Harrison thought had murdered four whites in Missouri the past fall. But Tecumseh proved no more cooperative with the Governor's agenda of topics than Harrison had been with his. Before mentioning the fugitives, he spoke at some length about the determination of the Indians with him to form a confederation. This confederation, he said, would take in tribes from the entire North and would be united under his direction. Such a confederation required much preparation and the whites, it seemed to him, were unnecessarily alarmed at those preparations. In fact, he meant nothing but peace.

... the U. States had set him the example of forming a strict union amongst the fires that compose their confederacy. That the Indians did not complain of it—nor should his white brothers complain of him doing the same thing with regard to the Indian tribes.

The confederation Indians had followed the example of the whites in regard to union, but Tecumseh also thought there was an area where the whites would do well to follow the example set by the Indians. He pointed out that white murderers of Indians were often not brought to trial. Even those who had murdered Indians from Tecumseh's own village had not been tried. The Indians had forgiven them. The whites, he recommended, should follow this Indian example.

Clearly nothing was about to be solved by this council. Both sides were talking; neither listening. Com-
promises and agreements were secondary in Harrison's mind to getting the talks over with and the Indians out of Vincennes before a clash occurred. The most significant result of the council came, as it turned out, from a small remark Tecumseh made in taking leave of Harrison. He mentioned that he was going south for a few months but might visit the President after he returned. His purpose in the journey was to convince the Southern tribes to join his confederation. He expressed the hope that, in his absence, the Americans would make no effort to settle the lands of the disputed 1809 cession. If they did, even though his warriors did not attack the settlers, they might kill some cattle and hogs and thus spark an unnecessary fight.

Harrison's reply was brief, as he was, in his own word, "anxious" to send the Indians off. His answer was that the Americans could not be expected to give up easily country that was rightly theirs. The President would sooner put his warriors in petticoats, the moon would sooner fall from the sky.81

Harrison's reply, however, is not nearly as significant as what he did not say. Tecumseh left Vincennes on August 5, a full ten days after he arrived. In the days that followed the talks at Vincennes, Harrison began to realize the true significance of Tecumseh's planned absence.

81 Ibid.
from the camp on the Tippecanoe. This absence would allow Harrison a chance to move against the Prophet in hopes that he could be goaded into some act that could clearly brand him as hostile.

On August 7, Harrison received Eustis's letters of July 17 and 20, which authorized him to call up the militia if necessary and spoke of the movement of the regulars to Kentucky. It took him no time at all, once in possession of this authorization, to draft a plan for the destruction of the confederation. Later that same day he wrote Eustis:

My letter of yesterday will inform you of the arrival and departure of Tecumseh from this place and of the route which he has taken.

There can be no doubt but his object is to excite the Southern Indians to war against us . . . I do not think there is any danger of any further hostility until he returns. And his absence affords a most favorable opportunity for breaking up his Confederacy. I have some expectation of being able to accomplish it without recourse to actual hostility . . . The implicit obedience and respect which the followers of Tecumseh pay to him is really astonishing and more than any other circumstance bespeaks him one of those uncommon geniuses, which spring up occasionally to produce revolutions and overturn the established order of things. If it were not for the vicinity of the United States, he would perhaps be the founder of an Empire that would rival in glory that of Mexico or Peru. No difficulties deter him. His activity and industry supply the want of letters. for Four years he has been in constant motion. You see him today on the Wabash and in a short time you hear of him on the shores of Lake Erie or Michigan, or on the banks of the Mississippi and wherever he goes he makes an impression favorable to his purposes.
He is now upon the last round to put a finishing stroke to his work. I hope, however, before his return that that part of the fabric, which he considered complete will be demolished and even its foundations rooted up. Altho the greater part of his followers are attached to him from principle and affection, there are many others who follow him through fear and he was scarcely a mile from the Town (Vincennes) before they indulged in the most virulent invectives against him. The Prophet is imprudent and audacious but is deficient in judgment talents and firmness. 82

Harrison, it seemed, had developed some real respect for Tecumseh. He clearly saw him as superior to the Prophet in every way. Even his decision to move against the Indians at Tippecanoe while Tecumseh was absent was a compliment of sorts to the abilities of the chief.

The Governor planned to require all the tribes to hand over all fugitives from American justice and also to compel the Indians to fulfill the articles in the Treaty of Greenville which obliged them to give the Americans information about and to stop the passage of hostile Indians through their lands. He also wanted tribes that had members with the Prophet to put those members "out of their protection."

But Harrison was not naive enough to think that these measures alone would achieve his purpose of destroying the confederation. He also asked that troops be brought in.

82 Harrison to Eustis, 7 August, 1811, Ibid., pp. 546-551.
What he wanted was no small force:

... I shall about the middle of September
move up to the upper line of the New
Purchase with the two companies of regulars,
fourteen or fifteen companies of militia
and two troops of dragoons the latter com-
prising about one hundred men.\textsuperscript{83}

Whereas in the first lines of his letter Harrison
had written that he thought he could destroy the confedera-
tion "without recourse to actual hostility", toward the end
of that same message he found himself detailing strategy
and planning to raise extra companies even from the state
of Kentucky should he think it necessary. Within four
months Harrison had fought the Battle of Tippecanoe and,
as he predicted, had at least partially destroyed the con-
federation.

\textsuperscript{83}Ibid.
CHAPTER EIGHT

TECUMSEH'S SOUTHERN JOURNEY AND THE
BATTLE OF TIPPECANOE

Tecumseh left Vincennes on August 5, 1811, after announcing to Governor Harrison his intention to visit the Southern Indian nations of the Chickasaws, Choctaws and Creeks, as well as the Osages who lived west of the Mississippi. Before he left, he entreated Harrison not to move settlers into the disputed Fort Wayne cession. Such movement, he warned, might touch off unnecessary fighting.

However, a fight appeared to be exactly what Harrison wanted. Not wishing to endanger the lives of innocent settlers to create one, he planned to use soldiers in any action which might occur. Less than a week before Tecumseh left Vincennes, Harrison wrote the Secretary of War, William Eustis, about how hostile Indians should be treated.

... if ... any tribe should dare to take up the tomahawk against their father, they must not expect the same leniency [sic] would be shown them as they experienced at the close of the former war; but that they would be absolutely exterminated or driven beyond the Mississippi.¹

¹Harrison to Eustis, 1 August, 1811, Dawson, Harrison, p. 192.
Tecumseh's absence provided Harrison with exactly the opportunity he needed to goad the Prophet into some rash action which would brand him hostile and justify the punishment the Governor mentioned in his letter to Bustis. Harrison thought the movement of troops into the vicinity of the Prophet's camp should provide all the provocation necessary.

Harrison's correspondence furnishes us with a record of what he hoped to accomplish by such provocation and how he went about preparing for it. Unfortunately, we have no similar body of correspondence to document the Indian side of the story. The records we have of the growth and development of the Northwest Indian confederation were almost all taken down by whites. When the whites could not see the Indians, their actions become almost impossible to trace. With increased alienation between the races, we have little information on how the confederation Indians conducted themselves between the 1811 council at Vincennes and the Battle of Tippecanoe. Thus the small bits of information we have were gathered by whites, either Americans or British, and, as a result, subject to some distortion.

A case in point is Tecumseh's journey to the Southern Indian tribes. Primary sources, British and American, indicate that Tecumseh did indeed make this
journey, but specific detail as to exactly what happened is simply lacking.²

²Primary sources on Tecumseh's journey to the South in 1811 are few. Those that exist confirm the fact that the trip occurred but do not provide detailed accounts of it. For example, Harrison wrote Eustis at least four letters in which the journey was mentioned (August 6, 7, 13 and December 4, 1811). However, none of these give any indication what happened during the journey. They only say that Tecumseh was visiting the Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw and Osage Indians, and that he was accompanied by some Kickapoos.

There is good evidence in primary sources as well as secondary sources that Tecumseh visited the first three of these tribes. There is some question about the visit to the Osage. John Dunn Hunter wrote an eyewitness account of Tecumseh's visit to the Osage in his Memoirs of a Captivity among the Indians of North America (London, 1823). The story he gives corresponds with other talks Tecumseh gave to Indians in content and tone. However, shortly after the publication of the book, Hunter was denounced as a fraud by Lewis Cass, famous Indian fighter and later Governor of Michigan. While I have seen no proof that Hunter's work is fraudulent, I have chosen not to include his account of Tecumseh's visit in this paper. However, one facet of his account is intriguing. Hunter mentions that Tecumseh was accompanied by a prophet named Francis. There was at that time, in the Creek nation, a prophet named Francis who was a strong supporter of the confederation. It is possible that this Francis accompanied Tecumseh to the Osages. (see H. S. Halbert and T. H. Ball, The Creek War of 1813 and 1814, (Chicago and Montgomery, Ala., 1895), pp. 91-93.)

Other indications in American primary sources that Tecumseh visited the Southern tribes are reports from Indian agents in the South to the effect that Northern Indians had been tampering with the Southern Indians. The time of these reports corresponds with the time of Tecumseh's visit. Two such reports, dated September 9 and 10, 1811, were forwarded to the Secretary of War by Governor Willie Blount of Tennessee. Portions of them read:

There is in this place a very noted chief of the Chickasaws, a man of truth, who wishes the President should be informed that there is a combination of Northern Indians, promoted by the English, to unite in falling on the frontier settlements, and are inviting the Southern tribes to join them. (American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, I, p. 801.)

and
Secondary sources dealing with this journey abound, yet because of their distance from the event, they cannot be accepted as fact. Still, the frequency and pattern with which particular incidents appear in a number of these sources

2. . . . from the manner in which they (the Northern Indians visiting the Southern tribes) proceed their intention is to stimulate the Creeks and Cherokees to hostilities against the United States. (Ibid.)

In another letter, dated November 29, 1811, an Indian agent named J. Nielly (sometimes Neely) told the Secretary of War:

The Shawanese Indians, and some of the Kickapoos, solicited the king of this nation [Chickasaw] to join the Prophet's party. I am told that there are some Creeks gone to join the Prophet's party; how many, I have not heard. (Ibid.), p. 802.

Tecumseh's return from the South was revealed to Harrison in a message from Little Turtle, the famous Miami chief, written January 25, 1812. Tecumseh, according to the Turtle, had only a few men with him and thus was not dangerous, or so they thought, at that time. (Little Turtle to Harrison, 25 January, 1812, Esarey (ed.), Messages, II, p. 18.)

References to Tecumseh's journey in British primary sources are even more scarce than those in American sources. In a letter dated January 12, 1812 Matthew Elliott told Isaac Brock Tecumseh had gone south in the winter of 1810-1811. This date must have been the result of a "slip of the pen", as Elliott next wrote that Tecumseh was supposed, at that time, to be on his return. Elliott's information about Tecumseh's return was likely accurate as it agrees with Little Turtle's message to Harrison mentioned above. (Elliott to Brock, 12 January, 1812, William Wood (ed.), Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812, (3 Vols., Toronto, The Champlain Society, 1920), I, pp. 280-283.)

Also in British primary sources is a speech of Tecumseh to Elliott and the Hurons of June 16, 1812. In it Tecumseh said that he had "left home last year to go to the Creek Nations . . . " (Speech of Tecumseh to Elliott and the Hurons, 16 June, 1812, MP&HC, XV, pp. 89-91.)
indicate that these incidents likely took place, even if they are no longer verifiable.3

3Secondary sources on Tecumseh's travels are both more numerous and more detailed than primary sources. The largest collection of them is held by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in its Draper MSS., Tecumseh Papers, 4YY. Most of the accounts in this volume were gathered by Benjamin Drake, author of the first book-length biography of Tecumseh, and by Lyman Draper of the Society. They came, in most cases, from Indians who had not been present at the time of Tecumseh's visit but who remembered descriptions of the visit from older tribesmen. This means that most of these stories exist in a sort of limbo somewhere between fact and legend. Still, the general tone of Tecumseh's talks, and the specific options that he was supposed to have held out to the Southern tribes "ring true." Undoubtedly a certain amount of apochrypha has crept into the stories. One such bit is an account, often repeated in this volume, of Tecumseh causing an earthquake in the South by stamping his foot when he had returned to the North. Another is the story of Tecumseh passing out red sticks among the Southern tribes. The idea was that the Indians were to discard one stick a day. When they were all gone it was time to attack the Americans.

Typical of the less sensational accounts of Tecumseh's visit is this one from J. G. Vore, an educated Creek:

Tecumseh did not, as I understand them (the old chiefs now dead) make any open effort, there were no public gatherings or public speeches, though he mixed with the people at their gatherings and felt his way as he went, infusing his ideas quietly—he seems to have spent some time among them—his efforts to persuade them to join the British against the Americans seem to have been quietly rejected by the principle men not listening to him—at that time the people were very much under the control of their chiefs, particularly their town chiefs as there were very few towns won over. (Draper MSS, 4YY21.)

All biographies of Tecumseh have included some discussion of this Southern journey. However, none of these accounts are supported by reference to primary sources. Most authors have simply uncritically accepted any available information on the journey and incorporated it into their texts. For a more detailed discussion of the treatment these biographies give this journey see Goltz, "Tecumseh," pp. 97-100.
Most accounts agree, for example, that Tecumseh spoke to the tribes he visited about uniting with him in a grand confederation of Indians. He spoke about the need for common resistance to American pressure for Indian land and the concept of common Indian ownership of that land. Many secondary sources also agree that Tecumseh spoke of the possibility of war, of British support for the Indian cause in case of war and of British willingness to supply the needs of their women and children if the Indians chose to fight.\(^4\)

Most secondary accounts also agree that Tecumseh got little positive response from the leaders of the Southern tribes. They listened to his arguments, sympathized with the predicament of the Indians in the Old Northwest and then, in most cases, decided against sending their young men to Tippecanoe with him. In short, the reaction of the chiefs of the Southern tribes, according to these secondary sources, was remarkably similar to that of Northern village chiefs. They seemed to recognize the

\(^3\)Other works dealing with the history of the Southern tribes also mention Tecumseh's visit. Most important among them are: Halbert and Ball, The Creek War; Thomas Woodward, Woodward's Reminiscences of the Creek or Muskogee Indians, (Montgomery, Ala., 1859); J. H. F. Claiborne, Life and Times of General Sam Dale The Mississippi Partisan, (New York, 1860); Judge John Law, The Colonial History of Vincennes, (Vincennes, Indiana, 1858).

confederation as a threat to their control, and they reacted to it negatively.\textsuperscript{5}

Still, Tecumseh's trip south was not entirely fruitless. There was ample frustration among the Southern Indians. Hearing Tecumseh's accounts of what the confederation Indians were planning to resist American pressures could only have encouraged the Southern Indians to resist as well. Southern tribes, like those in the North, had been experiencing strong demands from the Americans for their land. But unlike their Northern counterparts, some of the Southern tribes, like the Cherokees and Creeks, had followed the advice of Jefferson and adopted an agricultural way of life complete with cattle ranches, plantations and even Negro slaves. To their dismay, however, they found that this adaptation to "civilization" provided them with no immunity to American attempts to remove them from the lands of their ancestors. On the contrary, their improvements on the lands made them all the more attractive to the whites.\textsuperscript{6}

\textsuperscript{5}See those works listed in note 3 above as dealing with the history of Southern tribes.

\textsuperscript{6}American attempts to "civilize" the Southern Indians are dealt with in a number of scholarly studies. Best among them are Thomas P. Abernethy, \textit{From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee: A Study in Frontier Democracy}, (Chapel Hill, 1932); R. S. Cotterill, \textit{The Southern Indians: The Story of the Civilized Tribes before Removal}, (Norman, Okla., 1954); Reginald Horsman, \textit{Expansion and American Indian Policy, 1783-1812}, (Lansing, 1967); Roy Harvey Pearce, \textit{The Savages of America, A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization}, (Baltimore, 1953).
The Southern frontier seemed more quiet than the Old Northwest in the years just prior to the War of 1812. Yet this quiet was deceptive for some of the most bitter Indian fighting of the war occurred in the South. Southern Indian military activity in the War of 1812 was a clear indication that some of the Indians of the South were no happier under the American government than their counterparts in the North. Perhaps one of the reasons why the Southern Indians appeared cooperative to the Americans, in the five years before the war, was that they experienced little if any British agitation.

After the Chesapeake affair in 1807, the British resurrected the old notion of an Indian buffer between the Canadian colonies and the United States. Being vital to the security of the Canadas, the Indians of the Old Northwest were courted by the British Indian Department with both promises and presents, while they paid the Indians of the South practically no attention.

That the British were capable of getting in touch with the Southern Indians at will was demonstrated in 1808 by a visit to the Cherokee undertaken for the British by an old Shawnee chief, Blackbeard. He returned with the news that the tribes in the South were divided in their loyalties to the Americans and the British. The same capability was demonstrated once again in 1809 and 1810 by the journey of
the Mohawk Leader, John Norton among the Southern Indians.\footnote{7}{Gore to Craig, 27 July, 1808, RG10 F11; Elliott to Claus, 28 June, 1809, RG10 F11; Klinck and Talman (eds.), \textit{Norton's Journal}.}

For reasons of their own security, the British chose to exploit the anger of the Northern tribes only. This anger, once the British gave it an outlet, intentionally or otherwise, proved impossible to control. Thus, two years before the Americans and the British declared war, an undeclared war between the Americans and some of the Indians of the Old Northwest was already ravaging the frontiers. The Southern Indians, meanwhile, without agitation from British Indian agents, and without a ready outlet for their frustrations, appeared to be more docile. Tecumseh's talk of war to them in the fall and winter of 1811, may well have played some part in stirring their latent resentment into active resistance.

The only quantitative assessment of Tecumseh's success with the Southern tribes in primary accounts is a notice that about 200 Creek warriors were on their way to the Prophet's camp in the early winter of 1812.\footnote{8}{J. Nielly to Eustis, 29 November, 1811, \textit{American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs}, I, p. 802; Acting Governor Attwater to Eustis, 21 January, 1812, Carter (ed.), \textit{Territorial Papers, Vol. X, Michigan Territory, 1805-1820}, pp. 376-378.} There are no accounts of huge numbers of Southern warriors joining
the confederation. As far as the confederation was concerned then, Tecumseh's journey, was only a limited success. He did not attract a sufficient number of warriors to materially strengthen the confederation, yet, according to stories told by Southern Indians a generation and more later, he did play some part in encouraging resistance to the Americans among the Southern tribes. Had the British been able to decisively defeat the United States in the War of 1812, and had the Indians gained complete control of their land as a result, these limited successes would have been of tremendous significance. But the return to the pre-war status quo after the war reduced them to merely chances lost.

Furthermore, the small successes Tecumseh achieved on his journey were offset by the Battle of Tippecanoe.

Well before Tecumseh visited Vincennes in the summer of 1811, William Henry Harrison, as has been shown in the previous chapter, had been applying to the War Department for authorization to employ regular troops against the Indians. He did not receive much cooperation from the Secretary of War, however, since it was the policy of the American government to keep peace on the frontiers if at all possible. But the growing strength of the confederation so frightened the territorial officials of the Old Northwest

9Draper MSS, 4YY, passim.
that their combined pleas for some greater latitude in dealing with these threatening Indians finally convinced the Secretary to bend the rules a trifle.\textsuperscript{10} A few days after Tecumseh left Vincennes to begin his Southern journey, Harrison received Eustis's letters of July 17 and 20 which allowed him to use regular troops to disperse the confederation Indians.

What Eustis wanted was a "surgical operation" removing the source of the trouble yet leaving the frontier in peace. Harrison wasted no time in taking advantage of this long-sought authorization.\textsuperscript{11}

By August 9, only four days after Tecumseh had asked him not to violate the contested lands of the Fort Wayne purchase, Harrison wrote to Captain Daniel Bissell regarding the employment of the regular troops then stationed in Kentucky. He suggested that since Washington was distant and authorization from Bissell was all that was necessary to allow him the use of the troops, that Bissell address Harrison

\begin{quote}
'an order to the commanding officer to receive such instructions as I may give him--assuring yourself that none other will be given than such as are strictly
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{10}This correspondence is documented in chapter 7.

\textsuperscript{11}Eustis to Harrison, 20 July, 1811, War Department, Secretary's Office, Letters Sent, Indian Affairs, C:90, pp. 112-113. Harrison's reply dated August 7, 1811, is located in Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 548-551.
compatible with the relative situation we occupy until the militia are ordered into service . . . I meditate an expedition about the 20th of Sept. with the two companies of the regular troops, two of Dragoons & about 14 companies of Militia . . . 12

Harrison wrote other letters to citizens within and without the territory who had had what he considered some practical military experience and who, he thought, might be willing to join the expedition. He also realized that he needed the support of the other territorial governors. His letters to them set them to alerting their own militia in case the exercise became a war. 13

He was confident, he wrote Eustis, that

the most perfectly good understanding exists between us [Governors Ninian Edwards of the Illinois Territory and Benjamin Howard of the Missouri Territory] and the President may rest assured that our united councils and exertions will be directed to preserve peace with the Indians. I believe however, that we all agree in opinion as to the necessity of breaking up the Prophet's establishment upon the Wabash, but at any rate to stop the further accumulation of force at that point. 14

12 Harrison to Daniel Bissell, 9 August, 1811, Ibid., pp. 551-552.

13 Harrison to Eustis, 7 August, 1811, Ibid., pp. 548-551; Harrison to Eustis, 13 August, 1811, Ibid., pp. 554-555; J. H. Daviess to Harrison, 24 August, 1811, Ibid., pp. 558-559; Notice from J. H. Daviess to Volunteers, 29 August, 1811, Ibid., pp. 561-562; Ninian Edwards to Eustis, 11 August, 1811, American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, I, p. 801.

14 Harrison to Eustis, 13 August, 1811, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 554-555. Howard resigned as Governor of the Missouri Territory in 1813 to become a brigadier general in the army.
Ninian Edwards further assured Eustis of the understanding between the governors in a letter written August 11. In it he mirrored the sentiments Harrison had expressed.

Whether the Prophet intends to make war, or not, partial war must continue to be the consequence; the hostility which he excites against the United States is the cement of union among his confederates; and such is the nature of Indians, that they cannot be collected, and kept together, under such circumstances, without having their minds prepared for war; and, in that situation, it is almost impossible to restrain them from premature acts of hostility. Were this the only danger, it would be sufficient to justify the dispersion of the Prophet's party. 15

Both Harrison and Edwards were writing about breaking up the Prophet's following. Yet Harrison was also writing of preserving the peace with the Indians. What may appear contradictory to the reader was perfectly consistent to Harrison, however. Prerequisite to peace, in his mind, was the destruction of the confederation. However, the Secretary of War was clear in his instructions to Harrison that force could be used against the confederation if the Prophet commenced or should "seriously threaten" hostilities but even then only if there was absolutely no chance of an American failure. To lose a battle with the Indians at this juncture could be to risk a general Indian uprising. With all the

15 Ninian Edwards to Eustis, 11 August, 1811, American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, I, p. 801.
Secretary's reservations about engaging in any action with the Indians at Tippecanoe, Harrison had to handle him very carefully.\(^{16}\)

He explained, in several letters to him, that he was not definitely committed to offensive military action. Such action would clearly threaten the peace which Washington insisted be maintained on the frontier. In fact, Harrison was playing a dual game. On the one hand he wrote to potential participants in the expedition that he intended to fight the Indians. On the other, he wrote the Secretary that a fight might not be necessary. This two-sided approach lends weight to the argument that Harrison feared the War Department might withdraw his authorization to call up the militia and use regular troops if it discovered the actual nature of his plans.

In one letter he suggested to the Secretary of War that the use of the troops might be avoided if the Indians could be forced to comply with the provision in the 1795 Treaty of Greenville which required them to forbid hostile Indians passage through their lands. Harrison argued that since the Prophet's followers were hostile, he could insist that the neighboring tribes prevent them from reaching the Prophet at Tippecanoe. If no supporters were able to reach

the Prophet, he would cease to be a threat to the United States, and thus military action would be unnecessary.\textsuperscript{17}

But no one knew better than Harrison himself that the chiefs of the tribes on whose land the Prophet was located had no particular love for the confederation or the Shawnee brothers. Those chiefs had attempted, time and again, since as early as 1808, to dislodge the confederation. They had insisted at numerous conferences with the Americans that they disliked and distrusted the Prophet. The notion that now, in the face of growing unrest among the tribes of the Northwest, they could somehow prevent outside Indians from reaching Tippecanoe was one that even Harrison could not have taken seriously.

In a later letter to Eustis, Harrison suggested that if the Indians failed to keep supporters from reaching Tippecanoe, he might still be able to disperse the confederation Indians by using the troops, but even then only for a "demonstration of force."\textsuperscript{18} There is something in Harrison's letters to Eustis that is akin to a boy asking for candy he promises only to hold.

\textsuperscript{17}Harrison to Eustis, 13 August, 1811, Esarey (ed.), \textit{Messages}, I, pp. 554-555.

\textsuperscript{18}Harrison to Eustis, 3 September, 1811, \textit{Tbid.}, pp. 653-664.
... Let me assure you Sir, that I feel most forcibly the responsibility imposed upon me, by the president's directions 'to preserve peace if possible'. And that recourse to actual hostility shall be had only when every other means shall have been tried in vain to effect the disbanding the Prophet's force. Unless this is done, no arrangement that we can make, can ensure our tranquility for two months.¹⁹

What Harrison told the Secretary he later repeated in a message to the tribes with the Prophet. The confederation Indians must abandon the Prophet, his town and everything they had been working for since 1806. In return the Governor would then agree not to exterminate them. Harrison must have known that terms like these would more likely cause a fight than prevent one.²⁰

Meanwhile the Governor went through the motions of calling upon the various tribes to require them to recall any of their young men who were with the Prophet and to deny passage through their land to the warriors of any tribe who were going to join the Prophet. On September 4, 1811, Indian agents William Wells and John Shaw delivered a speech from Harrison in the name of the President to the various branches of the Miami tribe, including the Eel River and Wea tribes. It read, in part,

¹⁹Harrison to Eustis, 13 August, 1811, Ibid., pp. 554-555.
²⁰Harrison to Eustis, 3 September, 1811, Ibid., pp. 563-564.
My Children. I now speak plainly to you. What is that great collection of people at the mouth of the Tippecanoe intended for? I am not blind my children, I can easily see what their object is, those people have boasted they will find me asleep, but they will be deceived.

My Children. Be wise and listen to my voice, I fear that you have got on a road that will lead you to destruction. It is not too late to turn back. Have pity on your women and children. It is time that my friends should be known. I shall draw a line. Those that keep me by the hand must keep on one side of it and those that adhere to the Prophet on the other.

My Children. Take your choice. My warriors are in motion but they shall do you no hurt unless you force me to it... Do not be afraid to speak your minds. Tell those people that have settled on the Wabash without your leave that the land is yours and you do not wish them there. Do not be afraid to say this. You shall be supported by my warriors. My warriors are getting ready and if it is necessary you shall see an army of them at your backs more numerous than the leaves of the trees.21

Harrison found the replies of the Indians to this talk disturbing. Most diffident was that of Laprusieur, a chief of the Wea tribe. He insisted that while he was a friend of the Prophet, he was also a friend of the Americans. The Governor was not correct when he supposed the Weas "had joined hands with the Prophet to injure you [the Americans]." In reply to Harrison's talk of troops, Laprusieur

21Harrison to Miami, Eel River and Wea Tribes, 4 September, 1811, Ibid., pp. 576-577.
warned, "If our lands are invaded, we will defend them to
the utmost and die with the land." Five other chiefs signed
in favor of what Laprusieur had said. 22

Other chiefs of the Miami and Eel River tribes spoke
in a more conciliatory tone. Some of them insisted that
their proper position was not an alignment with either side
but neutrality. 23 Little Turtle said,

We pray you not to bloody our ground if
you can avoid it in the first instance
let the Prophet be requested in mild
terms to comply with your wishes and if
possible avoid spilling of blood. The
land on the Wabash is ours we have not
put the Prophet there, but on the con-
trary we have endeavored to stop his
going there—he must be considered as
setting there without our leave. 24

Harrison's conclusion, after reviewing all the
Indian responses to his talk, was that the entire Miami
tribe, including the various branches, was about equally
divided for and against the Americans. 25 In order to give
those Indians who might contemplate war against the United
States some food for thought, Harrison instructed John

22Laprusieur, the Wea Chief's Speech to Harrison,
4 September, 1811, Ibid., pp. 577-580.

23Notes on the Speeches of Silverheels, Oscenut and
Charley to Harrison, 4 September, 1811, Ibid., pp. 580-581.

24Little Turtle's Speech to Harrison, 4 September,
1811, Ibid., pp. 581-582.

25Harrison to Eustis, 17 September, 1811, Ibid.,
p. 571-575.
Johnston, his agent at Fort Wayne, to tell the Indians in that vicinity that

... the war that may be waged against us by any of the Tribes shall be the last they shall ever make as it is the positive determination of our Government after having so long and so sincerely laboured for their advantage to open their eyes to their inferior condition and to provide the means of their improvement and civilization that they will not again suffer themselves to be imposed upon by the professions of those who have so often deceived but that the War once begun it will be pursued to the utter extermination of those who shall commence it or until they are delivered to such a distance as to preclude all probability of their again annoying us.26

Harrison also ordered Johnston to communicate to the tribes around Fort Wayne the absolute necessity of complying with the article of the Greenville treaty requiring the Indians to inform the Americans of any hostile designs against the United States. Furthermore, the Governor told Johnston to warn the Indians to stay away from the Prophet so that any vengeance the United States took on the Shawnee and his followers would not "fall upon their heads."27

On September 24, Harrison met with some of the chiefs and warriors of the Kickapoo nation who resided at the Prophet's town. Their mission was nominally headed by

26Harrison to John Johnston, no date, Ibid., pp. 583-584.
27Ibid.
an old hereditary chief, but the Governor was sure that since the man had signed the treaty in 1809, he was not allowed to act as anything but a figurehead. The "efficient character" of the party was a war chief whom Harrison thought "entirely devoted to the Prophet."

These Kickapoos expressed their surprise at the warlike preparations going on in Vincennes. They tried to assure Harrison that "the hearts of all the Prophet's party were warm toward the United States that their establishment had no other object than peace." What, they wanted to know, were Harrison's intentions toward them? He replied that while he was reluctant to "draw the sword" against them, their repeated injuries to the whites could no longer be tolerated.

I then informed him [the Kickapoo] peremptorily that the army would march today and that the distance they would go up the Wabash would depend entirely on the Indians themselves . . .

Harrison was indeed ready to begin his move. The following day Lieutenant Colonel James Miller issued marching orders to the troops instructing them on the care of weapons and ammunition and designating sleeping arrange-

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28Harrison to Eustis, 25 September, 1811, Ibid., pp. 589-592.

29Ibid.
ments for everyone, including the musicians.30

Before two weeks were out Harrison and his men were on the Wabash, about 65 miles north of Vincennes. From this location the Governor wrote Eustis that the men were withstanding the rigors of the march well; only a few were ill. Some hours after completing this letter, however, Harrison heard of the first death, something short of glorious, among his soldiers. In his next letter to Eustis, the Governor reported that while the unfortunate man had been ill, that morning he was so well as to be able to walk about the camp, but "killed himself by eating heartily of fried liver."31

By October 10, however, the troops had more than disease and fried liver to worry about. That day one of the sentries was wounded by hostile Indians.

Presuming this was an act of Indians allied with the Prophet, Harrison wrote the Secretary of War

30Lieutenant Colonel James Miller, Detachment Order, 25 September, 1811, Ibid., pp. 588-589.

31Harrison to Eustis, 13 October, 1811, Ibid., pp. 599-603. Harrison wrote this letter from near present-day Terre Haute where he was delayed for more than two weeks waiting for supplies, reinforcements and constructing a fort. Even here Harrison had lost none of his drive to see the Indiana Territory surveyed and sold to settlers. He wrote on October 13 to Jared Mansfield, his surveyor, that it was safe to survey ". . . I believe the whole affair with the Indians will be settled before your surveyors can reach this country, and of course the progress of the business will meet with no interruption." Carter (ed.), Territorial Papers, Vol. XIII, Indiana Territory, 1810-1816, p. 137.
I had always supposed that the Prophet was a rash and presumptuous man but he has exceeded by [sic] expectations. He has not contented himself with throwing the gauntlet but has absolutely commenced the war.\(^{32}\)

Furthermore, some friendly Delaware Indians whom Harrison had asked to join him on his march as interpreters and messengers were intercepted before they reached the American army by some of the Prophet's warriors. The Delawares told Harrison that the confederation Indians demanded to know if they planned to join the Prophet's war on the Americans. The confederation Indians told the Delawares that they had "taken up the tomahawk and that they would lay it down only with their lives." Those tribes that refused to join the Prophet they promised would have "cause to repent."\(^{33}\)

These late developments allowed Harrison to safely reveal a bit more of his plan to risk war with the Prophet. He wrote Eustis that whereas he had originally planned only a feint in the direction of the Prophet's town, the situation now required "measures of a more energetic kind."

From this statement of Facts, Sir, you will no doubt be of the opinion with me that the return of the troops under my command without effecting the dispersion or humiliation of the Prophet's Party would be attended

\(^{32}\)Harrison to Eustis, 13 October, 1811, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 599-603.

\(^{33}\)Ibid.
with the most fatal consequences. If he is thus presumptuous upon our advance our return without chastising him or greatly alarming his fears and those of his followers would give him an eclat that would increase his followers and we would have to wage through the Winter a defensive war which would greatly distress our Frontiers. With this conviction thoroughly impressed upon my mind it is with the greatest mortification I have to observe that my advance to the Prophets Town depends upon circumstances which are entirely without my control.\[34\]

Of course, the closer the troops got to Tippecanoe the greater was the chance of being attacked by the confederate Indians. Any such attack would justify the extermination or removal about which Harrison had previously written and on which he had already set his mind.

But now that the Governor had the necessary pretext for his move against the Indians at Tippecanoe, he discovered that he had a morale problem among his men.

\[\ldots\] like all men who are about to engage a strange and untried Enemy many of the privates have imbibed such ideas of Indian address and Ferocity that it was found a matter of some difficulty to keep the sentinels at their posts \[\ldots\]

Detective work on Harrison's part, however, soon turned up the source of the fear. Some of the English-speaking Delawares in the camp had been telling the troops that their force was too small to attack the Prophet with

34 Ibid.
any hope of success.35

The troops, however, were not the only ones who thought that the force might be somewhat understrength. While Harrison wrote the Secretary that he thought his expedition was strong enough, his uneasiness showed through his assurances.

I do believe most sincerely that the Troops I have now with me are equal to the task of beating all the force the prophet can muster altho admitting him to have 600. The relative proportion is less favourable to us than it has ever been in any general action with the Indians. but I am not so ambitious of military fame as to subject the troops under my command to any unnecessary hazard to obtain it. A few companies more would make success entirely unequivocal.36

While awaiting these requested reinforcements, the expedition halted in the vicinity of present-day Terre Haute, then known as Battle des Illinois, for a little more than two weeks. Here they constructed a small fort which Harrison modestly named after himself. Here they drilled and practiced their maneuvers to the point that Harrison pronounced them "so perfect as Genl. Wayne's army was on the day of his victory over the Indians."37 Here too, Colonel

35Ibid.
36Ibid.
37Harrison to Eustis, 29 October, 1811, Ibid., pp. 604-605. Harrison considered naming the fort after someone else but decided that since it was only a temporary structure the compliment implied in the name was small.
J. P. Boyd of the 4th Regiment, Infantry, issued orders to his men which must be considered the epitome of positive anticipation. He instructed his troops,

In the event of meeting the enemy the Brigade will be ordered to make a vigorous and successful charge, the enemy will retreat in confusion, the horse will pursue and complete the victory.

The only problem was getting the same "script" to the Indians in time for the fight.38

On October 28, the Delawares the Governor had sent to the Prophet returned to Fort Harrison. They reported that their attempts to induce the Prophet to "lay aside his hostile designs" had failed. The Prophet, they said, had received them badly, treated them poorly, insulted them and finally dismissed them with "the most contemptuous remarks upon them [the Delawares] and us [the Americans]." Harrison wrote Eustis that while the Delawares were in the Prophet's camp, the Indians who had fired on his men on October 10, returned to Tippecanoe. They were Shawnees and "the Prophet's nearest Friends."

Nothing remains now but to chastise him and he certainly shall get it. One of the companies which I have ordered will join me today and another tomorrow. I cannot account for the conduct of the Prophet upon any rational principle. Many of the Potawatimies have left him; from the best

accounts I can get he has not more than 450 men. But these are desperadoes wound up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm by his infernal arts. The Delawares left him practicing his magic rites and performing their war dances day and night. 39

With the arrival of his reinforcements, Harrison was now prepared to advance upon the confederation Indians at Tippecanoe. On November 2, he wrote his last letter to Eustis before the battle. By that time he was within 45 or 50 miles of the Prophet's town. Also by that time one of his men had been fatally wounded by Indians. Harrison tried to trace the killers, "but in the attempt... the best woodsmen I have were baffled." 40 Casualties such as this could destroy the morale of the troops, thus the Governor was encouraged that only a few spots between his present location and the Prophet's camp offered the Indians the necessary cover to inflict further casualties. One of these dangerous spots was so located that Harrison thought he would pass it on November 4, the anniversary of St. Clair's

39 Harrison to Eustis, 29 October, 1811, Ibid., pp. 604-605.

40 Harrison to Eustis, 2 November, 1811, Ibid., pp. 606-607. Harrison's reports to the Secretary of War indicate that the total distance his army marched between Vincennes and Tippecanoe was something in excess of 110 miles. Yet earlier, when Harrison was waiting for Tecumseh to arrive for the 1811 Council at Vincennes he reported that the distance between Tippecanoe and his capital was 75 miles. Actually Harrison was off on both estimations. As the crow flies the distance is almost 140 miles, following the rivers it is closer to 180 miles.
defeat. "Should we be attacked on that day I hope to alter the color with which it has been marked on our calendar [sic] for the last 20 years."

No attack materialized, however.

Only a day before Harrison wrote that letter to Eustis, the British Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Washington, Augustus Foster, wrote to the American Secretary of State, James Monroe, about a final resolution of differences between the two countries over the **Chesapeake** affair, the incident which had touched off the British scramble for Indian allies in the Northwest back in 1807. Now these Indian pawns were refusing to act in their proper role in the international chess game which had developed. They were no longer pieces; they were players.

For the British, both the **Chesapeake** affair and the Battle of Tippecanoe were unfortunate and unwanted results of their decided policies. Furthermore, by enflaming the anger of the Americans, both of these incidents moved the British closer to a war they hoped to avoid. Tragically, by the time a solution was found for the **Chesapeake** affair differences, it was too late to prevent the Battle of Tippecanoe.

\[41^\text{Ibid.}\]

\[42^\text{Augustus Foster to James Monroe, 1 November, 1811, F05/77, pp. 64-65.}\]
That battle took place on November 7, 1811. The Americans, the British and the Indians all produced conflicting accounts of exactly what took place the day before the battle as well as the morning of it.

The first reports of the fight available to the American government were from Harrison himself. He wrote a brief account of the battle the day after, November 8, and then a more lengthy and detailed account on November 18, after returning to Vincennes. This later version he sent to the Secretary of War who forwarded it to the President, who in turn, presented it to the Congress.43

According to this report, the American force reached the immediate vicinity of the Prophet's camp on November 6. As the force drew closer to the town, the scouts and interpreters in the front of the army repeatedly tried to bring the Indians into a parley. However, the Indians, who were only a short way off, refused to respond to the invitations. Harrison then sent Touissant Dubois, who had often served him as a messenger to the Indians, under a white flag of truce to request a conference with the Prophet. However, as Dubois moved ahead of the army, the Indians began closing in on him to cut off his retreat. Seeing what was happening,

43Harrison to Eustis, 8 November, 1811, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 614-615; Harrison to Eustis, 18 November, 1811, Ibid., pp. 618-630.
Harrison called him back and decided to "encamp for the
night and take some other measure for opening a conference
with the Prophet."

A number of his officers approached Harrison as he
was laying out the camp for permission to attack the Indians.
They told him that the Prophet's men were clearly hostile;
that they had responded with "contempt and insolence" to
every attempt to talk with them. The officers, therefore,
requested that Harrison give the troops, "who were eager to
decide the contest immediately," permission to fight. After
some discussion, Harrison agreed. He ordered the men drawn
up into attack formation and began advancing. Nevertheless,
he insisted that interpreters be kept to the front of the
troops so that if the Indians asked for a parley they could
be accommodated.

This advance, according to Harrison, ended the
Indians' silence. He reported that he had moved no more
than 400 yards when three Indians appeared and asked to
speak with him. They told him they were surprised at his
maneuvers. They had understood that he would wait for the
answers to the demands he sent via the Miamies and Delawares
before taking military action. They gave these answers,
they said, to the Potawatomi chief, Winamac, who apparently
had taken the wrong side of the river in his search for the
American army. Thus Harrison had not received the confeder-
Harrison assured the three that he had not the least intention of attacking them until he had heard them out. He was merely, he stated, looking for a place to camp. Both sides thus agreed that they would meet on the morrow. Until that time, a truce was in effect. In addition the Indians were most cooperative in pointing out to Harrison a good place to locate for the night. An inspection by the army's scouts indicated the spot was well watered and treed as well as easily defensible. Thus, the American expedition camped on the night of November 6, on a site chosen by the Indians. Before allowing the men to retire, Harrison instructed them to be prepared for a night battle in case of surprise attack.

About four the next morning, Harrison remembered, he had risen and was about to give the signal for the men to be roused when shooting started. The sentry at the point of the initial attack fired only one shot at the advancing Indians and then fled to the relative safety of the camp.

Such of them [the troops] as were awake or easily awakened, seized their arms and took their stations, others which were more tardy had to deal with the enemy in the doors of their tents.

There is no indication in the sources if this was the friendly Winamac or the hostile one.
For several hours the firing was heavy. The American line gave way in places, but was always restored through the bravery of Harrison's officers, some of whom were fatally shot. Eventually the charges which the officers organized succeeded in dislodging the Indians, the troops drove them at bayonet point and mounted dragoons pushed them into a swamp where further pursuit was impossible. This ended the fighting. The American victory, by Harrison's own account, therefore, consisted in driving the Indians away from the camp.

Not until the following day did the American army venture into the Prophet's town which the Indians had abandoned. There the troops had an easy time destroying the lodges and burning the Indians' supply of corn.

Statistics showed American losses were startlingly high. There had been 179 casualties, of which 42 were dead and another seven or eight expected to die. However, Harrison proudly pointed out that no American captives had been taken, and of the three scalps the Indians tore from their victims, he had recovered two.

Indian losses Harrison found more difficult to document. He admitted he had no "data by which I can form a correct statement." However, he was sure that the Indians had at least 600 men in the battle, a figure comparable to the number of American soldiers involved. Indian deaths
Harrison thought to be at least as great as his own. He heard the Indians left 36 to 40 dead on the field. Other bodies he knew had been carried off by the Indians as fresh graves were found in the Prophet's town. The troops opened one such grave and discovered three bodies in it. By the Governor's own estimate, then, Indian casualties and the size of the Indian force were about comparable with the Americans.

These statistics, coupled with the failure of the American troops to do anything but beat off the Indian attack make the American action at the confluence of the Wabash and Tippecanoe Rivers a rather questionable victory. When one realizes that the Indians of the Old Northwest never participated in battles when they stood a chance of losing sizeable numbers of warriors, the "victory" looks even more anemic. In the Indians' hunting and gathering economy, the loss of more than a few able men from any band meant sure starvation for them all. European societies, with their advanced technologies, had been able periodically for centuries to slaughter their young men and still retain the capability of feeding the families which remained. Not so for the Indians. For them discretion was an absolute necessity. Seen in this light, the fact that they left the field after losing something more than 40 men hardly seems like an Indian defeat.
Still, Harrison believed, in the days after the fight, that his victory had brought about a solution to the Indian problems of the Northwestern frontier. The Prophet, he was convinced, was ruined; the confederation destroyed. Admittedly, the Governor had fallen somewhat short of his goal of exterminating the confederation Indians or driving them beyond the Mississippi. But he thought the Indians previously allied with the Prophet had now been taught a valuable lesson not to trifle with the United States.

In fact, Harrison wanted so much to believe the Prophet was beaten that he was "taken in" by stories to that effect from some of the Prophet's friends.

A Potawatomi chief who fell prisoner to the Americans after the battle told the Governor that he thought it likely the Indians would not only be willing to comply with Harrison's demands but might even put the Prophet to death. Harrison magnanimously told the man to tell his tribe and also the segments of the Kickapoos and Winnebagos who were with the Prophet that if they would abandon the confederation and return to their tribes their "past conduct would be forgiven and that we would treat with them as we formerly had done." In all, he was sure that as a result of his action at Tippecanoe, there would be "no further hostilities."45

The first intimation the British had that a battle had been fought in the Indiana Territory came from the accounts appearing in the public press in the United States. It was months after the battle before they had anything resembling detailed information from their own agents and Indian sources. The stories they did receive from those sources bear practically no resemblance to Harrison's version of the battle. According to them there was no Indian defeat, the Prophet was not vanquished, the confederation far from destroyed.

By December 2, Isaac Brock at York had heard something of the Battle of Tippecanoe. He wrote Sir George Prevost, Governor in chief,

The Indians, I am given to understand, are eager for an opportunity to avenge the numerous injuries of which they complain. A few Tribes at the instigation of a Shawanese of no note, have already (altho' explicitly told not to look for assistance from us) commenced the contest. The stand which they continue to make on the Wabash against about two thousand Regulars and Militia, is a strong proof of the large force which a general combination of the Indians will render necessary to protect so widely extended a frontier.46

But as late as December 9, Matthew Elliott was still not convinced a battle had been fought. He wrote William

46 Isaac Brock to Sir George Prevost, 2 December, 1811, Wood (ed.), Select British Documents, I, pp. 271-278. Prevost succeeded Craig as Governor in chief in the fall of 1811. Brock by this time had become Civil as well as Military Commander in Upper Canada as a result of Gore's return to England.
Claus, the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, that he had been visited by an unnamed Potawatomi chief who told him that the Americans were constructing a fort on the Vermillion River (more than 50 miles from Tippecanoe) but that so far no fighting had taken place. The confederation Indians, nonetheless, expected to be attacked at any moment and therefore had sent to the nearby tribes for support. What the Potawatomi reported was true, but about six weeks out of date. Elliott, however, had no way of knowing that. He told Claus that he had "great reason to believe that what was inserted in the public prints was the same report we had here; which after the lapse of some days without my confidential Indians arriving, I give no longer credit to."

Not until another month had passed did Elliott have definite word on the battle to pass on to Claus. His version of the events surrounding the battle came from an unnamed Kickapoo chief. According to him, Harrison advanced on the Prophet's town intending to surround it. This plan, however, was foiled by the Indians who warned the Governor that if he did so, "it would not go well with him." Temporarily put off his track, Harrison then asked where he might

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camp for the night. (This is the only detail of this version that agrees with Harrison's account.) The Indians told him that he could camp "wherever he pleased except round their village."

While the Governor busied himself with pitching his camp, the Indians captured a Negro who had accompanied the expedition. They threatened to kill him if he did not tell them what Harrison's plans were. He admitted the Governor planned to deceive them. The Indians then sent him back to the American camp. When he reached it, however, Harrison apparently unaware of what had happened, told him to go back to the Indians with a message that they should "sleep soundly" but not approach the American sentinels lest they be shot. The Kickapoo told Elliot that the Indians too posted sentries that night who often warned off American spies without doing them any harm.

Two young Winnebagos, however, allowed their curiosity to get the best of them and approached the edge of the American camp. They were spotted by the pickets who fired at them. The warriors pretended to be wounded, but rose and tomahawked the pickets when they came to inspect the results of their marksmanship. After this, the two returned to the Prophet's camp where their story so aroused the Indians that they decided to fight at "Cock Crowing."
By placing two parties of warriors, one on either side of the American camp, the Indians were able not only to surprise the soldiers but also to confine them to the camp for the better part of the fighting. However, by about nine o'clock, the Indians' ammunition ran out and they had to save themselves by flight. The Kickapoo estimated the Americans had lost at least 100 men dead, while he put the Indian deaths at 25. The Prophet, he told Elliott, was not defeated. He had later returned to his "former ground" even though the Americans had burned the village and destroyed the corn. Those Indians who had fought for the confederation, far from wanting to put the Prophet to death, were planning to come to Malden in the spring to get more arms and ammunition to continue the fight. 48

These two versions of the Battle of Tippecanoe and the events surrounding it were not the only ones in circulation after November, 1811. Harrison, in the months that followed, found it increasingly necessary to defend his leadership of that expedition against charges of stupidity and unnecessarily high losses. 49 While he was fretting


about how the administration and the public was being misled by these charges, British officials in Washington, the Canadas and in Britain were busy trying to prove that British instigation of the Indians had not been the cause of the fight. In fact, they claimed, the policy of Great Britain was positively to discourage such actions by the Indians. After all, had they not officially warned the Americans on several occasions that the Indians seemed bent on war?50

But on the frontier, whatever news of this diplomatic squirming may have reached the region was overshadowed by revelations beginning only a few weeks after the Battle of Tippecanoe, that hostilities with the Prophet were by no means at an end.51


51General Clark to Eustis, 23 November, 1811, American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, I, p. 802; Governor Howard to Eustis, 13 January, 1812, Ibid., p. 805; William Wells to Eustis, 10 February, 1812, Ibid., p. 805; (reports two British emissaries visited Prophet between January 12-21); John Johnston to Eustis, 5 December, 1811, Hill, John Johnston and the Indians, p. 56; John Johnston to Governor Howard, 7 January, 1812, American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, I, p. 805; Wells to Eustis, 1 March, 1812, Ibid., p. 806; Nicholas Boilvin to Governor Howard, 5 January, 1812, Carter (ed.), Territorial Papers, Vol. XVI, Illinois Territory, p. 186; Ninian Edwards to Eustis, 3 March, 1812, Ibid., pp. 193-194.
CHAPTER NINE
THE COMING OF THE WAR

In the weeks that followed the Battle of Tippecanoe there was hope on the frontier and in the national capital that the Indian problems of the Old Northwest might have been solved by Harrison and his troops. So great was the rejoicing, in log cabins and in Congress, that a legend was born to the effect that Tippecanoe had been an American victory instead of a defensive action. So strong was that legend that it has endured to this day.¹

But there were also those who saw, in the weeks and months that followed that battle, that the Indians of the confederation were far from defeated; those who realized that the Indians were feigning defeat to insure their very survival. Part of the legend of the Battle of Tippecanoe is that that battle destroyed the influence the Prophet had over his followers and, in fact, wrecked the confederation itself. The facts prove otherwise. It

¹In 1840 it was strong enough to elect Harrison President of the United States on the campaign slogan "Tippecanoe and Tyler too." Modern historians generally agree that the battle was no great victory but it lives on as that in American folklore.
must be noted that reports of Indian disillusionment with the Prophet came from some of the very Indians who later fought against the United States in the War of 1812. In other words, only a few months after these Indians professed to American agents their total contempt for the Prophet and the confederation, they were fighting with the confederation against the "long knives."

Their reason for appearing before American officials in the guise of a defeated and subjected people was simply and clearly to deceive the Americans into thinking that the confederation was no longer a threat. If the agents and governors could thus be convinced, the Indians would have bought valuable time. Such time would allow the confederation to pass the difficult winter season unmolested. It would allow them to get in touch with the British and to secure new supplies, food and equipment to replace that lost at Tippecanoe. It would also allow them to attempt to arrange alliances with still more tribes, especially those to the west and north. In fact, the Indians of the confederation attempted all these things during the respite that followed Tippecanoe.

On the other hand, if the Americans had thought the confederation had not been injured by the action at Tippecanoe, it would have been incumbent upon them to launch yet another expedition against the recalcitrant
"savages." Given the season and the losses of supplies and equipment the Indians had already sustained, such an expedition might well have succeeded where Tippecanoe failed. The only real alternative left to the Indians, then, was to deceive at least some American officials into thinking that the battle on the Wabash had been such a lesson that they wanted nothing further to do with the Prophet, his brother or the confederation. In this effort at deception they were remarkably successful. They were not able to fool all the agents and all the territorial governors, but they fooled enough to make the plan work. And, to make matters easier for them, Harrison unknowingly cooperated with their plan by deceiving himself.

The Governor had a special reason for believing that the Indians of the confederation were contrite, and, even at the cost of deserting the confederation, earnestly wished for peace with the United States. His reason was that his reputation as a military man depended on that very outcome of the Battle of Tippecanoe. If the Indians had not been chastised, if the frontier had not been rendered safe, then the lives of 61 Americans killed while under his command had been sacrificed for nothing.

And because of the vested interest he had in perpetuating this myth of victory, Harrison, for months, refused to admit the validity of the contrary reports that
reached him. As the weeks lengthened into months the frequency with which these reports reached his desk increased; still Harrison could not be moved to admit there was truth in them. In fact, until April of 1812, he continued to maintain that Tippecanoe had achieved its goals. By the time he finally admitted that Tippecanoe had not achieved its objective, the frontier was already enveloped in open and bloody fighting.

Earlier, only a few weeks after the battle, Harrison wrote the Secretary of War,

I am at a loss to know what to require of them [the Indians with whom the Prophet was living] in regard to the Prophet—whether to insist on his being given up—put to death or driven off. The objection to the latter is that he may establish himself elsewhere but this I am certain will never happen in a manner to be productive of much injury. The veil under which he has practiced his imposture has been completely rent and must discover his true character to the most ignorant of the Indians.  

On December 4, Harrison wrote Eustis again that, "all the tribes which lost men at Tippecanoe blame the Prophet."  


3Harrison to Eustis, 4 December, 1811, Ibid., pp. 656-658.
the Prairie," but had been told by them not to come upon pain of death. But had this information been correct, there was still little reason for Harrison to think that because the Indians were angry with the Prophet they would necessarily be friendly toward the Americans. Even without the Prophet, the hostile tribesmen were hardly likely to adopt a pacific attitude toward the United States.\(^4\)

Harrison, in his correspondence, also made much of the fact that the Prophet's followers had left him and his village after the Battle of Tippecanoe. This desertion, however, was essential for the survival of those Indians, since the Prophet's winter supply of corn had been destroyed by the American troops before they left the Wabash. It could hardly be taken as evidence that the Prophet's followers had lost faith in him. Faith without food is hardly the proper combination for surviving winter in the Old Northwest. The need to keep body and soul together would alone have forced most of the Prophet's adherents to return to their home countries to winter.

In fact, the need for food and supplies in the face of the coming season drove the Indians, some of them the very men who had fought at Tippecanoe, to the American Indian agencies to apply for their annuities and presents.

\(^4\)Ibid.
In previous years, under instructions from Harrison, Indians applying for their annuities were required by the various agents to renounce the Prophet and the confederation. It should have come as little surprise in the winter of 1811 that they willingly renounced him again. These renunciations had never had any real effect on their allegiance to the Prophet or his movement. Yet, on this occasion, Harrison read special significance into their words. How insincere the Indians were would only be revealed months later when some of those bands most active in denouncing the Prophet and the confederation joined the British standard in the war. But Harrison meanwhile proudly reported to the Secretary of War that the Indians agreed "they had never sustained so severe a defeat since their acquaintance with the white people."5

While the Governor was busily trying to convince himself and others that Tippecanoe had indeed solved the Indian problem, some friendly Indians were attempting to impress the American agent at Piqua, John Johnston, that Tecumseh and the Prophet remained significant threats, and their activities should not be allowed to continue unchecked. They even offered to assassinate the pair if the Americans would agree. But Johnston, who had been

5Ibid.
duped by the confederation Indians into giving them their annuities after Tippecanoe, did not feel he could accept this offer without authorization from his superior, Harrison. He wrote the Secretary of War that the plan "embarrassed" him and that he had decided to take no action on it until the Governor could be consulted. Nothing was ever done about it. 6

Harrison continued, meanwhile, on his campaign to vindicate his "victory" at Tippecanoe. On December 13, he wrote Governor Scott of Kentucky that "British agents" and his "personal enemies" were trying to devalue his accomplishments on the Wabash. 7 And on Christmas Eve he wrote Eustis that

All accounts that I have received from the Indian country agree in stating the entire dispondence of the Prophet's party in their disinclination for further hostilities. 8

In the matter of whether or not Tippecanoe ranked as an important victory, Harrison assured Eustis that it was not only a victory, but outclassed Wayne's effort at Fallen

6John Johnston to Eustis, 5 December, 1811, Hill, John Johnston and the Indians, p. 56.

7Harrison to Governor Scott, 13 December, 1811, Esarey (ed.), Messages, I, pp. 666-672.

8Harrison to Eustis, 24 December, 1811, Ibid., 683-685.
Timbers in 1794, since, according to Harrison, more Indians fell at Tippecanoe than had been killed by Wayne's army. He neglected to mention, however, that more American lives were lost at Tippecanoe than at Fallen Timbers.9

But other territorial officials were not as optimistic as Harrison. In fact, the reports which they and their agents were sending to the Secretary of War in the weeks and months that followed the battle indicated that, far from being defeated, the Prophet was regaining his influence with the Indians, and that the tribes were gathering strength once again for renewed offensive operations against the United States.

Early in January 1812, John Johnston wrote to Governor Benjamin Howard of the District of Louisiana that the Winnebagos had slaughtered two Americans. This tribe had been one of the foremost participants at the Battle of Tippecanoe. When they returned to their home country from the battle they stopped at the American agency at Prairie du Chien on the Mississippi where they complained with little result to the agent about the numbers they had lost in the battle. Johnston told Howard that the reason the Winnebagos had killed the Americans was that the Americans had killed "a great many of their people and

9 Ibid.
they intend to kill all they saw... Every hour I look for a war party and God only knows when it will end."10

A little less than a week later, Governor Howard wrote the Secretary of War from Fort Madison that he had further information from Johnston which "proves clearly that our difficulties with the Indians are not at an end." In fact, he thought that before the winter was out "we will have much danger to apprehend from them."11 The conclusion Howard reached was the one that Harrison was trying to avoid: there would be no peace with the Indians until another expedition was launched against them to accomplish what Tippecanoe failed to. The confederation had to be defeated.

By January 7, Harrison himself had a direct warning that the Indians of the confederation were preparing to rise again. Captain Snelling, whom Harrison had left in charge of Fort Harrison, told the Governor that friendly Wea Indians had been in. They warned that the Winnebagos and Kickapoos were deceiving the Governor with their talk of peace. Many of them, the Weas cautioned, still retained

10John Johnston to Governor Howard, 7 January, 1812, American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, (Washington, 1832), I, p. 805. The District of Louisiana became The Missouri Territory in June of 1812.

11Governor Howard to Eustis, 13 January, 1812, Ibid., p. 805.
confidence in the magic of the Prophet. Some were fanatical enough to think that if the Prophet died, they would die also. As for his failure at Tippecanoe, they ascribed that to the fact that unbeknownst to the Prophet, his wife was in her menstrual period at the time and thus ruined his power with the spirits.\(^{12}\)

Snelling wrote Harrison on January 18, that a friendly Indian named Five had been hunting with some hostile Miamis. They were prepared, and determined, Five reported, to go to war with the United States. As a result, Five told Snelling, the Americans should be ready for some hard fighting in the spring.

Five's story was supported by the testimony of another friendly Indian named Peter, who added that the Indians were then preparing to journey to Fort Malden in the spring to obtain arms. Harrison's response to these warnings was simply to reply that while Peter was indeed friendly, he was not always accurate.\(^{13}\)

But other territorial officials were becoming alarmed at the gains which the Prophet was making. On January 21, Acting Governor Attwater of the Michigan

\(^{12}\)Harrison to Eustis, 7 January, 1812, Esarey (ed.), \textit{Messages}, II, pp. 3-5.

Territory wrote the Secretary of War,

... many publications have been made respecting the determination of the Prophet and his Party; yesterday a Shawnee Indian said a Kickapoo Indian called on him and said that the Prophet had taken possession of his Village and had with him 150 Sacks, 200 Winnebagos and 200 Creeks, and was determined to hold a council, after that to visit Gov. Harrison at Vincennes and make peace if possible if not in the Spring go to War which last measure from what I have heard is most probable—.14

Attwater promised to keep a good eye on the Indians and "on all those who call themselves British subjects" as he was sure that spies were constantly passing between Malden and the Prophet.15

Like Attwater, Harrison was also keeping a watchful eye on the Indians. But his notion of how to deal with them excluded any really strong measures. Instead of punitive expeditions, Harrison planned such steps as withholding portions of their annuities or sending the diffident chiefs to Washington to meet the President. In the past the Americans had often used such trips apparently for

15 Ibid.
propaganda as they allowed the Indians to travel through mile after mile of settled farmland and to see city after city. The idea was that such sights would overawe them with a realization of American strength and thus force them to abandon any hope of resisting American pressures for land.

Secretary Eustis agreed with Harrison's pacific approach to the recently chastised confederation Indians. On January 17, he wrote to the Governor about arranging a trip to Washington for the Prophet and Tecumseh, as he felt it was "particularly desirable at the present crisis that measures should be adopted to re-establish the relations of peace and friendship with the Indians ..."\(^\text{16}\) The trip, however, was never made.\(^\text{17}\)

While it was becoming apparent on the frontiers that war with the Indians was a distinct possibility for early in the new year, in Washington, in Quebec and in London, British officials were doing their best to see that it did not take place. Augustus Foster, the British Minister in Washington, was active in the weeks that followed the Battle of Tippecanoe, warning his government that certain elements


\(^{17}\)Drake, \textit{Tecumseh}, pp. 156-157. Drake thought the brothers refused to make the trip because the Americans would not allow them to take what they considered a proper retinue.
in the American Congress were determined to fight. At the same time he was also passing on to the Americans the assurances of his government that a war was the last thing his Britanick Majesty wanted.

In his letters home Foster predicted,

... unless we change our system [the Orders in Council] this Country is disposed to go to war with us, notwithstanding they have few resources and no considerable number of troops nor above four frigates in a state for sea ... 

And to James Monroe, the American Secretary of State, Foster wrote that he had seen in some of the journals, "which are in the habit of uttering the foulest aspersions on His Majesty's Government and the British Nation," the claim that the British had instigated the Indians to attack at Tippecanoe. Given the "manifest absurdity" of the report he thought it would not be credited by "enlightened individuals." Still, Foster felt a refutation was necessary. He insisted that the muskets of British manufacture which had been found on the slain Indians at Tippecanoe were obtained in the course of lawful trade.

To you Sir, however, who are acquainted with the high sense of national honour which animates the British nation, it is superfluous for me to dwell on the improbability of a similar act of perfidy

18 Augustus Foster to Marquis Wellesley, 11 December, 1811, FO/5 77, pp. 154-158.
having been promoted by Great Britain, or on the absolute want of any kind of motive to urge the remains of the poor Indian Nations to their unavoidable destruction.

I beg leave, Sir, most unequivocally in the name of my government to deny the charge in question, and to declare it a fabrication altogether unworthy of the slightest degree of credit.19

In a subsequent letter, Foster attempted to give Monroe a brief history of Ex-Governor in chief Craig's efforts to warn the Americans that the Indians of the Northwest were determined on war. Foster offered Craig's efforts as proof that far from trying to instigate the Indians to war, the British were sincerely trying to prevent such an occurrence.

This evidence, Sir, of a friendly disposition to put the United States government on their guard against the machinations of the savages and even to aid in preventing the calamity which had taken place, is so honourable to the Governor-General of Canada, and so clearly in contradiction to the late unfounded reports which have been spread of a contrary nature, that I cannot resist the impulse I have to draw your attention towards it...20

Nor was Foster the only British official trying to convince the Americans that the British had not been

19 Foster to James Monroe, 13 December, 1811, Ibid., pp. 159-160.
20 Foster to Monroe, 28 December, 1811, F05/84, p. 135.
in any way connected with the Battle of Tippecanoe. In Canada, the new Governor in chief, Sir George Prevost, was busy denying involvement with the late action on the Wabash. Under the pen name of "Philalethes" he wrote a lengthy letter to the editors of the Quebec Mercury on January 18, in which he defended the honor of his nation. He thought his letter would "repel with indignation & contempt this most malicious & calumnious falsehood in the most public manner." 21

Isaac Brock, now Civil as well as Military commander for Upper Canada, had already assured Prevost that he had used his best exertions with the Indian Department to get them to dissuade the Indians from war but all to no avail. But if Brock agreed with Prevost on the necessity of keeping the Indians peaceful, he strongly disagreed with other points of Prevost's Indian policy. The Governor in chief had adopted the policy that Craig evolved in his last months in Canada: the policy of complete neutrality. This policy recognized the fact that the Indians were dangerously close to war and called for them to be actively discouraged, by both talks and the withholding of supplies.

21 Sir George Prevost to Earl of Liverpool, 22 January, 1812, CO42/146, pp. 17-18; Philalethes to the Editor, Quebec Mercury, 20 January, 1812, pp. 22-23. Translated from the Greek, Philalethes means lover of truth.
Brock viewed such a policy as essentially short-sighted. It seemed to him that such action might lose the Indians to the British cause altogether. On February 6, he wrote Prevost,

The more information I receive the stronger I am pressed with the necessity of being formidable at Amherstburg. Were we in a condition to act offensively in that quarter the greatest good would be sure to result from it. The Indians in the vicinity would in that case willingly cooperate with us. This example would, if I am correctly informed, be soon followed by the numerous tribes on the Missoury who are represented as being inveterable against the Americans.22

And again on February 25, Brock told Prevost,

It ill becomes me to determine how long true policy requires that the restrictions now imposed on the Indian Department ought to continue. But this I will venture to assert that each day the Officers are restrained from interfering in the concerns of the Indians—each time they advise peace, and withhold the accustomed supply of ammunition, their influence will diminish, till at length they lose it altogether—It will then become a question whether that Country can be maintained.

Thus at the end of February, the British in Canada had reached no clear agreement on what their Indian policy was, or should be. Only the outbreak of war, still some

22Isaac Brock to Prevost, 6 February, 1812, Wood (ed.), Select British Documents, I, pp. 292-293.

23Brock to Prevost, 25 February, 1812, C Series, RG8/676, pp. 92-94.
months distant could answer the question of which policy was the more correct.

During that same month, February, Harrison continued his efforts to pacify the Indians whom he had lately fought at Tippecanoe, and to maintain good relations with the other tribes that were ostensibly friendly or neutral. Toward this end he obtained promises of good behavior from Tecumseh and the Prophet. On February 19, he wrote Eustis that he was waiting for a visit from Tecumseh, the Prophet and the chiefs of the Kickapoo, Winnebago and Miami tribes. Portions of those tribes had participated in the fight on the Wabash. The Governor intended, when they arrived, to select some from among them to send on to Washington for a visit with the President. He asked Eustis if he should give hostages for the safe return of the Indians as he thought it unlikely that the brothers would agree to go unless some security was given for their return. Even then he thought the Prophet would wait to see what success Tecumseh was having raising support among the tribes before he would "submit" to making the journey to Washington.  

But while Harrison was busy trying to pacify the Indians, word continued to reach the Secretary of War that there was growing unrest on the frontiers and that it was

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the result, at least in part, of Tecumseh's efforts.

On March 3, Governor Ninian Edwards of the Illinois Territory, after talks with General Clark and Governor Howard, wrote Eustis that they

unite in the opinion that we have good cause to apprehend a formidable combination of Indians and a bloody war—And if there is any confidence to be placed in the agents sub agents and spies engaged in these territories in the Indian Department who have had an opportunity of forming an opinion, no other event can be expected. The Prophet is regaining his influence—Tecumseh has visited the tribes on our Northwestern frontier with considerable success—

An Indian called (I think) the White Pidgeon lately visited the Indians of the Illinois & Mississippi rivers, tried to engage them to attack our frontiers—promised them British protection, and invited them to Fort Maudlen [sic] to receive arms and ammunition &c &c This information has been received through four different channels and the fact cannot be doubted.

We know in part he has been successful in his machinations—Two more men have been lately killed in this territory... We have received positive information that the Kickapoos & Pottowatomies lately held a council near Peoria in which it was determined to attack our frontiers.

If the Indians have hostile views they will certainly be greatly encouraged by such multitudes leaving the territory as is daily witnessed—Indeed I think, the antient settlements of the country will soon become the frontier.25

William Wells also had information that Tecumseh was proselytizing amongst the tribes. He wrote Eustis from Fort Wayne that

it appears that he [Tecumseh] has determined to raise all the Indians he can, immediately, with an intention no doubt, to attack our frontiers. He has sent runners to raise the Indians on the Illinois, and the Upper Mississippi; and I am told, has gone himself to hurry on the aid he was promised by the Cherokee and Creeks. 26

Wells also told Eustis that a man he referred to as the Prophet's orator had passed within twelve miles of Fort Wayne on his way to Sandusky where he was to get powder and lead from the British.

Wells was correct in his information that Tecumseh had left the Wabash, but not in his destination. For the chief had, in fact, gone to Amherstburg and the British Fort Malden. Here, along with chiefs of some other tribes which had participated in the Battle of Tippecanoe, he pleaded with Matthew Elliott for food, clothing and supplies for his people.

Father: When last year I told you I would soon go to the Southward, before I went I desired my young men to remain quiet and attempt nothing until my return. My young men did so far as in their powers. But on my return lately I found great destruction and havoc—the fruits of our labour destroyed—the bodies of my friends laying in the dust, and our village burnt to the ground and all our kettles carried off.

Father: All your children call out poverty, but we are truly poor, in want of the common

26William Wells to Eustis, 1 March, 1812, American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, I, p. 806.
necessities of life both for ourselves and our women and children, everything having been destroyed by the Big Knives.

Father: Let me find that my young men of the different nations return with joy in their countenances, and serve them alike in ammunition to enable them to provide for their families, and give sufficient clothing.

Tecumseh promised that if these requests were met the gifts would serve as an incentive to the rest of the Indians to come to Malden in the spring.27

Meanwhile, Harrison received reports that the Indians were restless. The combined weight of these reports was enough, by April 14, to convince him that his hopes of a peace with the Indians were futile. In what amounted to an admission that Tippecanoe had failed, Harrison wrote Eustis,

It is with great regret that I inform you Sir that the hopes which I had entertained of being able to avoid a war with the Indians are entirely dissipated—the Prophet and his brother were altogether insincere in the professions which they made in February or they had been induced to adopt other politics in consequence of the probability of war between the United States and Great Britain.28

Harrison indicated in his message to Eustis that he was aware of Wells's letter about Tecumseh's organizing

27Tecumseh to Elliott, 13 March, 1812, RG10 F28.
28Harrison to Eustis, 14 April, 1812, Esarey (ed.), Messages, II, pp. 32-33.
the Indians for action against the frontiers. This information, along with news of a number of murders within 35 miles of Vincennes finally helped him to reach his decision that peace with the confederation was no longer possible. 29

The murders, Harrison thought, had to be avenged and consequently he sent men to discover to which tribe the culprits belonged. But even if this were ascertained, Harrison thought it unlikely that the murderers would be given up. This he blamed on the influence of the Prophet.

One of the most mischievous and successful of the Prophet's schemes is that of destroying the influence of the chiefs amongst the Pottawattimies and Kickapoos particularly. The Youjg men are under no kind of control, each man does as he pleases, and we have in my opinion no alternative but war. The propriety of it being undertaken and prosecuted with vigor is an opinion which pervades I believe the whole Western Country.

I hope to receive instructions upon this subject and the course that is to be pursued as early as possible. I shall proceed to put the frontiers in the best possible state of defense but no defensive measures can possibly be effectual against Indians. 30

With this rather belated recognition of the fact that the Indians were indeed hostile, Harrison proceeded to issue orders for the defense of the territory. His public statement regarding the situation rehearsed what everyone had known for months; that the murders on the

29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
frontier were proof that there was no peace with the Indians. As a result, he directed the military to prepare for service and asked the citizens to construct blockhouses and forts for use in emergencies.\textsuperscript{31}

Just how bold some of the Indians had become was revealed in a letter from Captain Snelling at Fort Harrison dated April 16, to Governor Harrison. Snelling related that Laprusieur, a confederation Wea chief, who before Tippecanoe had told Harrison he would die with the land if the whites attacked, had been into the fort. While there Snelling offered him rails to fence his crops. Laprusieur replied, however, that he did not want any as they "would not plant this season." Of course, the only reason for not planting was that the Indians planned to be fighting by the time the growing season arrived.\textsuperscript{32}

A few days before hearing about Laprusieur's insolence, Harrison wrote to Major Davis Floyd with his plans for dealing with the hostile Indians. These plans clearly reveal how far Harrison had come from his conciliatory stand of a few weeks before. He suggested that Floyd deliver a message to the Delaware Indians instructing them to unite

\textsuperscript{31}Harrison, General Orders, 16 April, 1812, \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 35-37.

\textsuperscript{32}Snelling to Harrison, 16 April, 1812, \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 37-38.
with the Miamis to drive the Prophet west of the Wabash.

Since 1806 Harrison had attempted on at least two occasions to prevail on those tribes to drive the Prophet and his followers to the west, away from American settlements. However, both times they tried to dislodge the Prophet they had failed utterly. There was no reason, now, to think they might suddenly succeed. Only Harrison's delusion that the Prophet had been discredited by Tippecanoe could have led him to suggest this solution again.

Even the Governor had some doubts that the plan would work, for he was no longer sure of the absolute loyalty of the Miamis.

If the disaffection amongst the Miamis should be such as to render this plan impracticable or the strength of the hostile confederacy so formidable as to render them unable to prevent them from crossing the Wabash, it would be desirable that they should occupy the country between the White River and the boundary of the Grouseland Treaty and undertake to prevent any depredation from being committed in that quarter whilst the Shawnee of the Auglaize [who were loyal] and the Wyandots of Sandusky should enter into the same engagements for the frontiers of Ohio adjacent to them.33

In other words, what Harrison wanted was a buffer of friendly Indians between the settlements and the confederation

33Harrison to Major Davis Floyd, 17 April, 1812, Ibid., pp. 39-40. While Harrison had earlier reported that the Wyandots of the Sandusky had joined the Prophet he now thought they could be trusted. In fact, they remained loyal during the war.
tribes. Thus the first blood spilled in any action would be that of Indians, not whites.\textsuperscript{34}

But while he was willing to sacrifice the lives of friendly Indians for his ends, he was incensed at the idea that the hostile Indians might attack the American settlements through the country of the peaceful Indians and thus implicate them and bring undeserved white retribution down on his potential allies.\textsuperscript{35}

On April 4, hostile confederation Indians came in to the American post at Fort Wayne. They were driven there by hunger, having run short of provisions on their return from Fort Malden where the British had supplied them with arms and ammunition. After some debate among themselves they decided to risk the wrath of the Americans for the chance of being fed. Surprisingly they made no secret of the mission to Canada to the American sub-agent there, John Shaw. And just as surprisingly Shaw fed them and sent them off. Given the disturbed state of the countryside, it is difficult to understand why they were not detained and why their weapons and supplies were not confiscated. These arms could only serve to make the frontier situation more unbearable.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{35}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{36}Benjamin Stickney to Harrison, 18 April, 1812, Thornbrough (ed.), \textit{Fort Wayne Letterbook}, pp. 102-107.
A few weeks after they had left Fort Wayne, Benjamin Stickney, Agent at Fort Wayne, wrote to Captain H eald at Fort Dearborn (Chicago) that Harrison had made peace with the Indians, had forgiven Tecumseh and the Prophet and was sending them to Washington to see the President. 37 His information was six weeks out of date. Perhaps it was this mistaken notion of the state of Indian-American relations that had led Shaw to deal so leniently with the Indians who had been to Fort Malden. By coincidence, on the very day that Stickney wrote Heald, Harrison was writing the Secretary of War with details of the grave situation he was facing in Indiana. What he described was a virtual state of panic.

It is impossible Sir to give you an adequate idea of the alarm and distress which these murders have produced . . . Families abandoning their homes and flying they know not whither and many of them without any means of support, are seen in every direction. Nor is the situation of the town by any means such as offers security to the fugitives. The expected departure of the regular troops and the revival of the design by the Prophet and his party to surprise it by a water expedition caused it to be viewed as a place of greater danger than any other and the fugitives pass through it as expeditiously as possible. 38


38 Harrison to Eustis, 29 April, 1812, Esarey (ed.), Messages, II, pp. 41-44.
And of course the murders continued. Within the next week John Johnston wrote the Secretary that two men had been killed near Fort Dearborn, three at Fort Defiance and the next week that a man had been murdered at Greenville, the site of Wayne's peace with the Indians in 1795.39

On May 6, Governor Edwards wrote Eustis that he had information from traders and Indians all of which confirmed the "hostile machinations of the Prophet and the hostility of the Winnebagoes." And the same day Harrison wrote the Secretary of the pitiful condition of the settlers in his territory who were being driven off their homesteads by the Indians.

Most of the citizens in this country have abandoned their farms and taken refuge in such temporary forts as they have been able to construct. Nothing can exhibit more distress than these wretched people crowded together in places almost destitute of every necessary accommodation. Unless something can be done soon to enable the people to return to their farms I fear there will be little or no corn planted this season.40

Even at home Harrison was confronted with the growing strength of the Prophet and the confederation. On May 13, he wrote the Secretary of War that the Prophet

39John Johnston to Eustis, 1 May, 1812, American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, I, pp. 807-808.

40Edwards to Eustis, 6 May, 1812, Ibid., p. 808; Harrison to Eustis, 6 May, 1812, Ibid.
had returned to the area and had with him about 300 Winnebagos and about 200 warriors of other tribes. He was supposed to have been gaining strength daily.\textsuperscript{41}

By June 3, Harrison was sure, on the basis of information he had from Governor Edwards in Illinois, that the strength of the Indians with the Prophet was at least as great as before Tippecanoe, and that "their intentions are equally hostile."\textsuperscript{42}

Meanwhile, on May 15, a grand council of Indians assembled at the Miami village on the Mississinewa River about 60 miles west of Fort Wayne. The talks were attended by 12 tribes, the Wyandots, Chippewas, Ottawas, Potawatomis, Delawares, Miamis, Weas, Eel Rivers, Piankeshaws, Shawnees, Kickapoos and Winnebagos. Both the British and the Americans had informers at them as well.\textsuperscript{43}

Tecumseh's performance at the talks was proof of his deliberate attempt to forestall American action against the confederation by making promises of peace and harmony. It was also an indication that he thought Harrison was at least temporarily pacified. In reply to the Wyandots'\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{41}Harrison to Eustis, 13 May, 1812, \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{42}Harrison to Eustis, 3 June, 1812, \textit{Ibid.}

order that the bloodshed be stopped and the Indians cease interference in the conflict between the two white powers. Tecumseh answered,

Elder Brothers, We have listened with attention to what you have said to us. We thank the Great Spirit for inclining your hearts to pity us; we now pity ourselves; our hearts are good, they never were bad. Governor Harrison made war on my people in my absence: it was the will of God that he should do so. We hope it will please God that the white people may let us live in peace; we will not disturb them, neither have we done it, except when they came to our village with the intention of destroying us. We are happy to state to our brothers present, that the unfortunate transaction that took place between the white people and a few of our younger men at our village has been settled between us and Governor Harrison; and I will further state, that had I been at home there would have been no blood shed at that time.

Tecumseh's frustration at his inability to keep all the confederation Indians peaceful until called upon to fight was revealed as his talk continued.

We are sorry to find the same respect has not been paid to the agreement between us and Governor Harrison, by our brothers, the Potawatamies; however, we are not accountable for the conduct of those over whom we have no control; let the chiefs of that nation exert themselves, and cause their warriors to behave themselves, as we have and will continue to do ours. Should the bad acts of our brothers, the Potawatamies, draw on us the ill will of our white brothers, and they should come again and make an unprovoked attack on us at our village, we will die like men, but we will never strike the first blow.

The Potawatomis replied, but the chiefs who spoke were of the anti-confederation faction of their tribe and
thus opposed to what the more radical young Potawatomis had been doing. These young men, the chiefs said, were deluded. They had "followed the counsel of the Shawanoe, that pretended to be a prophet", and under his influence had killed some whites. "We have believed that they were encouraged in this mischief by this pretended Prophet, who, we know, has taken great pains to detach them from their own chiefs and attach them to himself."

The Potawatomi chiefs denied they had any control over these "vagabonds" and indeed they promised to be thankful "to any people that will put them to death, wherever they are found." They are "bad people" and had learned to be so from the Prophet. If the Prophet was really sincere in his desire for peace, they suggested, he should actively seek to reconcile these men with the whites so that "our women and children may lay down to sleep without fear."

Tecumseh could not allow such a rebuff to pass unanswered. He replied that he and his brother had tried to give all the Indians good advice and was sorry if they had not listened. "We defy a living creature to say we ever advised anyone, directly or indirectly, to make war on our white brothers." Rather, he insisted, his views had been constantly misrepresented to the whites, and this was the work of the "pretended chiefs" of the Potawatomis, the men who had just spoken, the men who were in the habit of
selling land that did not belong to them to the whites.

The chiefs of the Delawares then tried to restore some order to the council and to prevent these charges and countercharges from disrupting the meeting. But they were also village chiefs and sympathetic to the Potawatomi chiefs. They had not come, they told Tecumseh, "to listen to such words." The fact was that the Indians were killing whites, and the Americans were ready to retaliate.

There is no time for us to tell each other you have done this and you have done that; if there was we would tell the prophet that both the red and white people have felt the bad effect of his counsels. Let us all join our hearts and hands together, and proclaim peace through the land of the red people. Let us make our voices heard and respected, and rely on the justice of our white brethren.

This talk was seconded by the chiefs of the Miamis and the Kickapoos who asked the tribes present to keep their warriors under restraint and to stop the "effusion of blood." 44

William Claus received his version of the Mississinewa talks from Isadore Chaine or Shetoon, a Huron Indian who had been working for the British as an informer in the vicinity of Fort Wayne. The British mistakenly thought the Americans had not discovered Shetoon was their agent. On receiving Shetoon's version of the council, Claus immediately sent for him to ask him about the state of preparation

of the confederation. Shetoon told him that Tecumseh had advanced to Machekethie (Mississinewa) on hearing that he (Shetoon) had a message for him. That he had with him the war chiefs of 12 nations and about 600 warriors. In addition, Tecumseh had left about 300 men at his village. The Indians of the confederation were supposed to have been well supplied with corn, save for the Shawnee, who had lost theirs in the engagement with Harrison in November. But all the Indians were short on arms and ammunition, so much so that those left behind at Tippecanoe were busy making bows and arrows to compensate for the shortage.45

It was also Shetoon's opinion that the Indians were anticipating another strike from the Americans, and this time they expected it would be directed at the "whole", instead of at a particular village.46

Claus, for his part, examined the records of ammunition given out to the Indians at Amherstburg and found that the powder distributed in the previous six months was "only 1,211 pounds", 1,921 pounds less than at "former periods." No lead had been given at all, which, Claus

45Col. William Claus to Brock, 16 June, 1812, Wood (ed.), Select British Documents, I, pp. 310-311. For proof that the Americans were aware of Shetoon's real purpose see Benjamin Stickney to Governor Hull, 25 May, 1812, American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, I, p. 810; Stickney to Hull, 20 June, 1812, Thornbrough (ed.), Fort Wayne Letter Book, pp. 140-143; Stickney to Johnston, 22 June, 1812, Ibid., pp. 144-146.

46Ibid.
thought, likely explained the increased consumption of provisions by the Indians, since without lead they were unable to hunt. Prevost's policy of keeping the Indians neutral through withholding supplies had had an effect, but not the one he wanted.47

Meanwhile, a week after the council at Mississinewa some of the Indians of the 12 nations who had been there came in to Fort Wayne to report to the Americans on what had taken place at their talks. All vowed that their intention was peace. Stickney, the agent at the fort, listened to their reports and then advised them that if they were really for peace, he would give them one month to surrender the murderers of whites who might be among them. After the month was up, he warned, strong action would be taken by the Americans.48 Of course, war broke out before his deadline was reached. And even on the eve of writing his report to the Secretary of War on the visits of the 12 tribes, Stickney had word that Indians were already crossing over to Fort Malden in "large numbers."49

Finally, on June 17, the day before war was declared, Tecumseh himself arrived at Fort Wayne with a small party of ten warriors. He stayed at the fort four days during

47 Ibid.
48 Stickney to Governor Meigs, June 8, 1812, Thornbrough (ed.), Fort Wayne Letter Book, pp. 139-140.
49 Ibid.
which time he had several conversations with Benjamin Stickney. According to the agent's reports, most of their talk dwelt on the subject of the events leading up to the Battle of Tippecanoe. Exactly what both men said about those days remains unknown. Stickney, however, recorded some of what passed between them in a letter to General Hull.

He wrote that Tecumseh told him that he was on his way to Fort Malden where he expected the British would supply him with lead and powder. The chief might have showed less candor had he known that war was officially declared between the United States and Great Britain while he talked with Stickney at the American post. However, in an apparent effort to mollify the agent, Tecumseh told him that his trip had a second purpose: to arrange a general peace among the Indians. To accomplish this goal he claimed it was necessary to call on all the tribes. Those in the vicinity of Amherstburg could hardly be excepted.50

Stickney was not deceived. He suspected that, far from intending to arrange peace, Tecumseh was seeking additional converts to his movement. He thought that the Shawnee was particularly interested in persuading the Chippewas to join him. Actually, as Stickney discovered long after Tecumseh had left Fort Wayne for the British side,

50 Stickney to Governor Hull, 20 June, 1812, Ibid., pp. 140-143.
the chief's plans were far deeper than merely adding one more tribe to his confederation. His talk of peace was intended to buy the time necessary to move his followers across to Canada.

Proof of Tecumseh's real intentions came when some of the warriors who arrived at the fort with him became suddenly ill and were forced to return to Tippecanoe. On their way to the Prophet's town they met an Indian named Petenwan who, unbeknownst to them, was an informer for the Americans. They told him that Tecumseh's peaceful attitude was intended only to fool the Long Knives, and that if "Gov. Harrison should not remain amused with his (Tecumseh's) stories of indoeavoring [sic] to make peace, and should rise, he Gov. Harrison might see his town in ashes as the Indians had last fall."51

Even though Stickney had no proof of Tecumseh's hostile intentions while the chief was still at the fort, he probably, had he been more decisive, could have found some way to detain him or to prevent his trip to Amherstburg. While he was certainly suspicious of Tecumseh's intentions, he felt it would not be "prudent" to try to prevent his leaving. He warned Tecumseh that the United States would have to consider such a journey an "act of enmity." But this toothless warning was the only obstacle he placed in

51 Stickney to Harrison, 30 June, 1812, Ibid., pp. 149-151.
Tecumseh's way. The Americans had passed up numerous chances to capture and imprison Tecumseh and the Prophet and even one chance to have them assassinated. This last chance to stop him before he crossed over to the British side was similarly missed. It is perhaps symbolic that Tecumseh's last visit to an American post before he became involved in the fighting was to the one named after the man who had "pacified" the Northwest Indians a generation before. From this fort he traveled to Amherstburg where he joined the British Indian department and the British military in a last effort to reclaim some of the lands Wayne had taken from the Indians in 1795. In this effort he was joined by Indians of some of the same tribes that had battled Wayne and his predecessors. 52

Tecumseh left Fort Wayne on June 21. The distance, as the crow flies, between Fort Malden and Fort Wayne is about 175 miles. As we have no indication of what mode of conveyance Tecumseh employed, it is impossible to estimate exactly how long it took him to reach British lines across the Detroit River. The first notice of him in Canada came on July 15, more than three weeks after he left Stickney. In a letter to William Claus, Matthew Elliott wrote,

52 Stickney to Hull, 20 June, 1812, Ibid., pp. 140-143. Ironically the Canadian town to which Tecumseh proceeded was named after Jeffrey Amherst, the British commander in the trans-Appalachian region in the 1760's who hated Indians. It was Amherst who first suggested the Indians be decimated with smallpox infected blankets or hunted down with dogs.
We expect to be attacked today or tomorrow. The Indians with us are between 3 & 400 who have resisted every allurement which Genl. Hull laid before them. Tech-kum-thai has kept them faithful—he has shewn himself to be a determined character and a great friend to our Government. 

With Tecumseh's crossing over to the Province of Upper Canada at the beginning of the War of 1812, the rise of the Northwest Indian confederation was complete. It might hardly have seemed so to white observers then and perhaps seems even less so to modern readers. The confederation at the beginning of the war was not the kind of tightly knit political and military organization that whites might have established to meet a similar threat to their existence. It had no treaties of mutual defense, no constitution, no cost-sharing agreements, no manpower quotas. It existed, in fact, more as a concept to which tribes, or portions of tribes, might subscribe if and when they felt so moved. Because of the ease with which Indians could join and leave the confederation, the British were seldom able, during the fighting, to be absolutely sure how many Indians they could muster for any particular engagement. This, however, was nothing new with the confederation, it had been true of alliances between the Indians and the Europeans from the time of the first wars in which

Indians were employed as allies by the whites.

Once the fighting began there was little chance for the confederation to be increased. Whereas in peace there had been time for Tecumseh and the Prophet to proselytize for their movement, in war there was time only to fight and prepare for the next battle. Yet, in another sense, the resistance of the confederation Indians to the Americans during the war's opening stages was perhaps as effective in securing converts as all the preaching and exhortation had been before. Actions do often speak louder than words.

Unfortunately it is impossible to determine how many Indians joined in the resistance to the United States as a result of the years of effort Tecumseh and the Prophet had expended to spread their message, and how many joined because, after the first few months of fighting, it looked as if the British were on the way to a speedy and complete victory over the Americans. Certainly British successes at Michilimackinac and Detroit brought large numbers of additional Indians into the British camp. Both the Americans and the British had long known that nothing succeeded with the Indians like success, and in the first part of the war the British seemed to have a corner on that commodity.

Recognition must also be given to the fact that a good proportion of the Indians who fought for the British
did so not because they had become adherents of the con-
federation but because of the efforts of the British-
controlled fur companies and their traders, men like
Robert Dickson. Dickson eventually brought hundreds of
Indians from the Michilimackinac area into the conflict
on the British side and was rewarded for his efforts by an
appointment as temporary Superintendent of Indian Affairs
among the Western Indians.54

A fault common to many historians of the Northwest
Indian confederation is that they have seen every Indian
who fought with the British as a follower of Tecumseh and
dedicated to the confederation. The facts indicate other-
wise. The confederation did not by any means comprise the
entire Indian arm of the British forces during the war, though
it must be seen as a significant element of that arm. Simi-
larly, every Indian who carried a gun for the British was
not necessarily devoted to Tecumseh, the Prophet or their
movement.

What then was the significance of the brothers'
movement to the British, the Americans and to the Indians
allied with one or the other of the white powers? To the
British the Prophet's revival and Tecumseh's confederation
represented one means to disseminate their messages of

54Horsman, Matthew Elliott, p. 205.
friendship among the Indians in the years after the Chesapeake affair, while at the same time building a potential fighting force which they could use against the Americans in case of war. But against the advantage of gaining the Indians as allies, the British were forced to consider the possibility that these allies could do them considerable damage if they became involved in fighting on the frontiers before the British were ready to declare war. Unfortunately, while the British were aware of the possibility of such an eventuality, they never found the means to prevent it. The result was that such eruptions on the frontier after 1810 did much to hasten the coming of the war. Thus the British use of the confederation, which they had intended as a protection against the day war might occur, actually helped cause that war.

To the Americans the Indian revival and confederation represented a constant yet unpredictable threat, not only to the peace, but more basically to the success of American land policy. The message the brothers spread, reversion to the ways of the Indian before contact with the whites coupled with insistence on retention of Indian land, stood in direct confrontation with the American government's policy of "civilizing" the Indians and relegating them to ever dwindling territories which were supposedly reserved for the Indian alone. As long as the brothers lived and preached there was always the possibility that the United
States could find itself in a predicament like the one that prevailed in the Old Northwest in the years between the Revolution and Wayne's victory at Fallen Timbers. During those years the Indians, in a loose confederation bolstered by British support, made American expansion into that region impossible. To Americans this was an intolerable situation. It is hardly surprising then, that American officials, once they understood the threat to their policies posed by the Shawnee pair, dedicated themselves to the eradication of their movement.

To Indian leaders, the village chiefs, the warriors of the older generation, the Prophet's revival and Tecumseh's attempts at establishing a confederation represented a threat to the peace which they themselves had so reluctantly, yet so tenaciously accepted from the Americans at Greenville in 1795. Those men, who had survived the wars of the 1790's, argued with their young warriors that further resistance to the Americans was not only foolhardy but impossible. Some of these old men had the bitter pleasure of surviving still another war, that of 1812. That war taught the young men the lesson which their fathers had been unable to communicate to them.

To these young men, however, those who had not accepted the finality of Wayne's victory, those who restlessly watched their elders sign successive treaties deeding
more and more of their ancestral lands to the voracious American pioneer, the revival and confederation held out the hope, however faint, that the Indians could, whether by natural or supernatural means, or perhaps a combination of both, somehow retain not only their lands but also a way of life which their people had known for centuries. But according to the teaching of the Prophet, a return to those golden days could only be had through ritual purification and rejection of the ways of the whites. Essential to such a purification was a segregation of the red and white races. This, in turn, could not be achieved without reserving large tracts of land for the Indians. Only when this purification was complete would the Great Spirit smile on his red children and restore them to their former prosperity and happiness.

Although there is no record of Tecumseh's having made reference to the idea of purification as preached by his brother, he surely understood the need for Indian retention of Indian land. His ideas of common ownership and refusal to sell more of their birthright to the Americans appealed to the young warriors, many of whom eventually became supporters of the confederation.

However, the hopes of the Indians, either for supernatural intervention in their affairs or for an organization among themselves which would be strong enough to resist American demands for land proved to be in vain. We have no
idea when the Prophet finally accepted the notion that white help might be necessary to achieve his goals. Certainly such help would hardly have been consistent with the philosophy of his revival. But Tecumseh, perhaps as early as 1808, came to understand that for the Indians to keep their land out of American hands would require British support. The Indians of the Old Northwest had had valuable lessons about the nature of the British as allies, both at the end of the American Revolution and again after Fallen Timbers. British help was given on British terms, terms never really calculated to gain any advantage for the Indians that was not multiplied many times over for the King. The Indians had also learned that British promises, be they of land or military support, were often impossible to collect on.

It was not that Tecumseh, or many of his followers, had forgotten these lessons by 1812, it was rather that they realized that if they were to have the slightest chance of retaining their lands they would have to take advantage of the disagreement brewing between the British and the Americans. This meant accepting British help on British terms once again. Unfortunately, even a clear British victory in war could not guarantee the Indians that they would achieve their goal.
The odds for success for an Indian movement such as the one begun by these brothers after 1805 were, sadly, no better than they had been for similar movements in the past. The rise of an Indian confederation with religious overtones was no new phenomenon in 1805. Such bodies had risen before and would continue to spring up long after Tecumseh and Elskwatawa had passed into history. They rose, seemingly a natural response, when the Indians were pushed by white encroachments beyond the limits of their ability to resist by human means. The sachem of the Wampanoag tribe, Metacom, or King Philip as the English called him, formed a confederation to resist the English as early as 1675. The wars waged by this confederation in New England cost hundreds of lives. King Philip died in battle in 1676. His followers were practically exterminated.

Pontiac's confederation, which rose against the British at the end of the Seven Years' War, was guided by the visions of a Delaware Prophet whose teachings were remarkably similar to those of the Shawnee Prophet two generations later. In the 1830's Black Hawk, who had fought under Tecumseh in the War of 1812, led his people, the Sauks and Foxes, against the Americans in the present-day states of Wisconsin, Illinois and Iowa. He was encouraged

by a prophet too, a man of mixed Sauk and Winnebago blood
called Wabokieshiek. Their struggle resulted in one of
the worst slaughters of Indians in American history. Al-
most 1,000 Sauks and Foxes lost their lives before the
fighting ended. Both Black Hawk and Wabokieshiek were im-
prisoned for a time after the war, and both also met with
President Jackson.\textsuperscript{56} Just as during Tecumseh's time, the
Americans were still trying to impress the Indians with
trips to Washington.

Chief Joseph of the Nez Percé, in his epic struggle
to preserve his people and their lands from the advance of
the whites, also accepted the instruction of a prophet named
Smohalla. Smohalla began preaching about 1870 that the
country was destined by the Great Spirit to be ruled by
the red man again. By 1877, the Nez Percé were at war with
the United States, a war which nearly destroyed the tribe.\textsuperscript{57}

Still another Indian prophet rose in 1888, a Paiute
named Wovoka, son of a dreamer and medicine man, who followed
the same vocation as his father. The Indian revival he
preached taught that the time was near at hand when the
Great Spirit would restore to the Indians all their lost
land as well as their departed friends and relatives. To

\textsuperscript{56}Donald Jackson (ed.), \textit{Black Hawk: an Autobiography},

\textsuperscript{57}Mooney, \textit{The Ghost Dance Religion}, pp. 708-730.
prepare for this day he instructed the Indians to practice a particular dance which came to be known as the Ghost Dance. In the space of a few years this dance spread among the tribes from the plain states south to Texas, west to California and even north across the border to Assiniboia. This rapid spread and the enthusiasm the Indians showed for the revival, of course, alarmed Indian agents all over the West and led to attempts to supress it. The worst violence resulting from these attempts came in South Dakota, at Wounded Knee, where American troops on December 29, 1890, killed almost 300 Dakota Sioux, a third were women and children.\textsuperscript{58}

Although historians have not yet examined it in this light, the possibility exists that the disturbances among the Metis of Canada with which Louis Riel was associated may well have contained elements of this often repeated attempt at Indian revival through an appeal to the supernatural. White society has judged Riel insane, but some of his "delusions" seem remarkably similar to the teachings of earlier Indian messiahs. Certainly the Metis had faith in Riel as a prophet. His visions were similar to those seen by leaders of other Indian revivals, and the response of his followers was no less credulous than the response of

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid., passim.
other Indians to earlier prophets. 59

Like the visions of his predecessors, Riel's dreams were foredoomed. All these attempts to stem the tide of white advance across the continent were born out of a sense of futility. Traditional military resistance to the whites had proven hopeless. Traditional means of retaining structural integrity in Indian societies had failed, as had human attempts to repair the damages. The only response remaining to the Indians was an appeal to a supernatural power. In the case of the movement begun by the Prophet and Tecumseh, as with these other examples, that appeal was doomed before it began. In fact, in retrospect, we can see that such appeals were evidence in themselves that the way of life the Indians were striving to preserve had already passed.

EPILOGUE

Tecumseh had not been in Canada long before he and the Indians under him saw action. By July 12, the Americans under General Hull had crossed the Detroit River and landed unopposed on Canadian soil. However, the old Revolutionary War hero failed to prepare his move against Fort Malden until early in August. By the time he was ready to advance on the fort he had heard the news of the fall of Michilimackinac which affected the morale of his men and certainly discouraged him. Hull also had trouble during his occupation of the Sandwich area in keeping up contact with his source of supply at Brownstown, south of Detroit.¹

On August 4, Tecumseh and a party of about 25 Indians ambushed Hull's supply train near Brownstown. As a result of this setback and the demoralizing news from Michilimackinac, Hull decided to retreat from Canada and return to what he thought was the safety of Fort Detroit. However, by the time he made his decision the Indians were operating so successfully in the country between Detroit and Ohio that Hull's source of supply was continually in danger, and his communi-

¹Hull to Eustis, 4 August, 1812, E. A. Cruikshank (ed.), Documents Relating to the Invasion of Canada and the Surrender of Detroit, 1812. (Ottawa, 1912), pp. 115-117.
cation link with forces in Ohio was extremely tenuous. 2

On August 8, Hull tried to clear these lines of supply and communication, but his forces were ambushed by about 150 British regulars and militia and about 250 Indians under Tecumseh. The fight took place at Monguagon (Magagua), about 14 miles south of Detroit. While the Americans managed to inflict heavy casualties on their attackers and made good their escape, they were nonetheless served a stern warning that they were not safe even a few miles from their stronghold. The Indians were making their presence felt, and the growing menace they posed eventually told on Hull's willingness to continue his resistance. 3

By August 15, the situation of a few weeks earlier had been reversed. By this time Brock had moved to the Detroit River frontier, and the British and Indians were preparing a counter-invasion of the United States at Detroit. Brock called on Hull to surrender not only his fort and the city, but also the forces of several officers under his command. The British general had with him about 700 militia and regulars as well as about 600 Indians led by Tecumseh and Matthew Elliott, who was by this time well into his seventies. Brock warned Hull that if he were forced to


3Hull to Eustis, 8 August, 1812, Ibid., pp. 126-127; Hull to Eustis, 13 August, 1812, Ibid., pp. 138-141.
storm Detroit he might not be able to restrain his Indians after the victory. Panicked by the thought of what might happen to the women and children huddled in Fort Detroit for protection, Hull surrendered without firing a shot.4

Thus, within the first two months of the war, two vital American posts had fallen to the British. Hull was not yet aware of it, but a third, less important post had also been captured. Fort Dearborn at Chicago was taken by a force of Indians the day before Detroit surrendered. In the massacre that followed at Fort Dearborn William Wells died along with other victims.5 With the collapse of these forts the remaining American posts were left in much more vulnerable positions. The British now had unhampered access to the American frontier from three points. Moreover, these victories brought hundreds more Indians to the colors of the King. Those additional Indians, along with their tribesmen already on the British side, and the British regulars and militia were now free, as a result of the fall of those forts, to fight in other locations in the Old Northwest.

4Brock to Hull, 15 August, 1812, Ibid., p. 144; Hull to Brock, 15 August, 1812, Ibid., pp. 144-145; Articles of Capitulation of Fort Detroit and Dependencies, 16 August, 1812, Ibid., pp. 146-147; Hull to Eustis, 26 August, 1812, Ibid., pp. 184-190; for additional documentary information on the situation on the Detroit frontier see Wood (ed.), Select British Documents, I, pp. 455-579 passim.

5Alec R. Gilpin, The War of 1812 in the Old Northwest, (Toronto and East Lansing, 1958), pp. 126-128; As late as August 26, however, the British were still unaware that Fort Dearborn had fallen. See Procter to Brock, 26 August, 1812, Cruikshank (ed.), Documents Relating to the Invasion of Canada, pp. 180-181.
Hull's failure at Detroit (for which he was later court-martialed) placed the responsibility for the American war effort in the Northwest in the hands of William Henry Harrison, who by this time had resigned as Governor of the Indiana Territory to accept a commission in the army. One of Harrison's first actions was to retaliate against the Indians aiding the British by ordering the burning of their villages. Under these orders the Prophet's town at Tippecanoe was destroyed once again, the second time in less than a year.6

Surprisingly, fighting continued in the Old Northwest into the winter months. The most important engagement of that season took place at the River Raisin in January. There is, incidentally, no documentary proof that Tecumseh took part in that battle. The American defeat on that occasion, unfortunately, was followed by a massacre of some of the wounded by drunken Indians, and "Remember the Raisin" served as a battle cry for the Americans in some later engagements.

What Tecumseh did during the winter of 1812-1813 is not clear. Some authors claimed that he again traveled in the South in the hope of raising new recruits for the confederation. Others thought that he was circulating among the northern tribes seeking increased support for the campaigns

of the coming year. However, the only mention of him in primary sources for this period comes from a British document which revealed that he had been ill for some part of the winter. It is possible, if this information is correct, that he did no traveling at all.7

By April, however, Tecumseh was back in action. At that time Brigadier General Henry Procter was preparing a force of about 1,000 regulars and militia and about 1,200 Indians to attack the American Fort Meigs, situated along the Maumee River in present day Wood County, Ohio. The Americans initially proved remarkably resistant, returning the British fire with deadly results. By May 4, Harrison, the commanding officer in the fort, received word that a relief column of some 1,200 Kentuckians was only a few hours away. In a daring move he ordered the relief column to attack the British batteries, which they did with some success on May 5. However, in a surprise counterattack the British and the Indians captured about 500 Kentuckians. At first these prisoners were stripped of their valuables by the Indians, then of articles of clothing and finally the tribesmen, carried away by the exhilaration of victory, began to beat and eventually massacre the stunned captives.8

7Procter to Major-General Sheaffe, 13 January, 1813, Wood (ed.), Select British Documents, II, pp. 3-5.

8General Orders, Adjutant General Edward Baynes, 21 May, 1813, Ibid., pp. 37-40, including returns of Procter’s forces in the expedition against Fort Meigs and the return of prisoners taken on May 5, 1813.
Procter, contrary to conventions of war, made no effort to stop the slaughter which ended only when Tecumseh himself rode up and ordered it to cease. There are numerous accounts, some from eyewitnesses, as to exactly how he stopped the butchery. While they conflict in detail, they agree in principle that had it not been for Tecumseh, the killing would have continued unchecked. Tecumseh's humanity on this occasion was long remembered by the Americans, and contributed in no small degree to his later "canonization" by the American public. Nor were writers on the United States' side of the border lax to point out to their readers that the supposedly civilized British general had permitted the crime while the "savage" Tecumseh put a stop to it.9

For all the captives taken, however, the British objective of reducing Fort Meigs failed. Procter had difficulty keeping his militia with him. By May 7, about half of them had gone home to plant their crops and the other half were reported preparing to leave. The Indians, at the same time, loaded with plunder, were quitting the army in large numbers. Only Tecumseh and about 20 other Indians remained. As a result, Procter finally decided by May 9 to abandon his attempt to take the fort.10


10Procter to Prevost, 14 May, 1813, C Series, RG8/678, p. 267.
This, however, was not Procter's last attempt to capture Fort Meigs. He tried once more in July of 1813, but his second attempt was a worse failure than his first. When he appeared before the fort he found it more strongly defended than previously. Both his troops and the Indians were unwilling to lay siege. Some of the Indians thought the effort so hopeless that they began leaving. To provide them with a more vulnerable target, Procter decided to move against Fort Stephenson on the Sandusky River. Had he been able to reduce this fort he could have cut Harrison's supply line to Fort Meigs and perhaps forced the American general out of his fort to do battle.

Harrison was so concerned about the weak state of Fort Stephenson that he ordered it abandoned. Its commander, Major George Croghan, however, disregarded Harrison's order and prepared to fight. The British and Indians attacked on August 2, but were driven back by heavy American fire. Croghan later reported that they had left nearly 40 dead in the ditches surrounding the fort. British casualties exceeded 100, while the Americans lost one killed and seven wounded. The second summer of the war in the Northwest was hardly the success for the British that the first had been, and worse was still to come. Morale among the British troops was low as were supplies.11

The British depended on Great Lakes transport to provision the soldiers and Indians fighting in the Old Northwest and stationed in parts of Upper Canada. British superiority on the lakes had so far insured them a constant supply of those items necessary to carry on war. However, the Americans were preparing to reverse this superiority in their favor. The result, of course, was the famous Battle of Put-in Bay at which Oliver Perry's fleet, suffering heavy losses itself, managed to defeat the British under Robert Barclay.

This American victory meant that Procter's troops, numbering nearly a thousand, and his Indians, who may have been as many as 3,000 including women and children, could no longer be provisioned if they remained at Fort Malden. It was clear that the next American move would be the recapture of Detroit, probably followed by an invasion of Upper Canada. Procter could either stand and fight in the hope that he could repulse Harrison before his supplies ran out, or he could retreat toward the head of Lake Ontario where other British forces were stationed. He decided to avoid a confrontation with Harrison. 12

12 Oliver Perry to Secretary of the Navy, William Jones, 12 September, 1813, Ibid., p. 540; Harrison to Secretary of War, John Armstrong, 15 September, 1813, Ibid., pp. 540-541; Procter to Noah Freer, 6 September, 1813, Wood (ed.), Select British Documents, II, pp. 269-270; Procter to Major General de Rottenburg, 12 September, 1813, Ibid., pp. 272-273.
By September 13, Procter ordered Fort Malden dismantled. Many of its guns had already been lost as they had been placed aboard one of the ships the Americans had taken at Put-in Bay. Tecumseh and the Indians, likely unaware of the real significance of the British loss on the lakes, protested vehemently against the retreat. Procter, for his part, tried to conceal the implications of the loss from them, probably out of fear that if the Indians realized how vulnerable the British were they might desert.  

By September 27, Procter had ordered the docks and public buildings in Amherstburg burned and had retreated as far as Sandwich, across from Detroit. On the same day Harrison landed at Amherstburg with about 5,000 men. Colonel Richard Mentor Johnson of Kentucky, the man later credited with killing Tecumseh, was supposed to have been on his way with another 1,000. Retreating with the 41st were some 1,200 Indians. What little respect they and their leaders had for Procter was lost as they watched his panicky flight. Tecumseh, throughout the retreat, repeatedly prevailed upon Procter to make a stand against the advancing Americans.  


The first skirmishes between the retreating Indians and the Americans came on October 4, and one day later Harrison's troops faced Procter's veterans and Indians on the battlefield at Moraviantown. The basics of what happened there at the Battle of the Thames have been agreed upon by most authors. The British formed their lines with the Indians on the right, in swampy ground. There were probably about 500 Indians, the rest having quit the British before or during the retreat. At the first American attack the British troops broke and ran, leaving the Indians to face the fury of about 3,000 soldiers. For a time the Indians resisted. Sometime during that resistance Tecumseh was fatally wounded. When it became apparent to the Indians that they would be decimated if they fought on, they abandoned the field taking as many of their dead and wounded as they could carry off.

British reports of the battle did not mention Tecumseh's death until nearly three weeks after the event. It is not surprising, given the confusion of the British flight, that Procter did not know Tecumseh had been killed. However, American sources indicate that they heard rumors of Tecumseh's death shortly after the battle. Later Harrison recalled looking over the battlefield for the chief's body. Several likely corpses were found, but Harrison was unable to identify any of them positively as Tecumseh's. He thought
one might have been that of the Shawnee, but the body was
so badly mutilated that he could not be sure. Nonetheless,
the story that Tecumseh was among the dead reportedly set
the Kentucky troops to flaying the skin from a number of
Indians in order to take home a souvenir of "Tecumseh's"
hide. 15

The immediate question after the battle on the
American side was whether or not Tecumseh was really dead.
Only later did the matter of who killed him receive much
attention. The answer to that question today is the same
as it was on the day after the fight: We simply do not know.
There probably have been a score of claimants for the honor.
While we have their stories, we lack the means to evaluate
them critically. 16

Richard M. Johnson eventually captured the Vice-
Presidency of the United States largely on the claim that
he had killed Tecumseh. His campaign slogan ran, "Hi diddle
dee and hi diddle dumpsey, Col. Johnson killed Tecumseh."
In the days just before the election of 1836, Johnson did
nothing to discourage the use of this ditty. However,
Johnson had earlier issued what is perhaps the most en-

15Procter to de Rottenburg, 23 October, 1813, Wood
(ed.), Select British Documents, II, pp. 323-327; Harrison
to Armstrong, 5 October, 1813, Esarey (ed.), Messages, II,
p. 557; Harrison to Armstrong, 9 October, 1813, Ibid., pp.
558-565; Harrison to General Tipton, 2 May, 1834, Ibid.,
pp. 749-755; Gilpin, War of 1812, pp. 225-226; Drake,
Tecumseh, p. 198.

16Harrison to Tipton, 2 May, 1834, Esarey (ed.),
Messages, II, pp. 749-755; Drake, Tecumseh, pp. 199-219;
Draper MSS, 777Y passim; Klinck (ed.), Tecumseh, pp. 200-220.
lightening statement we have about whether or not he killed the Shawnee. He said,

They say I killed him; How could I tell? I was in too much of a hurry when he was advancing on me to ask his name, or in- quire after the health of his family.17

The question of what became of Tecumseh's body has about as many answers as the question of who killed him. Unfortunately, none of those answers are very enlightening either. Some thought he was buried on the spot, others that the Indians carried him off and buried him elsewhere, and still others held that the Indians kept his bones with them to protect them from falling into the hands of the whites.18

Various skeletons of "Tecumseh" have turned up from time to time. Western Ontario historian, Professor Fred Landon said in an interview with the Montreal Gazette in 1931, "I'd hate to tell you how many times the bones of Tecumseh have been found." Yet none have ever been positively identified. Some sources claim that Tecumseh had a bluish tooth and a broken leg, but these claims cannot be verified and thus they cannot be used to make a certain identification of any bones unearthed.

Although Tecumseh was not known to be a communicant of any Christian denomination, bones supposed to be his were buried in 1941 with the rites of the Anglican church in a

17 Draper MSS, 3YY53.
18 RG10/1993, file 6828 passim.
memorial plot on Walpole Island. A photograph of that
skeleton revealed an embarrassing surplus of some bones
and a shortage of others. Little wonder that authorities
at the time were skeptical that the bones were those of the
Shawnee chief.19

For some reason, we, as a society, have seemed far
more interested in finding answers to the questions of who
killed Tecumseh and where his remains are located than we
have been in obtaining a factual account of his life and
work. Had all the energy expended by historians, amateur
and professional alike, on answering these questions been
spent instead on producing a documented history of the con-
federation we might have had a reliable account of the move-
ment some time ago.

To a man, writers on Tecumseh, the Prophet and the
War of 1812 argue that the confederation died with the
chief. The fact that many of the tribes associated the
confederation signed an armistice with Harrison a little
more than a week after the Battle of the Thames gives weight
to their contention. It is also true that the focus of the
war shifted away from the Old Northwest in the months after
Tecumseh's death. But perhaps inactivity in this theater
of the war meant forced inactivity for some of Tecumseh's

19Clipping from the Montreal Gazette, 20 January,
1931 in RG10/1993, file 6828; unsigned article, Life, 1
September, 1941, p. 23; Clipping from the Amherstburg Echo,
29 August, 1941, in Fort Malden National Park, History Files,
Tecumseh Folder.
allies. The number of references in both British and American sources to continued hostility on the part of some tribes allied with the confederation indicates that more research into their actions after October of 1813 is required.20

Certainly the British were not prepared to see the movement die with Tecumseh. During the winter of 1813-1814 they made efforts to convince the confederation Indians to continue the fight to drive the "Long Knives" from the lands of their ancestors. They also made efforts to find a successor for Tecumseh. Among those considered was a son of Tecumseh, heretofore unmentioned, called Tecumseh the younger. However, Matthew Elliott, in January of 1814, advised against setting the youth up as a chief on the grounds that he was too young, and it was likely that the Indians would be disgusted with his being made a chief before he had proven his manliness.21

In the spring of 1814, before fighting had resumed, the British were pleased to find a replacement for Tecumseh. His brother, the Prophet, was chosen war chief of the Shawnees and his son, the young Tecumseh was made village chief of the same tribe. In April the Prophet was chosen "principal chief of all the Western Nations." He was also given a


sword and pistols from the Prince Regent as a token of
his esteem. The Prophet responded to this by promising
that his "smallest boys capable of carrying arms shall be
ready to march at a moment's notice." Up to this juncture
the Prophet had gone virtually unnoticed in British reports
on the war. What the agency of the British was in his sud-
den elevation is impossible to determine, but certainly the
possibility of some British connivance cannot be discounted.22

However, the choice of the Prophet as leader of the
Indians did little to revitalize their flagging efforts to
drive the Americans back from their lands. American attempts
to take Michilimaicinac and Prairie du Chien in 1814 failed,
but not because of the confederation Indians.23 In the fall
of 1814 an Ottawa chief summed up the way a good many Indians
must have felt by that time. He said,

      Since our Great Chief Tecumtha has been
      killed we do not listen to one another,
      we do not rise together. We hurt our-
      selves by it. It is our own fault . . .24

Despite British efforts to keep the Indians together
there was little success. Some remained loyal, but their

22Sir Gordon Drummond to Freer, 5 February, 1814, C
Series, RG8/257, p. 211; Drummond to Freer, 16 February, 1814,
Ibid., p. 217; Drummond to Prevost, 13 April, 1814, C Series,
RG8/683, p. 33; Drummond to Prevost, 19 April, 1814, MP&HC,
XV, p. 534.

23Gilpin, War of 1812, pp. 235-257; Horsman, War of
1812, pp. 170-171.

24Speech of Naywash, an Ottawa Chief, 6 October,
1814, RG10 F12.
uncoordinated efforts were next to useless. By the time
the Ottawa chief delivered his assessment of the situation
in October, the British and American peace negotiators were
already meeting at Ghent. This conference, which would
eventually arrive at a formula by which hostilities between
the United States and Great Britain could cease, was one in
which the British, for a time at least, attempted to pro-
tect the interests of their Indian allies.

Realizing that the area between Prairie du Chien
and Michilimackinac was in British hands and the country
to the west was controlled by Indians partial to the British,
the negotiators for Britain thought they could propose a
settlement to the United States which would force the Ameri-
cans to recognize the Greenville Treaty line of 1795 as the
boundary between the United States and a massive Indian
reserve. What they were proposing, in effect, was a resur-
rection of the old notion of an Indian buffer state. The
American response to this and other British demands was to
conclude that talks with the British were impossible. They
began preparations to leave the Belgian town.

The British, however, were unwilling to see talks
break off at this point. Accordingly they began to reduce
their demands for territorial concessions. Still the buffer
state idea stuck in the American craw. Their unwillingness
to accept Wayne's line of 1795 as part of a peace was based
on sound reason. Much of this land had been obtained from
the Indians by subsequent treaties. Large amounts of it had been surveyed, sold and settled. The frontiersmen who lived on it could hardly be told they would have to give their homes back to the Indians. Even if the American negotiators had agreed to the idea, who would subsequently have protected the Indians west of the line from future American encroachments? Would British troops police the line? American compliance with the buffer state proposal was clearly impossible.

Finally the British reduced their demands on behalf of the Indians to one point: they would have to be given the boundaries, rights and privileges they enjoyed before the war began. Prime Minister Liverpool asked, "are we honour bound to do more for them?" The question must have been similar to the one the British asked themselves after the Revolution and after the Battle of Fallen Timbers. The answer was similar as well. From this point on the Indians were once again at the mercy of the Americans. The question they faced was not whether, but when, they would lose their lands. Responsibility to the Indians, for their allegiance, their fighting, their dying, was thrown over in exchange for a comfortable settlement with the United States.

25 The best secondary treatment of these negotiations regarding the Indians is the chapter entitled "Abandoning the 'Sable Heroes!'", in Bradford Perkins, Castlereagh and Adams, England and the United States, 1812-1823, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1964), pp. 81-101; the quotation is Liverpool to Bathurst, 14 September, 1814, as cited in Horsman, War of 1812, p. 256.
Meanwhile, the Americans had become somewhat more tractable too. This change was largely the result of news reaching Ghent that the British had burned Washington. After that it did not take the negotiators long to reach an understanding to end the war.

At the close of the fighting most of the Indians of the Old Northwest had already returned to their homes to make whatever sort of peace they could with the victors. The journals of their talks fill scores of pages in the American State Papers.\textsuperscript{26} Even the Prophet participated in these peace talks on behalf of the Shawnees.\textsuperscript{27} However, unlike most of the Indians, he did not return to his old haunts in the United States. Instead he remained in Canada, where the British, to their credit, provided a place for those who chose not to go home. For at least 10 years after the fighting ended the Prophet stayed in the upper province, the leader and spokesman for his mixed lot of displaced Indians.

Initially he was welcomed, and the needs of his followers were seen to by the Indian Department which appeared anxious to maintain his influence with the tribesmen. When they met with the British in council the Prophet spoke for

\textsuperscript{26} These treaties are recorded in American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, II, pp. 1-139 passim.

\textsuperscript{27} Speech of the Shawnee Prophet to Harrison, 4 September, 1815, \textit{Ibid.}, p. 23.
them as a figure of some authority. However, as the war receded into memory, the necessity for maintaining the Prophet decreased. As often happens, old allies slowly became estranged once the emergency which had thrown them together had passed. The Prophet became a burden to the British. His complaints and demands seemed excessive. Finally, in 1825, George Ironsides, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs at Amherstburg, reported that the Prophet had been to Detroit where he

abused our Govt. to Governor Cass, saying that the British had deceived him and all the Indians and that he detested them and looked upon them like the dust under his feet that not the Americans but the British killed his Brother. He is now on his way to Washington and is on his return to visit all the other tribes—Such conduct I should conceive ought to exclude him from His Majesty's Bounty should he again call here . . .

Whether the Prophet was asked to leave Canada or did so voluntarily we do not know. There was word that he was in Ohio in 1826 and 1827, after which he migrated along with other Shawnees to Kansas.29 There, in 1831, the

28Speech of the Prophet at Amherstburg, 14 September, 1815, C Series, RG8/258 part 2, p. 363; Speech of the Prophet at Amherstburg, 15 June, 1820, MP&HC, XXIII, p. 101; Speech of the Prophet at Amherstburg, 27 June, 1820, Ibid., p. 103; George Ironsides to Claus, December, 1825, Ibid., pp. 128-129.

famous painter of American Indians, George Catlin, found him living among his tribesmen. Catlin thought him intriguing, and as well as painting his portrait, attempted to encourage the Prophet to talk about himself. But like a good many old men, the Prophet chose rather to talk about the days when he and his brother were in their prime, about the plans they had to unite all the Indians from Mexico to the Great Lakes into a confederation which would drive the Americans from their lands. The Prophet remained convinced that nothing but the premature death of Tecumseh had defeated their scheme.30

Catlin's notice of the Prophet is the last record of him during his life. At his death he was as obscure as he had been before he began his revival in 1805. The time of his passing and the location of his grave were unmarked by the Americans who only a few decades earlier had found him so dangerous an adversary.

30Catlin's account of his meeting with the Prophet, cited in Mooney, Ghost Dance Religion, p. 691.
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