

it, without a formal Cession by its acknowledged Owners. The Oneidas and Tuscaroras who occupied the Frontiers, had been our Friends during the Revolution, and every Consideration of Justice demanded that we should deal generously with our late Allies, and take no Lands but with their full Consent, and upon payment of a satisfactory Price. Beyond these, there dwelt the Onondagas, Cayugas and Senecas, our late Enemies, and still warmly attached to the British Interests, and in close Relation with their former Allies, who still occupied the Military Posts at Oswego and Niagara, and enjoyed an unrestricted Trade with these Nations. The Cayugas and Senecas had suffered much in the Expedition of Sullivan's Army in 1779, and the Casualties of the War had thinned their Numbers, and reduced them to comparative Poverty, yet they were still able to prevent Settlements upon their Lands, unless protected by a Military Force; and Policy would have alone suggested the Purchase of their Rights to the Soil, had not the uniform Practice of the Government dictated such a Course.

Having had many unhappy Proofs of the Dangers arising from the Purchase of Indian Lands by Individuals, the Colonial Authorities had for many Years placed Restrictions upon the Practice; and the Framers of the first State Constitution wisely forbade any Purchase of Lands from the Natives, except by Commissioners acting under the Authority and in behalf of the State. In 1779 the first State Commissioners were appointed, but the