



with Dr. Albert L Burke

**The Monster
Slayer
Part III**

When dealing with these men (film: Indians) there is no question about national honor. Whether to fight them or run away or fool them is all a matter of expediency — whatever works . . . to exterminate them.

The time was 1871, when these Indians were just about finished as a nation after a war record of which any nation could be proud. These were the Sioux, great warriors. The record proves it. Using weapons like those (picture: bows and arrows, etc.) and only enough captured guns for about half their fighting men — with no cannon — they outfought the whites from the start of their part of the Indian wars. Every Sioux that died took five Federal troops with him. The facts of history are that the Sioux were not beaten in war — they were starved into defeat when those animals (picture: buffalo) were almost wiped out. (slide: Indian War scene) The idea was to wipe them out; the buffalo and those men. And anything went . . . anything was justified to do that job. There was no need to deal with them honorably. That's what you said, back in 1871, through the Indian Commissioner who represented you in dealing with these people at that time. The Indian Commissioner's name was Francis Walker. What Mr. Walker said in 1871 spelled out a problem almost all the founders of this nation thought would not be a part of the American

story. A problem that began very early in the American story with that poster ... and what began with that poster hasn't ended yet. And it all has to do with that word "honor" — yours, as we'll see now in part three of the Monster Slayer.

(film: soldiers drilling) There may have been some among these men who fought a revolution in 1776 because they were fed up with oppression, and stamp acts and taxes without representation. There may have been some here who were fighting for principles of liberty and freedom. Most of these men, in inland places like this away from the colonies on the coast, were not fighting for those reasons. Because they were borderers as borderers they were fed up with honor — — Great Britain's honor which, in a way, led to that country's defeat in the American Revolution. The way that's mentioned in this book written by a man named Mellen Chamberlen back in 1843. This book is titled "John Adams: Statesman of the Revolution," and part of it goes into what the Colonial G. I. did fight for in 1776 . . . that part of it which gives the results of interviews Chamberlen had some years earlier with veterans of the Revolution. That part of it, out of the mouths of those fighting men, isn't quite the prettied-up version of what happened then that can be found in today's history books. As one of those veterans put it here ... he had never felt oppressed by the British, or, for that matter, anybody else; he had never seen a stamp and was sure he'd never paid a penny for one; and he didn't drink tea, with or without taxes. As for what the Paines and Adams and Harringtons and Sydneys and Lockes had written about freedom and liberty, he and his friends had never read a word. They did read the Bible, he said, and the catechism and Watts Psalms and hymns and the almanac — if they could read. And they were very much concerned about running their own affairs, which the British would not let them do. So these men fought for the right to do as they had done before the year 1754.

No more important year exists in the American story because that was the year the British government took over the power to deal with the American Indian — took the power of negotiation and treaty-making with the Indian away from the colonies. And the British did that to get control over a situation that had gotten out of hand. This situation (film: fort and houses burning) as Indian nation after nation made it very clear that whatever the borderers might think they didn't like having their treaties and agreements broken. By 1754, settlers like these were moving over the boundaries of the Indian lands and taking them over. But, by treaty, Britain had given its word, pledged its honor that this would not happen. The borderers were fed up with that setup. They saw that Indian land as useless and worthless, as it was. They went over the border. They cleared the land for farms — made it useful and stayed until the Indians tried to

throw them out, or a British military force moved in to put them out in order to make them live up to the terms of the treaties.

Britain's honor was on the boundary lines of those Indian nations. In trying to keep its word, it lost North America. The borderers were not interested in honor. They were interested in land. And that interest wrote the chapter of the American story that never quite made it into our history books ... the chapter that was written for those people (picture: Cherokee Indians) in 4000 lives, during the event that picture tells about, for the Cherokee Indians back in the 1850's.

(picture: "Trail of Tears") The Cherokee talk about that event to this day, and they called it the "Trail of Tears." You won't find any mention of it in the books our young people read today about the American story. But something like it happened to us during World War II at a place called Bataan — when some 35,000 Americans and Filipinos were captured by the Japanese and forced into a "death march" off to prison. You will find that incident mentioned in most history books used by our young people today. It is mentioned as one of the most inhuman, barbaric acts of cruelty ever to be suffered by American fighting men in any war. Well, the same words could be used to describe that Cherokee "Trail of Tears" except that it was not just Cherokee fighting men who were marched 600 miles from Georgia to Arkansas by 7000 Federal troops in the middle of winter. 14,000 Cherokee men, women and children were forced into that march. 4,000 didn't make it ... in an incident that began about ten years earlier when word got around that there was gold in the Cherokee hills.

The Cherokees got their land (slide: treaty signing) by treaty in 1794.

It was a treaty signed between nations and it assured the Cherokee the lands that they lived on in parts of Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee ... it assured them these lands forever. "Forever" lasted about forty years, when the borderers pressured the Georgia legislature to ignore the 1794 treaty and pass an act to take over Cherokee land, now. This was illegal, but the Cherokee couldn't get into a Georgia court to fight their case because that same act said that no Cherokee could testify in court against an American. After which the Cherokee nation was carved up and passed out by lottery. And the Government, which had put its word and seal on a treaty with the Cherokee, the Government sent in Federal troops to move those people 600 miles away to the Indian Territory. Then, when they got there, they were informed by the Government that they would have to pay all the expense of their trip! Meanwhile, back in Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee, the borderers were having a ball on Cherokee land.

Now this Cherokee business is important. Because it — more than any other — set the pattern for what was to come in other parts of the United

States as Indian lands were to prove to be valuable . . . and our treaties with the Indian were to prove to be worthless, as those lands became targets for borderers. What happened to the Cherokee was one part of a much bigger story which, in 1874, was written in a particularly interesting and, for the Indian, a frustrating way by these men. (film: federal troops in a valley)

Six years earlier, under a man named William Tecumseh Sherman, these men had been in on the signing of a treaty with the Sioux nation. They were now on their way back to break that treaty. And, because of that, not one of these men would leave this place alive. Under the general leading them back — named Custer — they would make their last stand here against an enemy furious and pushed to the point of desperation by the dishonesty and hypocrisy of the Government that signed that treaty only six years before ... before word got around there was gold in those Sioux hills. The Sioux fought these men and those who came after them, hard. But they didn't win that fight. Because by that time there were too many Americans around like the one Frank Harris wrote about in this book called "Elder Conklin." This book is about the men of that time who made it absolutely impossible for the U. S. Government to honor its word in treaties with the Indian. Elder Conklin lived on that boundary of the Indian Territory in Oklahoma. He was a massive pain in the neck to the military commander who was assigned to protect that reservation. The Elder would deliberately plant his crops out beyond the boundary of Indian land, and military patrols would come down, knock his fences down and trample through those crops. That was against the law, those troops told him. Not God's law, he'd reply. God meant man to work the land and enjoy its fruits. That idle Indian land was blasphemy. It was wrong to keep him from using it, from making it fruitful.

Elder Conklin was not alone in his day. By this time there were thousands just like him. They carved up the Sioux nation . . . and in the usual way, by whatever means. After all, as Francis Walker the Indian Commissioner had said just before Custer and his troops broke the Sioux treaty, there was no question of national honor involved. So, in 1877, without letting the Sioux in on the matter, Congress wrote out and passed what it then called a new "Agreement" with the Sioux nation. The "Agreement" kicked the Sioux out of their gold country and let the prospectors and settlers in. Then the President signed it. It seemed to the Sioux that, even from the white man's point of view, something was not entirely right about that routine. So they decided to try a new way to fight for their lands. The way that was suggested to them one day by a lawyer ... through the courts. The Sioux went to court for justice.

What came of this didn't make the headlines because what happened, happened while this (film: Navy ships) was going on over at a place called

Guadalcanal. The year was 1942 and Bataan was on every American mind, as was a fellow named Rommel who was about to be tackled by 150,000 Americans just landed in North Africa. And the navy was in the Battle of the Coral Sea while off in Russia something was going on at a place called Stalingrad. There wasn't room, there wasn't interest in what the United States Court of Claims had to say then in its decision about the case called "The Sioux Tribe vs the United States." While we were fighting hard all over the world for freedom and justice, that Court of Claims decision went against the Sioux nation. It was a very interesting decision which did not dispute the facts of the case as they were presented. The Sioux may have, indeed, been bilked illegally out of their land, but, said the Court, we cannot and will not presume anything except benign and honest intentions on the part of the Congress or the President. The Court assumes, and will continue to assume, that the things Congress and the President have done, now do, or hereafter do, are conscientiously done for the benefit of the Indians. More, in a moment . . .

(film: soldier returning) This was Mr. Madison's war. It wasn't going according to plan. We had been pushed into this fighting in 1812 by the war-hawks, who had more on their minds than just putting an end to British kidnapping of American sailors on the high-seas, this way. They had seen this as a short, easy war which would end by our taking over Canada. Instead, we were being beaten badly. We were also coming apart at the seams. There were talks and meetings in New England about seceding out of the Union. Except for victories at sea, we were simply too weak to win this war. It was a very dangerous time for us.

It was a time when we needed help badly. We needed it to deal with a special problem that was coming at us from the west where the British had given several Indian tribes and nations guns and had then set them against us. We could not deal with those enemy Indians and the British army and navy, so we turned for help to what was then a powerful, big nation close by ... (film: Seneca war dance) this, the Seneca nation of the Iroquois. The Senecas made up about half the Iroquois population then and many of them were our allies in that 1812 war. They screened off the Indians allied with the British and French — gave us the change to put our power where it was needed most. These people were one of the main reasons we did not lose that war. And, as our allies, it was not the first time we were glad to have them around as friends. The people of Pennsylvania gave them several tracts of land a few years before that war as a sign of their appreciation for all those people had done to help those people through hard times in war and peace.

(slide: factory) But that was a long time ago. And it was a world removed from the men who about 25 to 30 years ago discovered they had a problem in the Allegheny river running by their factories, which hadn't

been a problem for them before. It was this problem (film: polluted water) ... polluted water. Polluted by growing numbers of factories upriver dumping their wastes into the water, adding to the stuff already there from the coal mines. When the river ran low during the dry season, that liquid garbage was concentrated enough to eat through the boilers of the factories down river that used Allegheny water. At best, this was an irritating business expense for which these men wanted relief. They got together to discuss the problem. How to solve it? There were two ways it could be solved. One was to see to it that every factory on that river was fitted with waste disposal units to keep their liquid garbage from getting into the water in the first place. The other was to find a way to increase the amount of water in the Allegheny during the dry season. That meant a dam some place to store water during the wet season. But where? (film: Kinzua dam) Well, there naturally. just behind those Indians. What you see behind them is the Kinzua dam — your 150 million dollar or more solution to the problem of polluted water that so concerned those business and industrial people whose factories have boiler problems. They feel happy about that use of your tax dollars to build a dam in the wrong place, to do a job it won't do. They're considerably happier about the whole thing than those Indians because a very old story is being repeated here. That dam is going up on Indian land, and it was put there by today's borderers ... men who see no more sense in letting that good land go to waste, not doing anything, today than the first borderers could 300 years ago. And now, as then, borderers are not interested in honor because this nation's word will be one of the things buried under the water behind that dam. In this case, a special word from George Washington through his personal representative to the Seneca Indians in 1794 — a man named Pickering. In this case, the oldest treaty on our books as a nation tossed aside as lightly and easily this minute as when this routine began. But then as Francis Walker said for you in 1871, when dealing with the Indian no question of national honor is involved.

At Kinzua on the Seneca reservation, not even common sense is involved. Because the explanation you were given to justify that dam where it is was not quite honest. (film: floods) This was the explanation — flood control. To protect the growing number of industries and business on rivers like the Allegheny, dams are necessary. So much of this country's producing power, for war or peace, is on rivers or in valleys that can and do flood this way. It is now vital to the national interest to protect that producing power. The Kinzua dam is an important part of the flood control program to prevent this.

You got that explanation pretty much from the Army Corps of Engineers, a government agency which, over the years, has developed an interesting routine in dealing with the public whose money it spends on

such things as dam building. That routine is not to tell the public the whole truth, but just enough truth to get done what the Corps wants done. For example, the Army Engineers said nothing about other possible answers for flood control that just might be less expensive than Kinzua to build and just might do a better job. There is another such place — which engineering studies every bit as good as those put out by the Corps of Engineers show could store about three times as much water and cost about half as much to build . . . and would not flood the Seneca reservation. The Engineering Corps knew about this, but for political reasons — which include making friends of powerful men in industry who have boiler problems — it was much better to build at Kinzua. And then, too, where else could land — unused land doing nothing — where else could land be gotten as cheaply, or as easily as by breaking just one more treaty with one more group of Indians?

In all of which, from Cherokee, through Sioux to Seneca Indians, there is a line that runs right through the American story to explain why the United States Government not only did not honor its treaties but could not ... even if it wanted to. (film: wagon train) These people carried that line across North American and through time. It was the unique line of representative government which made it impossible for that kind of government to enforce any law, any treaty against its own people. The responsibility for the record we've barely scratched in these sessions about the American Indian was not a government that would not honor its word ... but a people who would not. And who somewhere on that road through our history lost a very special and unique thing those men wrote into our way of life.

From the beginning — from Og the Caveman to John Q. American today, it's been the natural order of things for the strong to respect the strong and not respect the weak. In most of the world this minute, and that includes most Americans this minute, that's still the natural order of things. But, it was not for those men when they laid out this blueprint for a different order of things. This blueprint — The Constitution, which spells out in practically every sentence what people with the power shall not do to those without the power. The remarkable thing about this paper, when it was written, was that it laid out safeguards for the weak, for the minorities, to make them safe against the majorities. Every other sentence in this paper is a check on the use of power. That was the very special and unique idea they put down here. But that's all it was. Just an idea. The record of what we have done with our power to the American Indian shows that that idea ... the Constitution, itself ... is no guarantee of anything for anybody. It is now what it's always been ... a promise. In the hands of men who do not respect it, it can become as worthless as the treaties we've signed with the American Indian.

Here, then, some closing remarks because we will be going into Part IV of the Monster Slayer, the final program in this series, next week. But before closing out this program I would like to comment about some of the mail that has come in about this particular series. It has been quite heavy and it has surprised me because of the nature of these comments. There are complaints that we are not objective enough. I am concerned about objectivity in people. They are the people who hide from things around them. The greatest injustices I know have been created in the name of objectivity!