

## GEORGE MORGAN, INDIAN AGENT EXTRAORDINARY, 1776-1779

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“**A**T what Time do a People violate the Law of Nations, as the U[nited] S[tates] have done, with regard to the N[orth] W[estern] Indians? Only when they think they can do it with Impunity. Justice between Nations is founded on reciprocal Fear. Rome whilst weak was equitable: become more strong than her Neighbours, she ceased to be just. The ambitious & powerful are always unjust. To them the Laws of Nations are mere Chimeras. Cruel, faithless & treacherous, are the Epethets ever bestowed by the proud powerful Oppressor on his weak impotent Neighbour; And Resistance by this weak impotent Neighbour, against his powerful Adversary, is reputed most criminal. No Proof of this is more clear than the Complaint of an English Merchant made to the British House of Commons: ‘Gentlemen,’ said he, ‘You cannot imagine how perfidiously the Negroes treat Us; their Wickedness is so great that on some of the Coasts of Africa they prefer Death to Slavery! When we have bought them, they stab themselves or plunge into the Sea; which is so much Loss to the Purchaser. Judge by this, of the Perfidy & Perversity of that abominable Race.’”<sup>1</sup>

The above indictment of American Indian policy was written in 1793 to Timothy Pickering, who as United States commissioner to treat with the Indians, was one of the formulators of the policy that was being denounced. It was a devastating statement written in response to Pickering’s request for information from that eccentric, ingenious citizen of New Jersey and of the world, George Morgan of Prospect. It was written by one who had long since learned contempt for American treatment of the Indians when, as Indian agent for the tribes of the

<sup>1</sup> George Morgan to Timothy Pickering, April 21, 1793, Papers of Timothy Pickering. (Massachusetts Historical Society).

upper Ohio from 1776 to 1779, he had seen his humanitarian attitude toward the tribesmen set aside for a policy of militaristic browbeating and deception. And he also had the grim satisfaction of witnessing the fulfillment of his prophecies of disaster in the sanguinary defeats by the Indians of Generals Josiah Har-mar and Arthur St. Clair at the head of two large American armies in 1790 and 1791.

Morgan's contempt for American Indian policy in 1793 was deep. His attitude toward the Indians was based on a belief acquired from his experience as trader in the Illinois country for the Philadelphia house of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan, that in inter-racial contacts it was good policy as well as deserved justice that the red men should be treated as equals. "It will be found," he wrote on January 15, 1792, to Samuel Adams, "that Peace, Interest & Happiness of the Indian Nations & of the United States are intimately blended—And the Moment our Policy, Avarice, or Injustice infringe on their Rights, that Moment we deviate from our true Interest & risque the Peace & Happiness of our frontier Settlements." For this reason he believed that the United States should not have permitted settlements north of the Ohio River, but should have acquiesced in the insistence of the tribes upon that stream as the permanent boundary between the two races. He felt that the alleged cessions of Indian lands at the treaties of Fort McIntosh and Fort Harmar were not only fraudulently negotiated but extremely ill advised because they gave rise to wars that cost the United States far more than the lands gained were worth. Morgan believed that in dealing with the Indians about lands the United States should never entrust the negotiations to military officers. "The Indian Ideas of Propriety & Wisdom," he said, "are broken in upon when the Affairs of Peace are committed to War Leaders. It is a contradiction to their Understanding & contrary to every thing they have been used to." The United States should agree, Morgan believed, that no cession of lands should ever be made by the Indians until such cession was genuinely approved by the general confederacy of the tribes of the Northwest.

A strong foundation for permanently peaceful relations, Morgan insisted, would be provided by wise trade regulations in which "the Indian Councils ought to lay down Regulations for the

Trade within their own Territory—or, they ought at least to be consulted therein.” These regulations should be entrusted to the administration of a permanent American superintendent and his deputies who should reside at the important trading posts. The superintendent should be assisted by a council of delegates from the different tribes. To this council should be submitted all complaints of the misconduct of Indians brought by whites. This council should likewise consider all complaints made by Indians against the misconduct of the whites. Morgan believed that some such system, based on equity and justice was necessary. “Should we however,” he warned, “persist in aiming to chastise the Nations for defending their Lands, Lives & Liberties, the more absurdly we pursue the War, the more consistent will be our Conduct; and if they are united in their councils all our Efforts in an unjust War will be vain.”<sup>2</sup>

The United States needed a person with Morgan's direct knowledge of the Indians to handle the situation in the Northwest in 1776. With the retreat of the American army from Canada in that year the St. Lawrence was reopened to supply boats with the result that the possibility of a Tory-Indian counter revolt once more arose to distress the minds of patriots. The first threat of this sort in 1775 had been put down by a combination of circumstances including the invasion of Canada, the first treaty of Pittsburgh, the retention of the services of the Tory Indian agent, Alexander McKee, and the appointment as first American Indian agent of Richard Butler who was a friend of the Shawnee and an opponent to the whites who were responsible for bringing about Dunmore's War.

When Morgan arrived at Pittsburgh in the summer of 1776 to succeed Butler, he found the Pennsylvania frontiersmen on the verge of a panic for fear of a Tory-Indian uprising. It was known that the victorious British were in council at Niagara with the Iroquois for the avowed purpose of getting these Indians to enter the war on their side. The belligerency of certain independent bands of Mingo, Shawnee, and Cherokee Indians of which the famous capture of the daughters of the Kentuckians Callaway and Boone was an incident, seemed to the frontiersmen

<sup>2</sup> George Morgan to Samuel Adams, January 5, 1792, Letters of George Morgan. (Library of Congress).

to confirm their fears. It was at this time that lurid accounts were brought in from the forests north of the Ohio that convinced all frontiersmen that the British Governor, Henry Hamilton, was inciting a general Indian assault on the frontier by his alleged "hair-buying" offers. In August, Matthew Elliot, official emissary sent by the Indian commissioners of the Continental Congress to invite the tribes to an American treaty, returned and reported that "an Indian War is inevitable." His report was so specific as to tribes involved and objectives planned, that it was generally believed by all that Pittsburgh was about to be attacked.<sup>3</sup>

Morgan, therefore, was unable for the moment to show his philo-Indian proclivities. War was expected and he prepared to meet it. He wrote to Lewis Morris, one of the Continental Indian commissioners, insisting that the presence of Morris and his colleagues at Pittsburgh was necessary, otherwise Morgan himself must be vested with extraordinary powers. "This is a critical time," he wrote, "and unless the commissioners can attend to their department, or I have full power, you will hear of things going very wrong." He saw to it that two American spies were present at the British-Indian council at Niagara, and expressed himself as fully convinced that an invasion of the upper Ohio valley was impending.<sup>4</sup>

In the midst of feverish preparations to meet the invasion, while governors were writing panicky letters to county lieutenants, authentic news came from several quarters that frontier fears were unjustified. These assurances had been made possible because, at Morgan's request, William Wilson had been sent on a perilous mission as agent to the Indians to assure them of the peaceful intentions of the United States and to invite them to Pittsburgh to renew the pledges of neutrality made at the first treaty of Pittsburgh in 1775. Morgan had accompanied Wilson to the Shawnee country on the Scioto, where Wilson, guided by some Delawares, proceeded to the Wyandot country and from there to Detroit. They did not succeed in getting the latter tribe

<sup>3</sup> R. G. Thwaites and L. P. Kellogg, *The Revolution on the Upper Ohio, 1775-1777*. (Madison, Wis., 1908), pp. 186, 189. Indian Commissioners at Pittsburgh to Congressional Committee on Indian Affairs, August 2, 1776; Matthew Elliott to Indian Commissioners at Pittsburgh, August 31, 1776, Morgan Letter Book, (Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh), II.

<sup>4</sup> *American Archives*. Fourth Series (Washington, 1837-1846), VI, 475.

to come to the treaty negotiations, but they were able to convince them that the United States sincerely desired mutually friendly relations, thus keeping these Lake Indians peaceful for another year or so. The Wilson-Morgan mission accomplished the simple result of dispelling the ignorance that led the Indians to believe the British, who told the tribesmen that the Americans, or "Big Knives," were hostile. As Wilson wrote: "They [the Wyandot] said they had heard many bad reports from the *Big-Knife*, but my coming among them was a convincing proof that they were false."<sup>5</sup> The result was that a second treaty conference was held at Pittsburgh in October, 1776, at which the neutrality secured in the first treaty of Pittsburgh was reaffirmed by all the nearby tribes except the Mingo Indians.<sup>6</sup>

Morgan could now change his program from one of preparing for war to one of endeavoring to secure peace. The way was clear for him to follow out his ideas of fair treatment for the tribesmen. He believed, as most frontiersmen did not, that the promises by Indians of neutrality were sincere. He sought to strengthen their confidence in the United States by entrusting the Senecas with the responsibility of sending delegates to the implacable Mingo Indians for the purpose of seeking to instill ideas of peace into their minds. When Colonel Dorsey Pentecost of the West Augusta county militia contrived to circulate stories of impending Indian invasions, Morgan brought him smartly to task, informing him that: "Any Person the least acquainted with the Country, or who will take the least pains to inform himself, will pronounce these Expeditions to be, not only improbable, but impracticable."<sup>7</sup>

From this time until his final retirement Morgan pursued a policy that was based on this fundamental fact of Indian neutrality. He knew that of the three alternatives open to the Indians, of assisting the English, of assisting the Americans, or of assisting neither, the tribes naturally much preferred the last. The Indians had no stake in the Anglo-American conflict unless it was forced on them by one party or the other. Morgan also

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* Fifth Series (Washington, 1848-1853), II, 514-518.

<sup>6</sup> George Morgan to United States Continental Congress, November 8, 1776, Morgan Letter Book, I.

<sup>7</sup> George Morgan to Dorsey Pentecost, November 17, 1776, Morgan Letter Book, I.

believed that for this reason an intelligent policy of encouraging neutrality and forbearance would frustrate any attempts that might be made by the British to win the Indians to belligerency. Such a policy of course was doomed from the outset because it did not take into consideration that the United States in reality was financially unable to suppress the Indian hatred of frontiersmen who believed the Indians a menace to their homes.

The first real test of Morgan's policy came early in the year 1777, and the resulting failure clearly revealed this weakness. The problem of this season was what to do with the obstreperous Mingo Indians. This heroic band, a branch of the pro-British Iroquois, were encouraged by Governor Hamilton at Detroit to expect a great British victory as the result of Burgoyne's campaign. Augmented by Shawnee, Wyandot and Delaware warriors and asserting "the air and authority of the Six Nations council" they set forth early in the year to coöperate with Burgoyne and to make attacks on Wheeling, Boonesboro and other stations that made the war such a bloody one in western annals.<sup>8</sup>

Morgan's position was an embarrassing one. There was an obvious danger confronting the frontier and counsels of forbearance seemed strange advice to the frontiersmen. The danger was increased as the dreaded Loyalist conspiracy raised its head again to prepare the way for the expected victory of Burgoyne. Only the spirited action of Colonel Zackwill Morgan was able to keep this from making dangerous headway. By the late summer the Indian agent himself was suspected of treason and was openly treated as if guilty of it by the frontier militia, whose officers refused to deliver him supplies and eventually caused his arrest, imprisonment and trial, although they failed to secure his conviction.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Pennsylvania Archives*, First Series (Philadelphia, 1852-56), V, 446; R. G. Thwaites and L. P. Kellogg, *Frontier Defense on the Upper Ohio, 1777-1778*. (Madison, Wis., 1912) pp. 7-11, 18, 182; Mary C. Darlington, (ed.), *Fort Pitt and Letters from the Frontier* (Pittsburgh, 1892), p. 204; George Morgan to Agent for Indian Affairs in Northern Department, March 9, 1777, Morgan Letter Book, I.

<sup>9</sup> Wilbur H. Siebert, "The Tories of the Upper Ohio," *Biennial Report*, Department of Archives and History of the State of West Virginia (Charleston, W. Va., 1914), pp. 5-7; Hand Correspondence (Library of Congress), Nos. 141, 151; Max Savelle, *George Morgan, Colony Builder* (New York, 1932), pp. 148-151.

For the suppression of the Mingo Indians Morgan at first relied on the outcome of the Seneca mission sent to the West in 1776, but when this failed, because of the partial defection of the Senecas themselves during Burgoyne's and St. Leger's advance, he was forced to adopt other measures. Frontier pleas for protection had been successful in getting Governor Patrick Henry of Virginia to authorize a militia expedition against the Mingo Indians. Morgan thereupon set himself the task of seeking to prevent this action fearing that the inability of undisciplined militia to distinguish between friendly and unfriendly Indians would make the expedition the beginning of a general Indian war. He wrote to Henry on March 9, 1777: "We could very easily chastise these People, was it not for the difficulty before mentioned & our desire to avoid offending other Nations, for to distinguish between a Party of one & the other in cases of meeting in the Woods would be impossible in many cases; and a single mistake might be fatal." Henry argued that the difficulty could be overcome by getting the friendly tribes to fight against the Mingo, but the obvious impracticability of such a proposal must have been apparent even to Henry. Indians disliked to fight against men of their own race at the behest of the whites, and the United States had neither the money nor the leadership necessary to get the Indians to fight American battles.<sup>10</sup>

Morgan had something more than the immediate exigencies of the moment in view. He desired to lay the foundations for permanent peace with the Indians. Sometimes he abandoned argument and pleaded that it would be best to let the Mingo alone until the British were conquered. "Should it please God," he wrote to Patrick Henry on April 1, 1777, "to bless us with Victory to overcome our British Enemies on the Sea Coast, we shall have it in our power to take ample satisfaction of our Indian Enemy." He argued that the Indians had been insulted sufficiently at the hands of the whites to justify a little forbearance from the latter. He informed Henry that parties of whites were violating Indian rights by hunting north of the Ohio. "Parties,"

<sup>10</sup> George Morgan to Continental Congress, January 4, 1777; Shawnee Chiefs to George Morgan, February 28, 1777; George Morgan to Agent for Indian Affairs in Northern Department, March 9, 1777, *Morgan Letter Book*, I; R. G. Thwaites and L. P. Kellogg, *The Revolution on the Upper Ohio, 1775-1777*, p. 244; *Journals of the Continental Congress*, VII, 166.

he said, "have been hunting on their [the Indians'] own Lands, the known Friends to the Commonwealth. These Steps if continued will deprive us of all our Indian Allies, and multiply our Enemies. Even the Spies who have been employed by the County Lieutenants of Monongahelia & Ohio [counties] seem to have gone on this Plan with a premeditated design to involve us in a general Indian War." He denounced the people of the frontier for circulating untrue stories about the Indian dangers, accusing them of a desire to bring about a war. "It is not uncommon," he told Congress, "to hear even those who ought to know better express an ardent desire for an Indian War on account of the fine Lands these poor people possess." The stories circulated by such men when given credence to by "the most sensible people" and communicated to friends in the east "as News to be relied on" became the foundations of eastern approval of western belligerency.<sup>11</sup>

Morgan, therefore, proposed on March 15, 1777, that the states, especially Virginia, defer to Congress in determining a policy and that Congress appoint an investigator "to enquire into the true State of the Country & the real dispositions of the Indians & to report to Congress thereon as well as respecting the propriety of any expeditions or Parties being sent into the Indian Country & to advise the Officers commanding the respective Posts what conduct to observe." He knew what such an investigation would disclose. "I believe it is more necessary," he stated, "to restrain our own people & promote good order among them than to think of aweing the different Nations by expeditions into the Country which may involve us in a general and unequal Quarrel with all the Nations who are at present quiet, but extremely jealous of the least encroachment on their lands."<sup>12</sup>

Morgan's appeal to Congress produced immediate results. Upon receipt of his letter, Congress resolved, on March 25, 1777, that Virginia be requested to suspend the Mingo expedition, and that a copy of Morgan's communication be sent to Governor Henry.

<sup>11</sup> George Morgan and John Neville to Patrick Henry, April 1, 1777; George Morgan to Continental Congress, March 15, 1777, Morgan Letter Book, I.

<sup>12</sup> George Morgan to Continental Congress, March 15, 1777, Morgan Letter Book, I.



Virginia proved surprisingly tractable and orders for the suspension of the expedition were sent at once to the militia officers. The way was thus clear for settlement of the Mingo situation by treaty. Thus Congress, on June 18, 1777, upon the recommendation of Morgan authorized a third treaty to be made at Pittsburgh during the summer and appropriated \$4,200 for the expenses thereof. Morgan had already set the wheels in motion for such negotiations, having early in the spring invited the Delawares, Shawnee, Wyandot, Mingo, and Six Nations to council at Pittsburgh.<sup>13</sup>

That the negotiations were to end in disaster could not be known to the courageous Indian agent, although he knew that the difficulties were tremendous. The Six Nations were at the very moment in the process of going over to the British in support of the Burgoyne-St. Leger campaign. Morgan's task was to win them, or at least the pro-British Senecas, to the Americans and at the same time keep the frontiersmen from wreaking vengeance on these Indians for the belligerent acts that their brethren were committing. In this respect, an allegedly unprovoked atrocity had been committed by Senecas on the road between Pittsburgh and Kittanning that inflamed frontier opinion beyond conciliation. Under British instigation, a Seneca delegation had set out from Niagara for Pittsburgh with a message that demanded as the price of Seneca neutrality the withdrawal of squatters from the Indian lands on the Susquehanna and at Venango at the junction of French Creek and the Allegheny River. The bearers of this message encountered two American frontiersmen, Andrew Simpson and Fergus Moorhead. As was likely in such wilderness meetings, suspicion caused it to be a bloody one. The result was that a message, meant to be peaceful, was delivered on Simpson's dead body, which was found with a war mallet and a tomahawk beside it, the Indian sign that they had been attacked by the whites and that war was to follow. The capture of Moorhead and, subsequently, of Andrew McFarlane added to the frontier anger,

<sup>13</sup> *Journals of the Continental Congress*, VII, 201; VIII, 478, 493; R. G. Thwaites and L. P. Kellogg, *The Revolution on the Upper Ohio, 1775-1777*, p. 247; George Morgan to Delawares, March 6, 1777; George Morgan to Robin George, March 11, 1777; Delawares to George Morgan, March 29, 1777, Morgan Letter Book, I.

and the belief gradually reappeared that a British-Indian attack was to be expected at Pittsburgh.<sup>14</sup>

In the face of these circumstances, Morgan persisted in his policy of forbearance. He wrote to Congress that the Six Nations were partly justified in their complaints of encroachments which, he stated, "we have undeniably made on their Lands, (tho' not at Venango)." He advised that Pennsylvania be requested to remove the trespassers and that the Congressional Indian commissioners in the northern department in New York "repair to Onandaga & remove their Jealousies."

Little could be done by Congress at Onondaga with all New York in a state of active warfare. But in Pennsylvania it was different. Congress appointed a committee to confer with one appointed by the Pennsylvania assembly which reported that the Indian complaints of trespasses were well founded. Congress thereupon resolved that Pennsylvania ought either to remove the intruders or else compensate the Indians. Such action of course, was not taken by the Quaker Commonwealth. Morgan furthermore wrote to the Senecas by way of the Delawares gently rebuking them for the murder of Simpson, but reassuring them that they would be treated well at the treaty negotiations and that trespassers on their lands would be removed.<sup>15</sup>

Thus the conference convened in July, 1777, to lay the basis for permanent peace between the tribes and the Americans, and to placate or quell the Mingo banditti. The Senecas, assured by Morgan that they would be protected from frontier vengeance, were present. It would have been better if the conference had never been held, for its outcome became the basis of a belief that the Americans had deliberately plotted to trap them. The event was briefly described by the Moravian chronicler, Loskiel, who wrote: "It had hardly begun, when all hopes of peace vanished at once, a party of Americans having fired upon a body of Senneka Indians, who came to attend the treaty. By this step

<sup>14</sup> S. P. Hildreth, *Pioneer History* (Cincinnati, 1848), p. 116; Six Nations to the Virginians & Pennsylvanians at Vainyngo, February 2, 1777; George Morgan to Continental Congress, February 17, March 2, 1777; Mamaltaise, a Delaware, to George Morgan, March 4, 1777; Samuel Moorhead to George Morgan, March 21, 1777, Morgan Letter Book, I.

<sup>15</sup> George Morgan to Continental Congress, March 24, 1777; George Morgan to Captain Pipe, April 7, 1777, Morgan Letter Book, I; *Journals of the Continental Congress*, VIII, 392.

the Savages were again enraged at the white people, considered them altogether as traitors and vowed vengeance."<sup>16</sup>

This third treaty conference of Pittsburgh completely wrecked Morgan's policy of general pacification and neutrality. Furthermore his position as major and most respected adviser to Congress was at an end. For the moment, indeed, in the late summer of 1777, he was in custody as a suspected Tory and was about to be subjected to an investigation by Congressional commissioners. Although he remained in office until May, 1779, Indian policy was more and more determined by military leaders. The blunders and insults to the Indians involved in the murder of Cornstalk and in General Edward Hand's squaw campaign, followed in rapid succession until all tribes except the Delawares were avowed enemies of the United States.

A new American Indian policy originated out of these circumstances and made, as it increased in belligerency and duplicity, a less and less willing instrument of its agent, George Morgan. This policy was proposed in March, 1778, by a committee of Congressional commissioners appointed in November, 1777, to investigate the Tory disaffection of which Morgan was suspected to have played a part. Along with Morgan's acquittal, the commissioners recommended the establishment of a regular force of continental troops in the West and the stationing of a strong garrison on the Scioto River "from whence Detachments might continually harass the Savages and lay waste there Towns . . . [and effect] the recalling their murdering Parties from our Country to the Defense of their own." The commissioners also recommended a more reasonable treatment of the Indians, but, as the sequel was to show, the organic difficulties still persisted that made such a policy impossible.<sup>17</sup>

Before the post and troops could be placed in the Indian country, the friendship of the surrounding Indians naturally had to be assured. For this reason the location was changed from the originally proposed Scioto, where the hostile Shawnee hunted, to the Muskingum, the country of the Delawares. This tribe had not been alienated, even by the blundering atrocities of General

<sup>16</sup> G. H. Loskiel, *History of the Mission of the United Brethren Among the Indians in North America* (London, 1794), p. 122.

<sup>17</sup> United States Continental Congress Papers (Library of Congress), Series 78, II, 437-444.

Hand's squaw campaign because it had offended the British by their close friendship with the Americans and defiance of the Six Nations that began with the first treaty of Pittsburgh in 1775. This had led to a series of promises and donations of gifts by the United States to the Indians that the Delawares had in gratitude repaid by conferring the title of Taimenend, the highest possible honor, upon the agent enforcing this policy, George Morgan.<sup>18</sup>

To the Delawares who were still under the influence of Morgan and his neutrality policy this American friendship did not mean an alliance. It meant satisfactory trade relations by which ample supplies of guns, gunpowder, and clothing would come to them. It meant training in the arts of white civilization. It meant education in the white man's ways. It meant even the adoption of Christianity. To the continued reiteration of these desires Morgan turned a willing ear and assured the Delawares of eventual satisfaction. He wrote them early in 1778 from the seat of Congress: "What you desire shall be done. They [Congress] . . . are determined that you shall never have reason to be sorry for being strong in good works." The effect of this was to put the Delawares in disfavor with the other tribes, rumors being continually circulated that first the Wyandot and later the Mingo were coming to attack them. This in turn, of course, made the Delawares more anxious to receive the support of the United States.<sup>19</sup>

The new American policy thus led to a fourth conference in Pittsburgh in 1778, the purpose of which was to prepare for the erecting of a post and the stationing of a garrison in the Delaware country. It was conducted by Congressional commissioners unacquainted with the Indian situation and without the presence of Morgan whose application for the position of commissioner was rejected. His absence was most distinctly felt, for the results were as much of a fiasco, although of a different sort, as was that

<sup>18</sup> United States Indian Commissioners to King Newcomer, August 20, 1776; Indian Commissioners to John Anderson, August 20, 1776, Morgan Letter Book, II; George Morgan to John Killbuck, November 30, 1776; Delawares to George Morgan, February 26, March 29, April 5, 1777; George Morgan to Delawares, March 7, April 10, 1777, Morgan Letter Book, I.

<sup>19</sup> R. G. Thwaites and L. P. Kellogg, *Frontier Defense on the Upper Ohio, 1777-1778*, pp. 136-138.

of the negotiations in 1777. In Morgan's own opinion "there never was a Conference with the Indians so improperly or villainously conducted."<sup>20</sup>

What the American commissioners tried to do and succeeded in doing was to get the Delawares to sign a treaty committing the Indians to an offensive alliance against the British. Such a thing was farthest from the minds of these Indians who signed the treaty as the result of a misunderstanding of the words of the interpreters. As Kelelemund, the head chief of the nation, said in January, 1779: "I have now looked over the Articles of the Treaty again, & find that they are wrote down false, & as I did not understand the Interpreter what he spoke I could not contradict his Interpretation, but I will now speak the truth plain & tell you what I spoke . . . I remember very well that . . . I throwed down every thing that was bad . . . my heart became quite easy, & I was determined to continue in that what I was so often told to do by you, which was to sit quite still & let you and the English make out the matter together . . . all what I agreed to was to pilot the Army 'till beyond our bounds."<sup>21</sup> Morgan spoke this, though he was not present at the conference, for this was his old doctrine of neutrality that he had urged on them in other days.

Morgan, however, did speak in person for the Delawares on this treaty, for it was he who later dictated and wrote their formal protest to Congress. The American treaty commissioners, he said, speaking for them, "put a War Belt & Tomahawk into the hands of the said Delaware Nation & induced some of their Chiefs to sign certain Writings, which to them were perfectly unintelligible & which they have since found were falsely interpreted to them & contained Declarations and Engagements they never intended to make or enter into." This, the Delawares were made to say, had "created great confusion among Us & drove off two hundred of our Peopl[e] into the Neighbourhood of the English."<sup>22</sup>

The United States, nevertheless, pursued its new policy, which by the late spring of 1778, had developed into plans for an expedi-

<sup>20</sup> L. P. Kellogg, (ed.), *Frontier Advance on the Upper Ohio, 1778-1779* (Madison, Wis., 1916), p. 217.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 203.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 320.

tion against Detroit, with the assistance of considerable troops from the East. These plans had to be seriously abbreviated as the result of the Iroquois attack at Wyoming on the Susquehanna River, on July 3d, which required the use of the eastern troops in that section. General Lachlin McIntosh, the Congressional commandant at Pittsburgh, nevertheless persisted in the original plans of aggression with an army of Virginia and Pennsylvania militia that was poorly disciplined and badly supplied. The result was the erection of the two feeble posts of Fort McIntosh and Fort Laurens and the complete loss of the respect of the Delawares. Although the army that dragged itself out of the Muskingum to build Fort Laurens presented a ridiculous spectacle because of its condition and because it was obliged to appeal to the Delawares for sustenance, McIntosh insisted, to the amazement of the Indians, upon putting on the front of a swashbuckling conquistador. On November 22nd, he made the utterly absurd announcement that the tribes of the Northwest would have fourteen days to come to Fort Laurens to make peace. "If any nations or Tribes refuse this offer now," he declared, "I will never make it again nor rest or leave this Country but pursue them while any of them remain upon the face of the earth for I can fill the woods with men as the Trees, or as the Stones are on the ground." Then after asking for supplies, he loudly denounced all enemy Indians, stating "that any nation or people who would not afterwards Join us heartily by taking up the Hatchet with us, and Striking, such refractory People Should be looked upon as Enemys to the United States of America." Upon this declaration, the chronicler relates, the Indians "set up a General Laugh."<sup>23</sup> American influence among the Delawares was at an end and Morgan's retirement was but a matter of time.

Morgan almost sent in his resignation in the fall of 1778, but his duties as commissary for the army prevented him from doing this. The spring of 1779, however, brought additional infamies with the continuation of McIntosh's browbeating policy and with the discovery by Morgan of the secret murder by McIntosh's militia of George White Eyes, head chief of the Delawares. The time had long since passed when Morgan could conscientiously con-

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 178-180, 294; Louis E. Graham, "Fort McIntosh," *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine* (May, 1932), XV, 93-94, 104.

tinue in government service. The only use McIntosh had for an Indian agent was for assistance in directing the application of force. After openly denouncing McIntosh to Congress, he resigned in May, stating that an Indian agent was no longer necessary in his department "further than to act under the sole jurisdiction of the Officer commanding in the Department—which from the conduct of General McIntosh . . . Col. Morgan begs leave to decline—being fully satisfied, that a perseverance in the late adopted Indian Politics will terminate in a general Indian War."<sup>24</sup>

Thus Morgan left the service of his country in a public capacity. He retired to what in later years he described to the British Indian agent, Alexander McKee, as "that quiet rational Life which I have entered into ever since the spring of 1779 & which I had the year before, taken the necessary Steps for entering into when I found our Government could no longer influence the Conduct of those who wished to involve the U[nited] S[tates] in a War with the Indian Nations."<sup>25</sup>

There was no place in the administration of American Indian affairs for such a man as Morgan. In the conflict between races the dominant group seldom acts with reason. The rational life is for those fortunate few who know where to find it. Morgan was a prophet without honor and his prophecy of racial bloodshed and war was, as everyone knows, completely fulfilled.

<sup>24</sup> George Morgan to Members of Congress, May 12, 1784, Letters of George Morgan (Library of Congress); L. P. Kellogg, *Frontier Advance on the Upper Ohio, 1778-1779*, pp. 277, 345.

<sup>25</sup> E. A. Cruickshank, (ed.), *The Correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe* (Toronto, 1931), V, 155.