



The Monster Slayer Part II

The Monster Slayers. (*film: Indians in woods*) They picked this place to fight it because they knew by this time — in the 1630's — that the monster had to be destroyed or, in time, it would surely destroy them. What began here was to be one of the longest wars in history and it would be fought this way across every foot of North America, as Indian nation after nation saw the monster — just as these people saw it. But what they saw could not be stopped this way, because what they saw was not a living thing. What they saw was an idea at work, and as they saw it, it was a monstrous idea. There was only one possible answer to it and the Monster Slayers gave it . . . this way. (*slide: Indians in war garb*).

Americans to this day know nothing about the monster slayers in our history, or the monster that moved practically all Indians in North America to war against it for some 250 years. The reason Americans know nothing about them is simple enough. The reason is, the Monster Slayers didn't get their monster — they lost the Indian Wars . . . and people who lose wars don't write the official versions of what happened in history. The people who win wars do — and what we've written into our history books about what happened here had no place in the past and has no place now for the men who fought monsters from one end of America to the other.

Monsters indeed! What monsters? We'll probe that now in Part II of The Monster Slayer.

For these men, the world would never be the same after this day. (film: Indians running through woods) It started out for those Iroquois hunters as this kind of day had begun ,for their people for hundreds of years. This was the time for the hunt, to lay away food for the winter, and that was the trail that led to their hunting grounds. Every year they went off this way, but this year things didn't go in the old traditional way. This year, something new had been added during the several summer months that particular trail hadn't been used. This had been added. (sketch) A fence. Because of it — because of what happened at that fence — the world would never be the same for the Iroquois or the rest of the Indians in what are now the United States.

What happened was that these Iroquois ignored that fence — jumped it and followed that traditional old trail right through a newly-cleared field under crops planted by one of the first settlers to head west back in our history. That settler had put that fence there, obviously to protect his property, and he wasn't at all happy about that routine. (film: clearing trees in forest) He had cleared that land in the right and proper way in what he saw as useless, unused wilderness. The Indian wasn't doing anything with it. He put the land under crops. He made it useful and, as any civilized person knew then, this was the way things were meant to be. It was right and proper that the God-fearing head of every family be a land owner, and that the land be worked to meet their needs and to turn out that extra bit of profit that could mean the good life. It was also necessary for many of these Americans to turn out that extra bit of profit because they were in debt up to their ears. Our history books barely mention the fact that most of these early Americans couldn't have cared less about political or religious freedom. They were here on borrowed money and they carried signed contracts which said that they would pay off what they borrowed — with a profit for the trading companies that backed them — so many years after they got here. From the start of the American stay, the land had to pay off — as a man named Bradford states this flatly in this book. (book in hand) This particular writer was an historian himself and he had good reason to know what he was writing about. He was William Bradford who came over on the Mayflower and was the governor of Plymouth Colony for 30 years. In this book, titled "Of Plymouth Colony," Bradford gives a slightly different version of American history than comes through today's history books. He says the Pilgrims didn't really want to come to America. They wanted to go to Guinea where they hoped to find gold and easy riches to pay off their contract and make enough besides —quickly — to live the life of the country gentleman back home. Bradford's "on the spot" facts about that part of our history explains quite clearly why that early settler did this (sketch of settler with rifle) to protect his in-

vestment in his newly-cleared farm the day those Iroquois came over his fence and crossed his property. He shot one of those Indians that day to teach those primitive barbarians what was right and wrong, in the world. That shot started the Indian war.

As far as the American Indian was concerned, land was not an investment. It was not property. The idea that anybody could think so, simply made no sense. That idea was more than strange to the Indian. For good reason, he saw it as immoral, indecent, completely inhuman, and completely deadly. It was monstrous to think that anyone could claim this (film: wilderness wild life) as personal, private property. This — the land — was the source of life for everything alive on earth.

How could the basis of life itself be fenced in and kept away from all other living things, making it impossible for the rest of life to use and enjoy it too? This land was priceless as it was, to the Indian. It didn't have to be made useful, it was useful — in part because it was hunting ground, a food supply — but more important it was this kind of place. In one way or another, for all Indian peoples, this was part of their religious life too. (film: ceremonial dance) What you see going on here, in this case among the Indians of Arizona, is what could be called a class in "patriotism." This is a ceremonial dance which passes on, from one generation to the next, the stories of the people: of their history, their traditions, their morals and ethics, their customs and beliefs, how their way of life came to be. For all Indians, one way or another, this is the way people — the nation — is kept alive. All these people were and are concerned about posterity . . . about the responsibility to their children. Through these ceremonials, love and respect for the institutions of the people — for their way of life — is built. That kind of love and respect is right at the heart of what patriotism means. This way the individual Indian is made to understand his way of life. He or she knows — identifies with — the way of life of the nation . . . has guidelines to live by.

(slide: Navajo country) All that is tied into those dances, or classes, but one most important thing more. One way or another, for practically all Indians, those dances tie the people back to their beginnings, in what were their homelands. As most Indians shared this belief, one way or another, life begins in their homelands — so life came out of the earth. Their lives — made of the stuff of the land they lived on — whatever was on it, or in it, or over it was in their bodies and minds too.

Body and mind, men and gods — all part of the land. Own that? Own land as personal private property? Buy it, sell it, give it away, inherit it? What a monstrous idea, as the Indian saw it ... and fought you because you believe that idea — fought you from end to end of North America.

For Americans today — whose religion is a sometimes-Sunday thing in churches or synagogues which have ties to land only in the fact that

they are located on it — the Indian ideas about land as the source of life . . . well, they're quaint. That kind of American is one of the deadliest dangers to our future ever faced by the United States . . . deadly because the problem we faced in the American Indian isn't over. It's with us this minute; bigger than ever because now we face it all over the planet. Too many of us do not see or understand that problem now one bit better than that early settler saw or understood it right at the start of the American story.

What that early settler saw in the American Indian — standing solidly against his way of using land, to set up our economic system, our political system and our social ways of doing things — was an uncivilized person who was not God-fearing and was just plain ignorant about the right and proper way to use land . . . as property! If that early settler had looked a bit beyond that Indian to the rest of the world, he could have used the same words to describe just about the whole human race. Only a piddling handful of people shared his kind of civilization. Most of the world did not believe in his kind of single, all-powerful God who was to be feared. And practically no one on earth saw the American idea about land as private property (to be used for whatever purpose, however the owner pleased) practically no one saw that idea as right and proper. That was a very strange idea then. It was a very new idea — and it still is. (film: mid-East farmer) Because most of the world is still not a part of our kind of civilization — does not fear or worship a single, all-powerful God — it still sees our idea about how to use land, and own it, as strange. The idea of private property — as we worked it to become what we are —doesn't exist in most of the world this minute. It isn't even known in much of the world today. And it's that fact ... dangerously little known by to-days American who doesn't really know how or why his way of life is unusual, unique in the world ... it's that kind of person who is a deadly danger to this nations future. That kind of person can't defend what he doesn't understand. He can't fight todays kind of ideological war which, without exploding a bomb or firing a bullet, will decide this nations future. It's that kind of American who makes this story of the Monster Slayers (picture: Indian in war dress) anything but an obscure, little-known incident pulled out of our history. Because right at the heart of just about every problem we face around the world right now — in Laos, Vietnam, or the Congo, or Iran or Bolivia — right at the heart of every one of those problems, in nations we're trying hard to guide into non-communist futures, is this old American problem with the American Indian: how land should be used, how it should be owned. It's bigger than ever, more serious than ever because we can't solve it in the world around us the way we solved it here at home — killing off the Indian, then putting him on reservations until he saw the light. Our way worked here. But what we do to convince the rest of the human race that our road to the future is better

than any other — particularly, better than the communist road? What do we do to survive in that kind of world when only a handful of Americans know that this is the world they live in? (sketch) This kind divided into two parts. No, not a red part and a part that isn't communist. This is the important division in the world now — as it was for us yesterday when the Monster Slayers shaped our history. They're still shaping it . . . as we'll see after this time out.

(film: Indians in wagons heading to ceremonials) One of those Indians is a fellow named George Harris. That's his American name by which I knew him as a room mate in college. You frighten him. He's not afraid of you as a person. He is afraid of you as an idea, and that fear today is the same as it was when the first American Indian saw you as he (George Harris) does. That fear put him back here to live this way. Twenty years ago he was headed for a very different future. He was studying to be an electrical engineer, and back then you could count the number of his people with that background on the fingers of one hand. George was an important person to his people and to us as a way to solve the Indian problem which is still very much with us. We may have beaten these people in a very tough war, but we did not change their ideas to ours about the right and proper way to do things — politically or economically — though we've tried for almost 300 years. There's an important story here because we've spent about 15 years and many billions of tax dollars, in what we've called foreign aid since World War II, trying to do with people (in much of the world around us) what we haven't been able to do in 300 years here at home with most American Indians. It's an important story because most of the world around us lives by ideas a lot closer to those of the American Indian than ours, right now. These ideas (sketch) here.

This sketch was drawn for me one night in Arizona by George Harris, Navajo Indian, back in 1946. It was his answer to my question — why? Why turn his back on the years of experience, education and training he got in non-Indian schools? He was one of the very few among his people who really knew what life was like among Americans outside the reservation. His people couldn't stay the way they were, they'd have to change and he was one of the few people who could really help them make it. Why turn his back on that; why turn his back on us?

That's why, he said. Because of the difference between those two circles which he drew on the ground as we sat by his hogan one night in Arizona, just after World War II, and he explained what he'd done. These, he said, were the circles of life. This one, as he saw it, as a Navajo. He had decided against your way of life because, he said, there was too much inhumanity in it; too little of love, respect and honor for the things that count; too much destruction.

What he had in mind was this . . . this was the way things were in

the world. Everything that made up his world — everything that could be seen or felt or heard or smelled (and everything that couldn't) trees, clouds, dreams, rocks, gods, man, plants, rivers, hogans, and ideas — whatever was in this world, on it or out of it, all were part of this circle of life. All were parts of the other. All were tied together. If one thing on the circle was affected, everything else would be. The important thing about the circle as George saw it, and as people all the way from the hills of Burma to Bolivia see it too, man is on that circle. Man is part of it. As you see things, that Navajo said, the circle is about the same. All the same things, real and unreal, are on it too . . . with one enormous difference. You aren't. In your kind of world man is not on that circle of life — but apart from it, here. And you see the world, soon the universe too, as just so much real estate put down by your God for your special benefit with everything on it, in it or over it to be used as you please. You, in this world, are not part of the world. That idea, George Harris said, explains why you have little or no feeling for the things of the earth, or for other men.

Check the record. Things like the buffalo . . . what happened to the 50 million buffalo on the great plains out west about 100 years ago? What was our "feeling" about the buffalo? We had great sport with the passenger pigeon and the heath hen, too. When that sport was over there wasn't one bird left of either kind. We exterminated them. Things like trees went, as whole forests were cut out with no feeling about what came next for tomorrows Americans. What's the feeling now about over-grazed grasslands, misused farmlands, polluted rivers — what feeling for other men who come on this land tomorrow? That's part of the record of the inhumanity and destruction George the Navajo had in mind when he went home and turned his back on what we consider to be right and proper — what we see as the good life. He fears our ideas to this day ... 300 years after the first American Indian knew that same fear and for the same reason. There is reason to fear men who have no roots in the land under their feet, who live as though whatever works to make a buck is good . . . as though there were no laws or rules that tied them to the rest of life on earth. George didn't want to be a part of that because he's convinced, in the long run, those ideas will destroy your way of life.

That's his story. Peculiar notions, aren't they? Imagine being destroyed some day by the ideas we worked out on this land to become the richest, most powerful people on earth. Destruction indeed! What nonsense! This nonsense, perhaps. (film: juvenile delinquents) You can see this kind of senseless thing in almost any American city today. Can this be one of the byproducts of what that Navajo called rootlessness? Because that's one of the reasons given these day to explain juvenile delinquency. This is posterity ... yours! Tomorrows Americans. They behave as though whatever works to make a buck is good, as though there were no laws or rules that tied them to the rest of life in their own communities. Young people who are aimless

can't identify with or fit into their own way of life. They have no guidelines to live by.

Practically all those young people have one thing in common. They know nothing about their history as Americans, their tradition, the morals and ethics of their way of life, their customs and beliefs, how our way of life came to be. Walk into any juvenile court today to see what part "rootlessness" plays in our lives; see what untrained, unused young minds, without love of community or country, can do to our way of life . . . to destroy it. Then know what the same kind of older minds can do. They can make a nation rootless with deadlier results. As they've been working hard to do that in this place, recently. What is this place? Well, it's useless at the moment. It isn't doing anything though about 100 years ago some things did happen here to make our history, give us traditions, to explain how our way of life came to be. The place is Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. What happened here changed us. We came out of this a very different nation than we were when we went in. We fought the first total war in history here. And we proved that we had the people and the resources and the industrial power to be a world power. Some of the deepest, most important of our roots as a people were put down here ... and a part of this battlefield was set aside as a monument to that part of our past so that this part of the American story could be passed on to young people, particularly, so that they might know, appreciate and understand the blood, sweat and tears that went into making the America they were born into. What they do to keep America the land of, by and for the people depends upon how well they know the American story . . . the very story those young delinquents you saw a moment ago didn't know.

Because the line between those young delinquents and the committee of business and professional people who decided not long ago to make the battlefield at Gettysburg a useful place — by replacing the ancient cannon and historical markers with a shopping center and a housing project — that line is direct. What good is the place, they've asked, if it isn't being used . . . to make money that is. That part of Pennsylvania is growing and those people see little sense in letting good, valuable land sit around doing nothing. To get ahead, to make progress, that area needs more stores, more houses, more parking lots, more ways to expand the economy, more ways to make a buck.

Those people can't see Gettysburg as a national shrine . . . but it is, for anyone who can see beyond a buck, beyond an expanding economy to a solidly-rooted historical fact proved over and over again in history. The fact that progress, getting ahead, is not a one-way street! The people who travel that street have to move both ways — back to the ideas, the history, tradition and values, the beliefs and all the rest that laid the basis for shopping centers and housing projects in our lives, as well as forward. This country is not just one big glorious future in which more and more

people will make more and more bucks in more and more shopping centers. This country is one big glorious past, too, without an understanding of which, without a respect for which, our future won't be worth a plugged nickel . . . for all the bucks we make.

For the same reason the American Indian considered his homeland to be priceless — just as it was — our Gettysburg battlefields are priceless, just as they are. There was no stronger concern in any Indian nation than the concern for those who came after them. That's why ceremonials played such important parts in Indian life. They were the Indians' investment in their future, in those who came after them. just as our monument to the past, at Gettysburg, is our investment in the future. That battlefield is a thousand times more valuable as it is, with its old cannon and markers as a root of American history, than it will ever be when covered with parking lots and shoppers. There are, Lord knows, few enough such roots for Americans to go to, to know the American story. One is the story written by 650,000 Americans during the Civil War — a goodly chunk of which spoke their piece for the last time at Gettysburg. More on that story in Part III of *The Monster Slayer*.