

## 1783 Joseph Brant message to Governor Frederick Haldimand of Quebec

Brother Asharekowa and Representatives of the King, the sachems and War Chieftains of the Six United Nations of Indians and their Allies have heard that the King, their Father, has made peace with his children the Bostonians. The Indians distinguish by Bostonians, the Americans in Rebellion, as it first began in Boston, and when they heard of it, they found that they were forgot and no mention made of them in said Peace, wherefore they have now sent me to inform themselves before you of the real truth, whether it is so or not, that they are not partakers of that Peace with the King and the Bostonians.

**Comment [DPJ1]:** Brant speaks for the Iroquois peoples (Six Nations). They have heard that they were not included in the peace treaty when the Americans and the British signed a peace treaty. He has come to Quebec to find out the "real truth."

Brother, listen with great attention to our words, we were greatly alarmed and cast down when we heard that news, and it occasions great discontent and surprise with our People; wherefore tell us the real truth from your heart, and we beg that the King will be put in mind by you and recollect what we have been when his people first saw us, and what we have since done for him and his subjects.

**Comment [DPJ2]:** When the Iroquois heard about the peace treaty they were quite alarmed to learn that they were left out. They want the King to be reminded of their service to him and the British cause.

Brother, we, the Mohawks, were the first Indian Nation that took you by the hand like friends and brothers, and invited you to live amongst us, treating you with kindness upon your debarkation in small parties. The Oneidas, our neighbors, were equally well disposed towards you and as a mark of our sincerity and love towards you we fastened your ship to a great mountain at Onondaga, the Center of our Confederacy, and the rest of the Five Nations approving of it. We were then a great people, conquering all Indian Nations round about us, and you in a manner but a handful, after which you increased by degrees and we continued your friends and allies, joining you from time to time against your enemies, sacrificing numbers of our people and leaving their bones scattered in your enemies country. At last we assisted you in conquering all Canada, and then again, for joining you so firmly and faithfully, you renewed your assurances of protecting and defending ourselves, lands and possessions against any encroachment whatsoever, procuring for us the enjoyment of fair and plentiful trade of your people, and sat contented under the shade of the Tree of Peace, tasting the favour and friendship of a great Nation bound to us by Treaty, and able to protect us against all the world.

**Comment [DPJ3]:** Brant reminds the British of the Iroquois' long history of assistance to the British. They had been there when the British first arrived in small numbers and were in a vulnerable position.

**Comment [DPJ4]:** The Iroquois had once been a powerful presence in North America. They served as allies with the British in their wars. In those battles the Iroquois lost many warriors.

Charles M. Johnston, ed., *Valley of the Six Nations* (Toronto, 1964), 38-39.