

**Foreign Affairs in a Native Context:
The Significance of Foreign Relations on Thomas Jefferson's
Native American Views.**

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of
Master of Social Sciences in History
at
The University of Waikato
by
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THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

2016

Abstract

There has been considerable research into Native American history in recent times, with much analysis of what transpired in the early years of the United States, and how events from the late 18th and early 19th centuries have impacted the Native Americans. As a prominent figure, Thomas Jefferson made decisions that undoubtedly affected the Native tribes, yet his Native American ideas have not received as much attention from scholars as his thinking about most other topics. The majority of literature that has been produced which relates to Jefferson's attitudes about Native Americans, has not adequately considered the importance that foreign relations played in shaping his thinking. The purpose of this study is to examine the significance of foreign affairs on Jefferson's views about Native Americans, and to determine whether foreign affairs was a critical factor in influencing his plans. To ascertain the importance of foreign relations in shaping Jefferson's thinking about the Native Americans, an exploration of his writing was conducted, in which all documents that fell within the scope of this research project were analysed, and all relevant material used in this thesis. The documents used for this study were found online in the Jefferson Papers at the United States National Archives.

Findings from this study clearly show that foreign relations had a major impact on Jefferson's thinking about the Native Americans. The two predominant themes that emerged from his writing were conflict and land; foreign affairs primarily influenced Jefferson's views in relation to these topics. Because of the prominence of these themes, they were chosen as the focus of the two chapters for this thesis. Within the themes of conflict and land, the affect that foreign relations had on Jefferson's ideas is evident on a number of issues. He believed that most of the conflict with the Native Americans occurred because of the interference of foreign agents. The impact of foreign affairs can be seen in Jefferson's views about trade with the Native Americans, and his thoughts on agriculture were clearly shaped by concerns about other nations. The influence of foreign relations is unmistakable in Jefferson's thoughts about national security, and its effect can also be seen in the development of his ideas about Native American removal. Findings from this thesis add depth to an important factor that shaped Jefferson's

thinking, and help in gaining an understanding of his decision making regarding the Native Americans.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my family for all their support; their support has been particularly important over the last couple of years while I have been working on my Masters. I would also like to thank Michelle for all her support while I have been completing my Masters; her help and support has been crucial, and I appreciate it greatly. I would like to thank the staff of the history department, particularly Cathy Coleborne, Nepia Mahuika, Rowland Weston, for everything over the last two years; I have undoubtedly benefited considerably from their knowledge and expertise, and I'm certain that what I have learned will be an enormous help with my career ahead. I must reserve my biggest thank you for my supervisor, Raymond Richards, who has been incredibly helpful, and has taught me a lot; I am very appreciative of all the time he has invested in helping me throughout this process.

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Introduction

Research on the history of First-Peoples has increased significantly in recent years, with a number of pertinent issues being explored, ranging from land rights to social equality. Within the field of study on First-Peoples, the Native Americans have featured prominently, with a substantial amount of research conducted. A major focus of the scholarship has been how the Europeans, following their arrival in North America, treated the Native Americans. A period that is important to Native American research, particularly in reference to land and culture, is the late 18th and early 19th century; a key figure from this period is Thomas Jefferson. As secretary of state from 1790-1793, vice-president from 1797-1801, and then president from 1801-1809, Jefferson was in pivotal positions to influence United States Native American policy. As an important individual in United States society, his views on the Native Americans had considerable influence on public opinion; because of this fact, a close examination of Jefferson's writing regarding his Native American ideas is merited. Thomas Jefferson wrote at length about the Native Americans throughout his life, on a range of subjects; the result is a substantial collection of documents relating to Jefferson's views about Native American people. His writing has been heavily scrutinized and debated by a succession of academics on a range of different topics. A topic that comparatively has not received much attention is Jefferson's views about Native Americans; scholarship has been conducted on the subject, but the field is small when compared to literature about other topics. In analysing Jefferson's writing relating to the Native Americans, scholars have tried to explain his thinking on a number of different issues; they have sought to interpret meaning, clarify Jefferson's position, and looked at the motivation behind his words. In this endeavour, factors that shaped Jefferson's thinking about the Native Americans have been scrutinised. A contributing influence on Jefferson's thinking that has not been extensively considered is foreign affairs; some scholars have explored its significance, but a detailed analysis of the impact that it had on Jefferson's views has not been carried out. Because an in-depth study of the importance of foreign affairs has not been conducted, further research in this area is required. An exploration of Thomas Jefferson's writing reveals the significant

role that foreign relations played in shaping his attitudes about the Native Americans.

The material for this thesis has been divided up thematically in accordance with the predominance of land and conflict in Jefferson's writing regarding foreign affairs and the Native Americans. The first chapter centres on conflict, in which the intersection between foreign affairs, conflict, and Jefferson's views regarding Native Americans will be explored. It will be shown that foreign affairs in conjunction with the topic of conflict had a clear influence on Jefferson's ideas concerning the Native Americans. The significance of Native American involvement during the American War of Independence will be explained, with the importance of historical context emphasised when interpreting Jefferson's writing. The economic repercussions of regular warfare with the Native Americans, and the implications they had on Jefferson's thinking will be discussed. I will show that Jefferson attributed much of the fighting with the Native Americans to interference from foreign nations. The role Jefferson believed a negative British influence had on the Native Americans will be discussed, as will the growing concerns he had about Spain. His frustration regarding the actions of foreign officials and agents will be articulated in the first chapter. Some of Jefferson's decisions will be questioned, with a particular focus on his advocacy for severe treatment against hostile tribes. It will be shown that his Native American plans were heavily influenced by consideration of how foreign nations might react. The measures Jefferson proposed to try to minimise the influence of foreign nations on the tribes will also be looked at in the course of the first chapter. As president, Jefferson used a range of different approaches to try to build close relationships with the Native Americans. One approach that he used related to trade; how he believed trade could help with building close ties with the tribes will be discussed, along with Jefferson's views about the consequences of foreign nations trading with the Native Americans. Agriculture was an important aspect of Jefferson's plans for the Native American; why he believed it was imperative for the tribes to adopt agriculture will be shown. Its relevance for reducing conflict and minimising foreign influence will be addressed. The first chapter will conclude with an analysis of the clear impact of the War of 1812 on Jefferson's thinking regarding the Native Americans. In the

second chapter, the great significance of foreign affairs in shaping Jefferson's ideas about Native land will be explored. The relevance of the American War of Independence for Jefferson's thinking about Native American land will be explained; how his views about Native land were affected by foreign affairs in the years immediately following the war will also be shown. Chapter two will demonstrate that Jefferson's thinking was frequently influenced by his desire to minimise the likelihood that tribes would be open to advances from foreign nations; the desire to reduce foreign influence had clear consequences for his plans concerning Native land. It will be shown that economic factors, and the establishment of close relations with the tribes, were both clear considerations in his thinking about Native lands. Jefferson was exasperated by foreign agents and officials who he believed encouraged the tribes to disavow treaties and interfered in United States affairs with the Native Americans. Jefferson's views on United States pre-emption rights will be addressed in chapter two, in which the implications of his views for relations with the tribes will be discussed. Jefferson's ideas about Native land during his time as president will be explored. His desire to acquire land from the tribes will be addressed, including key factors that were relevant to his ability to obtain land. Jefferson believed that it was essential to strengthen the borders of the United States, and this concern clearly shaped his ideas about Native land; how border security influenced his thinking regarding Native lands will be discussed. Jefferson used many strategies in order to acquire land from the Native tribes, and these will be explored in chapter two. The significance of agriculture and trade for Jefferson's thinking about Native lands will be explored also in chapter two, as will how he sought to capitalise on Native American hostility in order to obtain land. The idea of removing the Native American tribes west of the Mississippi clearly affected Jefferson's views regarding Native land, and this will be shown, as will the undeniable impact that the War of 1812 had on Jefferson's thinking concerning Native lands. Following chapter two, conclusions will be drawn from the material as a whole, and the significance of foreign affairs for Jefferson's thoughts regarding Native Americans will be explained. It will be demonstrated how gaining a thorough understanding of the importance of foreign affairs for Jefferson's ideas about the Native Americans can help with understanding his thinking, and adds depth to an element that is crucial in any analysis of his work. For this thesis, there are terms

that will be defined to help with understanding their use and to clarify meaning. The term conflict is widely used throughout this thesis; it is used to refer to tension or disagreements between two sides, as well as armed conflict or open warfare. Hostile is a term that for this thesis refers primarily to Native tribes that are confrontational, or have engaged in open hostilities against another group. For this thesis, the term Native American has been preferred to Indian, as while Jefferson frequently referred to the Native Americans as Indians, the term Native American is more appropriate for the present.

The information for this thesis has been drawn entirely from the Jefferson papers, online at the United States National Archives. All of Jefferson's writing held at the National Archives concerning the Native Americans have been systematically scrutinized and considered for inclusion. All material that relates to the influence of foreign affairs on Jefferson's ideas about the Native Americans has been used in the writing of this thesis, which provides a detailed account of the importance of foreign affairs in shaping Jefferson's views about the Native Americans. The National Historical Publications Records Commission, which is part of the United States National Archives, have an agreement with the University of Virginia Press; this agreement has resulted in many documents pertaining to Jefferson becoming available for analysis. The collection includes primarily the Original Series, prepared by the Princeton University Press, and the Retirement Series, produced by the Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello. The collection has sourced documents from over nine hundred repositories and private collections, to provide a collection that accounts for almost every document Jefferson wrote and received. The National Archives also have an early-access program, which has increased the number of documents available for research, as it has made documents available online that have not yet appeared in published volumes. Significant collections of Thomas Jefferson's writing are the *Memoirs, Correspondence, and Miscellanies: From the Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, published in 1829-1830, the H. A. Washington Edition titled *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson: Being his Autobiography, Correspondence, Reports, Messages, Addresses, and Other Writings, Official and Private*, published in 1853-1854, the Ford Edition, titled *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, first published as ten volumes in 1892, and then twelve volumes in 1904, and the Lipscomb-Bergh

Edition titled *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, published from 1903-1907.

These collections are satisfactory, but are not as comprehensive as the collection produced by the Princeton University Press titled *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, which is a major contributor to the Jefferson collection found online at the National Archives. The documentation relating to Jefferson's writing found at the National Archives may not be completely exhaustive, but it is comprehensive, and thus provides enough information to give a reliable view of Jefferson's thinking about the Native Americans.

In order to establish the current state of scholarship about Thomas Jefferson, and to determine the extent that the literature has addressed the influence that foreign affairs had on Jefferson's views about the Native Americans, a review of the existing literature is required. In this literature review, I will examine the most significant scholars and works that relate to Jefferson. The most frequent topics and recurring themes in the literature will be shown, and the most valuable contributions will be highlighted. The major focus of research on Jefferson's views about Native Americans will be explored, with gaps and problems with the research discussed. Writing pertaining to Jefferson's thinking about the Native Americans is relatively limited when compared to literature about his views on other topics. Within this limited, albeit increasingly expanding field of research, the bearing that foreign affairs had in shaping Jefferson's thinking about Native Americans has not been extensively explored, and deserves further attention because of its importance. Some authors have ignored the role of foreign affairs altogether, while those who have addressed the topic have not done so adequately, which precludes a comprehensive understanding of Jefferson's thinking regarding Native American issues. This review will demonstrate that existing scholarship is insufficient to explore the significance of foreign relations on Jefferson's attitudes about the Native Americans. A full appreciation of the importance of foreign affairs on Jefferson's views relating to the Native Americans can only be achieved through an exhaustive analysis of his writings. This review will be organised chronologically, with the leading writers and works in the field examined; and the current state of research regarding Jefferson's thinking about the Native Americans will be shown.

Dumas Malone won the 1975 Pulitzer Prize for his six-volume biography of Thomas Jefferson. In his exploration of Jefferson's life, Malone gave a detailed assessment of Jefferson's thinking about many issues, but his analysis of Jefferson's views on Native Americans was comparatively brief. Malone touched on the exposure that Jefferson had to Native Americans in his youth and the unmistakable impression this made on him, with particular reference to a visit to Williamsburg by Cherokee chief Ontasette in 1762.¹ Malone argued that Jefferson had a "scientific mind, softened by humanitarianism" and a tendency towards sentimentality when it came to Native Americans, expressing admiration for their eloquent oratory, particularly in relation to a speech given by Chief Logan, which lamented the loss of his family, allegedly as a result of the actions of a frontier leader called Michael Cresap.² The biographer also touched on Jefferson's undoubted interest in Native American languages and his defence of Native Americans in his 1785 book *Notes on the State of Virginia*, in which "he discussed the characteristics of the savages with an objectivity which was rare among philosophers and naturalists of other lands."³ Malone discussed how in *Notes on the State of Virginia* Jefferson sought to refute French naturalist the Comte de Buffon's disparaging remarks regarding Native Americans; Jefferson acknowledged that differences existed between racial groups, but attributed them to environmental factors as opposed to any inherent deficiency. Malone argued that for Jefferson "It was not merely in the name of scientific accuracy and simple justice that he spoke. He also defended the honour of human nature and challenged the doctrine of human inequality."⁴ Malone was sympathetic towards Jefferson, trying to provide understanding of Jefferson's views on Native Americans. He referred to Jefferson's positive descriptions of Native American society and his deep interest in their history, as well as what Malone saw as Jefferson's genuine concern for their well-being.

Malone asserted that Jefferson's policies as president concerning the Native Americans "appear to suggest that Jefferson had divested his mind of the

¹ Dumas Malone, *Jefferson & His Time, Volume 1: Jefferson the Virginian* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd, 1948), p. 59.

² *Ibid.*, p. 387.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 385

⁴ Dumas Malone, *Jefferson & His Time, Volume 2: Jefferson and the Rights of Man* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd, 1951), p. 101

sentimentality he had previously held toward the Indians.”⁵ This was an astute observation, as once Jefferson had ascended to the presidency he downplayed affection he felt for the Native Americans and proceeded with a degree of pragmatism; this is evident in his writing. President Jefferson prioritised the concerns of United States citizens, but continued to work towards what he considered best for the Native Americans; as president, he needed to consider many different interests when making decisions, such as the demands of individual states, and this clearly affected his plans for the Native Americans. Malone was right to address the Georgia Compact of 1802, as this was a significant issue for Jefferson early in his presidency, in which Jefferson agreed to work towards the extinguishment of Native land title in Georgia in return for Georgia ceding her western territory.

Malone noted the importance that foreign affairs had in shaping Jefferson’s views in relation to the Native Americans, but his discussion of this topic was minimal and concentrated exclusively on how it influenced his thinking as president, ignoring other periods of his life. Malone made mention of the British refusal to vacate trading posts they continued to occupy in violation of the 1783 Treaty of Paris, and the detrimental impact that Jefferson believed this had on United States relations with the Native tribes.⁶ He also touched on the fact that Jefferson wanted to remove the influence of foreign traders from within United States territory, but did not explore precisely why he was so opposed to foreign traders, or what Jefferson believed to be the consequence of continued exposure to foreign traders on the minds of the Native American tribes.⁷ Malone described how the purchase of the Louisiana Territory by the French in 1800 intensified border concerns, as Jefferson was worried that the Native Americans in the region would fall under French influence; hastening his desire to buy land in an attempt to improve security on the frontiers.⁸ Malone failed to devote enough attention to this topic in order to convey a clear picture of just how significant border concerns were to Jefferson. Malone was correct to suggest that Jefferson’s plans for the Native

⁵ Dumas Malone, *Jefferson & His Time, Volume 4: Jefferson the President, First Term 1801-1805* (Boston: Little Brown & Company, 1970), p. 217.

⁶ Malone, Vol 2, p. 416.

⁷ Malone, Vol 4, p. 274.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

Americans “cannot be divorced from considerations of national defence” but he did not delve deeply enough into this area.⁹ He completely ignored the role United States relations with Spain had in affecting Jefferson’s thinking, and his mention of the impact that affairs with Britain had on Jefferson’s concerns about border security is minimal; as a consequence, he insufficiently showed the importance that foreign affairs had in shaping Jefferson’s thinking about Native American issues.

Scholar of literature Roy Harvey Pearce, in his discussion of Jefferson’s treatment of Native Americans, was at times scathing, with a tendency to lack objectivity or context in his appraisal. One of Pearce’s primary arguments was that the concept of ‘savagism’ originated with Jefferson, and that this idea was extremely influential in how the Native Americans were perceived by the United States public.¹⁰ Savagism essentially denotes qualities defined as being ‘uncivilised’, and Pearce’s contention that an understanding of savagism in the United States originated with Jefferson is an interesting one, but evidence for this is scant and is open to interpretation; it must be conceded though, that because of Jefferson’s prominent position in society, his views held considerable sway. Pearce accurately asserted that the adoption of agricultural practices by the Native American tribes was important to Jefferson, but provided little context to help explain why Jefferson felt this was necessary or how he sought to accomplish this goal.¹¹ For Jefferson, a shift by the Native Americans to a lifestyle of agriculture and industry would reduce their dependence on hunting, subsequently removing their need for such extensive lands; Jefferson believed this change would make them amenable to selling land they no longer required. Regular fighting on the frontiers, concerns of individual states, as well as border security issues, were among the reasons that Jefferson sought land cessions from the Native Americans, but he always argued that this should be with their consent and should not be forced on them. Pearce claimed that, because of frequent hostility, the “Indians would have to be crushed on the frontier, again and again” but he did not satisfactorily explain why this

⁹ Dumas Malone, *Jefferson and his Time, Volume 5: Jefferson the President, Second Term 1805-1809* (Boston: Little Brown & Company Ltd, 1974), p. 5-6..

¹⁰ Roy Harvey Pearce, *The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilisation* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1953), p. 96.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

conflict occurred.¹² As with Malone before him, he also failed to describe what part Jefferson believed the pernicious influence of foreign nations had in exciting the tribes to engage in hostile action against the United States. Pearce often generalised in his discussion of the Native Americans, failing to differentiate among tribes, thus ignoring the fact that Jefferson supported military action exclusively against tribes that were hostile to the United States, and advocated friendlier treatment to tribes that were on good terms with the United States.

Pearce pointed to the importance that circumstance played in shaping Jefferson's views on Native Americans; Jefferson believed that the Native American way of life called for a reliance on hunting and fighting, and this profoundly shaped their character. For Pearce, Jefferson felt, "their situation had influenced them significantly, and demanded that certain talents be utilised to thrive in the world in which they lived."¹³ Pearce made reference to the role that writers of the Scottish Enlightenment had in shaping Jefferson's thinking, particularly the importance of Scottish moral sense philosophy, noting that they "gave Jefferson a way of bringing into focus and relationship all that he could discover in the Indian."¹⁴ In exploring these topics, Pearce offered considerable insight into the contribution that these factors played in shaping Jefferson's thinking, but he omitted an integral element by not giving a detailed analysis of the role of foreign affairs.

Historian Merrill D. Peterson wrote extensively about Thomas Jefferson, and provided a detailed analysis of Jefferson's thoughts about the Native Americans. He covered several themes familiar from Malone's work, focusing on Jefferson's anthropological interest in Native Americans; exploring Jefferson's interest in their languages, history and society. In addition, he contributed significant depth on what shaped Jefferson's thinking, and addressed the importance of foreign affairs. Peterson showed how troubled Jefferson was as a result of the perceived negative influence of British agents; stating that he advocated providing the Cherokee with everything they needed in an attempt to buy their friendship, anticipating that doing so would make them less receptive to advances from the

¹² Ibid., p. 70.

¹³ Ibid., p. 95.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 96.

British.¹⁵ This was a shrewd observation, as Jefferson did, indeed, endorse supplying the Native tribes with gifts, hopeful that these gifts would deter them from aligning themselves with the British. While astute to touch on this particular subject, Peterson unfortunately gave insufficient depth to the issue of foreign influence, and consequently failed to set the example of the Cherokee in context. Peterson argued that Jefferson's policy towards the Native Americans was to "divide and rule, aid the friendly in peace, exterminate the incorrigibles."¹⁶ Peterson was right that Jefferson did advocate severe measures against tribes hostile to the United States, while being considerably more congenial towards friendly tribes, but his analysis lacks nuance and doesn't adequately explain Jefferson's views. Peterson failed to adequately explain the antecedents, thus impeding a full understanding of Jefferson's thinking. Peterson did not discuss tribes that allied themselves with the British during the American War of Independence and the War of 1812, also making no mention of tribes that aligned themselves with the Spanish at different times. Any interpretation that disregards these important aspects cannot fully explain why Jefferson advocated strong measures against hostile tribes. Peterson accurately articulated Jefferson's frustration that, at times of war with Britain, violent clashes with the Native Americans on the frontiers diverted resources from fighting the British. While right to mention this issue, Peterson again gave little context in this area, failing to elucidate its significance in shaping Jefferson's views, and making it impossible to confidently place Jefferson's words in context. Peterson argued:

Jefferson consistently advocated a strong national line, including the use of force against intruders on the Indian lands, even if it collided with state authorities. More was involved than the rights of the Indians and the paramount authority of the national government with respect to them, for Spain exploited every disturbance on the brawling southern frontier.¹⁷

Peterson was right to suggest that Jefferson wished to prevent intrusions onto Native lands, because the Spanish regularly sought to capitalise on any problems the United States had in their relations with the Native Americans; intrusions onto their lands was a major grievance for many tribes. Jefferson was adamant that

¹⁵ Merrill D. Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 193.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 431.

both Britain and Spain looked to influence the tribes whenever they could, especially when relations with the United States were poor; therefore, Peterson was correct in asserting, “Peace on the frontiers was thus involved in peace with Britain and Spain.”¹⁸ Maintaining peace with Britain and Spain was undoubtedly critical in preserving peace on the frontiers, and Peterson was right to touch on its significance, but he does not provide enough background to the subject. The cursory treatment he gave the topic, resulted in merely a limited and unsatisfactory understanding of the topic and its importance.

Peterson devoted considerable attention to the Lewis and Clark expedition, which started in 1803, and his description of the expedition is detailed. He correctly pointed to the acquisition of scientific knowledge as a main factor for the expedition, and he also noted the importance of commerce and establishing close relations with the Native American tribes inhabiting the area. Peterson’s analysis of the amendment to the Constitution that Jefferson proposed following the purchase of the Louisiana Territory is comprehensive and illuminating. He rightly claimed that, following the purchase, Jefferson sought to reserve a large area of land for the Native Americans, which Peterson described as a “startling bid to control the future of the Trans-Mississippi West.”¹⁹ For Peterson this was a significant moment in Jefferson’s thinking, and “its sources may be discovered in considerations of national unity, defence, political economy, disposition of lands, and, above all, Indian policy.”²⁰ The purchase of the Louisiana Territory from the French incontrovertibly had an impact on Jefferson’s Native American plans, with the issue of security primary. Peterson suggested that concerns about the British and the Spanish prompted Jefferson to propose the idea of a Native American buffer state, which would be accomplished by the United States exchanging Native land east of the Mississippi for land in the newly acquired Louisiana territory.²¹ Peterson argued that Jefferson’s policy regarding Native Americans following the Louisiana Purchase was

aimed at the rapid acquisition of Indian lands by treaty, the control of the tribes by commercial intercourse under federal supervision, accompanied by a variety of expedients to draw the savages into agriculture, thus by

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 431.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 771.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 771.

²¹ Ibid., p. 771.

degrees civilizing them until ultimately they were incorporated with the whites.²²

Jefferson felt that control of commerce with the Native tribes was crucial in governing them effectively, believing that as they became increasingly dependent on United States supplies, the United States would attain a high degree of power in the relationship; convinced that close commercial ties would also improve relations between the United States and the Native tribes.²³ While correct to point to the importance of commerce for Jefferson, Peterson did not explore the role that foreign nations had in influencing Jefferson's thinking about trade; failing to discuss the negative influence Jefferson believed that foreign traders had on the minds of Native Americans ignores a significant factor in his plans regarding commercial activity with the tribes. Peterson provided a satisfactory overview of Jefferson's Native American ideas, and at times delved into the role that foreign nations played in influencing his thinking, but he regularly offered insufficient detail, which limits understanding of the topic.

Historian Bernard Sheehan, in *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian*, discussed Jefferson's role as war governor of Virginia during the American War of Independence; in this capacity he was heavily involved in attempting to form alliances with the Native American tribes. Sheehan was correct in his assessment that Jefferson's preference was for tribes to remain neutral during war with Britain, and did not actively seek their involvement; he advocated severe measures against tribes that had disregarded this request and had sided with the British. Sheehan notes Jefferson's belief that any tribe that had aligned themselves with the British, should be eradicated or forced to remove west beyond the Mississippi.²⁴ Several authors incorrectly point to the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 as the origin of Jefferson's proposal for tribes to remove west, but Sheehan accurately shows that Jefferson considered the possibility much earlier. Jefferson's suggestion that extreme measures should be pursued against hostile tribes after the American War of Independence show that Jefferson already possessed thoughts about removal prior to 1803. Sheehan referred to Jefferson's

²² Ibid., p. 775.

²³ Ibid., p. 904.

²⁴ Bernard Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973), p. 208.

anger at British officials employing Native American warriors to fight the revolutionaries during the war, but he did not show how British actions such as these affected Jefferson's views of the British in the future, and how this influenced his decision making with respect to Native American matters.²⁵

Sheehan discussed in depth the Louisiana Purchase and its consequences for the Native Americans, but unlike Peterson before him, he failed to mention the significance that border security had on Jefferson's thinking; in the process, ignoring the clear role foreign affairs played in shaping Jefferson's plans for the Louisiana Territory. Sheehan alluded to Jefferson's desire to incorporate the Native American tribes into United States society, with the aim of 'civilising' the tribe's fundamental to eventual inclusion. For Sheehan, the Native tribes "faced the stark choice of civilisation or destruction," and while it is true that Jefferson believed the future of the Native Americans depended on their progression towards a more 'civilised' state, Sheehan does not touch on the frustration that Jefferson felt because of foreign meddling.²⁶ He was certain that the interference of foreign nations stopped the Native Americans from becoming 'civilised', and proposed the removal of many of the tribes west of the Mississippi as a result. The planned removal of the eastern tribes would be achieved through an exchange of Native land east of the Mississippi for unoccupied land in the west. Sheehan devoted attention to Jefferson's plans to acquire Native American land, arguing that, for Jefferson "Indian survival depended on their willingness to give up their land."²⁷ He suggested that Jefferson's strategy for obtaining land from the Native Americans "could be categorised as subtle manipulation, but at times it could cross the line into deception or coercion."²⁸ To support this assertion, Sheehan directed attention to Jefferson's support for allowing Native American leaders to fall heavily into debt, believing that as a result they would agree to cede land to pay off what they owed. Jefferson did advocate the use of strategies such as this in order to obtain Native lands, and Sheehan was right to point to it, but he did not set comments such as these into context.²⁹ If he had done so, he would have

²⁵ Ibid., p. 209.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 152.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 170.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 171.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 171.

provided a deeper understanding of why Jefferson sought land cessions in the first place; the exclusion of Jefferson's anxieties related to security and his concerns about the destructive influence of foreign nations were unfortunate omissions. Sheehan throughout made very little mention of foreign relations and their relevance to Jefferson's thinking about Native American issues; this was an oversight in his work.

Francis Paul Prucha was a renowned scholar in the field of Native American policy. His 1984 book *The Great Father* is a rigorously researched and brilliantly written book, offering an extraordinarily detailed analysis of United States federal policies regarding the Native Americans. Prucha provided a comprehensive examination of the area, but his exploration of Jefferson's attitudes toward the Native Americans is minimal and covered much of the same ground as previous authors; yet he still offered valuable insights into Jefferson's thinking. Prucha argued that while Jefferson had the Native Americans' best interests at heart and typically urged humanity in dealing with them, he was not afraid to use fear if required.³⁰ This is correct, as Jefferson did advocate employing fear as a tactic when necessary, but this was typically reserved for tribes who contemplated hostile action against the United States; he anticipated that the undeniable strength of the United States would deter tribes from aligning themselves with foreign nations or engaging in hostility against the United States. Jefferson wanted to maintain peaceful relations with the Native Americans, and Prucha pointed to Jefferson's commitment to protect them from the transgressions of United States citizens, which he felt was a critical factor in remaining on good terms with the tribes.³¹ Unfortunately, Prucha did not explore the costly nature of war on the frontiers, and ignored the role that economics played in Jefferson's wish to avoid military action with the Native Americans whenever possible.

What Prucha does relatively well is detail Jefferson's views on United States pre-emption rights to Native American land. For Jefferson, the land belonged to the Native Americans, but the United States possessed the exclusive right to buy their land, if they decided to sell. Prucha was correct in stating that, in Jefferson's

³⁰ Francis P. Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), p. 31.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

mind, the Native Americans, because of pre-emption, did not have full sovereignty of their land. Jefferson believed that the Native tribes had ownership of their land and could not be forced into selling, but if they did elect to sell, they could only do so to the United States government. At different times, Jefferson sought to acquire land cessions from the Native owners, and used a range of strategies to obtain the desired land. As with Pearce before him, Prucha noted Jefferson's hope that the Native tribes would adopt agriculture. Jefferson believed if the tribes adopted agriculture it would reduce their need for vast expanses of territory, and so they would be willing to sell lands they no longer needed. Jefferson felt that if the Native Americans adopted agriculture, the result would be mutually beneficial, as not only would it enable the Native Americans to thrive, but also it would free up land for white settlers. Prucha wrote:

In Jefferson's mind there was no contradiction or equivocation in working for the Indians' advancement and at the same time gradually reducing the land they held. It was not an opposition of policies, one working for the education and civilisation of the Indians, the other seeking to relieve them of their lands; they were two sides of the same coin. At the same time that white settlers were seeking more land, as the Indian's turned progressively more toward farming and a sedentary existence they would require less land.³²

Prucha argued that while pressure from settlers was a definite factor in Jefferson's desire to obtain land, Jefferson was convinced that it was in the best interests of the Native Americans to embrace agriculture. In *The Great Father*, Prucha gave a detailed explanation why Jefferson felt it was imperative for the Native American tribes to adopt agriculture and to move towards a more 'civilised' way of life. He stated, "for Jefferson trading houses were an integral part of an essential Indian policy" as he hoped that by multiplying the number of trading houses among the tribes, they would gradually become dependent on necessities required to carry on an agricultural lifestyle, and as a result would be willing to sell land in order to acquire these supplies.³³ Peterson had earlier noted the importance of trade for Jefferson's Native American ideas, and Prucha reinforced this view by claiming that trade was another way Jefferson sought to procure land from Native American tribes. While *The Great Father* has many strengths, a disappointing

³² Ibid., p. 139.

³³ Ibid., p. 119.

aspect of Prucha's work is that he often generalised Jefferson's comments, and as with many authors before, he did not adequately set them into context. He touched on a range of topics relating to Jefferson's Native American views, but his analysis was slight, and he does not emphasise the key role that foreign relations played in influencing his thinking on topics such as land and commerce.

In 1996, Pulitzer Prize winning historian Joseph J. Ellis published *American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson*, which has been a very influential and widely referenced book for scholars studying Thomas Jefferson. Ellis presented a character study, told through a series of historical vignettes, concentrating on five significant periods of Jefferson's life, and analysing what can be learned about Jefferson's character from an exploration of these points in his life. He tried to correct the populist image of Jefferson, to de-mythologise him, and presented Jefferson as an inscrutable person with a contradictory philosophy. A major contradiction within Jefferson's personality that Ellis pointed to is the fact that in the Declaration of Independence he wrote about the importance of equality while he owned slaves. Another apparent contradiction that Ellis highlighted is the fact that Jefferson was opposed to the federal government taking on a substantial debt, and yet he himself accumulated an enormous debt by the end of his life. *American Sphinx* presented a balanced portrayal of Jefferson's character, and throughout Ellis was careful to note the brighter and darker aspects of his personality. A particularly strong argument that Ellis made in his work was that Jefferson's words, though seemingly contradictory at times, are difficult to judge out of their context and time, and this is an important point to remember. A questionable approach Ellis took was occasionally speculating about Jefferson's motives, trying to explain Jefferson's complicated nature with psychological explanations, which are very difficult to verify, but what is made clear by Ellis in his examination of Jefferson's character is the complexity of human nature. Ellis's exploration of Jefferson's writing of the Declaration of Independence was excellent, examining both the antecedents and the changes made after its submission to the Continental Congress.

What Ellis contributed most to the field of scholarly research on Jefferson was his penetrating study of Jefferson's character, but an area that Ellis devoted minimal attention to was Jefferson's thinking about Native Americans. He suggested that

Jefferson's attitude towards the Native Americans was paradoxical, but his explanation why that was the case is lacking; a deeper analysis of Jefferson's writing regarding Native Americans gives an understanding of Jefferson's views and shows that they were not as contradictory as they might appear.³⁴ Ellis was correct in his assertion that it was during Jefferson's presidency "that the basic decisions were made that required the deportation of massive segments of the Indian population to land west of the Mississippi," but the author did not provide enough historical context to gain a detailed understanding as to why it occurred.³⁵ His suggestion that, to Jefferson, the Native Americans "were a doomed species" and that "their dooming had not been his doing, but he had no compunction or doubts about serving as the instrument of their destruction" lacks nuance regarding Jefferson's views about removal.³⁶ Ultimately, Ellis's analysis of Jefferson's thoughts on the removal west of the Native American tribes lacks sufficient depth, which a closer reading of his writing would reveal. Ellis was correct in stating that Jefferson believed the tribes needed to abandon their reliance on hunting and adopt agriculture, hoping that they would eventually assimilate into United States society, but his belief that for Jefferson any Native tribes who resisted assimilation "deserved nothing less than extermination or banishment" is a distortion of what he wrote and lacks historical context.³⁷ *American Sphinx* offers minimal insight into the role that foreign affairs played in influencing Jefferson's thinking about the Native Americans. Where Ellis did address this topic was in his discussion of Jefferson's policy towards hostile Native American tribes who allied with the British during the American War of Independence. Ellis argued that Jefferson advocated taking severe measures against hostile tribes because of political pressure and criticism, and not because he genuinely supported such harsh measures.³⁸ It is an intriguing thought, but lacks historical support, as Jefferson throughout the American War of Independence encouraged firm action against hostile tribes; he advocated strong

³⁴ Joseph J. Ellis, *American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1996), p. 200.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

measures against hostile tribes throughout his life, and the evidence that he did this at any point simply as a result of political pressure is scant.

Anthony F. C. Wallace was an anthropologist at the University of Pennsylvania who wrote several books on Native Americans. In his 1999 book *Jefferson and the Indians: The Tragic Fate of the First Americans*, Wallace looked at Jefferson within the context of the evolving Native American policies of the early United States. Wallace gave a detailed description of Jefferson's Native American policy before then exploring what might have influenced his thinking; the result is an extensive analysis of the political and cultural influences that likely affected Jefferson's views. Wallace examined the contradictions in Jefferson's character that allowed him to take an interest in Native American language, history and culture, but then support plans that would harm Native American people. Wallace delineates the stark difference between Jefferson's idealistic views, and the harsh reality that many Native tribes experienced because of his policies; he tried to distinguish between rhetoric and the historical reality of Jefferson's policies. Wallace described many of the people Jefferson dealt with, and showed the influence they might have had on Jefferson in the formulation of his attitudes towards Native Americans. At times, Wallace struggled to prove Jefferson's exposure to various potential influences; he capably detailed what those influences might have been, but did not prove that Jefferson was actually aware of them. Wallace's interpretation of Jefferson's writing was insightful, and his arguments were thought provoking, but as with Sheehan before him, he at times strayed into speculation when interpreting Jefferson's work; an example was his suggestion that Jefferson must have been aware of fighting on the frontiers from a young age, even though there is minimal evidence to support that assertion.

Wallace argued that, as president, Jefferson's plans were directed at the eradication of Native culture, as he found it impossible to see a future of different cultural groups living harmoniously; the Native Americans, in order to survive, would need to assimilate and leave their Native culture behind. For Wallace, Jefferson was very much a product of his time, who supported western expansion, and foresaw a future in which the nation would be populated by yeoman farmers, with Native people being forced to adapt or disappear. Wallace argued that Jefferson often insisted that Native lands needed to be bought fairly, but was

prepared to bend the rules if their land stood in the way of westward expansion. Wallace referred to Jefferson as the architect of removal, and asserts that his policies initiated a chain of events that led to Native culture being undermined. While there is an element of truth in that assertion, his reference to Jefferson's policies as genocide, and the accusation that Jefferson was accountable for the degradation that Native American people have subsequently endured, is harsh and does not consider the historical complexity of the situation. In *Jefferson and the Indians*, Wallace created the impression that Jefferson had no inhibitions about expelling the Cherokee from their lands during the American War of Independence; but what Wallace's assessment of that episode fails to show adequately is that Jefferson only supported that action because of repeated hostility by Cherokee warriors against United States settlements. There is no indication at that time that Jefferson wanted to force Native tribes from their lands simply so the United States could obtain them; that policy was reserved for hostile tribes and was not used against tribes the United States were on favourable terms with. Wallace is correct that, later, Jefferson encouraged Native leaders to run into debt, as they often were prepared to cede land to pay off those debts, but Wallace did not provide enough context to allow for an understanding of why Jefferson supported that policy, ignoring the significant role foreign relations had in his thinking. That is not to say that Wallace failed completely to address the impact foreign relations had on Jefferson's ideas, as he did touch on the subject at different points. His description of the Spanish alliance with the Creeks, and his discussion of tribes that sided with the British during the American War of Independence, are a couple of examples of Wallace's exploration of the subject, but overall his treatment of the topic is limited and lacks depth.³⁹

Historian Peter Onuf has written many books about Thomas Jefferson, and while much of his writing covered familiar ground, such as Jefferson's interest in Native American languages and history, his work about Jefferson's views on gender roles in Native society contributes significantly to this area, and furthers understanding of Jefferson's thinking around the structure and function of Native American societies. Onuf explored the lack of government in Native American societies, and

³⁹ Anthony F.C. Wallace, *Jefferson and the Indians: The Tragic Fate of the First Americans* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1999), p. 169.

their reluctance to follow a regime of law. He argued that they resisted because of a “profound attachment to male prerogatives” in which “the regime of ‘manners’ that preserved order in their lawless societies was male supremacy, a perversion of the consensual conjugal union that constituted the foundation of a just and lawful social order.”⁴⁰ For Onuf, Jefferson did not attribute this approach to any intrinsic deficiency, as he firmly believed that the Native Americans were capable of civil life; as a result, Jefferson was unwilling to “recognise the collective rights of Indian communities, for these communities were based on force, not consent.”⁴¹ Onuf argued that, in resisting ‘civilisation,’ Native American men were not defending natural rights but were instead defending unnatural male prerogatives.⁴² Onuf suggested that, for Jefferson, male oppression of females within Native society violated their natural rights and showed why it was essential that Native societies advance towards a more ‘civilised’ state.⁴³ For Onuf, “Jefferson’s views on gender issues is crucial in the broader discussion of native peoples in the Americas,” and he explored this topic extremely well.⁴⁴

Onuf offered an interesting perspective on the detrimental impact that Jefferson believed contact with European nations had on Native American society; he suggested that, for Jefferson, increased dependency on European nations gradually degraded Native morals and values. For Onuf, dependency on hunting, rather than agriculture made them vulnerable to encroachments by European nations, and with the susceptibility of Native American men to corruption by European powers, often exchanging military service for European goods, the result was a further weakening of Native society.⁴⁵ As with Peterson before him, Onuf discussed Jefferson’s concerns about a negative British influence on the Native American tribes, but added to this topic by arguing that Jefferson believed the negative British influence helped to degrade Native society. Jefferson was undeniably very worried about the influence of the British on the Native Americans, and Onuf was right to point to Jefferson’s frustration that many tribes

⁴⁰ Peter Onuf, *Jeffersons Empire: The Language of American Nationhood* (Virginia: Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia, 2000), p. 26.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

aligned themselves with the British during both the American War of Independence and the War of 1812. Onuf agreed with Sheehan's earlier argument about Jefferson's support for harsh measures against tribes that had failed to heed his warnings about remaining neutral in the lead up to the War of 1812. For Onuf, these harsh measures were primarily designed to show the Native Americans it was essential that they dispense with their warlike tendencies, because if they did not, they would never have prosperity and peace. Onuf claimed Jefferson felt that war with the Native Americans was a direct result of outside interference, as no other explanation made sense.⁴⁶ He was correct that Jefferson did, indeed, attribute much of the conflict with Native tribes to the negative influence of foreign nations, but he did not expand enough on this, only briefly discussing British influence and completely ignoring the significant influence that the Spanish had on the Native tribes in the south and the effect of this on Jefferson's thinking. For Onuf, Jefferson's policy for the Native Americans "depended on the exercise of power, through diplomacy and war" with the acquisition of land of primary importance⁴⁷. He argued that the result of Jefferson's policy "was to speed the retreat and removal of Indian nations as distinct political societies that could threaten the security of the federal republic or block its continuing expansion."⁴⁸ As with Peterson before him, Onuf was correct to suggest security was a contributing factor in Jefferson's plans for the Native Americans, but his exploration of this topic was minimal. Throughout his writing, he offered interesting insight into the impact that contact with foreign nations had on the Native Americans, but he frequently referred to European powers in a general sense, and did not give satisfactory depth about how foreign affairs influenced Jefferson's thinking about Native Americans.

Law Professor Robert J. Miller, in his 2006 book *Native America Discovered and Conquered*, provided valuable insight into how the Doctrine of Discovery and pre-emption rights influenced Jefferson's thinking regarding the Native Americans. Miller showed that, as an attorney, Jefferson regularly dealt with disputes involving Native American land issues. As a result, Jefferson was

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 47.

⁴⁷ Peter Onuf, *The Mind of Thomas Jefferson* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007), p. 126.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 126.

familiar with discovery principles and what they entailed.⁴⁹ Miller offered significantly more depth on pre-emption rights than Prucha and was correct in his assertion that Jefferson did indeed believe that the United States had pre-emption rights to Native lands.⁵⁰ For Miller, Jefferson employed the Doctrine of Discovery and “applied its elements in his interactions with Indian Nations and European countries as he worked to expand America’s borders.”⁵¹ As with Sheehan and Peterson previously, Miller devoted considerable attention to Jefferson’s conduct following the Louisiana Purchase. Miller argued that Jefferson’s comments following the purchase of the Louisiana Territory demonstrate Jefferson’s understanding of how discovery principles applied to the newly acquired territory.⁵² Miller shrewdly pointed to the fact that the Louisiana Purchase was not actually a real estate deal, but instead was the purchase of the “very sovereign and pre-emption rights of discovery” to the Louisiana Territory.⁵³ Jefferson was aware that in the Louisiana territory the tribes were still sovereign governments, but as a consequence of the Doctrine of Discovery they had forfeited some of their governmental power, first to France and then to the United States. For Miller, Jefferson’s instructions to Meriwether Lewis in 1804 represent proof that Jefferson did, indeed, believe that the United States had purchased France’s sovereign discovery power and pre-emption rights in Louisiana.⁵⁴

Earlier authors, such as Peterson and Sheehan, had addressed Jefferson’s policies regarding land acquisition, but Miller went further by referring to Jefferson as an aggressive expansionist. For Miller, because of Jefferson’s understanding of the Doctrine of Discovery, he could only acquire Native American lands with explicit tribal consent, and employed a range of strategies in order to obtain it.⁵⁵ Miller is correct that Jefferson at different times did look to acquire land for the United States, but the author did not give a complete explanation why Jefferson sought to procure certain land cessions from the Native people, ignoring important reasons such as border security. Miller described Jefferson as an aggressive expansionist,

⁴⁹ Robert J. Miller, *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Lewis & Clark, and Manifest Destiny* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2006), p. 60.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

and while much of his argument is solid, his analysis, at times, lacks balance and does not fully account for the complex factors that influenced Jefferson's views regarding Native land. Jefferson's thoughts on the removal of Native American tribes west of the Mississippi had been touched on by previous authors such as Onuf and Sheehan, but Miller went further by arguing that Jefferson was the architect of the removal policy; the idea originating with him. For Miller, the plan to remove the Native tribes put forward by Jefferson was a complete "violation of his own stated goals to civilise, educate, and assimilate Indians into white society," and Miller was very critical of Jefferson as a result.⁵⁶ He pointed to Jefferson first advocating such action as far back as 1776, but failed to mention why he suggested such action be taken. Similarly, he did not outline precisely why Jefferson suggested such measures later in life, which results in an inadequate understanding of Jefferson's comments about removal. Miller's suggestion that removal was simply a way of acquiring land for the United States is an oversimplification, because a robust understanding of Jefferson's views about the Native Americans is attained only through a detailed analysis of the source material. Ignoring significant factors that influenced his ideas, such as economics, conflict, the concerns of individual states, and foreign affairs makes a complete understanding of his thinking impossible and can create the impression that his thoughts were more inconsistent than they were. Miller offered interesting insight into how the principles of discovery and pre-emption impacted on Jefferson's decision making about Native American issues, but he did not explore sufficiently how other factors shaped his thinking. Failure to incorporate the role that foreign affairs played in influencing Jefferson's thinking about these issues throughout his life is a deficiency in his work.

Foreign affairs is a prominent theme in Jefferson's writing, and further insight into this important topic can be gained from analysing the relevant secondary literature.⁵⁷ Scholarship related to Jefferson's thinking is also vital as it provides

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 86.

⁵⁷ Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson, *Empire of Liberty: The Statecraft of Thomas Jefferson* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).
Francis D. Cogliano, *Emperor of Liberty: Thomas Jefferson's Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014).
Mary P. Adams, 'Jefferson's Reaction to the Treaty of San Ildefonso', *The Journal of Southern History*, 21.2 (1994), 173-188.

valuable insight into his thought processes.⁵⁸ For further information pertaining to Jefferson and the Native Americans, a review of the secondary literature is essential.⁵⁹ The three most significant themes in this thesis are foreign affairs, the Native Americans, and Thomas Jefferson's thinking. The literature that corresponds to each of these themes separately is beneficial for gaining a deeper

Samuel Flag Bemis, *Pinckney's Treaty: America's Advantage from Europe's Distress, 1783-1800* (Westport: Praeger, 1973).

Samuel Flag Bemis, *Jay's Treaty: A Study in Commerce and Diplomacy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965).

Albert H. Bowman, 'Jefferson, Hamilton and American Foreign Policy', *Political Science Quarterly*, 71.1 (1956), 18-41.

Lawrence S. Kaplan, *Entangling Alliances With None: American Foreign Policy in the Age of Jefferson* (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 1987).

James E. Lewis Jr., *The American Union and the Problem of Neighborhood: The United States and the Collapse of the Spanish Empire, 1783-1829* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

Leonard Sadosky, 'Revolutionary Negotiations: A History of American Diplomacy with Europe and Native America in the Age of Jefferson', (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Virginia, 2003).

Leonard R. Robert, *Enlightened Defense: The National Security Policy of Thomas Jefferson*, (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2006).

⁵⁸ Burton Spivak, *Jefferson's English Crisis: Commerce, Embargo and the Republican Revolution*, (Chapel Hill: University of Virginia Press, 1988).

Reginald C. Stuart, *Half-way Pacifist: Thomas Jefferson's View of War*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979).

John P. Kaminski, *Citizen Jefferson: The Wit and Wisdom of an American Sage*, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006).

Peter S. Onuf and Leonard J. Sadosky, 'Jeffersonian America', in *Problems in American History*, ed. By Jack P. Greene (Malden: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2002),

Brian Steele, 'Thomas Jefferson and the Making of an American Nationalism', (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of North Carolina, 2003).

Phillip W. Walsh, 'Representations of Nature in Revolutionary and Post-Colonial American Nations: A Study of the Political Traditions in the Thought of Thomas Jefferson and Simon Bolivar', (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, 2001).

Douglas A. Ollivant, 'Jefferson's "Pursuit of Happiness"', (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Indiana, 2002).

Raymond George Lacina, 'Thomas Jefferson's "Essay on the Anglo-Saxon Language: in Context: A Study of Jefferson's Analytical Method', (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Toronto, 2001).

Francis D. Cogliano, *Thomas Jefferson: Reputation and Legacy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2006).

Brett F. Woods, *Thomas Jefferson: Thoughts on War and Revolution* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2009).

⁵⁹ Reginald Horsman, 'American Indian Policy in the Old Northwest, 1783-1812', *The William and Mary Quarterly* 18.1 (1961), 35-53.

Annie H. Abel, *The History of Events Resulting in Indian Consolidation West of the Mississippi* (New York: AMS Press, 1972).

Michael Paul Rogin, *Fathers and Children: Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2009).

Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

Donald Jackson, *Thomas Jefferson and the Stony Mountains: Exploring the West from Monticello* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993).

Daniel Lewis, 'Thomas Jefferson and the Execution of the United States Indian Policy' (Unpublished Masters Thesis, University of Central Florida, 2010).

understanding of these different topics. These works have not been explored in more detail here because they do not explore the intersection of all three topics adequately.

Over the years, there has been a considerable amount of scholarship about Thomas Jefferson, and many scholars have made significant contributions to the field. Literature has been produced that has analysed Jefferson's character, and looked at factors that might have influenced his thinking, such as writers of the Scottish Enlightenment. The amount of literature produced concerning Jefferson's ideas about the Native Americans is minimal, and most literature that has focused on this topic has exclusively looked at Jefferson's time as president. Researchers who have addressed Jefferson's thoughts pertaining to Native Americans, have tended to discuss generally, and have not satisfactorily delineated the different views that Jefferson had about different tribes; they have also not clearly shown the different treatment Jefferson advocated for hostile tribes, as opposed to friendly tribes. A lot has been written about the importance of the Louisiana Purchase on Jefferson's thinking, and there have been worthwhile contributions about the amendment to the Constitution he proposed. Some scholars have noted the significance of the Louisiana Purchase on his plans for the Native Americans, but research on this topic is comparatively small, with only a minimal amount of literature published exploring its significance; even less has been produced which has shown the significance of foreign affairs in his thinking following the Louisiana Purchase. Scholars have delved into Jefferson's interest in Native Americans, with many of the same topics being covered regularly; such as Jefferson's views on their languages, history and society. Some scholars have looked at the significance of foreign affairs on Jefferson's thinking about Native Americans, but typically the topic has only been briefly explored, and its importance has not been adequately highlighted. Work has been produced which has touched on Jefferson's concerns about a negative foreign influence on the Native Americans, but the topic has not been covered comprehensively. Similarly, some scholars have mentioned border security as having an effect on Jefferson's thinking concerning Native Americans, particularly in relation to the acquisition of Native land, but not enough detail has been provided to give a full appreciation of how important security was for Jefferson. Meaningful additions to scholarship

on Jefferson have been made concerning his views on pre-emption rights, and the significance of the Doctrine of Discovery on his thinking about Native lands, but the clear role that foreign affairs had in shaping his thinking about land purchases has not been adequately explored. Most scholars who have looked at the impact of foreign relations on Jefferson's attitudes toward Native Americans have looked at Great Britain, with only minimal mention made of Spain; the scarcity of literature about the influence of Spain on Jefferson's Native American views is mystifying as the Spanish wielded considerable influence over the tribes, particularly in the south. Research has shown Jefferson's interest in Native American people adopting agriculture, but the literature does not elucidate the role that foreign affairs had in influencing his thinking about this topic. Equally, while the importance of trade and economic factors have been analysed in connection with the formation of Jefferson's Native American views, the impact that foreign relations had on his thinking regarding these topics has not been satisfactorily investigated. Some scholarship has shown the role that Jefferson believed the influence of foreign nations had in conflict that the United States engaged in with Native American tribes, but it has not been sufficiently explained and warrants further exploration. The subject of Jefferson's role in the removal of the Native American tribes west of the Mississippi has been addressed in the literature, but the significance of foreign affairs on Jefferson's ideas about removal has not been studied. Much of the literature about Jefferson's views regarding Native Americans has lacked depth and context, which has subsequently made a confident understanding of Jefferson's thinking difficult; the result has been that Jefferson's words can appear contradictory. The clear gap that exists in the literature regarding the importance of foreign affairs on influencing Jefferson's attitudes about the Native Americans needs to be addressed, as it will add an important element that will help with understanding Jefferson's thinking about Native Americans; this needs to be done by a close analysis of his writing.

Chapter 1: Conflict

Conflict is an important topic in Thomas Jefferson's writing pertaining to Native Americans, and a close analysis of this subject facilitates a deeper understanding of why Jefferson expressed particular thoughts about the Native Americans. The impact that foreign affairs had in influencing his thinking regarding Native Americans is indisputable; a full appreciation of the effect they had on Jefferson in relation to the subject of conflict is vital to forming a complete understanding of how the convergence of conflict and foreign affairs shaped his attitudes about Native Americans. This convergence will be extensively explored throughout this chapter. The role that Native Americans had in the American War of Independence will be looked at, with the consequences for tribes that sided with the British explored; Jefferson's unforgiving stance regarding these tribes will be explained, with an emphasis placed on the consideration of context in scrutinizing his remarks. This chapter will examine how important the financial consequences of regular warfare with the Native Americans was in shaping Jefferson's views, and the role that Jefferson believed foreign nations played in the continued fighting and the resultant expense that went with it. For Jefferson, in the years after the American War of Independence, the British continued to be a problem, with hostilities on the frontier largely a consequence of regular British meddling. It will be shown how because of the regular hostility from many of the tribes, Jefferson supported taking severe measures against them, believing that if they were decisively beaten it would allow time for the United States to improve relations with the tribes. This chapter will illustrate the difficulties that Spain presented for Jefferson in United States relations with the tribes after the War of Independence; he believed that Spanish agents had discouraged tribes in the south from cooperating with the United States and had convinced them to break existing agreements. The actions of Spanish agents had a clear impact on Jefferson's thinking, and this will be dealt with in the course of this chapter; how Jefferson sought to reduce the Spanish influence over the tribes will also be explained. Concerns that Jefferson had about an alliance between Spain and Great Britain will be discussed, and the consequences of this alliance on United States relations with the Native Americans will be addressed. It will be shown how Jefferson

frequently had to consider the possible reactions of foreign nations to plans he proposed; he was reluctant to advocate measures that could result in war.

The strategies that Jefferson used as president to try to establish strong ties with the tribes will be explored. Trade was an important aspect of Jefferson's Native American policy, as he believed it was central to improving relations between the United States and the tribes. The vital nature of trade will be explored, as will Jefferson's views about the necessity of foreign nations being excluded from trade with the Native American tribes. Jefferson believed strongly that if tribes adopted agriculture then that would reduce hostility, and violent clashes with the tribes would diminish as a result; the significance of agriculture for Jefferson's policy for the Native tribes will be extensively examined in this chapter. The War of 1812 was an important event in relations between the United States and the Native tribes; Jefferson hoped the tribes would remain neutral but feared that some tribes would side with the British in the conflict. The consequences of the War of 1812 on Jefferson's thinking regarding Native Americans will be looked at, as will the consideration of foreign influence in the plans he supported subsequently. The subject of conflict and the significance of foreign affairs in shaping Jefferson's views concerning Native Americans is unavoidable. This important topic will be comprehensively explored throughout this chapter.

As far back as his first draft of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, Thomas Jefferson gave as one of the reasons why the United States should break from Great Britain the fact that the British had actively encouraged the Native Americans to carry out attacks against settlers on the frontier; he pointed to the extremely savage form of warfare that the Native Americans employed to reinforce this point.⁶⁰ Throughout the American War of Independence, Jefferson was intolerant of Native American hostilities committed against the colonists, and he consistently advocated severe treatment for offending parties. In a letter to John Page, a colonel during the Revolutionary War, he suggested the most effective way of confronting unfriendly Native American factions was to take the war into their territory. Jefferson argued that if any Native American group acted

⁶⁰ "I. First Draft by Jefferson, [before June 1776]." *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-01-02-0161-0002> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 1, 1760–1776, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950, pp. 337–347.]

in a hostile manner, the colonists were justified in pursuing the offending parties into their own territory; he insisted that the colonists would not stop until all Native American hostility had been eradicated east of the Mississippi.⁶¹ In a letter to Edmund Pendleton, a member of the Virginian Legislative Council, Jefferson contended that because the Cherokee had started a war against the colonists, they should be forced to move west of the Mississippi; he believed this would serve as an example to other tribes and deter them from taking up arms against the United States. For Jefferson, this policy was a necessity, as the war against the British was too important to allow Native American tribes to make the fight for independence even more challenging.⁶² The firm position that Jefferson took was reinforced by his support of a decision by Congress to inform the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy that, if they elected to go to war against the colonists, then the United States would continue to pursue them until they were completely destroyed; Congress added that, if the Six Nations did not recall their men from Canada, Congress would perceive that decision as acting against the United States. Threat of annihilation brought about the desired result, as the Six Nations assented to United States demands, dissuading hostile action from their people and recalling their men from Canada.⁶³ Jefferson's use of harsh language, and his advocacy of extreme measures, was reserved exclusively for hostile Native Americans; with the American War of Independence in the balance he was not prepared to tolerate any Native Americans who took up the hatchet against the colonists.

It is clear from Jefferson's writing during the American War of Independence that he wanted the Native American tribes to remain neutral in any conflict between the British and the United States. At no point did he ask the tribes to help the colonists fight the British; this was because he believed it was morally reprehensible to enlist the support of 'savage' warriors against a 'civilised' nation,

⁶¹ "From Thomas Jefferson to John Page, 5 August 1776," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-01-02-0202> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 1, 1760–1776, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950, pp. 485–487.]

⁶² "From Thomas Jefferson to Edmund Pendleton, 13 August 1776," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-01-02-0205> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 1, 1760–1776, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950, pp. 491–494.]

⁶³ "From Thomas Jefferson to John Page, 5 August 1776."

such as the British. In a letter to John Page on 20 August 1776, Jefferson wrote of reports coming from a number of tribes that approved of the colonists' consistent approach in not asking them to fight for the colonists against the British. Congress proposed to send an agent to meet some of the tribes to seek their help, however, Jefferson was strongly opposed to the idea, as he believed it would create the impression that the colonists had been disingenuous when they said all they wanted was neutrality from the Native Americans.⁶⁴ Jefferson detested the brand of warfare waged by Native American warriors, describing it as "cruel and cowardly;" his main criticism, though, was directed at the British for enlisting military support from Native American warriors.⁶⁵ He was particularly scathing towards Henry Hamilton, lieutenant-governor of Detroit and commander of the British forces at Vincenne; Jefferson held him accountable for enlisting the help of a people whose known rule of warfare was the "indiscriminate butchery of men women and children."⁶⁶ Jefferson felt that Hamilton was responsible for the atrocities perpetrated by Native American allies, and was contemptuous of Hamilton's strategy for employing their services; he believed they were used primarily against farming settlements on the frontier, rather than against forts or armies in the field.⁶⁷ The perception of dishonourable conduct by the British in their dealings with the Native Americans, and the decision by some tribes to align themselves with the British during the War of Independence, had a profound impact on Jefferson's views of both the British and the Native Americans, especially as he had previously asked the Native Americans to stay neutral during the conflict.

⁶⁴ "From Thomas Jefferson to John Page, 20 August 1776," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-01-02-0207> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 1, 1760–1776, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950, pp. 497–501.]

⁶⁵ "From Thomas Jefferson to Theodorick Bland, 8 June 1779," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-02-02-0118> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 2, 1777–18 June 1779, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950, pp. 286–287.]

⁶⁶ "From Thomas Jefferson to William Phillips, 22 July 1779," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-03-02-0052> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 3, 18 June 1779–30 September 1780, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951, pp. 44–49.]

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

Jefferson advocated different treatment for different tribes, depending on how hostile or friendly the tribe was with the United States government. His first recorded Native American address was to Kaskaskia Chief Jean Baptiste Ducoigne in 1781. In the address, Jefferson made it clear that maintaining peaceful relations with friendly tribes was important; he explained to the Chief that tribes who remained peaceful would benefit after the war, while tribes that had been hostile towards the United States and their allies would suffer as a consequence.⁶⁸ The Shawnee had been consistently hostile towards the colonists, and because of this Jefferson argued that the Shawnee should be removed beyond the Mississippi as a condition of peace.⁶⁹ Jefferson was of the opinion that the United States had previously been reluctant to enforce good behaviour from the Native American tribes because of guiding humanitarian principles, but that needed to change because of the astronomical expense of continual warfare with the tribes; a major consideration was that it was diverting money from the primary war against Britain.⁷⁰ The proposed removal of certain tribes west of the Mississippi can thus be viewed as a way of not only minimising fighting on the frontier, but concomitantly reducing expenses and enabling necessary resources to be redirected to the main war against the British. The idea of removal, at that time, can be viewed as a form of punishment to be inflicted on hostile tribes, while friendly or neutral tribes would be allowed to remain on their lands.

In the years immediately after the American War of Independence, Jefferson's writing continued to focus very heavily on the British. He considered the British to be the natural enemy of the United States, believing them to be

the only nation on earth who wished us ill from the bottom of their souls. And I am satisfied that were our continent to be swallowed up by the ocean, Great Britain would be in a bonfire from one end to the other.⁷¹

⁶⁸ "Speech to Jean Baptiste Ducoigne, [ca. 1] June 1781," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-06-02-0059> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 6, 21 May 1781–1 March 1784, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952, pp. 60–64.]

⁶⁹ "From Thomas Jefferson to the County Lieutenants of Berkeley and Certain Other Counties, 19 April 1780," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-27-02-0616> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 27, 1 September–31 December 1793, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997, pp. 691–693.]

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ "From Thomas Jefferson to William Carmichael, 15 December 1787," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016,

He, along with other members of the United States government, including President George Washington and Secretary of War Henry Knox, were convinced that the British had provided hostile Native American tribes with supplies and had actively encouraged them to oppose the United States with force.^{72,73} In 1791, a report reached Jefferson suggesting that an English adventurer, William Bowles, had been sent by the British to convince the Creek nation to go to war with the United States. In a letter to British diplomat George Hammond, he said he did not believe that the British government had authorised the action, but wanted to bring it to their attention.⁷⁴ In all likelihood Jefferson did, in fact, believe that the British government had sanctioned Bowles' mission; that belief then increased his concerns about the British and their dealings with Native American tribes. Jefferson continued to receive regular reports of Native American attacks on the frontier, which he believed were the result of British persuasion, and proposed in a letter to James Monroe in the spring of 1791 that the best approach was to initially crush the Native Americans, and then shift to a policy of bribery. He suggested that bribery was a policy that had been used by the British for some time, and the United States would be advised to adopt this same tactic. Jefferson frequently identified the expense of regular war with Native American tribes as a major concern; he argued that placating the tribes with regular gifts was a much cheaper alternative. He believed that this approach would allow for an extended period of peace between the United States and the Native Americans that would gradually result in improved relations between the two sides.⁷⁵ A critical factor in

<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-12-02-0434> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 12, 7 August 1787–31 March 1788, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955, pp. 423–427.]

⁷² “To George Washington from Thomas Jefferson, 17 April 1791,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-08-02-0087> [Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Presidential Series, vol. 8, 22 March 1791–22 September 1791, ed. Mark A. Mastromarino. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999, pp. 114–117.]

⁷³ “Circular to Consuls and Vice-Consuls, 13 May 1791,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-20-02-0143> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 20, 1 April–4 August 1791, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982, pp. 401–404.]

⁷⁴ “From Thomas Jefferson to George Hammond, 12 December 1791,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-22-02-0364> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 22, 6 August 1791–31 December 1791, ed. Charles T. Cullen. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986, p. 394.]

⁷⁵ “From Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe, 17 April 1791,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-20-02-0051> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 20, 1 April–4 August 1791, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982, pp. 234–236.]

improving relations was ensuring that the British stayed out of United States affairs with the tribes. Jefferson believed that if the Native tribes were content, then they would be resistant to British influence.

A major grievance for Jefferson was that the British had not satisfactorily fulfilled their obligations set out in the Treaty of Paris of 1783, which had effectively brought the American War of Independence to a close. His complaint related primarily to the British refusal to abandon their forts that now lay on United States soil. The British garrisons at these forts claimed jurisdiction over the territory in their immediate vicinity, and had also forbidden United States citizens from navigating rivers.⁷⁶ As a result, Jefferson felt that the United States

have been intercepted entirely from the Commerce of furs with the Indian nations to the Northward: a commerce which had ever been of great importance to the United states, not only for its intrinsic value, but as it was the means of cherishing peace with those Indians, and of superseding the necessity of that expensive warfare, we have been obliged to carry on with them, during the time that these posts have been in other hands.⁷⁷

Jefferson was hopeful that the British would relinquish the forts but was doubtful it would happen, and believed that no instruction had ever been given by the British to evacuate the forts.⁷⁸ In a conversation that Jefferson had with Hammond, he explained that the United States wanted the forts to “awe the Indians, to participate in the Fur trade, and to protect that trade against the Indians.”⁷⁹ He was unequivocal as to why he believed the British wished to keep the forts, arguing that it was because they wanted to maintain their influence with the Native Americans, and to retain a monopoly over the fur trade.⁸⁰ Jefferson clearly believed that, together with a detrimental impact on commerce, a continued British presence prevented the United States from establishing closer

⁷⁶ “From Thomas Jefferson to George Hammond, 15 December 1791,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-22-02-0384> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 22, 6 August 1791–31 December 1791, ed. Charles T. Cullen. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986, pp. 409–412.]

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ “From Thomas Jefferson to George Hammond, 29 May 1792,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-23-02-0506> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 23, 1 January–31 May 1792, ed. Charles T. Cullen. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 551–613.]

⁷⁹ “Notes of a Conversation with George Hammond, 4 June 1792,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-24-02-0023> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 24, 1 June–31 December 1792, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 26–33.]

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

relations with many of the Native American tribes, which resulted in ongoing expensive warfare, which was a drain on the United States economy⁸¹.

While there were issues with the tribes in the south, the main focus of conflict with the Native Americans in the early 1790s was in the north-west. On 4 November 1791, an expedition led by Major General Arthur St Clair was decisively defeated by a force of Native American warriors comprised largely of members of the Miami and Wabash tribes. Following that defeat, there was considerable debate about the government's policy regarding the north-west tribes. Many journalists were critical of the government's approach, with some arguing that the war was unjust and the result of white settlers encroaching on Native American lands. Jefferson ignored the criticism and argued that further military measures were necessary; he pointed to the fact that attempts at peace with the tribes in the north-west had failed, and a military response was the only option.⁸² For Jefferson, the consequences of further warfare with the north-west tribes were primarily economic, but as he believed the peace negotiations would not succeed, Jefferson could see no other option.⁸³ He continued to be troubled by the high financial cost of war, but nonetheless pressed for further military action, despite the fact that a military solution had been pursued many times before and had failed. With clear economic concerns and the repeated failure of that course of action, a different approach to the problem was needed, but Jefferson was unwavering in his belief that the best policy was to beat the hostile tribes into submission, and then explore opportunities for peace. It is possible to interpret his belief in a military solution as a consequence of Jefferson's undoubted frustration that attempts at peace had repeatedly failed, resulting in continued hostility by

⁸¹ "Notes on John Jay's Mission to Great Britain, [1797 or after]," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified December 6, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-29-02-0487> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 29, 1 March 1796–31 December 1797, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002, pp. 605–631.]

⁸² "Enclosure: Draft Message on Western Defense, 16 December 1791," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-22-02-0388> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 22, 6 August 1791–31 December 1791, ed. Charles T. Cullen. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986, pp. 415–416.]

⁸³ "From Thomas Jefferson to Gouverneur Morris, 15 October 1792," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-24-02-0450> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 24, 1 June–31 December 1792, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 484–486.]

many tribes in the north-west; the fact that the conflict was often the result of meddling by foreign nations incensed him even further.

In his writing, Jefferson discussed reports that suggested there would be peace with the Native American tribes in the north-west only if the British were invited to mediate between the two sides.⁸⁴ If the United States accepted British mediation for these negotiations, the British offered to evacuate the forts they continued to occupy in clear violation of the Treaty of Paris. A condition that the British demanded if they agreed to vacate the forts, was that the United States would have to consent to the creation of a Native American barrier state to separate the British and the United States. Jefferson did not support the creation of a barrier state at that time, but believed that relations between the United States and the British would benefit from an agreement to remove all military posts on either side of the boundary between the two nations; he supported the idea of both nations having only trading posts on the border.⁸⁵ Ultimately, Jefferson was against British mediation, stating it was:

An established principle of public law among the white nations of America that while the Indians included within their limits retain all other natl. rights no other white nation can become their patrons, protectors or Mediators, nor in any shape intermeddle between them and those within whose limits they are.⁸⁶

Jefferson argued that while peace with the western tribes was desirable, if negotiations should fail and peace terms could not be agreed, it was preferable that no British representative should be in attendance as the United States public may perceive the negotiations as failing because of British interference.⁸⁷

After the American War of Independence, the Spanish started to become a concern for Jefferson regarding Native American matters. In a letter to Thomas

⁸⁴ “Thomas Jefferson’s Memorandum of a Meeting of the Heads of the Executive Departments, 9 March 1792,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-10-02-0039> [Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Presidential Series, vol. 10, *1 March 1792–15 August 1792*, ed. Robert F. Haggard and Mark A. Mastromarino. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002, pp. 69–73.]

⁸⁵ “Notes of a Conversation with George Hammond, 4 June 1792.”

⁸⁶ “Notes for a Conversation with George Hammond, [ca. 10 December 1792],” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-24-02-0704> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 24, *1 June–31 December 1792*, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 717–721.]

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

Barclay, United States first consul in France, Jefferson stated that the Creeks had ignited a war with the United States, and as their lands lay between United States and Spanish-held territory, speculation was that the Spanish had encouraged the Creeks in this action. He received reports suggesting that Spain were concerned about possible United States expansion, which they believed placed Spanish possessions in North-America in jeopardy, and had incited the Creeks to try and prevent that expansion. Jefferson argued that if the Spanish had been worried about a threat from the United States to their territories in North-America, they had two options available to them; the first was continuous warfare with the United States in an attempt to prevent United States growth, while the second was to try to build a close friendship with them. Jefferson believed the policy the Spanish were likely to choose was the second plan, and subsequently was incredulous about reports that the Spanish had stirred the Creeks to make war with the United States.⁸⁸ This belief about Spanish innocence would not last, as Jefferson became increasingly suspicious about their intentions. In 1792, Jefferson received reports that accused the Spanish of sending an agent into Creek territory to try to discourage the Creeks from establishing a boundary with the United States. In a letter to Spanish commissioners Josef Ignacio de Viar and Josef de Jaudenes, Jefferson conveyed doubts he had that the agent had acted with the permission of the Spanish government, as he believed an understanding existed between the United States and Spain which precluded either country from sending an agent into the other country's territory without first obtaining permission. Jefferson suggested that no further action was necessary, and he simply wanted to bring the infraction to the attention of the Spanish government.⁸⁹ He did, in fact, believe the Spanish government had sent the agent into Creek territory, and as a result believed that action should be taken against the Spanish; he did not specify precisely what action should be taken, though. Because of concerns about the conduct of Spanish agents, Jefferson asked William Carmichael and William

⁸⁸ "From Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Barclay, 31 August 1786," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-10-02-0231> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 10, 22 June–31 December 1786, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954, pp. 313–315.]

⁸⁹ "From Thomas Jefferson to Josef Ignacio de Viar and Josef de Jaudenes, 9 July 1792," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-24-02-0184> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 24, 1 June–31 December 1792, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 203–204.]

Short, commissioner's plenipotentiary sent to negotiate with the Spanish in Madrid, to press for the inclusion of a clause in the treaty which would prohibit either nation from placing an agent within the limits of any Native American tribe residing within the territory of the opposing nation.⁹⁰ Jefferson's growing concerns about Spanish motives were confirmed in a letter to George Washington, sent on 2 September 1792, which expressed suspicion that Spain were strengthening their position on the Mississippi, and suggested that any hope given to the United States regarding the possibility of obtaining permission from Spain for navigation rights to that river, was nothing more than a ruse to keep the United States quiet while the Spanish sought to build up their strength.⁹¹

It was important to Jefferson to show that he was aware of the interference from Spanish agents. In a letter sent to Carmichael and Short, Jefferson gave evidence of unscrupulous behaviour by Spanish officers in their conduct towards the United States. He accused the Baron de Carondelet, Governor of New Orleans, of encouraging the southern tribes to take up arms against the United States, and supplying them with weapons and ammunition. Jefferson lamented the fact that the United States had been on good terms with the southern tribes before Carondelet's involvement.⁹² He also received intelligence from Indian agent James Seagrove, who accused a Spanish agent, William Panton, of being responsible for a raid carried out by a party of Creek warriors; he also claimed that this raid was part of a scheme devised by Spanish authorities to bring about a war between the Creeks and the United States.⁹³ Jefferson bemoaned the principles and practices of Spanish officers and agents, alleging that they carried on a policy

⁹⁰ "From Thomas Jefferson to William Carmichael and William Short, 14 October 1792," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-24-02-0445> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 24, 1 June–31 December 1792, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 479–481.]

⁹¹ "From Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, 9 September 1792," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-24-02-0330> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 24, 1 June–31 December 1792, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 351–360.]

⁹² From Thomas Jefferson to William Carmichael and William Short, 14 October 1792."

⁹³ "To George Washington from James Seagrove, 17 March 1793," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified December 6, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-12-02-0259> [Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Presidential Series, vol. 12, 16 January 1793–31 May 1793, ed. Christine Sternberg Patrick and John C. Pinheiro. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005, pp. 335–338.]

of encouraging the southern tribes to disavow treaties that had been made with the United States. The tug of war that existed between the Spanish and the United States for the favour of the southern tribes was delineated by Jefferson's description of tribes that he believed the Spanish had sought to influence. For Jefferson, the Creeks had fallen victim to the influence of Spanish agents and had subsequently become hostile towards the United States. The Creek attacks that followed were, according to Jefferson, dealt with in a very conciliatory manner, in that the United States resisted taking retaliatory action, and instead helped the Creek people by providing them with food when they were in desperate need. For Jefferson, almost all of the fighting with the Native Americans on the southern frontiers was a result of Spanish meddling.⁹⁴

As Jefferson's suspicions continued to grow, he started to believe that the British and Spanish were in collusion; mutually working together against United States interests on the frontier.⁹⁵ At a cabinet meeting on 4 September 1793, Jefferson received a report by United States General, Anthony Wayne, which accused British agent, Alexander McKee, of trying to convince the tribes in the north-west to form an alliance with the southern tribes in order obtain territorial concessions from the United States; with their main objective being an Ohio River boundary.⁹⁶ Jefferson became convinced that, with the urging of Great Britain and Spain, the tribes in the north had planned to form an alliance with the tribes in the south. This is confirmed in a letter Jefferson wrote on 8 April 1793 to Gouverneur Morris, Minister Plenipotentiary to France, in which he discussed the supposed alliance and reasoned that, as a result, the northern tribes did not intend on establishing peace with the United States.⁹⁷ Jefferson expressed concern and outrage at the conduct of the Spanish, stating:

⁹⁴ "From Thomas Jefferson to William Carmichael and William Short, 30 June 1793," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-26-02-0368> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 26, 11 May–31 August 1793, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995, pp. 405–417.]

⁹⁵ "From Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, 9 September 1792."

⁹⁶ "Notes on Cabinet Meetings, 4 September 1793," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-27-02-0031> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 27, 1 September–31 December 1793, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997, pp. 32–34.]

⁹⁷ "From Thomas Jefferson to Gouverneur Morris, 8 April 1793," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-25->

They undertake to espouse the concerns of Indians within our limits; to be mediators of boundary between them and us; to guaranty that boundary to them; to support them with their whole power; and hazard to us intimations of acquiescence to avoid disagreeable results. They even propose to extend their intermedlings to the northern Indians.⁹⁸

He claimed that the United States had always been “desirous to avoid whatever might disturb our harmony with Spain,” especially at a time when the Spanish were on good terms with Great Britain, but if the two nations were working together against the United States, then that was a major concern for Jefferson.⁹⁹

Jefferson felt that the United States needed to avoid becoming embroiled in the conflict that was unfolding in Europe, because of the possibility of war breaking out with tribes in the south and the north-west. In a letter to federal court judge, Harry Innes, he indicated that peace negotiations with the Native tribes in the north-west were the last effort of the United States to live peacefully with them, and if they failed then war was the likely outcome; an outcome that he had previously stated was very probable. He anticipated war with the tribes in the south was also imminent, and as a result believed that the United States becoming immersed in conflict in Europe would be detrimental to national interests.¹⁰⁰ For Jefferson, the possibility of warfare in the north-west and the south was because of foreign interference, which resulted in Jefferson arguing that the United States needed to steer clear of any involvement in the fighting raging on in Europe.

Jefferson’s plans for the Native Americans were influenced by concerns about how foreign nations might react, which is elucidated by how Jefferson argued the situation involving the Creeks needed to be handled. In a cabinet meeting held on 29 May 1793, Jefferson stated that, because of a possible negative reaction by foreign powers, the Governor of Georgia should be told not to take offensive

[02-0477](#) [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 25, 1 January–10 May 1793, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992, pp. 519–520.]

⁹⁸ “From Thomas Jefferson to William Carmichael and William Short, 31 May 1793,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016,

<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-26-02-0139> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 26, 11 May–31 August 1793, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995, pp. 148–150.]

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ “From Thomas Jefferson to Harry Innes, 23 May 1793,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-26-02-0090> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 26, 11 May–31 August 1793, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995, pp. 99–100.]

action against the Creeks; he believed that only defensive measures should be taken by Georgia.¹⁰¹ Jefferson believed that the Creek attacks were the result of incitements by the Spanish, who tried to resist United States expansion by creating an alliance of the southern tribes, encouraging them to oppose the United States militarily. Jefferson was growing increasingly frustrated with Spain, which is confirmed by a letter to Carmichael and Short, who were still locked in negotiations with the Spanish in Madrid. In this letter, he stated that, prior to Spanish meddling, the Creeks and the United States had been on peaceful terms, but because of Spanish interference the Creek attacks had escalated to the point of giving the appearance of outright war and, subsequently, relations had significantly deteriorated. Jefferson claimed the defensive strategy would continue with a peaceful outcome preferable, but if Creek hostilities did not cease, then the United States would be forced to take more offensive action; something Jefferson was very reluctant to do.¹⁰² Jefferson's belief that no retaliatory action should be taken by Georgia because of a possible reaction by Spain is a clear example of how his plans for the Native Americans were influenced by considerations of foreign nations.

Spain repeatedly accused the United States of impropriety and meddling in the affairs of tribes that had signed treaties with the Spanish, and were on good terms with Spain. Jefferson responded to the accusation by pointing to treaties that the United States had with the tribes in question, and argued that, as a result, the United States was justified in continuing to deal with them.¹⁰³ Spain made further accusations, and alleged that United States ambassador, James Seagrove, had tried to influence the southern tribes against them. Jefferson believed that Seagrove was innocent, and that Spain had accused Seagrove of this charge simply because Seagrove himself had previously accused Spain of a similar charge.¹⁰⁴ Spain

¹⁰¹ "Cabinet Opinion on the Creek Indians and Georgia, 29 May 1793," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-26-02-0127> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 26, 11 May–31 August 1793, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995, pp. 138–140.]

¹⁰² "From Thomas Jefferson to William Carmichael and William Short, 31 May 1793."

¹⁰³ "From Thomas Jefferson to William Carmichael and William Short, 30 June 1793."

¹⁰⁴ "From Thomas Jefferson to Josef Ignacio de Viar and Josef de Jaudenes, 21 May 1793," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-26-02-0071> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 26, 11 May–31 August 1793, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995, pp. 78–79.]

continued to direct accusations at the United States, and a charge was made by the Governor of Louisiana, in which he suggested that the United States had committed many atrocities against the Native American people. Jefferson was outraged by the charge, and in response stated that the accusation was entirely baseless; nothing more than an attempt to besmirch the name of the United States.¹⁰⁵ Spain further attacked the reputation of the United States by claiming that the United States had supplied the tribes with weapons. In a letter to Carmichael and Short, Jefferson expressed his anger but did not deny the charge; he instead pointed to the hypocrisy of the accusation, as Spain had also supplied the tribes with weapons. For Jefferson, a major difference in the conduct between the two countries was that Spain had given weapons to the tribes so they could continue to fight the United States, while the United States had given them simply as gifts.¹⁰⁶ A significant allegation made by Spain was that the United States had encouraged the Chickasaw Nation to go to war against the Creeks; they essentially argued that the United States had used Native American warriors to help fight their battles. Jefferson had in the past not been opposed to employing Native American allies to fight hostile tribes, but on this occasion he denied the charge. Jefferson insisted, though, that if the Creeks did not stop the attacks on United States settlements, the United States would be forced to take military action; he was hopeful that if military action was required, it would not lead to war with Spain, as Spain was closely aligned with the Creeks at that time.¹⁰⁷

The United States and Spain continued to fire allegations back and forth in relation to their dealings with the Native tribes, and while Jefferson believed that much of the fighting on the frontier was a result of Spanish provocations, a recurring theme in his writing was a desire to maintain peace with Spain. To try to preserve peaceful relations, Jefferson reassured the Spanish commissioners that

¹⁰⁵ “From Thomas Jefferson to William Carmichael and William Short, 11 September 1793,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-27-02-0086> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 27, 1 September–31 December 1793, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997, pp. 88–89.]

¹⁰⁶ “From Thomas Jefferson to William Carmichael and William Short, 30 June 1793.”

¹⁰⁷ “To George Washington from Thomas Jefferson, 4 August 1793,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-13-02-0231> [Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Presidential Series, vol. 13, 1 June–31 August 1793, ed. Christine Sternberg Patrick. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007, pp. 339–340.]

the United States would do their best to encourage the Native American tribes to remain on peaceful terms with Spain. Jefferson hoped that the negotiations that were continuing in Madrid would resolve the issues that existed between Spain and the United States relating to Native American matters.¹⁰⁸ Because of concern about possible consequences for United States relations with Spain if the United States were to take aggressive measures against the Creeks, Jefferson believed that the legislature needed to be convened earlier than usual to discuss the issue; this was necessary, as war could not be declared without Congress approval.¹⁰⁹ Congress elected not to go to war, and at a cabinet meeting on 4 September 1793, Jefferson discussed a proposal that had been made by the Governor of Georgia to conduct a military expedition against the Creeks. Jefferson felt that the expedition should not proceed because war with Spain, and potentially Great Britain, could be the result. He believed that as Congress had elected not to go to war against the Creeks, it would be inadvisable for the executive to take this action unilaterally.¹¹⁰ A war with Spain was something that Jefferson desperately wanted to avoid, so he welcomed evidence that demonstrated good conduct of Spanish agents in their dealings with the Native Americans. He argued that if good conduct was “pursued with good faith both by Spain and us, it will add to the prosperity of both, and to the preservation and happiness of the Indians.”¹¹¹ Unfortunately for Jefferson, while there were some positive reports of the conduct of Spanish agents, these reports were minimal, so relations between Spain and the United States continued to be strained.

Between the years 1794 and 1800, there is minimal mention in Jefferson’s surviving papers of foreign relations in connection with Native American matters. It was not until March 1801, after Jefferson had assumed the presidency that foreign affairs again began to feature in his writing about the Native Americans. In a letter to United States Ambassador to Spain, David Humphreys, and acting Secretary of State, Levi Lincoln, Jefferson asked that they reassure the Spanish of

¹⁰⁸ “From Thomas Jefferson to Josef Ignacio de Viar and Josef de Jaudenes, 21 May 1793.”

¹⁰⁹ “To George Washington from Thomas Jefferson, 4 August 1793.”

¹¹⁰ “Notes on Cabinet Meetings, 4 September 1793.”

¹¹¹ “From Thomas Jefferson to Josef de Jaudenes and Josef Ignacio de Viar, 21 December 1793,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-27-02-0530> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 27, 1 September–31 December 1793, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997, pp. 603–604.]

the importance of the relationship that existed between the United States and Spain, with the prosperity of the United States dependent on commercial ties with the Spanish nation. As in his earlier writings, Jefferson pledged to always encourage Native American nations which adjoined United States and Spanish territory to remain on friendly terms with Spain, and anticipated that Spain would reciprocate. While Jefferson had previously been critical and suspicious of Spanish conduct, he now claimed to be:

Firmly persuaded, from the long established character of the Spanish government for rectitude and good faith that it will reciprocate towards us dispositions which may so much contribute to mutual interest and prosperity.¹¹²

Whether his concerns about the Spanish meddling in Native American affairs had markedly changed by that point is difficult to know, but as these words are official in nature, intended for the Spanish government, it is improbable that they reveal much about what he thought privately about the situation. As president, Jefferson was clearly very eager to preserve good relations with Spain, and pivotal to that objective was having Spanish representatives with whom he could work well with. Jefferson's words about Spanish envoy Chevalier de Yrujo reinforce this view, as he was very disappointed to learn that he was leaving his position, stating, "the good sense, honor and friendly dispositions of that gentleman could not fail to render him a useful organ of communication between the two countries."¹¹³ After having considerable issues with previous Spanish agents and officials, such as the Baron de Carondelet, the president's disappointment could be interpreted as regret over losing someone he believed he could work with constructively.

Trade became a crucial part of Jefferson's plan for reducing conflict with the tribes; he believed that complete control over trade with the Native Americans was vital for United States interests. The United States government had plans to take over all trade with the Native tribes, but Jefferson recognised the detrimental

¹¹² "From Thomas Jefferson to David Humphreys, with Levi Lincoln, [17] March 1801," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-33-02-0278> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 33, 17 February–30 April 1801, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006, pp. 321–323.]

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

impact that increased governmental control would have for individuals who had profited from that trade. With this in mind, Jefferson pointed to a new opportunity that had presented itself in which these individuals might seek to profit. The Native tribes that inhabited territory in the vicinity of the Missouri river were not well known to the United States at that time, and Jefferson wanted to learn more about them. He stated that he had received information which indicated that many of the tribes were engaged in trade with Great Britain, primarily involving furs and pelts, and he was keen to explore commercial possibilities for the United States in that region. Jefferson understood that trade which occurred between these tribes and other nations was fraught with difficulties because of the treacherous terrain that needed to be traversed. He believed that the Missouri River was potentially a less hazardous route, and if that proved to be the case, it would then allow the United States to engage in trade with tribes that occupied the Missouri region. A research team was assembled to explore the Missouri to its source; they were given instructions to acquire as much information about the tribes as they could, and explore possible commercial opportunities for the United States with these tribes.¹¹⁴ Jefferson had previously expressed a desire to stop private traders, both foreign and domestic, from trading with the Native tribes, as he believed that trade should be conducted entirely by traders officially sanctioned by the United States government. Following the acquisition of the Louisiana Territory by the United States in 1803, Jefferson changed his mind, suggesting that he was willing to agree to United States private traders engaging in trade west of the Mississippi; this idea related particularly to trade up the Missouri. Jefferson then proposed that the United States government should establish trading factories on the western margin of the Mississippi, but that all trade in the territory beyond that be offered to private merchants.¹¹⁵ The reason for this decision was because he felt that the government could not extend its reach to these newly acquired

¹¹⁴ “From Thomas Jefferson to the Senate and the House of Representatives, 18 January 1803,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0303> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 39, 13 November 1802–3 March 1803, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012, pp. 350–354.]

¹¹⁵ “From Thomas Jefferson to Lot Merkel, 30 April 1806,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-3669> [This is an **Early Access document** from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). **It is not an authoritative final version.**]

lands at that time. Jefferson was determined to exclude foreign traders, and if that meant allowing United States private traders in, then he was prepared to accept that; what was vital was that all trade conducted with the Native tribes in United States-held territory be carried out by United States citizens.

Jefferson believed that offering the Native Americans excellent trade terms would help to tie them to the United States, while simultaneously turning them away from the influence of other nations. He was of the opinion that it was important to remain on good terms with tribes who shared a border with the British, such as the Sioux and the Kickapoo, as they could turn to the British for help if they were dissatisfied with the treatment they received from the United States. As a way of achieving this, Jefferson advocated taking their pelts and furs at generous prices, and selling them goods at lower prices; he was hopeful that by treating them well, they would trade exclusively with the United States, and cut off contact with the British.¹¹⁶ Jefferson was adamant that the British had no right whatsoever to trade in the Louisiana Territory, and wanted the British to relinquish any right to trade with the Native tribes there.¹¹⁷ While particularly focused on the British, Jefferson wanted to exclude not only them from trade with the Native American tribes, but also traders from all foreign nations. Earlier in his writing, Jefferson regularly lamented the negative impact foreign traders had on the minds of Native Americans, and again, following the acquisition of the Louisiana Territory, he cited this influence as a significant reason for wanting to exclude foreign traders, stating, “they poison the minds of the Indians towards the US.”¹¹⁸ Jefferson believed that it was imperative for the United States to offer the Native tribes good trade terms as a way of gaining their acceptance of the exclusion of foreign traders; he believed at the same time it would help to bind these tribes closely to the United States.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ “From Thomas Jefferson to William Henry Harrison, 16 January 1806,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-3024> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). It is not an authoritative final version.]

¹¹⁷ “Notes on a Cabinet Meeting, 14 March 1806,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-3414> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). It is not an authoritative final version.]

¹¹⁸ “From Thomas Jefferson to Lot Merkel, 30 April 1806.”

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

For Jefferson, a policy based on trade and friendship was preferable to one which revolved around continuous warfare. Jefferson felt that many of the tribes west of the Mississippi, such as the Kansas, had not attached themselves to the United States because the United States had not had enough time to convince them of their “moderation, justice & friendship.”¹²⁰ Thus, they had remained aligned with the Spanish against United States interests, but Jefferson believed that employing a policy of open commerce would gradually attach them to the United States.¹²¹ Jefferson argued that a policy of “military coercion” towards the Native tribes was wrong, as it would lead to perpetual war, and instead suggested, “Commerce is the great engine by which we are to coerce them.”¹²² He claimed this policy had been liberally employed with the Native tribes east of the Mississippi, and that it had convinced them of the justice, moderation and good treatment of the United States government. Subsequently, the eastern tribes aligned themselves closely to the United States, and Jefferson felt that it was only a matter of time before this feeling spread to the tribes in the west.¹²³ Jefferson was firm in his view that commerce was the most effective way of governing the Native tribes and of tying them closely to the United States. He was anxious that all the proposed trading factories planned on the Missouri and the Mississippi Rivers be completed as soon as possible, arguing that the establishment of these trading stations would unquestionably have a more positive impact on the minds of Native tribes than an army ever could; advocating a policy based on friendship rather than fear.¹²⁴

Together with trade, Jefferson believed that the Native tribes would become less hostile if they adopted agricultural practices; a reduction in bloodshed on the frontier would be the result. The intentions of Shawnee leader Tenskwatawa, also known as the Prophet, were questioned by many, with some claiming that he had tried to turn the tribes in the Midwest against the United States. Jefferson received

¹²⁰ “From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 20 August 1808,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-8548> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). It is not an authoritative final version.]

¹²¹ “From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 20 August 1808.”

¹²² “From Thomas Jefferson to Meriwether Lewis, 21 August 1808,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-8555> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). It is not an authoritative final version.]

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ “From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 20 August 1808.”

reports that tried to assuage concerns about Tenskwatawa, but the Shawnee leader's intentions remained unclear. The uncertainty about Tenskwatawa is confirmed in a letter Jefferson wrote to Ohio Senator Thomas Worthington, in April 1808, in which he indicated that he had heard many conflicting reports about Tenskwatawa and was unsure what to think. He said that if further information proved his intentions were friendly towards the United States, and that he was "endeavoring to reform the morality of the Indians & encourage them in industry & peace" then Jefferson would seek to extend Tenskwatawa's influence as much as possible with the Native tribes of that area.¹²⁵ Jefferson wanted to encourage the Native Americans to adopt industry and agriculture; as validation of this point, he claimed that tribes that "are most advanced in the pursuits of industry," particularly the southern tribes which are "much advanced beyond the others in Agriculture & household [*sic*] arts," were the ones that maintained friendly relations with the United States.¹²⁶ He argued that tribes that were more remote and relied heavily on hunting were more inclined towards hostile action against the United States, and open to the advances of the British. For Jefferson, the Shawnee were one of these remote tribes, and the possibility of having someone such as influential Tenskwatawa in that vicinity, and who would promote peace and industry, was extremely desirable. Unfortunately for Jefferson, Tenskwatawa's intentions were found not to be favourable, and so the positive influence Jefferson had hoped for did not materialise; however, he continued to promote agriculture amongst the Native tribes at every opportunity.¹²⁷

Jefferson felt that what transpired in United States affairs with Great Britain would have clear consequences for United States dealings with the Native American tribes. Following a series of perceived infractions, the United States responded by introducing the Embargo Act of 1807, closing United States ports to

¹²⁵ "From Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Worthington, 24 April 1808," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-7906> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). **It is not an authoritative final version.**]

¹²⁶ "From Thomas Jefferson to United States Congress, 27 October 1807," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-6665> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). **It is not an authoritative final version.**]

¹²⁷ "From Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Paine, 6 September 1807," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-6339> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). **It is not an authoritative final version.**]

British ships and forbidding United States ships to sail to any foreign port. As a result of this law, the United States were forced to rely increasingly on internal manufactures, which Jefferson suggested would ultimately benefit United States businesses, as “under the auspices of cheaper materials and subsistence, of the freedom of labour from taxation with us, and of protecting duties and prohibitions” they would almost certainly prosper. The embargo had an impact on trade with the Native Americans, as most of the goods traded with the tribes needed to be produced internally.¹²⁸ Jefferson hoped that supplying the tribes with what they needed would have a positive effect on relations, and tie the tribes closely to the United States.¹²⁹ Because of anxiety about preserving good relations with the tribes, and continued concern about possible interference from the British in United States affairs, Jefferson felt that it was important to keep the Native Americans happy. In speeches to Native leaders, he tried to discourage them from siding with the British by pointing to how destructive British policies had been on Native societies, while also reminding them of how much the tribes had benefited from the treatment they had received from the United States. Jefferson said to many of the Chiefs:

The British, the course they advise has worn you down to your present numbers, but temperance, peace & agriculture will raise you up to be what your forefathers were, will prepare you to possess property, to wish to live under regular laws, to join us in our government to mix with us in Society, and your blood & ours united will spread again over this great Island.¹³⁰

By suggesting a bright future ahead for the United States and Native peoples together, Jefferson hoped the tribes would be less susceptible to what he viewed as a corrosive British influence.

With the possibility of war with the British building, concern intensified about distant tribes that were beyond the reach of the United States, such as the Sacs and Foxes; their susceptibility to the advances of the British, and their inclination

¹²⁸ “From Thomas Jefferson to United States Congress, 8 November 1808,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-9054> [This is an **Early Access document** from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). It is not an authoritative final version.]

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ “From Thomas Jefferson to Indian Nations, 21 December 1808,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-9368> [This is an **Early Access document** from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). It is not an authoritative final version.]

towards hostility against the United States, were particularly disquieting. For some time Jefferson had hoped to encourage the Native tribes to adopt the ‘civilised’ arts, and with war looming, he believed it was particularly important to:

Extend the civilized arts, & to introduce a separation of property among the Indians of the country round Detroit than elsewhere, because learning to set a high value on their property, & losing by degrees all other dependance for subsistence, they would deprecate war with us as bringing certain destruction on their property, and would become a barrier for that distant & insulated post against the Indians beyond them.¹³¹

The British influence over the distant tribes clearly shaped Jefferson’s thinking about where and when certain aspects of ‘civilisation’ should be propagated. By 1811, Jefferson had come to believe that in the advent of war, the United States should try to take Canada from the British, which he felt would remove the negative British influence on the Native peoples. He thought many Native American attacks were a result of British influence, and believed that if the United States took Canada it would spare United States citizens from the “tomahawk & scalping knife”.¹³²

After the start of the War of 1812 against the British, Jefferson noted that the war was extremely popular in many of the states, and suggested that one way that it would remain popular was by stopping aggressive actions by the Native tribes.¹³³ Jefferson had previously expressed the belief that the Native peoples should be governed by commerce and by trying to forge close relationships with them, but in 1812 he hinted that this policy had not been entirely successful, especially with the more distant tribes, which he suggested only remained quiet because of fear and not because of any affectionate attachment to the United States. Following a significant military setback for the United States forces at Detroit on 16 August 1812, Jefferson was concerned that this fear would be obliterated and that the

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² “Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, 11 June 1812,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/03-05-02-0100> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, Retirement Series, vol. 5, *1 May 1812 to 10 March 1813*, ed. J. Jefferson Looney. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008, pp. 122–125.]

¹³³ “To James Madison from Thomas Jefferson, 29 June 1812,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Madison/03-04-02-0555> [Original source: *The Papers of James Madison*, Presidential Series, vol. 4, *5 November 1811–9 July 1812 and supplement 5 March 1809–19 October 1811*, ed. J. C. A. Stagg, Jeanne Kerr Cross, Jewel L. Spangler, Ellen J. Barber, Martha J. King, Anne Mandeville Colony, and Susan Holbrook Perdue. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999, pp. 519–520.]

tribes would seek to unleash their warriors against the United States.¹³⁴ Jefferson at this time wanted to ensure that United States citizens would not be victims of the brutal Native American tactics used during war, and so encouraged a policy that would see the Native tribes cut off from their British allies; he then sought to employ friendly Native warriors against tribes that were hostile to the United States.¹³⁵ In a letter to former ambassador to Spain William Short, on 18 June 1813, Jefferson argued that at the conclusion of the war during negotiations, the United States should push for a boundary with the British that would effectively cut them off from the Native tribes bordering on United States territory. For Jefferson this strategy would significantly improve United States security and permanently remove the negative influence that he believed the British exerted over many Native tribes.¹³⁶

Security from Native American attacks, and the removal of the influence of foreign nations, were central to Jefferson's thinking at the conclusion of the War of 1812. After the war, Jefferson was hopeful of incorporating Canada into the Union, and suggested that any peace that did not yield Canada to the United States was nothing more than a truce; for Jefferson, the United States were justified in insisting on Canada as compensation for all alleged wrongs that the British had committed against the United States.¹³⁷ If the United States obtained Canada, the British would be permanently cut off from the Native Americans, which would result in their influence being diminished; for Jefferson, it would improve relations between the United States and the Native tribes. The United States were

¹³⁴ "Thomas Jefferson to William Duane, 1 October 1812," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/03-05-02-0311> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, Retirement Series, vol. 5, *1 May 1812 to 10 March 1813*, ed. J. Jefferson Looney. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008, pp. 366–368.]

¹³⁵ "Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, 6 November 1812," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/03-05-02-0377> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, Retirement Series, vol. 5, *1 May 1812 to 10 March 1813*, ed. J. Jefferson Looney. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008, pp. 445–446.]

¹³⁶ "Thomas Jefferson to William Short, 18 June 1813," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/03-06-02-0184> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, Retirement Series, vol. 6, *11 March to 27 November 1813*, ed. J. Jefferson Looney. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009, pp. 204–206.]

¹³⁷ "Thomas Jefferson to Tadeusz Kosciuszko, 30 November 1813," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/03-07-02-0004> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, Retirement Series, vol. 7, *28 November 1813 to 30 September 1814*, ed. J. Jefferson Looney. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010, pp. 9–13.]

not able to take possession of Canada, but security concerns, and the removal of a negative British influence over the Native tribes, were reasons why he thought the United States should try to take the country. Security from Native American hostility was also a significant reason why Jefferson believed that the United States should try to take Florida from the Spanish. Jefferson felt that the United States could have taken Florida before, especially when Spain was suffering and in a weakened state as a result of being embroiled in war in Europe. He argued that the only reason the United States did not try to take Florida sooner, was because it would have been unscrupulous to take advantage of Spain's vulnerability in that way. However, upon learning that Spain had encouraged Native tribes to commit acts of hostility against the United States, he was convinced that security should be placed ahead of principles, and that the United States should push for the incorporation of Florida into the Union.¹³⁸ Ultimately, the United States would not take possession of Florida until 1821, but clearly Jefferson was of the view that the United States should have seized the opportunity to take it well before then, with security from Native American attacks a decisive factor.

This chapter has examined the intersection of conflict, foreign relations, and Thomas Jefferson's attitudes regarding Native American people. The subject of conflict is a central theme in Jefferson's writing, and achieving an understanding of the role it played in shaping Jefferson's views is crucial; to not satisfactorily explore the significance of the area limits the ability to place his words in meaningful context. It has been shown how conflict with the British during the American War of Independence had major consequences for Native American tribes, particularly tribes who had sided with the British during the war. Jefferson's comments regarding harsh measures being employed against tribes that allied themselves with the British can be explained by analysing the context they were said in; at a time of war, Jefferson was unforgiving towards groups that opposed the colonists and became impediments in the pursuit of independence.

¹³⁸ "Thomas Jefferson to Pierre Samuel Du Pont de Nemours, 29 November-14 December 1813," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/03-07-02-0003> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, Retirement Series, vol. 7, 28 November 1813 to 30 September 1814, ed. J. Jefferson Looney. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010, pp. 6–9.]

Jefferson abhorred the type of warfare waged by the Native Americans, and the fact that the British were prepared to employ Native warriors against the colonists left an indelible impression on his mind; this tactic had a clear impact on his thinking regarding both the British and Native Americans. It is very probable that if none of the Native tribes had sided with the British during the conflict, he never would have advocated for the removal of the Cherokee or the Shawnee at that time; his words respecting friendly tribes were almost entirely positive. The expense associated with ongoing warfare with tribes on the frontier is a recurring theme throughout Jefferson's writing, and undoubtedly shaped his thinking; he firmly believed that if foreign nations refrained from interfering with Native peoples in United States territory, then relations with the Native tribes as well as United States finances would improve significantly. This chapter has shown how the British continued to be a problem for Jefferson regarding United States relations with the Native tribes after the War of Independence; he believed that the failure of the British to vacate their trading posts after the Treaty of Paris impeded the United States' ability to improve relations with the tribes. Constant meddling by the British in affairs with the tribes in the north-west infuriated Jefferson; and the frequent skirmishes that transpired, which he believed to be because of British interference, led Jefferson to advocate crushing many of the hostile tribes militarily, before then pursuing peaceful solutions. The consistent failure of this policy, makes his support of it mystifying, but he believed if the tribes were beaten comprehensively, then a period of peace would follow, which would give the United States a chance to build close ties with the tribes afterwards; if the British could be removed from the picture, it would make that even more likely, from Jefferson's perspective.

This chapter has explored the role that relations with Spain played in influencing Jefferson's thinking about the Native American tribes; this became a particular focus for Jefferson in the years after the American War of Independence. When reports started to surface indicating that the Spanish had begun interfering in United States affairs with the Native Americans, he was initially sceptical, but he became convinced they were interfering in United States relations with the tribes. He sought to minimise their influence by pushing for an agreement which would prevent either nation from placing an Indian agent within the territory of the

opposing nation without permission. Suggestions that Spain had discouraged the Creeks from agreeing to territorial boundaries, and had actively encouraged them to oppose the United States with force, frustrated Jefferson enormously. His concerns escalated further when he became convinced that Spain had established an understanding with Great Britain in which they would work together to the detriment of United States interests; one way they would do that was by encouraging the tribes in the north-west to align themselves with the southern tribes; it was hoped that if the tribes united, they could resist the United States successfully. The actions of Spanish officers and agents became a significant problem for Jefferson; the undeniable impact they had on how he believed certain Native American matters needed to be handled has been explored throughout this chapter. While Jefferson responded angrily to Spanish accusations about how the United States treated its Native inhabitants, it is clear from his writing that he consistently opposed taking any action that could result in war with Spain.

It has been demonstrated in this chapter that, as president, Jefferson tried to maintain peaceful relations with the Native tribes, but believed that the machinations of foreign nations made that difficult; he was convinced that foreign agents consistently sought to poison the minds of the Native Americans against the United States. It has been shown how crucial trade was for Jefferson, as a way of improving relations with the tribes, and tying them closely to the United States; he believed that if the United States had a monopoly over trade with the Native Americans, then that would provide the United States with an opportunity to build close relationships with the tribes. He hoped that the exclusion of foreign traders, and offering the tribes excellent trade terms, would also result in the tribes distancing themselves from other foreign nations. In conjunction with a policy based around commerce, Jefferson wanted to promote agriculture and industry amongst the tribes, as he was convinced that if tribes adopted the 'civilised' arts, they would become less hostile and less vulnerable to foreign influence. Before the American War of Independence, Jefferson had encouraged the tribes to remain neutral if war broke out with Britain; and again prior to the War of 1812 he pleaded with the tribes to remain neutral. As war with Britain seemed inevitable, Jefferson had concerns about the distant tribes being susceptible to British influence, and actively promoted aspects of 'civilisation' among tribes that he felt

inhabited territory between the United States and the distant tribes, believing they would act as a buffer. By the War of 1812 Jefferson expressed frustration that a policy based on trade and the promotion of agriculture had not been completely successful, as many tribes had sided with the British. After the war, Jefferson supported measures to try to cut the Native tribes off from the influence of foreign nations, by establishing boundaries that would make contact difficult and taking possession of territory that would give the United States more control over the Native tribes. The importance that the topic of conflict had in shaping Jefferson's views on Native Americans is unmistakable, with the actions of foreign nations undoubtedly significant; how these topics are interrelated and the way they influenced his thinking have been extensively explored in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Land

In this chapter, the relationship between foreign affairs and Thomas Jefferson's attitudes regarding Native American land will be explained. The influence of foreign relations on Jefferson's thinking concerning Native lands is unquestionable, and no analysis of the topic is complete without considering this important element. Native American involvement in the American War of Independence had a significant impact on Jefferson's thoughts concerning Native lands, and this point will be explored in this chapter. After the war, Jefferson wanted to establish close ties with many of the tribes, but he believed that interference from foreign nations, such as Great Britain and Spain, made that difficult. It will be shown how concerns about foreign nations, in the wake of the American War of Independence, shaped Jefferson's thinking about Native lands. Jefferson was conscious of the need to have good relations with the tribes, and felt it was critical in ensuring that tribes would be less receptive to the approaches of foreign nations; the impact that this belief had on his plans regarding Native lands will be explored in this chapter. Jefferson believed that the negative influence of foreign nations led to ongoing costly wars with the Native Americans, and this concern had clear consequences for how he approached the subject of Native American lands. This chapter will explore Jefferson's frustration at the conduct of other nations, who he believed were encouraging the Native tribes not to honour treaties with the United States, and often involved themselves in boundary issues the United States had with Native American tribes. The plans that Jefferson advocated with respect to the Native Americans were often influenced by considerations of how foreign nations would react, and this will be demonstrated in this chapter. Foreign nations condemned the United States for how they treated the Native Americans, and the way that Jefferson responded to these accusations will be examined. Jefferson's views on United States pre-emption of Native lands will be studied, showing how his thinking on the subject had a significant impact on United States relations with the Native American tribes in the north-west.

As president, Jefferson sought land cessions from the Native Americans, but the influence that foreign nations exerted over some of the tribes made obtaining those cessions difficult. He felt that because of foreign influence, it was imperative that the United States remained on good terms with the tribes, and the

efforts he made to advance relations will be explored in this chapter; decisions made that damaged this ambition, such as the Georgia Compact, will also be analysed. It will be explained how after France took control of the Louisiana Territory in 1800, national security became a significant component of Jefferson's Native American land policy. He devised several strategies to obtain land he felt was critical to United States interests; the role that agriculture played in his plans will be explored in detail, along with how he sought to capitalise on debts that many of tribes had in order to secure land for the United States. It will be shown how Jefferson tried to exploit hostility from tribes to acquire land, believing that the United States were justified in taking land from tribes who were consistently violent, and forcing them to relocate west of the Mississippi. It will be shown how after the Louisiana Purchase the idea of removal became a major focus for Jefferson, and he sought cessions of land to achieve that objective. This chapter will also show how Jefferson tried to obtain land from Native American tribes to make it difficult for foreign traders to engage in trade with Native American tribes; he believed that a close commercial relationship between tribes and the United States was important, and felt it was necessary to keep the negative influence of foreign traders out of United States territory. In the years leading up to the War of 1812, Jefferson encouraged tribes to remain neutral; he hoped that close ties, along with the unassailable strength of the United States, would convince tribes to stay out of the war. He also took measures to foster peaceful relations with the tribes, such as stopping negotiations for land that was not required urgently. It will be shown how, much to Jefferson's disappointment, many tribes sided with the British, and took up arms against the United States; that decision reaffirmed for Jefferson how essential it was for the Native Americans to be removed west. Foreign affairs played a key role in influencing his thinking about Native American lands, and this will be demonstrated in this chapter.

Foreign affairs started to influence Jefferson's perception of Native Lands during the American War of Independence. In the midst of the war with Great Britain, Jefferson suggested that any individual who agreed to participate in a planned military expedition against British forces should be rewarded with three hundred acres of land in territory that at that time belonged to tribes who were allied with

the British; he believed that tribes who had taken up arms against the United States would be beaten and their land would be given to the soldiers.¹³⁹ He was clear that land should be taken only from tribes that were hostile, and was desirous not to do anything to upset tribes that were on good terms with the United States. Jefferson was concerned that tribes would side with the British, and argued that to prevent that from happening, the United States needed to provide the tribes with necessary supplies, and protect them from intrusions onto their lands. An example of that idea is found in a plan that Jefferson proposed which related to the Cherokee: As war governor of Virginia during the American War of Independence, Jefferson tried to make arrangements with both North and South Carolina to help Virginia in providing assistance to the Cherokee. The plan consisted of the division of the Cherokee into southern, middle and northern settlements, with the responsibility for each settlement falling to one of the three States. In a letter to John Rutledge, governor of South Carolina, Jefferson stated:

The protecting from intrusion the lands of the Southern Cherokees and furnishing them with goods seems most convenient to you, the same friendly offices to the middle settlements will be so to North Carolina; and the Northern settlements to us (Virginia). The attachment which each settlement will by these means acquire to the particular state under whose patronage it is, perhaps will be a bond of peace.¹⁴⁰

On 24 January 1780 Jefferson issued a proclamation which required any settlers north-west of the Ohio to vacate that territory immediately, and warned them that anyone who did not comply would have their settlement destroyed. He was hopeful that taking measures that would be of benefit to the Cherokee would incline them to remain close with the United States and reduce the likelihood of them being seduced by British persuasion.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ “From Thomas Jefferson to George Rogers Clark, 3 January 1778,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-02-02-0044> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 2, 1777–18 June 1779, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950, pp. 132–133.]

¹⁴⁰ “From Thomas Jefferson to John Rutledge, 11 November 1779,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-03-02-0188> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 3, 18 June 1779–30 September 1780, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951, pp. 179–180.]

¹⁴¹ “Proclamation Requiring Settlers Northwest of the Ohio to Vacate, 24 January 1780,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-03-02-0302> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 3, 18 June 1779–30 September 1780, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951, pp. 266–267.]

After the American War of Independence, Jefferson's comments gave the Native tribes a degree of security in their lands. He claimed that purchases of Native lands would not be sought every year, "but only at distant intervals as our settlements are extended," and it could be "taken for a certainty that not a foot of land will ever be taken from the Indians without their own consent."¹⁴² When British diplomat, George Hammond told Jefferson the British thought that settlers planned to eradicate the Native Americans and take their lands, Jefferson assured him that was not the case; he insisted that the United States wished to provide tribes with protection and had no interest in "purchasing any more lands from them for a long time."¹⁴³ Jefferson wanted to pursue a policy of peace and friendship with the Native tribes, and thought to achieve that the United States would have to "guaranty them in their present possessions, and to protect their persons with the same fidelity which is extended to its own Citizens."¹⁴⁴ He reinforced that position in a letter to Henry Knox that related to the South Carolina Yazoo Company's attempt to buy land from the State of Georgia; a significant part of the land was occupied by Native tribes, so Jefferson believed Georgia had no right to sell the land. Jefferson asserted the

Indians have a right to the occupation of their Lands independent of the States within whose chartered lines they happen to be; that until they cede them by Treaty or other transaction equivalent to a Treaty, no act of a State can give a right to such Lands; that neither under the present Constitution nor the antient Confederation had any State or person a right to Treat with the Indians without the consent of the General Government; that that consent has never been given to any Treaty for the cession of the Lands in question; that the Government is determined to exert all its energy for the patronage and protection of the rights of the Indians, and the preservation of peace between the United States and them; and that if any settlements are made on Lands not ceded by them without the previous consent of the United States, the Government will think itself bound, not only to declare to the Indians that such settlements are without the authority or protection of the United States, but to remove them also by the public force.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² "IV. Jefferson's Observations on DéMeunier's Manuscript, 22 June 1786," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-10-02-0001-0005> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 10, 22 June–31 December 1786, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954, pp. 30–61.]

¹⁴³ "Notes of a Conversation with George Hammond, 4 June 1792,"

¹⁴⁴ "Circular to Consuls and Vice-Consuls, 13 May 1791,"

¹⁴⁵ "From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Knox, 10 August 1791," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-22->

While preserving good relations with the tribes was important, Jefferson hinted that a principal reason why he wanted to provide the Native tribes with protection in their lands, was because any settlements established on Native lands could “cost the other inhabitants of the U.S. a thousand times their value in taxes for carrying on the war they produce.”¹⁴⁶ He noted that he was “satisfied it will ever be preferred to send an armed force and make war against the intruders” as it was the most cost effective option.¹⁴⁷ Preservation of peace with the tribes would undoubtedly make it less likely they would be receptive to an approach by a foreign nation, and that also factored into his thinking, but the expense associated with United States settlements on Native lands was a major contributing factor why Jefferson was determined to protect the Native Americans right to their lands.

Jefferson believed Native tribes had been treated well by the United States and, prior to foreign interference, they had generally been satisfied with the treatment they had received. Spain disagreed, and heavily criticised United States treatment of Native American tribes; Jefferson responded to the criticism by providing what he referred to as “a true statement of facts.”¹⁴⁸ In the statement he argued that, despite vigorous attempts to convince the Native American tribes to remain neutral in the war with Great Britain, several groups had nonetheless sided with the British. Jefferson stated that, following the success of United States forces against hostile tribes during the American War of Independence, the United States would have been justified in seeking severe retribution against them, but as the United States wanted peace, the measures they adopted were extremely moderate. He claimed that the United States had tried to settle territorial boundaries with the tribes, and while land cessions had been expected, adequate payments had been made for the land; the tribes generally accepted that deal as a form of recompense for taking up arms against the United States. Jefferson believed the Native Americans had been treated fairly in the wake of the American War of

[02-0025](#) [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 22, 6 August 1791–31 December 1791, ed. Charles T. Cullen. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986, pp. 27–28.]

¹⁴⁶ “From Thomas Jefferson to David Campbell, 27 March 1792,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-23-02-0292> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 23, 1 January–31 May 1792, ed. Charles T. Cullen. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, p. 346.]

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ “From Thomas Jefferson to William Carmichael and William Short, 30 June 1793,”

Independence, and pointed to examples of United States generosity to support that view. Several tribes had been dissatisfied with land cessions they had been forced to make, and because of that the United States had given many of the tribes some of their land back; Jefferson cited the Creeks in particular, who had some of their land returned to them following negotiations. Jefferson was adamant that the Creek Nation would have been content with that outcome if not for the interference of Englishman William Bowles:

Who acting from an impulse with which we are unacquainted, flattered them with the hope of some foreign interference, which should undo what had been done, and force us to consider the naked grant of their peace as a sufficient satisfaction for their having made war on us.¹⁴⁹

What angered Jefferson further was that, while Spain had helped to remove Bowles, their agents had continued his policies, and had encouraged tribes to disavow treaties they had signed with the United States and to ignore the boundaries which had been agreed to; offering the full support of Spain if their disavowal led to serious issues with the United States.¹⁵⁰

Jefferson wanted to determine precise boundaries with tribes, as he thought that would help to maintain peace, but the actions of Spain made that difficult. In 1792, Jefferson discovered that Spain had interfered in a boundary issue the United States had with the Creeks; the establishment of a boundary which Jefferson thought would remove any source of difference between the two sides.¹⁵¹ He was of the opinion that the reason for Spanish interference was a dispute they had regarding territory that the boundary would pass through.¹⁵² In a letter Jefferson received from Spanish commissioners Josef Ignacio de Viar and Josef de Jaudenes, the dissatisfaction that Spain had with the proposed boundary was made clear. He was warned that if the United States proceeded with fixing the

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid

¹⁵¹ “From Thomas Jefferson to William Carmichael and William Short, 3 November 1792,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-24-02-0521> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 24, 1 June–31 December 1792, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 565–567.]

¹⁵² “From Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, 2 November 1792,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-24-02-0518> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 24, 1 June–31 December 1792, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 562–563.]

boundary, a war with Spain was a distinct possibility. The Creeks had previously agreed to the proposed boundary, and for Jefferson, it was Spanish interference that had changed their minds; he did not want to take action against the Creeks to enforce the boundary because of the possible consequences, but was worried that choosing not to run the boundary line could be construed as proof the United States had uncertainties about their territorial rights.¹⁵³ The United States ultimately decided not to enforce the boundary because of Spanish pressure; in a letter to Viar and Jaudenes on 1 November 1792, Jefferson gave assurances the United States wanted peace with the Creeks, and provided as evidence United States suspension of the boundary.¹⁵⁴ Jefferson was furious at the conduct of Spain and indicated that a boundary needed to be agreed upon as soon as possible, in order to remove any Spanish interference with Native tribes residing in United States territory; it was commonly understood that no nation could offer protection or interfere with the affairs of any Native tribe residing within the boundary of another nation.¹⁵⁵ It is likely that Jefferson would have wanted the United States to enforce the boundary, irrespective of Creek objections, if he had not needed to worry about the possible consequences that fixing the boundary could have had for United States relations with Spain.

Early in 1793, negotiations were about to begin between the United States and many western tribes, with the United States hopeful, though not optimistic, of achieving a peaceful outcome. In a cabinet meeting in February 1793, the question arose as to whether the president and the Senate could return land to Native American tribes once it had been acquired by the United States validly by treaty, especially if it was considered crucial to bringing about a peaceful resolution to negotiations with the western tribes at Lower Sandusky. The land in question was

¹⁵³ “Notes of Cabinet Meeting on the Southern Indians and Spain, 31 October 1792,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-24-02-0506> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 24, 1 June–31 December 1792, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 547–550.]

¹⁵⁴ “From Thomas Jefferson to Josef Ignacio de Viar and Josef de Jaudenes, 1 November 1792,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-24-02-0510> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 24, 1 June–31 December 1792, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 552–553.]

¹⁵⁵ “From Thomas Jefferson to William Carmichael and William Short, 3 November 1792.”

a section north of the Ohio. The Attorney General, the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Treasury all thought that the land could be given back, providing that the return did not impinge on any State reservations or interfere with grants previously given to individuals. Jefferson disagreed, arguing that the Native tribes could not be restored to their lands as neither the president nor the Senate had the authority to cede territory that had been officially incorporated into the United States.¹⁵⁶ Jefferson explained his views on pre-emption rights of Native American land, and why he believed it could not be handed back, by stating:

I considered our right of preemption of the Indian lands, not as amounting to any dominion, or jurisdiction, or paramountship whatever, but merely in the nature of a remainder after the extinguishment of a present right, which gave us no present right whatever but of preventing other nations from taking possession and so defeating our expectancy: that the Indians had the full, undivided and independant sovereignty as long as they chose to keep it and that this might be for ever: that as fast as we extended our rights by purchase from them, so fast we extended the limits of our society, and as soon as a new portion became encircled within our line, it became a fixt limit of our society: that the Executive with either or both branches of the legislature could not alien any part of our territory: that by the Law of nations it was settled that the Unity and indivisibility of the society was so fundamental that it could not be dismembered by the Constituted authorities except 1. where all power was delegated to them (as in the case of despotic governments) or 2. where it was expressly delegated. That neither of these delegations had been made to our general government, and therefore that it had no right to dismember or alienate any portion of territory once ultimately consolidated with us.¹⁵⁷

He was willing to go as far as proposing that the land in question would not be settled by United States citizens at that time, but he would go no further.¹⁵⁸

Jefferson had previously discussed the fact that after the American War of Independence, the United States had restored tribes to their lands in order to maintain peaceful relations; but following the signing of United States Constitution in 1787, Jefferson's views on the subject had changed. While he may have thought it was outside of the parameters of the Constitution to take such action, there was an opportunity in 1793 to pursue peace with tribes that had been continually hostile towards the United States, but Jefferson was unprepared to

¹⁵⁶ "Cabinet Opinions on Indian Affairs, [25 February 1793]," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-25-02-0236> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 25, 1 January–10 May 1793, ed. John Catanzariti. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992, pp. 258–259.]

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

endorse measures that may have helped to achieve that peace. His ambition to reduce the interference of foreign nations makes his lack of support difficult to understand, as tribes were more likely to turn to the help of another country if they were discontent.

In the first year of Jefferson's presidency, obtaining land cessions, in particular from the southern tribes, was of major importance. Gaining consent from the tribes for roads to be run through their territory was a priority, as was getting their permission to establish trading posts in their lands. Fulfilling those objectives was extremely important to Jefferson, but he insisted they could only be achieved with the "good will of the Indians."¹⁵⁹ Jefferson argued that, because of the increase in settler numbers, it was imperative the United States acquire additional lands; the United States would buy land from the Native tribes whenever they chose to sell. He explained to tribal leaders that the reason the United States needed to run roads through Native American territory was to connect United States settlements on either side of land which belonged to Native tribes.¹⁶⁰ Negotiations with the tribes at that time were made difficult because of friction between the United States and Spain, with Spain's continued influence over the southern tribes very problematic. William Bowles had also resurfaced and was causing problems for the United States in negotiations with the four major southern tribes, in particular the Creeks. Jefferson instructed the commissioners sent to treat with the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, and Creeks to tread carefully in negotiations, as the tribes "were known to be very jealous on the subject of their lands."¹⁶¹ The negotiations did not go well, and it appeared that the influence of foreign agents had made the tribes less agreeable to proposals made by the United States. The United States would damage relations with the tribes further, and make them far more susceptible to foreign influence, as a result of how they dealt with a boundary

¹⁵⁹ "I. Heads of Answer to Speech of The Glass [30 June 1801–3 July 1801]," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-34-02-0394-0002> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 34, 1 May–31 July 1801, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007, pp. 508–510.]

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ "From Thomas Jefferson to the House of Representatives, 8 February 1802," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-36-02-0345> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 36, 1 December 1801–3 March 1802, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009, pp. 543–545.]

dispute that involved the State of Georgia. In 1790 a boundary had been negotiated between the United States and the Creeks that placed a section of land called Tallassee County, held by Georgia, in Creek territory, which left Georgia extremely aggrieved. In a letter to the Senator of Georgia, Abraham Baldwin, Jefferson suggested that the United States would repurchase Tallassee County for Georgia if they agreed to give up their claim to territory west of the Chattahoochee River.¹⁶² This discussion would eventually culminate in the Georgia Compact of 1802, in which Georgia agreed to give up any right to their western territories in return for the United States extinguishing all Native land title in their state as soon as was reasonably possible. The situation resulted in significant problems for the United States in relations with the Cherokees and the Creeks.

Jefferson was conscious of the need to improve relations with many of the tribes, and felt that one way to do that was to punish anyone who trespassed on Native lands. Jefferson received reports that the Spanish Governor of East Florida, Enrique White, had tried to recruit soldiers from within United States territory for a planned expedition against the Creeks. Jefferson believed punishments outlined in the Trade and Intercourse Act would deter any United States citizen who considered enlistment. For Jefferson, the Trade and Intercourse Act meant that

to go on the Indian lands without a passport is punishable by fine of 50. D. & 3. months imprisonment, to go on them with an hostile intention, or to commit on them a robbery, larceny, trespass or other crime by fine of 100. D. & 12. months imprisonment, and to murder an Indian is punishable by death.¹⁶³

Unfortunately, the Trade and Intercourse Act had expired, and if not renewed quickly, the stipulated punishment for any infraction could not be enforced; consequently, anyone who enlisted in the Governor of East Florida's campaign against the Creeks could not be prosecuted. In a letter to Samuel Smith, chairman of the committee of Indian Affairs, Jefferson made clear that he wanted the Trade

¹⁶² "From Thomas Jefferson to Abraham Baldwin, 13 July 1801," Founders Online, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-34-02-0426> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 34, 1 May–31 July 1801, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007, pp. 558–560.]

¹⁶³ "From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, [5 March 1802]," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-37-02-0004> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 37, 4 March–30 June 1802, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010, pp. 7–9.]

and Intercourse Act renewed as soon as possible as “the Indians are so sore on our not punishing offenders against them, that I am anxious to guard against it.”¹⁶⁴

Jefferson was relieved that the Trade and Intercourse Act was indeed renewed, as failure to punish anyone trespassing on Native lands could have irreparably damaged relations between the United States and the tribes. Strained relations with many of the tribes made it a necessity for the United States to forge alliances with tribal leaders whenever an opportunity presented itself.

In August 1802, Jefferson became aware of a Chickasaw Chief, previously loyal to Spain, who, following a disagreement, had decided to switch his allegiance to the United States. After the American War of Independence, the Chickasaw splintered into two opposing groups, one aligning itself with the Spanish and the other with the United States. In 1801, the pro-American faction had agreed to allow the United States to build a road through Chickasaw territory. After learning of this, Ugulayacabe, a Chickasaw leader allied to the Spanish, went to New Orleans to ask for support in opposing the road. Secretary of State, James Madison, was told that Ugulayacabe had been outraged by the treatment he had received from Spanish Governor of Louisiana, Manuel de Salcedo, and had subsequently switched his allegiance to the United States.¹⁶⁵ Upon hearing of this turn of events, Jefferson was determined to capitalise on the situation by looking to cultivate a close relationship with Ugulayacabe.¹⁶⁶ The main concern for Jefferson was trying to forge a close relationship with the Chickasaw, which he believed would help the United States in achieving its primary objectives, such as land cessions; the possible fallout in foreign relations was not a major consideration.

¹⁶⁴ “From Thomas Jefferson to Samuel Smith, 5 March 1802,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-37-02-0008> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 37, 4 March–30 June 1802, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010, p. 12.]

¹⁶⁵ “To James Madison from Daniel Clark, 16 August 1802,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified December 6, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Madison/02-03-02-0620> [Original source: *The Papers of James Madison*, Secretary of State Series, vol. 3, 1 March–6 October 1802, ed. David B. Mattern, J. C. A. Stagg, Jeanne Kerr Cross, and Susan Holbrook Perdue. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995, pp. 487–489.]

¹⁶⁶ “From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 30 August 1802,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-38-02-0280> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 38, 1 July–12 November 1802, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011, pp. 314–316.]

Security was a major concern for Jefferson and played a key role in shaping his thinking regarding Native American lands. Following the Treaty of San Ildefonso on 1 October 1800, Spain ceded the Louisiana Territory back to France; with the Mississippi in the hands of Napoleonic France, the United States potentially had a powerful threat to contend with. The establishment of a strong front on the western boundary became a major priority for Jefferson, so he suggested, “our proceedings with the Indians should tend systematically to that object.”¹⁶⁷ Jefferson wanted to acquire the Native land title for the whole of the left bank of the Mississippi as soon as possible, and believed that quick settlement of the land would effectively provide that region with the means of its own defence, which would consequently give the United States a western border as strong as the border they had in the east.¹⁶⁸ In a letter to Henry Dearborn on 15 February 1803, Jefferson described the “light French Breeze” that had reached most Native tribes; he believed that the French would discourage the tribes from selling any further land to the United States, so it was important the United States pushed for land they wanted immediately.¹⁶⁹ Jefferson was desperate to improve national security and identified territory between the Ohio and Yazoo rivers as being of particular importance. The land was in the possession of the Chickasaw, and while they had generally been on friendly terms with the United States, they had become increasingly resistant to the prospect of selling land. Jefferson pointed to the fact that the land most desired by the United States was land the Chickasaw did not actually inhabit, as their settlements tended to be in the interior. As the Chickasaw were inclined towards agriculture, Jefferson felt that if they were supplied with

¹⁶⁷ “Memorandum for Henry Dearborn on Indian Policy, 29 December 1802,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0208> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 39, 13 November 1802–3 March 1803, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012, pp. 231–234.]

¹⁶⁸ “From Thomas Jefferson to William Dunbar, 3 March 1803,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0531> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 39, 13 November 1802–3 March 1803, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012, pp. 623–624.]

¹⁶⁹ “From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 15 February 1803,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0448> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 39, 13 November 1802–3 March 1803, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012, pp. 529–530.]

the implements they required, it would assist the United States in acquiring the land needed to help in the establishment of a strong western front.¹⁷⁰

Jefferson stated that he did not want to pressure tribes to sell land if it was detrimental to relations, but hoped that by encouraging the tribes to adopt agriculture the United States would be able to acquire the land they wanted. He was aware that obtaining land from the tribes would be extremely difficult, as several were angry at the loss of their lands and would be reluctant to sell to the United States. Jefferson was not optimistic at the “prospect of obtaining any more [land] for a great number of years” and certainly not until tribes became agricultural and found they had more than they could reasonably cultivate.¹⁷¹ Agriculture became a critical part of Jefferson’s plan for acquiring land from the Native tribes, but he thought that the adoption of agriculture would also have positive consequences for the tribes. He believed that if tribes adopted agriculture, the result would be mutually beneficial, as tribes would not require as much land, and consequently, would be willing to sell in order to buy necessary supplies; it would also be advantageous for the United States who aspired to expand their territorial boundaries to protect against possible foreign attacks. Because the land wanted by the United States was primarily on the western frontier, the focus was on tribes in that vicinity to adopt agriculture, as Jefferson thought that if they did so, they would be more likely to part with their land. The purchase of land on the frontier may have been his focus, but he also believed that the establishment of a strong western boundary would result in tribes in the interior being forced to adopt agriculture as well. He stated:

The Indians being once closed in between strong settled countries on the Missisipi & Atlantic, will, for want of game, be forced to agriculture, will find that small portions of land well improved, will be worth more to them than extensive forests unemployed, and will be continually parting with portions of them, for money to buy stock, utensils & necessaries for their farms & families.¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ “From Thomas Jefferson to the Senate and the House of Representatives, 18 January 1803,”

¹⁷¹ “From Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Mann Randolph, 12 March 1802,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-37-02-0042> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 37, 4 March–30 June 1802, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010, pp. 64–67.]

¹⁷² “Memorandum for Henry Dearborn on Indian Policy, 29 December 1802.”

Jefferson anticipated that tribes in the interior would eventually adopt agriculture, but he was not prepared to force the issue as land cessions in the interior were considered unimportant; especially if applying pressure could cause problems for the United States in relations with the tribes. He stated that while “we may wish in time to extend our possessions, the doing it at this time in that quarter cannot be worth a war, nor the loss of the affections of the Indians.”¹⁷³

Jefferson was extremely concerned about France after their arrival in Louisiana, and sought to exploit debts the Native tribes owed to acquire land in areas he considered important. Before French influence among the tribes intensified, Jefferson hurriedly pushed for necessary lands; to obtain land he at times manipulated situations involving foreign trading companies. A British trading company, Panton and Leslie, had tried to persuade the Creeks to part with some of their land to repay a large debt they owed. Jefferson was not prepared to agree to the arrangement, as the United States did not allow British subjects to own land within United States territory, but he suggested that if the Creeks were willing to pay in land, the United States were happy to take the lands and pay the debts they owed to Panton and Leslie.¹⁷⁴ A similar situation occurred which involved the Choctaw, who also owed Panton and Leslie a considerable debt. The Choctaw held lands between the Yazoo and the Mississippi, and Jefferson was desperate to acquire those lands to further improve security on the western boundary for the United States. In order to do so, he identified the large debt that the Choctaw had with Panton and Leslie as a way of obtaining the land.¹⁷⁵ As with the Creeks before, Jefferson was prepared to offer to clear the debt the Choctaw had with Panton and Leslie in exchange for the lands he wanted. Jefferson identified the debts that many Native tribes had as a particularly useful method of obtaining

¹⁷³ “From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 13 August 1802,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-38-02-0188> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 38, 1 July–12 November 1802, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011, pp. 208–209.]

¹⁷⁴ “Memorandum for Henry Dearborn, 22 January 1803,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0323> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 39, 13 November 1802–3 March 1803, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012, pp. 379–381.]

¹⁷⁵ “From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 15 February 1803,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0448> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 39, 13 November 1802–3 March 1803, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012, pp. 529–530.]

land from them. He stated that by “letting them get in debt, which when too heavy to be paid, they are always willing to lop off by a cession of lands.”¹⁷⁶

Jefferson wanted to accurately determine and enforce land cessions previously made to the British and the French; land which had then passed into the hands of the United States. The enforcement of prior land cessions was particularly significant for land adjacent to the Mississippi, as security of that region was vitally important. An example of this was Jefferson’s insistence that the territorial boundary established as a result of land cessions previously made by the Choctaws to the British be upheld, irrespective of what the financial cost may be to ensure Choctaw acquiescence.¹⁷⁷ Another example related to a section of land on the Wabash River, which had initially been ceded to the French, then from the French to the English after the Seven Years War; and then finally from the English to the United States after the conclusion of the American War of Independence. There had been confusion about the exact boundary, so at a meeting between the United States and the Native tribes at Vincennes in 1803, a boundary was agreed on to settle the issue. Following the agreement, there was opposition from tribal leaders who disputed the boundary, but Jefferson refused to listen to complaints, and would not yield territory that had been ceded to the United States.¹⁷⁸ For Jefferson, the need to adhere to boundaries established by previous Native American land cessions was vital because of “the daily increasing reluctance of the Indians to cede lands” and because of this reluctance, it was imperative for the United States to “hold tenaciously whatever they have once [given] us hold of.”¹⁷⁹ For Jefferson, it was essential not only to keep land already ceded to the United States, but also to exploit any opportunity to obtain new territory in areas considered important to United States interests. One method he used to obtain new territory was to enforce United States rights of pre-emption, as Jefferson did for a section of land that had belonged to the Cahokia tribe, who had

¹⁷⁶ “From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 13 August 1802.”

¹⁷⁷ “From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 27 August 1802,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-38-02-0265> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 38, 1 July–12 November 1802, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011, pp. 299–300.]

¹⁷⁸ “From Thomas Jefferson to Owl and Others, 8 January 1803,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0248> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 39, 13 November 1802–3 March 1803, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012, pp. 286–290.]

¹⁷⁹ “From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 27 August 1802.”

been effectively “extirpated” by the Sacs and Foxes. For Jefferson, the United States had paramount sovereignty, which gave them a better claim to the Cahokia land than any other Native tribe.¹⁸⁰ Land occupied by the Peoria and the Kaskaskia also became available, as the Peoria had been driven off their land, and the Kaskaskia had been reduced to a few families; Jefferson instructed his agents to offer money and the protection of the United States in order to acquire the lands.¹⁸¹ The need for a strong boundary meant that Jefferson would seize any chance to secure lands for the United States.

So firm was Jefferson in his wish to acquire lands from the Native tribes that any suggestion an agent had advised tribes against ceding land was treated very seriously. In a letter to United States Senator James Jackson, on 16 February 1803, Jefferson described the two main objectives for the United States in their dealings with the Native tribes as the preservation of peace and the acquisition of land cessions. For Jefferson, in order to achieve those objectives, it was essential that agents gain the confidence of the tribe they were sent to engage with. Jefferson believed that Indian agent Benjamin Hawkins had acquired a high level of trust and confidence with the Creeks; he had consistently promoted peace and encouraged the Creeks to adopt agriculture. A problem arose for Jefferson, though, in the form of an accusation by the State of Georgia, which claimed that Hawkins prioritised Creek interests over theirs, and had actively obstructed the United States in their endeavours to obtain land from the Creeks. In their continued efforts to strengthen their western boundary the United States were pushing to obtain land from the Creeks around the Ocmulgee fork. When Jefferson received information which suggested Hawkins had prevented that from happening, he replied in a letter to James Jackson on 16 February 1803: “you may be assured that he shall be placed under as strong a pressure from the Executive to obtain cessions.” Making it clear that Hawkins would be “made sensible that his

¹⁸⁰ “Memorandum for Henry Dearborn on Indian Policy, 29 December 1802,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0208> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 39, 13 November 1802–3 March 1803, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012, pp. 231–234.]

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

value will be estimated by me in proportion to the benefits he can obtain for us.”¹⁸² In a letter to Hawkins, Jefferson said:

The ultimate point of rest & happiness for them is to let our settlements and theirs meet and blend together, to intermix and become one people, incorporating themselves with us as citizens of the US. this is what the natural progress of things will of course bring on, and it will be better to promote than to retard it. surely it will be better for them to be identified with us, and preserved in the occupation of their lands, than be exposed to the many casualties which may endanger them while a separate people.¹⁸³

He went on to tell Hawkins he thought it probable that eventually the Native Americans would become citizens of the United States, and he felt it was “consistent with pure morality to lead them towards it,” and because of that it was in “their interest to cede lands at times to the US.”¹⁸⁴ Jefferson likely said these things to Hawkins to convince him to encourage the Creeks to be open to ceding land to the United States. With the acquisition of land vital to United States interests, any individual who acted against Jefferson’s wishes could not be tolerated, and needed to be brought into line.

With the Louisiana Territory in French possession, Jefferson was not prepared to tolerate hostility from any tribe that had territory in close proximity to the western border. While he discouraged hostility from tribes who had land near the border, he also believed the United States could benefit from tribes who engaged in hostile action, by manipulating them into ceding territory as a form of recompense for taking up arms against the United States. Jefferson stated that tribes would forfeit their land, and be forced to remove west across the Mississippi, if they became hostile towards the United States; he hoped that such severe consequences would serve as a strong deterrence to other tribes.¹⁸⁵ Several tribes remained

¹⁸² “From Thomas Jefferson to James Jackson, 16 February 1803,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0451> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 39, *13 November 1802–3 March 1803*, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012, pp. 541–542.]

¹⁸³ “From Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Hawkins, 18 February 1803,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0456> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 39, *13 November 1802–3 March 1803*, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012, pp. 546–549.]

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ “From Thomas Jefferson to William Henry Harrison, 27 February 1803,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0500> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 39, *13 November 1802–3 March 1803*, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012, pp. 589–593.]

hostile towards the United States, and with security concerns still very prominent in his mind, Jefferson came to believe early in 1803, that all Native tribes should be encouraged to relocate west of the Mississippi. He stated:

It would be good policy in us to take by the hand those of them who have emigrated from ours to the other side of the Missisipi, to furnish them generously with arms, ammuniton, & other essentials, with a view to render a situation there desireable to those they have left behind, to [toll] them in this way across the Missisipi, and thus prepare in time an eligible retreat for the whole.¹⁸⁶

Initially, Jefferson had only mentioned relocation for tribes that had been hostile towards the United States, but over time he came to believe it was the right policy for all Native American tribes. It is entirely plausible that if Jefferson had not been concerned about the intentions of foreign nations, and the subsequent requirement of a strong western boundary, he may not have proposed the idea of removal for the Native American tribes at that time.

The concerns that Jefferson had about security were all but removed in April 1803, when the French agreed to sell the entire Louisiana Territory to the United States. The treaty was signed on 30 April 1803, but did not reach Washington until 4 July 1803. The acquisition of the Louisiana Territory was extremely significant for Jefferson, and alleviated many of his anxieties, but a possible problem that arose as a result of the acquisition was the constitutionality of the purchase. It was believed by some that the acquisition of new territory in that manner was outside the confines of the United States Constitution, and in response to those concerns Jefferson drafted an amendment. A significant proportion of the amendment dealt with the Native Americans, and an analysis of its contents elucidates his thinking at that time. He stated:

The legislature of the union shall have authority to exchange the right of occupancy in portions where the US. have full right, for lands possessed by Indians within the US. on the East Side of the Missisipi: to exchange

¹⁸⁶ “From Thomas Jefferson to William C. C. Claiborne, 24 May 1803,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-40-02-0323> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 40, 4 March–10 July 1803, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013, pp. 422–425.]

lands on the East side of the river for those of the White inhabitants on the West side¹⁸⁷

Ultimately, the amendment was disregarded by Congress, but these words show Jefferson's thinking regarding the relocation of the Native tribes west of the Mississippi; following the Louisiana Purchase the idea of removal had gained momentum. Jefferson's plans for removal were confirmed in a letter he composed to George Irving on 10 July 1803, in which he suggested that the Louisiana Purchase not only had brought peace with France but also had provided the United States with a way of condensing their population on the east side of the Mississippi, and of removing the Native American tribes west of it.¹⁸⁸ The plan of removing the Native tribes west of the Mississippi applied mainly to the southern tribes, and Jefferson contended that land between the Arkansas and St Francis Rivers would be the most suitable location for the Choctaw and Chickasaw tribes, with land south of the Arkansas River being preferable for the Cherokees and Creeks.¹⁸⁹ After the Louisiana Purchase, the French threat dissipated, and the need to strengthen the western boundary was no longer considered a priority. However, Jefferson's desire to purchase land then intensified as removal of the tribes west became a central focus of his Native American policy.

Another prominent feature of Jefferson's Native American land policy was the desire to obtain land cessions to try to keep foreign nations off the Mississippi. In order to achieve that ambition he first sought land cessions from the Choctaw and the Chickasaw, hoping to get all their land on the Mississippi.¹⁹⁰ Towards the end of 1804, Jefferson believed that the objective had been accomplished by a purchase of land from the Sacs and Foxes, which Jefferson indicated had secured

¹⁸⁷ "I. Draft Amendment, on or before 9 July 1803," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-40-02-0523-0002> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 40, *4 March–10 July 1803*, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013, pp. 685–686.]

¹⁸⁸ "From Thomas Jefferson to George W. Irving, 10 July 1803," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-40-02-0536> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 40, *4 March–10 July 1803*, ed. Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013, pp. 711–712.]

¹⁸⁹ "From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 20 October 1804," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-0518> [This is an **Early Access document** from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). **It is not an authoritative final version.**]

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

the United States right to keep the British off the Mississippi.¹⁹¹ For Jefferson, the substantial nature of the land cession obtained from the Sacs and Foxes on the east side of the Mississippi enabled the United States to strengthen their “means of retaining exclusive commerce with the Indians on the western side of the Missisip,” which he felt was “indispensable to the policy of governing those Indians by Commerce rather than by Arms.”¹⁹² At the end of 1808, Jefferson made it clear that he wanted the exact boundary between the Kickapoo and the United States firmly established, as he sought to secure territory on the Mississippi from the Ohio to the Wisconsin River. He believed this land would give the United States an extensive boundary to try to prevent the British from attempting to move merchandise and traders into the Louisiana Territory. Jefferson felt that possessing that vast stretch of land would enable the nation to implement on the east side of the Mississippi, the same policy they had pursued on the west side; that of not allowing any traders to go into the towns of any Native tribes, and with trade conducted at factories, the regulation of trade would be much easier.¹⁹³ Jefferson wanted to be certain that everything was done to ensure the Native tribes were attached to the United States indissolubly; particularly tribes that had borders with other foreign nations, and he believed that a commercial relationship that was advantageous for the tribes was the best way of achieving that. This approach was consistent with his policy of trying to govern and control the Native Americans with commerce; the removal of foreign powers from trade within United States boundaries made it significantly easier for the United States to achieve that goal.

Jefferson wanted to attach the Native American tribes to the United States through commerce, but he had no inhibitions about asserting the strength of the United States and its dominant position in North America following the Louisiana

¹⁹¹ “From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 16 December 1804,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-0839> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). **It is not an authoritative final version.**]

¹⁹² “From Thomas Jefferson to United States Senate, 31 December 1804,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-0913> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). **It is not an authoritative final version.**]

¹⁹³ “From Thomas Jefferson to William Henry Harrison, 22 December 1808,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-9372> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). **It is not an authoritative final version.**]

Purchase. In a speech to the Chiefs of the Creek Nation on 2 November 1805, Jefferson mentioned rumours that had been spread throughout the tribes which suggested the United States would not be in possession of the Louisiana Territory for long. He insisted that the rumour was untrue, and that the Louisiana Territory was permanently part of the United States. For Jefferson, the increasing population of the United States, and its undeniable strength in comparison with other foreign nations in North America meant that no foreign power was capable of taking it from them.¹⁹⁴ Clearly implicit throughout many speeches Jefferson gave to Native American tribes at that time was his belief in the unassailable strength of the United States, which feared no nation. He wanted to be certain that the Native Americans were aware that the French, the English and the Spanish would not be returning, and the United States were firmly in charge.¹⁹⁵ By emphasising that point to tribal leaders, Jefferson sought not only to establish the pre-eminence of the United States, but also to clarify that the tribes had no other country to turn to. From his perspective, they would deal exclusively with the United States from that point on; the power in the relationship firmly resided with the United States government. With the indomitable position of the United States clearly asserted, and the power dynamics of the relationship delineated, Jefferson was able to push United States demands for land and roads without needing to worry about disaffected tribes turning to a foreign nation for support. He believed the strong position that the United States had attained also enabled him to push even harder for tribes to adopt agriculture and a more sedentary existence, which would then make it easier for the United States to convince the Native tribes to sell their land. Jefferson was hopeful that the progress many tribes east of the Mississippi had made in agriculture would have a positive impact on tribes in the newly acquired Louisiana Territory. He was optimistic that tribes who inhabited

¹⁹⁴ “From Thomas Jefferson to Creek Nation, 2 November 1805,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-2564> [This is an **Early Access document** from *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*. **It is not an authoritative final version.**]

¹⁹⁵ “From Thomas Jefferson to Chiefs of Nations, 4 January 1806,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-2960> [This is an **Early Access document** from *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*. **It is not an authoritative final version.**]

Louisiana would see how well the tribes in the east had done, and would be persuaded to pursue the same course more vigorously themselves.¹⁹⁶

For about a decade, the British and the United States had remained on relatively good terms, but by the beginning of Jefferson's second term as president, the relationship had started to deteriorate. In 1806, negotiations took place between the United States and the British to renew the Jay Treaty which had been signed in 1795; the objective for the United States during the negotiations was to convince the British to agree to discontinue the impressment of sailors from United States ships, but the British refused to comply with the demand. The Monroe-Pinkney treaty that emerged from the negotiations was signed in 1806, but Jefferson rejected it, and he declined to send it to the Senate for ratification. Events such as this heightened tensions between the two nations, and the relationship continued to worsen. It was around that time that Jefferson was growing increasingly worried about the intentions of the Shawnee leader, Tenskwatawa. As concerns about Tenskwatawa escalated, and with relations with Britain strained, Jefferson believed it was important to keep the Native tribes content with "redoubled acts of justice & favour," and because several tribes had become extremely disgruntled at the loss of their lands, he believed that land sales should not be pushed at that time.¹⁹⁷ In a letter to Henry Dearborn on 2 September 1807, Jefferson wrote that information suggested that the intentions of the Native tribes were not as worrying as had initially been feared. He believed that military preparations should continue as a precaution, but reiterated his desire for all negotiations for land to be stopped immediately. He suggested that if negotiations did not stop, any displays of military strength by the United States could be interpreted by the tribes as an attempt to intimidate them into selling their lands; for Jefferson, the repercussions could have been extremely damaging for relations between the United States and the tribes.¹⁹⁸ Jefferson clarified his position on Native land negotiations in a letter

¹⁹⁶ "From Thomas Jefferson to Cherokee Nation, 10 January 1806," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-2979> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). It is not an authoritative final version.]

¹⁹⁷ "From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 12 August 1807," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-6156> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). It is not an authoritative final version.]

¹⁹⁸ "From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, 2 September 1807," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, [http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-](http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-6156)

to the Senate on 15 January 1808, in which he stated that while negotiations for land should cease, this policy applied only to land that was not considered a necessity at that time; negotiations for land which was deemed important to United States interests should continue.¹⁹⁹ It could be inferred that by taking that position, Jefferson had clearly demonstrated his priorities; preserving good relations with the tribes was preferable, but if they conflicted with national interests, then those came first.

Before the War of 1812, Jefferson regularly encouraged tribes not to side with the British, and told them that the fate for any tribe that did not heed his warnings would be extremely bleak.²⁰⁰ In a speech to a number of tribal chiefs in 1809, Jefferson said, “if you love the land in which you were born, if you wish to inhabit the earth which covers the bones of your fathers, take no part in the war.”²⁰¹ Jefferson made it clear that any tribe contemplating joining forces with the British should first consider the consequences of taking such action; if they did so, the United States would forcibly remove them from their ancestral home lands. He hoped that the warnings had worked, but he did not believe they had in all cases. Prior to the outbreak of war, Jefferson suggested that tribes that had made significant progress towards ‘civilisation’ would not be seduced by British advances, but tribes that had not advanced very far in this pursuit would be more susceptible to British enticement; with the result being regression to their previous ways, which would then leave the United States with no alternative but to drive them as far away from United States territory as possible.²⁰² Jefferson was right, as several tribes did align themselves with the British in the War of 1812, and his frustration at that fact is very evident in his writing. He lamented that the United States had

[02-6306](#) [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). It is not an authoritative final version.]

¹⁹⁹ “From Thomas Jefferson to United States Senate, 15 January 1808,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-7211> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). It is not an authoritative final version.]

²⁰⁰ “From Thomas Jefferson to Indian Nations, 10 January 1809,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-9516> [This is an [Early Access document](#) from [The Papers of Thomas Jefferson](#). It is not an authoritative final version.]

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

²⁰² “Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, 11 June 1812,”

spared nothing to keep them at peace with one another, to teach them agriculture and the rudiments of the most necessary arts, and to encourage industry by establishing among them separate property. in this way they would have been enabled to subsist and multiply on a moderate scale of landed possession; they would have mixed their blood with ours and been amalgamated and identified with us within no distant period of time.²⁰³

For Jefferson, the likelihood of that happening after the War of 1812 was very remote, as he believed that tribes which had sided with the British had left the United States with no alternative but to either exterminate them or drive them beyond the Mississippi, and out of the reach of the United States.²⁰⁴

The subject of Native American lands featured very prominently in Thomas Jefferson's writing, and this chapter explored the way in which concerns about foreign nations influenced his thinking regarding Native lands. Jefferson's early writing showed that he advocated very different treatment for hostile tribes as opposed to friendly tribes. His desire to protect friendly tribes from intrusions onto their lands, while suggesting that land should be taken from hostile tribes and given to soldiers who had fought against the British during the American War of Independence, is clear evidence of that. After the war, Jefferson sought to minimise the likelihood that tribes would be amenable to the influence of foreign nations; he believed that providing them with assurances regarding land ownership and giving them protection in their lands would achieve that objective. It is clear that while Jefferson's plans were influenced by a desire to improve relations with the tribes, a critical factor in his thinking was to take measures that would reduce the possibility of costly wars on the frontiers. When the United States were accused of mistreating the Native Americans, Jefferson responded by pointing to how well hostile tribes had been treated with respect to their lands after the American War of Independence, and any discontent the tribes had was a result of foreign influence encouraging tribes to not honour treaties. Jefferson was infuriated by Spain interfering in a boundary issue the United States had with the Creeks, and it is clear that the course of action he supported was strongly shaped

²⁰³ "Thomas Jefferson to Alexander von Humboldt, 6 December 1813," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified October 5, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/03-07-02-0011> [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, Retirement Series, vol. 7, 28 November 1813 to 30 September 1814, ed. J. Jefferson Looney. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010, pp. 29–32.]

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

by considerations of how Spain would react. It has been shown in this chapter how Jefferson's expressed desire to preserve peace with the Native tribes, and to deter them from aligning themselves with foreign nations, was contradicted by his stance on the possibility of returning land to tribes in the north-west if this was found to be critical to securing peace. Other members of the cabinet suggested it was an option, but Jefferson disagreed, arguing that once land had been incorporated within the boundaries of the United States, it could not be parted with.

This chapter has explored how, early in Jefferson's presidency, the acquisition of Native land was considered important, particularly from the southern tribes, and how Jefferson was frustrated in this endeavour by what he saw as the pernicious influence of foreign agents who consistently advised the tribes against making land cessions to the United States. Because of this negative influence, Jefferson thought it was critical to avoid doing anything that could upset the tribes, but this plan was severely disrupted by the consequences of the Georgia Compact of 1802; how the situation was handled led to serious problems for the United States regarding the Cherokees and the Creeks. After this, Jefferson reiterated the importance of protecting the Native tribes from intrusions onto their lands; this is demonstrated by the fact that Jefferson urgently wanted the Trade and Intercourse Act renewed following its expiration, so that trespassers onto native lands could be punished. It also became imperative to build strong relationships with Native leaders whenever possible, such as with Chickasaw Chief, Ugulayacabe, who had fallen out with the Spanish and sought to establish close ties with the United States. Jefferson wanted to exploit these relationships to obtain land cessions, and did not appear to consider the damage this could have for United States relations with Spain.

After Spain ceded the Louisiana Territory back to France in 1800, the security of the border of the United States became a serious concern for Jefferson, and this subject has been discussed in this chapter. Jefferson considered Napoleonic France a serious threat to national security, and sought to obtain land cessions from Native tribes to protect the western border; the fact that he believed the French would discourage the tribes from making land cessions to the United States convinced Jefferson that the required land needed to be acquired quickly. A

strategy that Jefferson used to try to obtain the necessary lands from the Native tribes, was to encourage them to adopt agriculture; he believed that the adoption of agriculture would result in the tribes needing less land, and then they would be prepared to sell surplus land to the United States. The enforcement of land cessions, and the exploitation of debts that tribes had with trading companies, such as Panton and Leslie, were also tactics used by Jefferson to obtain land needed to improve the security of United States borders. Jefferson's determination to acquire lands at that time meant that he was unwilling to accept any agent or official who was seen to be discouraging the tribes from ceding land. This point has been demonstrated by how Jefferson dealt with accusations made against Benjamin Hawkins; the president made it clear that anyone acting against national interests would not be tolerated, and he sought to convince Hawkins of how essential it was for tribes to make cessions of land to the United States. It is probable that Jefferson mentioned the possibility of some tribes eventually becoming United States citizens as a way of convincing Hawkins to encourage the tribes to be open to ceding territory. With security of paramount importance, Jefferson was unwilling to tolerate hostility from tribes who occupied territory near the borders; he sought to capitalise on any violence from Native tribes to force them to cede territory, and he suggested that hostile tribes would be made to forfeit their land and be removed west of the Mississippi. Gradually, Jefferson began to believe in the removal west of all the eastern tribes, and with the acquisition of the Louisiana Territory in 1803, the idea crystallised in his mind. Following the Louisiana Purchase, and with border security no longer a concern, removal became a central aspect of Jefferson's Native American land policy. Another significant focus for Jefferson was trying to secure land cessions to prevent foreign nations from gaining access to the Mississippi and to make it extremely difficult for foreign traders to engage in trade with Native tribes within United States borders. Jefferson continued to believe that foreign traders were a negative influence on the tribes and that a close commercial relationship with the tribes would maintain peace; while he did want to preserve good relations with the tribes, he had no inhibitions about asserting the strength of the United States once foreign nations had effectively been driven out, and he used that position of strength to push his agenda. In the build up to the War of 1812 against the British, Jefferson took measures to preserve good relations with the tribes, such as

suspending negotiations for land that was not considered important. Much to Jefferson's consternation, many tribes allied themselves with the British during the war, and that fact further consolidated in Jefferson's mind the belief that the Native tribes needed to be removed west. The significant role that foreign affairs had in shaping Jefferson's thoughts about Native American land is indisputable and this fact has been explored in detail throughout this chapter.

Conclusion

Foreign relations strongly shaped Thomas Jefferson's thinking about Native Americans, and very clearly influenced plans he proposed and supported throughout his career. The significance of foreign affairs for Jefferson's Native Americans ideas has not been extensively explored previously; scholars have commented on its relevance but an in-depth analysis has not been conducted. Failure to adequately address the contribution foreign affairs made to Jefferson's views about Native Americans has limited a comprehensive understanding of his ideas. Many other factors that influenced Jefferson's attitudes have been explored in the literature, but foreign affairs has not been sufficiently highlighted. Findings from this thesis will further understanding of Jefferson's thinking about Native Americans and the factors that shaped his views.

The crucial role that foreign affairs had on Jefferson's thinking was revealed through an exhaustive analysis of his writing, in which each document was thoroughly examined. Information that pertained to foreign affairs in relation to the Native Americans was identified, and its relevance to this thesis assessed. All evidence that was considered relevant to the topic has been examined in this thesis to show how significant foreign affairs were for Jefferson regarding Native American issues. The key areas where the impact of foreign affairs is most noticeable in relation to Jefferson's thinking about Native Americans are conflict and land; so the material was divided up according to the prominence of these topics. In his writing, the interrelationship that existed between foreign affairs, conflict and the Native Americans is undeniable. Similarly, a close analysis of his writing reveals the indisputable impact that foreign affairs had on Jefferson's attitudes concerning Native American lands. An in-depth exploration of the topics of conflict and land, taken together, gives insight into the impact that foreign affairs had on Jefferson's thinking in general. In this thesis, an emphasis was placed on context, in which Jefferson's words were not viewed in isolation, but instead analysed in accordance with how they fitted into the larger picture of his thinking at any given time. Consideration of context is of paramount importance when scrutinizing Jefferson's writing, as to ignore the context can result in a distortion of his views. An example is Jefferson's advocacy for severe measures to be taken against some tribes during the American War of Independence.

Looked at in isolation, his words appear ruthless, but when analysed in context, they appear much more consistent and easier to explain. Jefferson's words have been criticised by some scholars for appearing contradictory, but while Jefferson did not avoid contradiction altogether, his writing is less ambiguous when interpreted in context. The research phase of this thesis revealed a paucity of writing relating to foreign affairs in connection with Native American issues between the years of 1794 and 1800. It is an anomaly that cannot be easily explained, because as vice-president from 1797-1801 under John Adams, he almost certainly would have had dealings in this area, so the absence is something of a mystery. There are documents that Jefferson received from that period pertaining to foreign affairs and the Native Americans, but nothing he wrote himself. There are documents written by him that relate to either foreign affairs or the Native Americans, but nothing directly related to the influence that foreign affairs had on his thinking about the Native Americans. The documentation used for this thesis was found in the Jefferson papers, online at the United States National Archives, and was limited solely to documents located in the National Archives.

I argue in this thesis that the actions of foreign nations were a constant issue for Jefferson concerning the Native Americans, and his thinking was regularly shaped by their conduct. The nations that had the most significant impact on the proposals that Jefferson advocated, and the thoughts he expressed, were Great Britain and Spain. While France was in possession of the Louisiana Territory, that nation also had an influence on Jefferson's thinking, particularly in relation to national security, but this concern diminished entirely after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. The behaviour of Great Britain shaped Jefferson's thinking about the Native Americans throughout his life on many issues, while the actions of Spain started to influence Jefferson's thinking in the years after the American War of Independence, and they continued to impact on Jefferson for much of his life. It has been shown that the activities of foreign agents, traders and officials were a frequent concern for Jefferson, and he believed that they consistently sought to influence the Native Americans against the United States; many of his plans were affected by that belief. Jefferson believed that both the British and the Spanish encouraged Native American tribes to engage in hostility against the United

States; the British primarily during the American War of Independence and the War of 1812, and he believed the Spanish often tried to incite the southern tribes to take up arms against the United States. Jefferson's concerns about the financial consequences of ongoing warfare with the Native Americans has been explained in detail throughout this thesis. He often lamented the economic costs of regular fighting with the Native Americans, and his determination to reduce hostility was clearly affected by his desire to minimise expenses. Because Jefferson believed that much of the conflict with the Native Americans was a result of foreign influence, he regularly endorsed measures to ensure the tribes remained content, in order to reduce the likelihood the tribes would be agreeable to an approach by a foreign nation; this concern affected his thinking concerning trade and Native lands. He supported giving the tribes assurances about land ownership, and he wanted to give the tribes security on their land; a significant reason for this was to make them less receptive to foreign influence. His belief that it was essential to keep good relations with the Native Americans makes his failure to support a proposal to return land to the tribes in the north-west in 1793 mystifying, especially as land had been given back to tribes after the American War of Independence, so it was not without precedent. Jefferson's professed desire to maintain peaceful relations with the tribes was damaged by the Georgia Compact of 1802, which caused the United States considerable problems with tribes in the south. It has been shown in this thesis how vital trade was for Jefferson in relations with the Native Americans, as he believed that it was a possible way of tying them closely to the United States. For Jefferson, if the malicious intent of foreign traders was removed, and the United States gained complete control of trade with the Native Americans, relations would significantly improve. It has been argued that, for Jefferson, trade also had another purpose, which revolved around the desire to acquire land. He proposed exploiting debts that the tribes had to obtain land that was important to United States interests; the United States would pay off debts the tribes had in return for land. The desire for land was at its highest point for Jefferson when securing the nation's western boundary was a priority, and he employed a range of strategies to try to obtain land cessions from the Native Americans. The significance of security concerns for Jefferson's Native American ideas has been extensively explored, with the significance of foreign affairs on his thinking demonstrated. Jefferson believed that, if the Native

Americans adopted agriculture and the 'civilised' arts, they would become more peaceful; hostility would be reduced, and relations between the United States and the tribes would improve. The result would be that securing United States borders would be easier, and tribes would not be as open to the influence of foreign nations. It has been argued that Jefferson also believed that, if the tribes adopted agriculture and other aspects of 'civilisation', they would not require large amounts of land; he anticipated that the result would be an increased willingness to sell surplus land to the United States. At times when border security was a significant focus, this willingness would be particularly useful; for Jefferson, as Native American reliance on vast expanses of territory declined, the United States would be able to obtain land cessions from the tribes. The significance of foreign affairs on Jefferson's thinking regarding the removal west of the Native American tribes can clearly be seen; this has been explored in detail throughout this thesis. He first proposed the idea of removal for hostile tribes during the American War of Independence against Britain. It was not until the United States bought the Louisiana Territory from France that the idea of removal for all the eastern tribes became a serious option in Jefferson's mind; his land policy was significantly shaped by this focus in the years following the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. The War of 1812 against Britain, with many tribes siding with the British, solidified in Jefferson's mind the need for removal of the tribes; he was already working towards removal prior to 1812, but the war reaffirmed the necessity of removal for him. Together with these events, frequent violent clashes the United States engaged in with the Native Americans, which Jefferson strongly believed was a consequence of a negative Spanish influence, undoubtedly contributed to his thinking about removal. The pervasive nature of a foreign influence can clearly be seen in an analysis of the factors that led Jefferson to advocate removal. It is entirely feasible that if the tribes had not been subject to the interference of foreign nations, Jefferson would not have proposed the idea of removal. It has been argued that Jefferson often had to consider the reaction of a foreign nation when formulating Native American policy; this concern can clearly be seen in his recommendation not to pursue aggressive measures against the Creeks to enforce territorial boundaries, as this could antagonise Spain. It has been shown throughout this thesis that the conduct of foreign nations had an undeniable impact on Jefferson's thinking concerning Native Americans.

Because this thesis focuses on the impact of foreign affairs on Jefferson's thinking regarding the Native Americans, other factors that affected his views have not been analysed. The findings of this research, which clearly demonstrate the significant contribution that foreign affairs had for Jefferson's attitudes, would benefit from being examined in conjunction with other key factors that shaped Jefferson's thinking. The consequences of his plans, in which the significance of foreign affairs is considered, would also be a worthwhile area of research, to see the impact that his plans had on Native American communities, and the United States in general. Research exploring the consequences of Jefferson's plans from an exclusively Native American perspective would be of benefit. With Native American research a scholarly focus at the present time, an in-depth examination of Jefferson's thinking, viewed from a Native American stand-point, would undoubtedly be a meaningful contribution. There might be a scarcity of documents that reveal the views of the Native Americans, nevertheless a study that examines the documents that are available would be invaluable. Throughout Jefferson's career foreign relations played a vital role in influencing his thinking on a range of Native American issues; an analysis of two important themes in his writing, conflict and land, reveals how crucial foreign affairs were in shaping his views.

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