

To His Excellency Zachary Taylor President of the United States of America.

Father, The undersigned memorialists are members of the Munsee Tribe of Indians, now presently residing in the Delaware Country (Ind. Ter.) who now humbly beg leave to inform your Excellency in regard to the welfare of their Nation. We would in the first place, inform you, how that many years ago, our people were scattered throughout many parts of the United States, but in the course of time our places of residence have become quite altered.

Part of our people here, many years ago resided in the northern part of the state of Ohio, and now presently residing with the Delawares in their Country. We would here make the preliminary remark in regard to our inconvenience by living with the said Delawares. In the first place we do not feel welcome to the enjoyment of the privileges of their country, and we would likewise observe that our Munsee tribe are naturally an enterprising and industrious people, but now living as they do with a different tribe of Indians they do not feel themselves at liberty to practice and exercise their Industry, though they have made great improvements already on the said Delaware lands.

The said Delawares have sold this part of their Country where we reside to the Wyandots, and in this sale of their lands to the said Tribe, there has not been the least kind of calculation made, by which our people might be paid for the valuation of the improvements that they have made on the said Delaware lands. Our people have built good comfortable houses and all the improvements are generally valuable, and they have also built a good and commodious House of worship, and where they attend at every Lord's day to the ^{preaching of the} good words of eternal life, by their kind Missionary. We would further observe, that whereas a part of our Nation have for many years past received the gospel, that they have likewise enjoyed the good effects of it, and by it many of us have been enabled to see the advantages of civilization. We would further state, that whereas we have been told that there will be no remuneration allowed to our people for their

dwelling houses and fields, that this is a great discouragement to our people for making further improvements on the Delaware lands, because it is nothing else, but wasting our strength and industry, and also throwing away labour for nothing.

Your Excellency will please permit us to remind you of our ancient Covenant of Friendship, which was established at East Town (Pan), and which was to be good forever, to remain as long as the Sun would be seen, and as long as Rivers run, and Trees grow. The Commissioners name was Capt. Bullen, who acted on the part of the government of the United States, in making the said important Covenant of peace. He told our people to commit it to Memory in their feeble way of entering into Record, such important national matters.

Thus a Wampum Record was made out directly to that effect, which now still remains in our hands to this present day. He also did let our people have the Flag of the United States, which likewise remains in our possession to this present time. The said Commissioner told our forefathers never to lose this Record of peace & relationship, but to keep it safe always for our remembrance: because he further stated, that at some future period of time, the Munsee Nation might some how unfortunately become overshadowed with a cloud of trouble, then in such a perilous time, if they should be able to show this Record of peace and Friendship, their Great Father would certainly at such a time, release and Comfort his Munsee Children. The said Commissioner further stated that at some future time, if even a small Munsee boy would only be able to show this Covenant of Friendship to our Great Father, and if only partly convince him of the reality of our Covenant, even to such a young lad, favour should be granted. He further told our people, that if even our Great Father hereafter, would have but a small piece of Bread, he would divide a part of it to his Munsee Children. Our said Wampum is divided into thirteen parts, which signifies Friendship strongly established, by the authorized Commission of thirteen Governors of the thirteen original states.

Further your Excellency will please to permit us to state further in regard to other particulars concerning our Nation. Previous to your arrival into our vast Continent, our Ancient Prophets and wise men had a Vision and Revelation in regard to your coming,

though they did not understand fully the meaning of it, whether it was

though they did not understand fully the meaning of it, whether it was to be the almighty himself or our fellow men, this was a matter of deep Consideration for a while with our forefathers untill you did arrive. Our ancient wise men, without any delay made a Song, concerning their expectation of your coming; likewise a Drum was made for the purpose, out of the Shell of a Sea Turtle. The Drumming and their singing of the song were connected together, and were performed jointly together and also dancing, which was performed with great solemnity, in honour to your coming. This foreknowledge of our forefathers of your coming was one year previous to your arrival, our forefathers collected together frequently and performed these celebrations, untill you did arrive, and when the Vessel came at last in open sight, to the eyes of our forefathers at the shore, the appearance of the Vessel at Sea was truly a great mystery to our forefathers, and immediately many wise men and counsellors of high respectability among our ancient forefathers were called and collected together by the runners and influential men of our Nation, in order to ascertain, what that mysterious sight ^{could} be, which was making progress toward the Shore: by the distant appearance of the sails of the Vessel our forefathers first concluded that it was some great Water Fowl, and as the Vessel came nearer to fair open view, they concluded that it must be their God, coming to bring them some new kind of game, and when the Vessel reached the shore, they saw the Captain of the Ship, and then concluded that he must be the almighty himself, and as he had blue eyes, this was another great wonder, and by it they further concluded that he must certainly be the Great God. Our forefathers highly respected the arrival of their Great Father, and did instantly spread white Beaver Skins from the shore where the Vessel landed to a certain tent where the wise men and Counsellors were assembled together, for the Cap. to walk on. The kind disposition of the Captain induced him to tell our forefathers, that he was not the almighty, but that he was their brother, that in ancient times he was with his brethren, and by the various changes that frequently occur in this life, he had some how got separated from his brethren, but he expressed great joy, that he had now arrived and found his brethren again, and hoped that he would never be again separated from his brethren. He further told our forefathers that ^{he} had merely come in search of his red brethren,

and seeing he had discovered his brethren, He would then return to his people, and inform them how that he had discovered their brethren on the great Continent, and which ^{would} cause great joy throughout the nations who were situated beyond the Deep Waters. He gave our forefathers many presents such as hoes and axes, and Tin Buckets, and the next year he came again in company with a large number of his people in order to come and reside among their red brethren: at which time they saw our forefathers, ~~was~~ wearing hoes and axes, and covers to the Tin Buckets about their necks. He then showed our forefathers the design of the hoes and axes, handles were put into stumps, and large trees were cut down before them, which created a general time of laughing, to think how greatly they had been mistaken in regard to the design of the presents that had been given to them.

Father we do further beg leave to state, that when you first arrived into our vast American Continent, you was destitute of land, but your Munsie children were always liberal towards you in granting you their lands according to your necessity. You first requested your Munsie children to grant you as much land, what a Bullock Skin would cover; and which was cut into small cards, which was laid in the form of a circle on the land which you desired to have, and we your Munsie Children directly complied to your request for land. ~~and~~ Furthermore your Excellency will please permit us to state further, that ^{at} another time afterwards, you did, that is figuratively speaking, your Nation applied to our Munsie Tribe again for more land, which was our Father then proposed, that we should grant him as much land as a middling sized Lord could ~~travel~~ travel around a tract of land in one days journey, and again your Munsie children did likewise grant this earnest request for more land. And now Father you have got all our land, and we at this time are very poor, have no land at all, not so much as to set one foot on, and you have plenty of land lying in waste, and we think it would ^{be} better for us to have some of it than to have it lying useless as it presently does, and by our persevering Industry, we think we may get our living out of it.

We would further state in relation to our destitute circumstances. The present amount of annuity ^{allowed to us} is nothing as it were in com-

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comparison to the annuities allowed to other tribes, because some of them now yearly receive from thirty to seventy and one hundred dollars a head, while we the poor Muncie receive something like a dollar a piece, which is almost a trifle, and likewise these tribes never ^{had} no more land than us.

Father, your Excellency will please permit us to speak plainly to you of our needy circumstances, and as you have always told us ~~not~~ not to be backward in telling you of our desires, as you had no distinction toward your red children, and that you had feelings of compassion for them just as much as you did for your own children of your Flesh and Blood, and we have always rejoiced to see the kind feelings of the Government toward us, therefore we would also refer your kind attention to the latter part of our ancient Covenant of Friendship, where you told us that hereafter, if you only had a small piece of Bread, that you would divide a part of it to your poor Muncie children, therefore we would humbly request you, under your kind feelings for us, in order to better our condition, that you will please to grant us Wagons and working Cattle, chains &c. narrow and Broad axes, Ploughs and harrows, Saw Mill and Grist Mill, likewise Cross cut saws, grind Stones, Axes to rim shingles with, and likewise Black Smithing. Likewise that our rising young may be educated by the kindness of the Government of the United States.

Again your Excellency will please permit us to speak in regard to the Delawares having sold us out to the Wyandots, that the said Wyandots will want all the land that they have bought of the Delawares. Thus you see that we are entirely destitute of home. And on account of our living with the said Delawares in their Country, not having no right to form regulations for the good of our Nation, we would observe that it is a disadvantage to us in living on the Delaware lands, and because many of our rights are kept down. The total number of our Muncie tribe including all that are settled in various places is probably about eleven hundred.

And again we would further humbly beg leave to remark in connection to what has already been

said in regard to the Munsee Tribe being liberal toward their Great Father, when he first came to them on this our vast Continent, and made application to our forefathers for a sufficient quantity of land for his subsistence, that his earnest request was freely granted by our forefathers. And we would further say, that we do rejoice with exceeding great joy, to think that our forefathers were able to show kind favour to our Great Father, on his arrival to this Continent, and not only this but we likewise rejoice that our Great and kind Creator, has so highly favoured him in prosperity, since he has come to this Continent, and has rendered him to become a great Nation.

And now our Great Father, your Excellency will please permit us to say further in regard to this important subject, that we observe, that your stature as it were (figuratively speaking) almost reaches the heavens, and your arms extending from the rising of the Sun, and to the going down of the same, and we are sensible that it is the Almighty who is now building you up, on the foundation where our forefathers once stood. Our forefathers first had this greatness granted to them by the good will of the Almighty, but he is now granting it to you. And now in all your splendour and greatness, we do entreat you most tenderly as our Father that you will never forget your poor red children.

We the Museses, were the first tribe that you came to on this Continent, and we were the first ones that listened to your wants for land, and we were the first Indian Nation that received you, our forefathers were then living on Manhattan Island where the City of New York now stands.

Therefore Father be not indifferent or unmindful to the humble entreaty of your poor Munsee children: and now Father we do further humbly entreat you to provide a way to collect and gather your scattered Munsee children: that is we sincerely request your kind feelings towards us, to grant us land of a sufficient size where the whole of our Munsee Tribe can be collected together. And if we are collected together as a tribe, it will turn out as we hope, for our best good. We do therefore further entreat you as our Father, that your Excellency will please to permit us to explore the vacant land in the (Ind.) (Ter.) and that you will

please to send us the permission through the hands of our Agent of the Fort Leavenworth Agency. And we would here further entreat your Excellency that you will be so kind as to lay the foundation for the lasting residence of our

mit us to explore the vacant land in the (Ind.) (Tr.), and that you will

please to send us the permission through the hands of our Agent of the Fort Leavenworth Agency. And we would here further entreat your Excellency that you will be so kind as to lay the foundation for the lasting residence of your Munsee Children. We would likewise humbly entreat your kindness, that if you grant us home, that you will be so good as to remove us there, and to allow us one years provision.

We would further beg leave to inform your Excellency that a few years ago we sent one of our influential men to the seat of Government, for the purpose of laying before the United States, the object of high importance, which we had in ^{view} for many years past, which was concerning the old Treaty, which the said Government made with our Munsee tribe in connection with some other tribes of Indians, when our people together with the other tribes did sell the large Territory of land about one hundred and twenty miles square, which was situated, and laid on the north part of the state of Ohio, commonly called lower Sandusky: and our people never have received nothing at all yet, from the avails of said Treaty. Therefore we would most tenderly refer your kind attention to the fourth article of said Treaty, which was made on the fourth of July 1765. Our Delegate was told by the Government, that he had come unexpected, that nothing could be done for our people then at that time, under the said Treaty, because Government ^{was} unprepared to act on it then, and that our people were required to send again to the said Government in two years time, and by all means the next time they send, to notify the Government that such a one was coming again for that purpose, and Govt. agreed by their kind Officers, likewise to bear the expences of such Delegates going on this important purpose. Now we inform you that we want to send again next winter, and that Government would be so kind as to befriend us some how in order to enable our Delegates to go to go to the Seat of Government.

We would further state to your Excellency, that our Tribe did actually own the said immense Territory of land, the Shawnee and Senecas, had but a small right to it, because they were few in number, and they were living with the Wyandots, as to the Chipeways, Ottawas, and Potawatamies, they were nothing but hunters on the said Territory, the Delawarees had no right at all, no more than this, our Munsee Tribe under the kind respect they had for the Delawarees, who were agreeable

to the ancient customs of our forefathers, politically related to us as our sisters, for this reason they inserted the Delawares into the said Treaty. It will soon be forty four years since the said Treaty was made, & up to the present time our Munsee tribe, have never yet received the least benefit, from the avails of said Treaty. We think that we are entitled to all the back annuities, and likewise we would recant, disannul, revoke and exclude the Delawares entirely out of the said Treaty, because they never owned or ever were in possession of the said Territory of land. And furthermore we would inform your Excellency that our Munsee tribe was the legal and rightful owners of the said vast Territory of land, and they were the only ones that ever held possession of the said Country of land; and likewise the only owners of it. Therefore ~~we think~~ we think that it would be just and right for us, from henceforth forever hereafter to receive annually the one thousand dollars stipulated in the said Treaty.

Our people have really been patient for nearly half a century, while the other tribes, have probably been drawing annuities from the said Treaty, who had but a small right to it. There were thirty two families of our Munsee tribe then actually residing on the said Territory of land, and their population was two hundred ^{at} the time the said Treaty was made; and vast improvements were made by our people on the said Territory of land, amounting to one thousand acres without the least shadow of doubt. Some of our people are yet living among us, who were born and raised in the said Territory of land, and did reside there until it was sold to the Government of the United States.

We would likewise further state in regard to the other tribes who were included in the stipulations of said Treaty, that they really are better off in circumstances than what we are at this present time, and they can do better without the benefit of said Treaty than what we can.

We would further inform you of the Names of our Chiefs who signed the said Treaty. The Name of the first was Pucconsittond, and the other was Pamehlot. The first was the head chief of the Nation, who died on the place before our people moved from there. The other was our War Chief. We do further remark that we shall ever consider ourselves to be under the peaceable and quiet protection of the United States.

We would further inform your Excellency that our Munsee Tribe did also own land in Genesee County in the State of New

We would further inform your Excellency that our Munsee Tribe did also own land in Genesee County in the State of New York, which was a place of residence of one Long Arm, an ancient Chief of our Munsee Tribe, who resided near Rochester some time before the revolutionary War. Our Munsee tribe have never ^{yet} received ^{benefit} from the avails of said County of land; we would therefore enquire in regard to that land, and in what position it lies in the eyes of the Government; because it is altogether likely that the United States must have had some kind of Jurisdiction over that part of the State of New-York at the time our said Chief Long Arm resided there on the land. We do further humbly pray, that your Excellency will be so kind as to take particular notice of our important enquiries and that you will please to send us answers to our enquiries as soon as convenience will become favourable. By thus complying to our humble Memorial, you much oblige your unworthy Memorialists and Munsee Children. There are seven important enquiries in our Memorial, the first enquiry, in regard to implements of husbandry, the second in regard to one year's provision, ~~the third in regard to~~, in regard to our being removed by the kindness of Government. The fourth in regard to permission from Government for exploring vacant land in the (Ind.) (Ter.) The fifth in regard to the said mentioned Treaty, the sixth in regard to the land in Genesee County in the State of New-York. The seventh in regard to our kind Father granting us land. May your Excellency please to send us answer to our Memorial, to the hands of our Agent as soon as practicable. And we your unworthy Memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray. In Testimony of the same we have hereunto set our hands this 29th of March 1849.

Done at the
Munsee Settlement
(Ind.) (Ter.)
March 29th 1849.

his
Gideon x Williams
mark

his
John x Quasrobe
mark

John Killbuck

his
Joseph x Francis
mark

John Wrightman

This was written by
John W. Newcom a Mohokanuk
or Stockbridge Indian, who
was educated at Cornwall (Con.)

and who wrote this under the
request of his Munsee friends

(Decorative flourish)

Samuel Williams
John Henry
William Caleb
John Smith
John Brown
Esqr. Nicodemus
Leonard Snake

Daniel Anderson

Thomas Hill

Yaptaw Hill

John Thomas

John Lewis

John Daniel

John Wilson

Doctor Block

John^{his} Young
mark