

arms. They had peace and plenty, and were content. But in the hinterland it was different. At Detroit, Michilimackinac, and other forts were French trading communities, which, being far from the seat of war and government, were slow to realize that they were no longer subjects of the French king. Hostile themselves, these French traders naturally encouraged the Indians in an attitude of hostility to the incoming British. They said that a French fleet and army were on their way to Canada to recover the territory. Even if Canada were lost, Louisiana was still French, and, if only the British could be kept out of the west, the trade that had hitherto gone down the St Lawrence might now go by way of the Mississippi.

The commander-in-chief of the British forces in North America, Sir Jeffery Amherst, despised the red men. They were 'only fit to live with the inhabitants of the woods, being more nearly allied to the Brute than to the Human creation.' Other British officers had much the same attitude. Colonel Henry Bouquet, on a suggestion made to him by Amherst that blankets infected with small-pox might be distributed to good purpose among the savages, not only fell in with Amherst's