

councillors because our people think we have wisdom above others amongst us. Then let us show our wisdom. Let us show our wisdom by choosing the right path now while we yet have a choice.

“We have always lived and received our needs in clothing, shelter, and food from the countless multitudes of buffalo that have been with us since the earliest memory of our people. No-one with open eyes and open minds can doubt that the buffalo will soon be a thing of the past. Will our people live as before when this comes to pass? No! They will die and become just a memory unless we find another way.

“For my part, I think that the Queen Mother has offered us a new way and I have faith in the things my brother Mista-wa-sis has told you. The mother earth has always given us plenty with the grass that fed the buffalo. Surely we Indians can learn the ways of living that made the white man strong and able to vanquish all the great tribes of the southern nations. The white men never had the buffalo but I am told they have cattle in the thousands that are covering the prairie for miles and will replace the buffalo in the Long Knives’ country and may even spread over our lands. The white men number their lodges by the thousands, not like us who can only count our teepees by tens. I will accept the Queen’s hand for my people. I have spoken.”

With the last of his words, the councillors of both main speakers rose to their feet, together held up their hands as a gesture of acceptance, and again took their places. Other chiefs among the assembly spoke a few words in agreement. The greater majority with a few exceptions had accepted the views of the two main chiefs.

Mista-wa-sis adjourned the meeting by saying, “It is good that my brothers go back to their teepees and study these matters with care. We will not be hasty. You will have a chance to ask questions on things you want cleared up. We will have our interpreter mark down the things we think we should have.”

To this the Indians agreed. Dismissed, many of the chiefs came up and shook hands with Mista-wa-sis and Ah-tuk-a-kup, thus expressing their unanimous approval of the speeches of the two men that had swung the meeting in favour of treaty terms. I noticed that Poundmaker and The Badger were not among those who came forward to shake hands.

After I had retired to our tent, I lay awake thinking of the things spoken by the two chiefs, and marvelled at the confidence they both felt in the fairness of the justice carried out by this slender arm of the Queen Mother. The statement that