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Article Summary: The signing of the Treaty of 1851 was heralded as the dawn of a new era of peace between the United States and the Indian tribes of the Northern Plains. It was believed that the treaty had put an end to the intertribal wars of the region. And on one important front, a real attempt was made by the Indians to adhere to the fraternal spirit of the treaty. In the period 1851-1857, the long war between the southern divisions of the Teton Sioux and their old enemies the Crow was interrupted by six years of peace.

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Names: D D Mitchell; E T Enig; Big Robber; Red Fish; Lone Horn; Jean DeSmet; Joseph Bissonette; John Richard; T S Twiss; Lame Deer; Flying By; Black Shield; Shoots Bear Running; Fire Thunder; Man Afraid of His Horse; Two Face; Bear's Head; H B Carrington; William S Harney; Soldier Chief Who Swears; Red Cloud; Little Thunder; Crow Feather; A D Vaughan; Iron Wing; Four Horns; Lame Deer; Elk that Bellows Walking; Red Anus; Man Afraid of His Horse; White Robe; Gouverneur K Warren; Bear Ribs

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Photographs / Images: Map: Country of Lone Horn's Peace

Lone Horn's Peace: A New View of Sioux-Crow Relations, 1851-1858

By Kingsley M. Bray

The signing of the Treaty of 1851 was heralded as the dawn of a new era of peace and friendship between the United States and the Indian tribes of the Northern Plains. No less significantly it was believed that the treaty had put an end to the intertribal wars of the region. Although most modern historians have scoffed at the hopes expressed by contemporary white observers for a lasting peace between the warring plains tribes,¹ a thorough reexamination of the documentary and traditional record discloses that on one important front a real attempt was made by the Indians to adhere to the fraternal spirit of the treaty. For in the period 1851-1857, the long war between the southern divisions of the Teton Sioux and their old enemies the Crow was interrupted by six years of peace—a fragile peace, but peace nonetheless.

The councils for the great treaty were called by the United States in an effort to stem the mounting tension between the Indians and the growing tide of white emigrants crossing the plains. By 1851 Indian-white relations along the Platte River section of the Overland Trail had deteriorated to near-crisis point. The Indians were angry at the thinning of game and timber along the trail, and at their heavy losses from diseases brought westward by the wagon trains. On their part the emigrants complained of minor harassments and petty pilfering by the Indians. After the cholera epidemic of 1849 carried off many of their most moderate chiefs, the wilder warriors of the powerful Teton Sioux considered taking sterner measures against the emigrant trains.² The summons for the tribes to attend a grand peace council on the North Platte near Fort Laramie in September, 1851, came just in time to check the drift toward war.

For three weeks the representatives of the Indians—Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Crow, Shoshoni, Assiniboin, Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara—and the Treaty Commission met in long sessions to hammer out the problematic details of tribal boundaries and the appointment of tribal head chiefs. The latter dignitaries were to be held responsible for their people keeping the peace, while the clear delineation of tribal territories would serve to minimize intertribal aggression, regarded by the government as a necessary corollary to any Indian-American peace.³

These official councils were reported by white observers, but the debates held between the tribes themselves have sadly, if understandably, gone unrecorded. Yet, it was in these talks where any real progress toward intertribal peace was to be expected. The Indians-only deliberations actually occupied most of the time spent at the treaty grounds, and were summarized by Chief Commissioner D. D. Mitchell:

Invitations were freely given, and as freely accepted by each of the tribes to interchange visits, talk and smoke together like brothers, upon ground where they had never before met but for the purpose of scalping each other. This, to my mind, was conclusive evidence of the sincerity of the Indians, and nothing but bad management, or some untoward misfortune can ever break it.⁴

The judgements of Mitchell and his contemporaries cannot be simply dismissed as empty pieties; that clear-sighted and unsentimental trader E. T. Denig remarked that after 1851 truces between warring tribes became "tolerably general," citing instances of peace negotiations between the Crow, Atsina, Piegan, and Assiniboin.⁵

While some such truces proved abortive, at least one had significant results for the future. The winter counts (calendric and historic records) of the Miniconjou division of the Teton Sioux curtly record for 1851: "Peace With the Crows."⁶ Contemporary documents and further traditional evidence make clear that the truce established between the Miniconjou and the Crow was a sincere attempt to create new conditions of amity on the Northern Plains with important advantages for both parties to the agreement.

Two major chiefs were involved in the Crow-Miniconjou negotiations of 1851. First was Big Robber, appointed Crow head chief by the treaty commission; while the Miniconjou's main representative was evidently the aging chief Red Fish.

Although the latter is not known to have been certainly present at the 1851 treaty, it is inconceivable that he was absent. He was the most important Miniconjou chief of the day, and his son Lone Horn was present, for he was one of the Indians taken to Washington immediately after the treaty was signed.⁷ Moreover, it was the division of Miniconjou led by Red Fish and Lone Horn that tried most strenuously to preserve the Crow peace in later years; and Red Fish himself had good reason to feel less animosity toward the Crow than did most Sioux.

Three years before, in 1848, his daughter had been captured by the Crow but had managed to escape. Her safe return Red Fish ascribed to the prayers of Father Pierre-Jean DeSmet, a Jesuit missionary he had met and agonized with over his child's loss.⁸ Now, three years later Father DeSmet was present at the treaty councils, working tirelessly to promote goodwill between the tribes. Red Fish, who ever since his daughter's return had addressed his own prayers not to *Wakan Tanka* but to the black-robed priest who had taken pity on him, cannot but have been swayed by DeSmet toward ending his people's war with the Crow.

In adopting such an inevitably controversial policy, Red Fish enjoyed the invaluable support of his ablest son. Lone Horn (c. 1814-1875) commanded the necessary respect of the vocal warrior class in the Miniconjou council; yet, his whole career was dedicated to maintaining amicable relations with most neighboring peoples, red and white. Faced with a need for new hunting grounds, Lone Horn preferred intertribal diplomacy to bloody conquest. While still a young man in 1840, he had effected a peace between the Miniconjou and the Cheyenne. His role in the peacemaking with the Crow may well have been instrumental in securing favorable public opinion for the truce.⁹

So much for the formalities of the peace councils; how did the Crow-Miniconjou peace work out in practice? The evidence of tribal locations and movements in the next six years strongly indicates that Big Robber, Red Fish, and Lone Horn agreed upon joint use by their tribesmen of the boundary region between Crow and Sioux territories as defined by the 1851 treaty. The boundary ran from the North Platte near present Casper, Wyoming, northeastward along the divide be-

tween the Powder and Cheyenne Rivers (see map, p. 34). These "boundaries" were interpreted flexibly by the treaty commission. As long as the tribes remained at peace, they might wander at large, regardless of the boundaries.

The border region from the Powder River east to the Black Hills until this date had in fact hardly been utilized by the Indians, despite its rich game resources. The long-standing Sioux-Crow war had resulted in the region's becoming a debatable area in which no camp dared stay long. Such so-called "Neutral Grounds" were common on the edges of the Sioux domain; but the Powder-Belle Fourche Country in the period 1851-1857 was unique in being a truly neutral area. Here Miniconjou and Crow camps met in true amity, associating with one another in intertribal trade, social visits, and festivities.

Both the Miniconjou and the Crow had sound reasons to effect a mutual peace and establish a joint-use zone with a frontage on the North Platte. Their reasons, although differing, were complementary. For the Miniconjou game was the primary factor. For well over a decade the buffalo herds in their own country east of the Black Hills had been thinning almost to extinction; they needed rich new hunting grounds. In 1847 they had made peace with the Arikara Indians and were granted free use of lands claimed by the latter tribe on the upper Little Missouri River immediately northwest of the Black Hills.¹⁰ Here the Miniconjou were on the edge of Absaraka, the home of the Crow, a land teeming with buffalo and other game. Thus, for the Miniconjou the peace with the Crow was the logical outcome of their advance to the Little Missouri. Unthreatened by any enemies, they could now advance southwestward along the valley of the Belle Fourche into an Indian paradise of rich game country (see map).

The Crow's problem in 1851 was not game; their homelands, from the Powder to the upper Missouri, were the richest hunting grounds on the high plains. For the Crow the advantage of the Miniconjou peace was the opening to safe travel of the trading posts on the upper North Platte. Their traditional trading base was along the Yellowstone River, but by the 1850s trade there had become erratic and highly dangerous. Blackfeet Indian raiders infested the Yellowstone Valley, stealing horses and killing stragglers, red and white.

Consequently, traders were reluctant to venture up the river and the major Crow trading posts were periodically abandoned, while the Crow themselves found the long journey to Fort Union at the Yellowstone mouth unconscionably hazardous.¹¹

The creation of the joint-use zone west of the Black Hills permitted Crow access to trading posts on the upper North Platte hitherto frequented only by the Sioux and their Cheyenne and Arapaho allies. Here, at posts such as Joseph Bissonette's and John Richard's, Crow could safely trade their ample supplies of buffalo robes for the necessities (guns and metal tools and weapons) and the luxuries (blankets, paints, and trinkets) of Plains Indian life. By 1855 two well-beaten trails ran from the Crow's Yellowstone heartland to the North Platte, one terminating at the Richard post and one near Bissonette's (see map).¹²

Principal among the Crow bands to utilize the joint-use zone was the camp of Big Robber. This camp was to be found after 1851 within reach of the North Platte throughout the year. During the summer it subsidized its livelihood by begging from emigrant trains along the Overland Trail. In winter it was joined by other camps of Mountain Crow, spending the cold season at the head of Powder River. Here, probably at the mouth of Salt Creek, traders from the North Platte established a winter branch post for the Crow trade.¹³

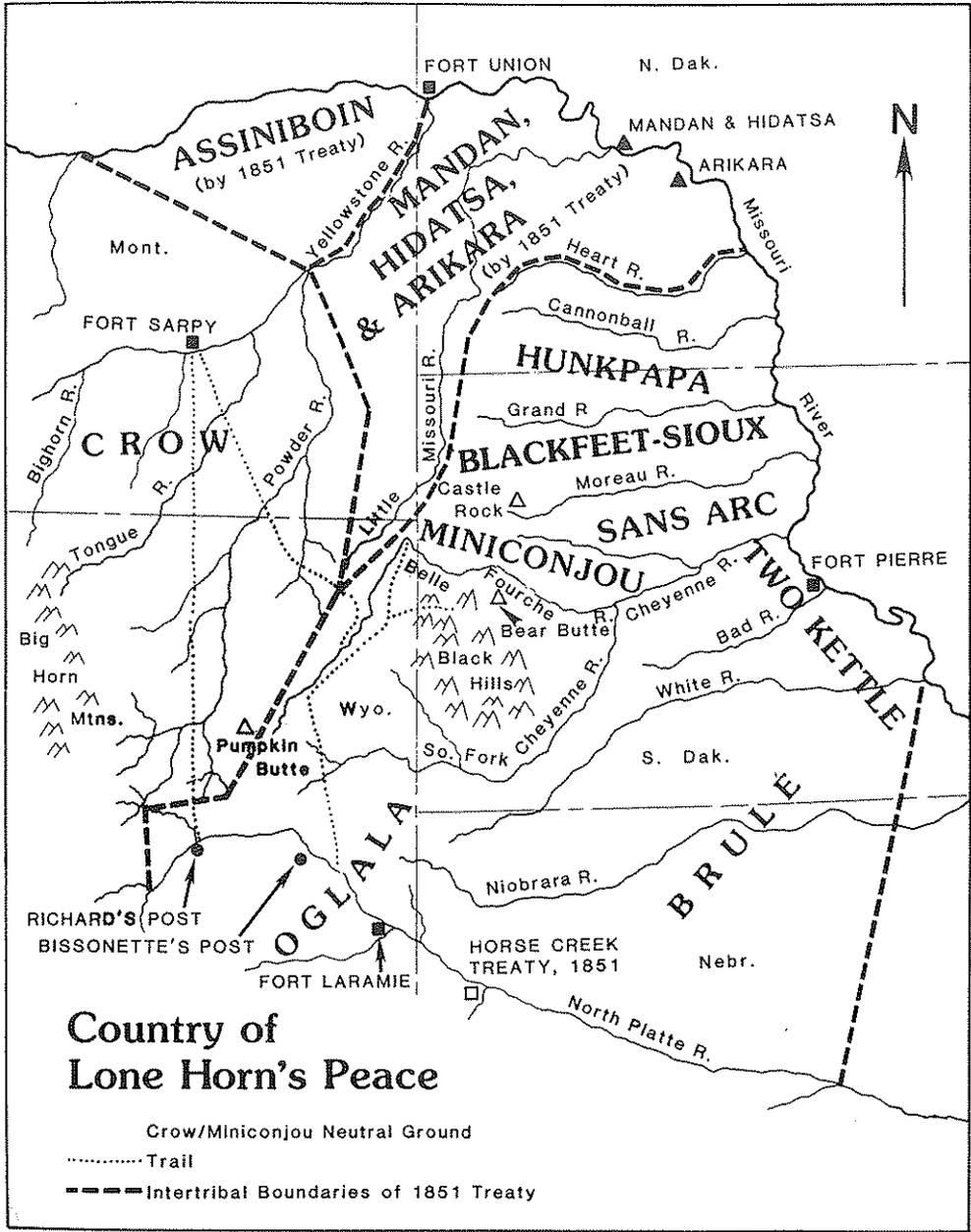
Just as Big Robber's camp most comprehensively exploited the joint use zone for the Crow, one division of the Miniconjou was particularly involved in fostering the Crow peace. This was the group styled the "Upper Band" of Miniconjou by Agent T. S. Twiss in 1856, distinguishing it from those Miniconjou bands that kept largely to their old lands east of the Black Hills. The largest camp of this group was the Flying River Band led by Red Fish and after 1854 by Lone Horn. Other Miniconjou camps, including those of Lame Deer (Lone Horn's elder brother), Flying By, Black Shield, Shoots Bear Running, and Fire Thunder, also utilized the Neutral Ground.¹⁴

The first Miniconjou venture into the Neutral Ground was in the summer of 1852. After wintering at present Castle Rock, South Dakota, Red Fish led his followers southwest around the Black Hills and into the joint-use zone. It is likely that his was

the large Sioux camp met by emigrants on the Sweetwater River, far west of the undisputed Sioux range, in July, 1852.¹⁵ The Miniconjou enjoyed a prosperous and peaceful summer and were still on the Neutral Ground in the fall, when an early snowstorm struck the plains. A small party of Nez Perce Indians blundered into the village at the height of the blizzard. The Miniconjou warriors sprang to arms, and the Nez Perce took refuge in the lodge of Lone Horn (now returned from Washington), where a council was in progress. The Nez Perce leader thrust the pipe of friendship at Lone Horn, who accepted it and so saved the Nez Perce's lives.¹⁶ The incident emphasizes the depth of sincerity implicit in the Crow-Miniconjou peace, for the Nez Perce, who frequently wintered with their Crow allies, had not been represented at the Treaty of 1851. For the Miniconjou the pledges of goodwill made at the treaty had not been the empty rhetoric claimed by modern historians.

Later in the fall of 1852, Red Fish and Lone Horn led their camps back eastward to wintering grounds near the Missouri.¹⁷ The move proved ill-advised, for all the Sioux east of the Black Hills put in a hungry winter with no meat. The cold season proved uncommonly severe. Many horses died, and the camps were unable to move west to the buffalo country. By summer, 1853, the Miniconjou and their neighbors were living off wild fruits and prairie turnips—poor commons for the proud Sioux.¹⁸ After the winter of 1852-1853 the Upper Miniconjou gave up the old practice of wintering near the Missouri; instead they spent seven or eight months of the year (September to April) in the joint-use zone, and wintered on the upper Belle Fourche.

In the fall of 1853, Red Fish and Lone Horn left the Missouri and again went around the northern flank of the Black Hills into the Neutral Ground. The notable event of the winter there was a visit by John Richard, who brought with him a fine stock of gaudily striped "Spanish" blankets.¹⁹ Richard operated a toll bridge across the North Platte at modern Casper during summer, but when the emigrant season ended in August he went back to his first vocation—Indian trader *sans-pareil*. Richard may have utilized Pumpkin Buttes as the base for his winter operations among the Miniconjou; there, he and his customers were within a day's travel of the Crow



ASSINIBOIN
(by 1851 Treaty)

**MANDAN,
HIDATSA,
& ARIKARA**
(by 1851 Treaty)

HUNKPAPA

BLACKFEET-SIOUX

SANS ARC

MINICONJOU

TWO KETTLE

OGLALA

BRULE

Country of Lone Horn's Peace

Crow/Mniconjou Neutral Ground

..... Trail

--- Intertribal Boundaries of 1851 Treaty

FORT UNION

N. Dak.

MANDAN & HIDATSA

ARIKARA

Mont.

FORT SARYP

CROW

Cannonball R.

Grand R.

Castle Rock

Moreau R.

Little R.

SANS ARC

MINICONJOU

FORT PIERRE

Big Horn Mtns.

Pumpkin Butte

Wyo.

Belle Fourche R.
Bear Butte
Black Hills
So. Fork Cheyenne R.

S. Dak.

RICHARD'S POST
BISSONETTE'S POST

FORT LARAMIE

HORSE CREEK TREATY, 1851

Nebr.

Niobrara R.

North Platte R.



camps wintering near the Salt Creek post. Parties of Crow and Miniconjou spent the winter exchanging lengthy social visits and lavish amounts of presents.²⁰ With the Mountain Crow regularly wintering on the upper Powder and the Miniconjou just eastward on the head of the Belle Fourche trading, visiting, and feasting together, the intertribal agreements of 1851 cannot be simply written off as empty formalities.

So far, we have been studying the relatively limited consequences of the truce for relatively small numbers of Sioux and Crow. What of the wider picture of Sioux-Crow relations in the early 1850s? The attitude of the other Teton divisions toward the Crow-Miniconjou peace has gone unrecorded, but can be reconstructed in some detail. The Brule Sioux doubtless agreed in principle with the peace; they were remote from the Crow, and their main martial interest was a war with the Pawnee (unrepresented at the 1851 Treaty). The Two Kettles Sioux were also remote from the Crow country, and their reputation as tractable, peace-loving people who rarely went to war²¹ indicates that they too abided by the spirit of the peace.

Of the other Teton the Oglala were in the throes of an anarchic political situation; their warriors often flouted the wishes of peaceful chiefs, and one Oglala raid against the Crow at this period has been documented in Cheyenne tradition.²² However, the weight of evidence does indicate that the Oglala chiefs were trying to maintain amicable relations with the Crow in the years 1851-1857. In 1854, for instance, a Crow was welcomed to the Oglala camp by the great chief Old Man Afraid of His Horse. In the same year or the next, one of the Oglala men's societies underwent a minor modification on a Crow model, implying the friendly contacts were being maintained.²³ As we shall see, in 1856 Oglala chiefs counseled with the Crow in a clear attempt to broaden the scope of the joint-use zone.

Only the northernmost and most intractable of the Teton tribes, the Hunkpapa and Blackfoot Sioux, refused to have anything to do with the Crow peace. They were uninterested in the 1851 Treaty and, unrepresented among its signatories, never lived by its agreements. Throughout the period 1851-1857 Hunkpapa and Blackfoot Sioux raiders harassed the Crow along the lower Yellowstone. The last Teton divi-

sion, the Sans Arc, may have been split over the issue, for one faction of this small tribe seems to have habitually "run with" the Miniconjou and another with the irreconcilable Hunkpapa.²⁴

Another feature of the Crow peace ignored by modern historians was the reopening of the country south of the Platte River to Crow hunters and traders. Before the Sioux and Cheyenne advance into the Platte Country in the period 1825-1835, the Crow had been free to wander down into the Central Plains on long trading journeys. These trips were reciprocated by their old friends the Kiowa, but the Sioux and Cheyenne effectively cut these contacts after 1830.²⁵ Now, with a new peace established, Crow camps began to venture again beyond the South Platte. In 1853, again in 1854, and possibly in other years, Crow are known to have been living on the Central Plains on friendly terms with Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa and Comanche, and joining with these tribes in wars against the Pawnee.²⁶

Thus, while the Sioux-Crow peace was most productive for, and diligently fostered by, the limited numbers exploiting the joint-use zone west of the Black Hills, its implications were felt throughout the plains from the Arkansas River to the Yellowstone. Its very real advantages for safe hunting and trading made it work, and by 1856 growing numbers of Indians were utilizing the Neutral Ground. Fully two-thirds of the Crow tribe—evidently the Mountain Crow bands—were regularly crossing the joint-use zone to trade on the North Platte. One of their trails crossed the Belle Fourche near present Moorcroft, Wyoming, and followed the river up to its head before cutting south to the Overland Trail.²⁷ Along this stretch of the Belle Fourche, the Crow could expect to meet their Miniconjou friends at any time from autumn to spring.

So secure were Crow relations with the southern Teton divisions that in 1856, to avoid the Blackfeet menace on the Yellowstone, the Crow treaty annuities were recommended to be distributed at Fort Laramie.²⁸ Later in the same year Upper Platte Indian Agent Twiss recommended the establishment of a series of sub-agencies, near the various tribes' wintering grounds. For the Crow, Shoshoni and Upper Miniconjou he advocated an agency at Richard's Upper Platte Bridge.²⁹ Even if Twiss' reasoning was colored by his own illicit trading ac-

tivities, his recommendation still demonstrates the continuing success of the Miniconjou-Crow peace as late as the winter of 1856-1857—and indicates that by that date Lone Horn had effected a truce with the Shoshoni too. But by the time he wrote, clouds had drawn over the spirit of amity in the country west of the Black Hills, and the experiment in peace was about to be briskly cut short.

The delicate balance established in the Neutral Ground was first threatened by events at Fort Laramie in August, 1854. Long-mounting tension between the Oglala and Brule Sioux and the US military presence on the Overland Trail was brought to a head in an ugly skirmish after an emigrant cow was butchered by hungry Indians. The Brule head chief and 30 soldiers were killed, and the Indians fled north of the Platte. Man Afraid of His Horse led the Oglala into the joint-use zone on their autumn hunt, where they seem to have met Lone Horn beating southward up the Belle Fourche. The Grattan Fight of 1854 and the troubles of the following year culminating in the destruction of a Brule camp by General Harney, impressed upon the Oglala the need to shift into new hunting grounds remote from the Overland Trail. For the bands comprising the Smoke People faction of Oglala, led by Man Afraid of His Horse, whose hunting grounds lay between the North Platte and the upper South Fork of Cheyenne River, the obvious answer was to move northwestward into the Neutral Ground. To this end, the Smoke People Oglala wintered in 1854-1855, and again in 1855-1856, near the Upper Miniconjou.³⁰ Man Afraid and Lone Horn were both moderate men committed to maintaining friendly relations with the Americans, and it is likely that they came to quick agreement over Oglala use of the Neutral Ground.

The major obstacle to any projected Oglala use of the region, however, remained Crow opinion. How would the Crow react to a proposal to extend the scope of their agreement with the Miniconjou? Our admittedly meagre evidence clearly indicates that Man Afraid of His Horse entered into formal negotiations with the Crow chiefs. One group of Oglala winter counts gives 1856 as the year the Oglala counseled with the Crow.³¹ The councils doubtless took place in summer at the Crow tribal camp on the Big Horn River, near the present Wyoming-Montana border.³² The leading Crow chiefs—Two

Face, Bear's Head, and Big Robber—met Man Afraid of His Horse and his headmen in what must have been earnest, protracted councils. The winter counts do not record the outcome of the debate, but statements made by Cheyenne Indians to Colonel H. B. Carrington a decade later (when the Sioux and Cheyenne had overrun the old Crow country) do seem to report the council's results.

Carrington asked the Cheyenne chiefs:

"This country is called Absaraka, the home of the Crows. Why do the Sioux and Cheyennes claim land which belongs to the Crows?"

The Cheyenne response was:

"We stole the hunting grounds of the Crows because they were the best. The white man is along the great waters [i.e., the Missouri and Platte Rivers], and we wanted more room. *We fight the Crows because they will not take half and give us peace with the other half.*"³³

This crucial statement clearly refers to events which took place in the decade after 1856. After an Oglala-Cheyenne victory over the Crow in c. 1820, relations between the Crow and their enemies had stabilized; while raiding continued, the major thrust of the Sioux migration was south, toward the North Platte and beyond. The intertribal agreements of 1851 had served to consolidate the security of Crow and Sioux-Cheyenne lands. The Cheyenne statement can only refer to events after 1856, when the tribes of the upper Platte country needed new hunting grounds remote from white travel. Therefore, we can state with confidence that the Crow response to Man Afraid of His Horse's embassy was a firm "no" to any extension of the joint-use zone for the accommodation of the Oglala. If the Oglala remained determined to utilize the country west of their old ranges, war with the Crow was the only solution.

In other areas of the Sioux domain, events were hastening toward the collapse of the Crow peace. The year 1856 was crucial for all the Teton Sioux. A sense of the need for Teton solidarity *vis-a-vis* American encroachments on their lands was sweeping the Sioux camps. In early spring of 1856, General William S. Harney had summoned the Teton chiefs to counsel with him on the Missouri at Fort Pierre. He had taken a high hand with the chiefs, browbeating them over the troubles with the military in 1854-1855. Their tempers badly frayed by the Soldier Chief Who Swears, the chiefs left Fort Pierre in stormy mood and certain that a concerted Teton

policy towards the whites must be promptly formulated. In the summer of 1856, even as Man Afraid of His Horse was conducting his abortive negotiations with the Crow, a formal pipe was sent out to all the Teton camps. The redoubtable Oglala warrior Red Cloud was one of the envoys, bearing a summons for all the Teton Sioux to meet the next summer, 1857, at Bear Butte on the northeastern edge of the Black Hills. There decisions would be reached on the critical matter of future Sioux policy regarding the United States.³⁴

Sioux opinion was hardening everywhere against the white man. The chiefs of those Sioux east and south of the Black Hills—Lone Horn, Man Afraid of His Horse, Little Thunder (Brule), and Crow Feather (Sans Arc)—were moderates. Although committed to maintaining the old nomadic life of their people, they were intensely aware of the overwhelming might of the United States. In Washington in 1851, Lone Horn had visited the Navy Yard and been sobered as he was shown foundries, steam engines, and great 64-pounder cannons. He had been convinced that his people must remain on good terms with the Americans, for war could end only in disaster.³⁵

Among the northern Teton, however, the situation was very different. The Hunkpapa and Blackfeet Sioux were the most conservative and intractable of the Teton divisions. As early as the 1830s Little Bear, the Hunkpapa headchief, had formulated a thoroughly isolationist policy as regards the whites. Alone of all the Teton chiefs, he had seen how closely the links of trade bound the Sioux to commercial and expansionist interests in the United States, and had advocated that the Sioux cut off all trade with the white man. As recently as 1853, the aging Little Bear had ordered his *akicita* police to destroy traders' property and send them packing back to the Missouri.³⁶

Neither were the Hunkpapa and Blackfeet Sioux happy with the annuities due them under the terms of the 1851 Treaty. They were convinced that the annuities were construed by the government as committing the Sioux to future cessions of land. Consequently, only lengthy persuasive harangues could sway the chiefs to acknowledge receipt of the annuity goods. In 1854 the chiefs did not deign to so much as attend the distribution; and in 1855 wild Hunkpapa and Blackfeet warriors had destroyed the annuities before the dismayed eyes of

Agent A. D. Vaughan.³⁷

By the following year the intransigent attitude of these northern Tetons was infecting the southern and traditionally more tractable divisions. After the Harney campaign of 1855, an Oglala camp (perhaps the Short Hair Band of chief Iron Wing) and one of Brule (probably the Wazhazha camp that settled permanently with the Blackfeet Sioux), fled north from the Platte country to winter with the northern Teton.³⁸

An event pregnant with significance for Teton politics occurred later in 1856. A camp of the very wildest of the Hunkpapa came south and visited the moderate Upper Miniconjou. In an important prelude to the planned pan-Teton council, the Hunkpapa chief Four Horns—the head and front of anti-American Hunkpapa opinion—was selected after much political infighting to officiate in the *Hunka*, a ceremony of ritual adoption. Four Horns chose to adopt two brothers of Lone Horn—now the Miniconjou head chief—Lame Deer (alias Elk that Bellows Walking) and Red Anus.³⁹

This ritual was resonant with implications for the Hunkpapa and Miniconjou. It was clearly a carefully considered, politically inspired mechanism to bind closer together the interests of the moderate Upper Miniconjou and the intractable Hunkpapa bands. Normally, the *hunka* rite involved an adult adopting a child into a relationship considered closer even than blood ties. But Four Horns, some 56 years old, was only a decade or so older than his new “son,” Lame Deer, himself already a Miniconjou chief. Patently, the 1856 *hunka* was a deliberate exercise in Teton *real-politik*. Its purpose was to foster the pan-Teton spirit sweeping the Sioux camps that year, to dramatically express the need for Teton solidarity in the face of the growing American presence in Sioux country.

Four Horns' adoption of Lone Horn's brothers was significant, too, in the sphere of intertribal relations. *Hunka* relatives were expected to aid one another in all war enterprises. For the Hunkpapa, the main arena of war was still the Crow country. It need not surprise us that within two years of the *hunka* ceremony, Lame Deer was running with the very wildest of the Hunkpapa and aiding them in their wars against the Crow.⁴⁰

Thus, likely with reluctance, was Lone Horn drawn into the

inflexible Hunkpapa sphere of influence. As he led his camps around the western edge of the Black Hills once more in the fall of 1856, he may well have realized that this would be the last peaceful winter his people would spend on the neutral ground. The winter camp was established once again on the head of the Belle Fourche, with the Mountain Crow just west on the Powder. For a while it may have seemed like old times, but in November came a reminder of the harsh issues to be debated at Bear Butte the next summer. A small camp of Northern Cheyenne was sent by Agent Twiss to winter with the Miniconjou and Crow.⁴¹

From the Cheyenne headmen, Lone Horn would have heard the dismal tale of their troubles with the military and the emigrants this past summer—a rerun of the Sioux conflict of 1854-1855. The Cheyenne story would be grist for the mill of the irreconcilable elements of Sioux opinion next summer—and a further plank for the platform of those Sioux calling for expansion into the remote Crow country with or without Crow consent.

By winter's end the tensions in Lone Horn's camp had been twisted to breaking point. Given the volatile politics of a Sioux camp, Lone Horn's achievement in engineering and maintaining the Crow peace between peoples who had been implacable enemies for generations evinces a political acumen, breadth of vision, and diplomatic skill rare among any people in any age. His task was no easy one; and the peace must frequently have been threatened by wild warriors eager for coups, scalps, and horses. Lone Horn had *akicita* police to enforce his council's decisions, but the Sioux considered it impolitic to deploy *akicita* against fellow-tribesmen bent on raiding enemies—even former enemies like the Crow. Instead Lone Horn and his headmen had to personally negotiate with trouble-makers, dissuading them from the warpath with lavish presents of horses and guns.⁴²

The winter of 1856-1857 passed peacefully on the neutral ground, but the undercurrents of dissension and violence in the Miniconjou camp, sublimated by the strength of Lone Horn's leadership, were ready to break to the surface. The end came suddenly. One spring day, as the camp was about to break and start up the trail east of the Black Hills, a party of Crow came over from the Powder River. The Crow had

women along; they expected no trouble. The Miniconjou turned out to greet them; then a wild young warrior named White Robe appeared, carrying a strung bow. A Crow woman wearing one of John Richard's Spanish blankets made a bright, conspicuous target, and White Robe shot four arrows into her body.⁴³ At this outrage the *akicita* evidently intervened, for there was no more violence and the other Crow were able to return home unharmed. But the six-year peace had died with the Crow woman, and Lone Horn's work was undone.

As the Teton camps gathered at Bear Butte in midsummer, 1857, Lone Horn and the other moderate chiefs probably viewed the proceedings with mixed feelings. From the beginning the councils were dominated by the angry voices of the northern Teton chiefs and warriors. The moderate chiefs doubtless argued against extremist action, but their stance was undercut by the intransigence infecting their own followings. Thus Lone Horn's own brothers may have been swayed by the intractable Four Horns, their *hunka* father, whose authority might outweigh even the claims of blood. Man Afraid of His Horse's head-*akicita* Red Cloud, to judge from his later career and his role in arranging the council, stood against the moderate position of his own chief. Only in rare instances were Teton chiefs despots; the moderate chiefs could not flout the powerful warrior lobby in their camps, and it was a truism of Sioux politics that peaceful chiefs could not overrule a warlike *akicita*.⁴⁴

At the end of the great council, the moderate chiefs joined with the extremists in smoking a formal pipe, pledging themselves to a series of resolutions on future Teton policy toward both the United States and neighboring tribes.

From Teton statements made immediately after the Bear Butte Council, those resolutions can be reconstructed in some detail.⁴⁵ The major decisions were to preserve the integrity of existing Teton lands from any further encroachments made by white men or other Indian tribes; and to extend the boundaries of the Teton domain into lands more rich in game and more remote from the avenues of American commerce.

To this end, a series of resolutions was agreed upon:

1. All white men must be excluded from Teton lands north of the North Platte and west of the Missouri except for traders who would be allowed to maintain their old posts and travel their old trails.

2. No emigrant or military roads would be allowed to cross the Teton domain.

3. If Americans other than traders did enter the Sioux country, they would be "whipped out."

4. The Yankton Sioux, who were considering a cession of their lands east of the Missouri, would be similarly expelled if they intruded on Teton lands.

5. War would be made upon the Crow to appropriate the rich game lands west of Powder River.

A second set of resolutions was hammered out on the problematic issue of treaty annuities. The original northern Teton motion was perhaps that in future the Sioux would refuse all annuities guaranteed under the Treaty of 1851; but more moderate voices seem to have forced through some important qualifications to this position.

Thus, the resolutions regarding annuities received final expression in this form:

No treaty annuities would be acceptable to the Tetons if the US government construed them as binding upon the Sioux to:

1. Countenance cessions of Teton land.

2. Acknowledge legitimacy of Yankton Sioux land cessions east of the Missouri.

3. Allow Americans other than traders to occupy or cross the Teton domain.

4. Maintain friendly relations with the Crow.

As the great Teton camp circle broke up in August, 1857, it was clear that the six years of peace between the southern Teton and the Crow had come to an end; White Robe's atrocity apart, Bear Butte had made the long truce and the Neutral Ground dead letters. To emphasize the point, about half the Hunkpapa and Blackfeet Sioux followed the Upper Miniconjou on their autumn beat around the Black Hills. While this big camp settled in near Inyan Kara Mountain for the fall buffalo hunt, a small party of Army Topographical Engineers led by Lieutenant Gouverneur K. Warren appeared from the south to inadvertently test the Bear Butte resolutions. Hardline Hunkpapa and the wilder warriors were for killing Warren's party, but the Miniconjou chiefs succeeded in swaying the council to more pragmatic action, and Warren was warned out of the country in unambiguous terms. On the matter of the Crow, however, there was to be no compromise. In a council

with the new Hunkpapa head-chief Bear Ribs, Warren was told that under no circumstances would the Sioux make another peace with the Crow.⁴⁶

Later in the year the Bear Butte resolutions were served notice upon the Crow. A mixed Oglala-Miniconjou war party led by Red Cloud cornered 10 Crow at Castle Rock and killed them all.⁴⁷ The Crow were not slow to reply in kind. In 1857-1858 the Upper Miniconjou and an Oglala camp wintered together on the Belle Fourche in the Devil's Tower region. To this village came Crow horse thieves, announcing that for their tribe too the Miniconjou peace was at an end.⁴⁸ From the winter of 1857-1858 on, war would be once more the natural state of affairs between all Crow and all Teton Sioux.

The raiding season of 1858 saw the beginning of the concerted Teton advance into the Crow country. Oglala pushed northwestward beyond the upper Powder and into the Wind River Country; Miniconjou struck westward across the middle course of the Powder; Hunkpapa and Blackfeet Sioux advanced toward the lower Powder. In this first year of concerted aggression, the Crow chief Big Robber, instrumental in establishing the old Neutral Ground, was killed with 30 of his warriors by the Sioux.⁴⁹

The Crow themselves were not idle. In August of 1858, Crow raiders stole a large herd of Sioux horses at the Upper Platte Agency; and traders working among them this same year heard Crow warriors boast of the Sioux they had recently killed.⁵⁰ But the war's outcome was a foregone conclusion. The Crow, facing Blackfeet raiders from the northwest as well as Sioux aggression, could not hold out against the overwhelming force of the Sioux and their Cheyenne and Arapaho allies. By large campaigns and little raids the Sioux made *Absaraka* untenable for its native occupants. At the end of 1859, after only two raiding seasons, the Crow had withdrawn into the fastnesses of the Big Horns. Early in 1860 they fled north to the upper Missouri River, never to reoccupy the country south of the Yellowstone and east of the Bighorn Rivers.⁵¹

The Powder River Country became briefly undisputed Sioux territory. Almost immediately, however, the conquerors found their newly won lands threatened by new American advances into their domain. For a decade and a half *Absaraka* became the theater for the final conflicts between an ad-

vancing industrial civilization and those militant Sioux who longest upheld the spirit of the resolutions formulated at Bear Butte in the summer of 1857.

NOTES

1. George E. Hyde, *Red Cloud's Folk: A History of the Oglala Sioux Indians* (Norman, 1957), p. 65 *et seq.* epitomizes historical thinking to date on the intertribal consequences of the Treaty of 1851.
2. Edwin Thompson Denig, *Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri: Sioux, Arickaras, Assiniboines, Crees, Crows*, ed. John C. Ewers (Norman, 1961), p. 19.
3. *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (hereafter cited as CIA AR), 1851, pp. 324-26, 332-37.
4. D. D. Mitchell to CIA, Nov. 11, 1851, National Archives & Records Service, Record Group 75 (hereafter cited as NARS RG 75).
5. Edwin Thompson Denig, "Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri," ed. J. N. B. Hewitt, Bureau of American Ethnology 46th *Annual Report* (hereafter cited as BAE AR), 1928-1929 (Washington, 1930), p. 440; Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, pp. 93, 195, 199.
6. Winter Counts of Flame, Lone Dog, Swan, "Major Bush," and Black Bear, in Garrick Mallery, "Pictographs of the North American Indians," BAE 4th AR, 1882-1883 (Washington, 1886), pp. 120-121.
7. Washington *Daily National Intelligencer*, Jan. 7, 1852; Flame, *et al.*, Winter counts, Mallery, "Pictographs," p. 123.
8. Hiram Martin Chittenden & Alfred Talbot Richardson, *Life, Letters, and Travels of Father Pierre-Jean DeSmet, S.J.* (New York, 1905), Vol. II, p. 631; statement of Red Fish in Agnes Wright Spring, *Caspar Collins* (New York, 1927), pp. 174-181.
9. Flame, *et al.* Winter Counts, Mallery, "Pictographs," p. 118.
10. Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, p. 25; cf. Louis Pfaller, *Father DeSmet, in Dakota* (Richardton, 1962), p. 30.
11. Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, pp. 200-204 & fns.
12. Map of Lt. G. K. Warren, in F. V. Hayden, "Contributions to the Ethnography and Philology of the Indian Tribes of the Missouri Valley," *American Philosophical Society Transactions*, Vol. XII, No. 2 (Philadelphia, 1862); James A. Hanson, letter to the author, August 7, 1983.
13. Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, pp. 203-204. James A. Hanson, letter cited, drew my attention to the Salt Creek Post.
14. T. S. Twiss to CIA, Sept. 22, 1856, NARS RG 75; Hayden, "Contributions," pp. 375-376; Lt. G. K. Warren MS Journal, Sept., 1857, quoted to author by James A. Hanson, letter cited.
15. For Red Fish's wintering ground, see Winter Counts of the Swift Dog Group, in James H. Howard, "Dakota Winter Counts as a Source of Plains History," BAE *Bulletin* 173 (Washington, 1960), p. 381; Alexis Praus, "The Sioux, 1798-1922: A Dakota Winter Count," Cranbrook Institute of Science, *Bulletin* No. 44 (Bloomfield Hills, 1962), p. 17. See also Harry H. Anderson, "From Milwaukee to the California Gold Fields," *Chicago Westerners' Brand Book*, Vol. XXVI, No. 8, Oct. 1969, pp. 58-59.
16. Flame, *et al.* Winter Counts, Mallery, "Pictographs," p. 121.
17. Praus, "Winter Count," p. 18; Howard, "Dakota Winter Counts," p. 382.
18. A. D. Vaughan to CIA, Sept. 20, 1853, CIA AR 1853, 353 *et seq.*
19. Flame, *et al.* Winter Counts, Mallery, "Pictographs," p. 121; White Bull Winter Count, in James H. Howard, *The Warrior Who Killed Custer: The Personal Narrative of Chief Joseph White Bull* (Lincoln, 1968), pp. 18-19. where "Jar" is to be identified with "Richard."

20. The Crow "Have peace with...some bands of Sioux with whom they occasionally reside and exchange presents." See Denig in 1856, Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, p. 194. The sources cited throughout this paper clearly demonstrate that the identity of these Sioux was Miniconjou.

21. Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, pp. 28-29.

22. Red Cherries to George Bird Grinnell, in Peter John Powell, *People of the Sacred Mountain: A History of the Northern Cheyenne Chiefs and Warrior Societies, 1830-1879, With an Epilogue, 1969-1974* (San Francisco, 1981), pp. 169-171.

23. Man Afraid of His Horse, "Narrative of Particulars of Affair of 19th Aug. last by the Man who is Afraid of his Horses," accessioned in Dept. of the West, Feb. 13, 1855, NARS; Clark Wissler, "Societies and Ceremonial Associations in the Oglala Division of the Teton-Dakota," *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. XI, Part I (New York, 1912), p. 47.

24. On the irreconcilable northern Tetons, see Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, pp. 25-28; A. D. Vaughan to CIA, Oct. 19, 1854, NARS RG 75; Vaughan to CIA, Sept. 12, 1855, NARS RG 75. The two Vaughan reports are printed in the CIA AR for the appropriate years.

25. James Mooney, "Calendar History of the Kiowa Indians," BAE 17th AR, 1895-1896 (Washington, 1898, reprinted 1979), pp. 155-156, 271; George Bird Grinnell, *The Fighting Cheyennes* (Norman, 1956), pp. 32-34.

26. Grinnell, *Fighting Cheyennes*, pp. 84-85, 103. Withholding petty raids, the Cheyenne seem to have respected the truce with the Crow in 1851-57. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 7.

27. Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, p. 203; Warren map in Hayden, "Contributions"; James A. Hanson, letter to the author, Aug. 7, 1983.

28. Supt. A. Cumming, annual report to CIA, in CIA AR 1856.

29. T. S. Twiss to CIA, Sept. 22, 1856, NARS RG 75.

30. George E. Hyde, *Spotted Tail's Folk: A History of the Brule Sioux* (Norman, 1974), p. 68; *Reminiscences of L. B. Dougherty*, in *Missouri Historical Review*, July, 1930 (with corrected dating); Lloyd E. McCann, "The Grattan Massacre," *Nebraska History*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (March 1956), pp. 1-25.

31. Ben Kindle Winter Count, in Frederick W. Turner III, ed., *The Portable North American Indian Reader* (Harmondsworth & New York, 1977), p. 150. Related Counts are numerous; for a handy summary see James R. Walker, *Lakota Society*, ed. Raymond J. DeMallie (Lincoln, 1982), pp. 117-120.

32. A. D. Vaughan to CIA, Sept. 10, 1856, CIA AR 1856, p. 80.

33. Grace R. Hebard & E. A. Brininstool, *The Bozeman Trail* (Cleveland, 1922), Vol. I, p. 264.

34. Susan Bordeaux Bettelyoun, "Conditions From 1854 Until 1868," Bettelyoun MSS, Nebraska State Historical Society, microfilm, outlines Red Cloud's role; Hyde, *Red Cloud's Folk*, pp. 81-82; Mari Sandoz, *Crazy Horse, the Strange Man of the Oglalas* (New York, 1942), pp. 87-89, are good general overviews. See also Sir Richard Burton, *The City of the Saints, and Across the Rocky Mountains to California*, ed. Fawn M. Brodie (London, 1964), p. 112.

35. Washington *Daily National Intelligencer*, Dec. 13, 1851.

36. Edmund C. Bray and Martha Coleman Bray, eds., *Joseph N. Nicollet on the Plains and Prairies: The Expeditions of 1838-1839, With Journals, Letters, and Notes on the Dakota Indians* (St. Paul, 1976), p. 261; Denig, *Five Indian Tribes*, pp. 26-27.

37. A. D. Vaughan to CIA, Sept. 20, 1853, Oct. 19, 1854, Sept. 29, 1855, NARS RG 75.

38. Susan Bordeaux Bettelyoun, "Battle of Ash Hollow—First Account," Bettelyoun MSS; Hayden, "Contributions" p. 376 (where "Iron Arm" should be translated "Iron Wing"); "Proceedings of a council held at Fort Pierre by General Harney with nine tribes of Sioux Indians" (March, 1856), in 14th Congress, 1st Session, Ex. Doc. No. 94, p. 25; J. O. Dorsey, "Siouan Sociology," BAE 15th AR, 1893-1894 (Washington, 1897), pp. 215-221.

39. Flame, *et al.* Winter Counts, Mallery, "Pictographs," p. 122; Stanley Vestal, *Sitting Bull, Champion of the Sioux* (Norman, 1957), p. 85; Stanley Vestal, *New Sources of Indian History, 1850-1891: A Miscellany* (Norman, 1934), p. 318.

40. Vestal, *Sitting Bull*, p. 47; on the *hunka* generally, see especially James R. Walker, *Lakota Belief and Ritual*, eds. Raymond J. DeMallie and Elaine A. Jahner (Lincoln, 1980), pp. 193-240.

41. T. S. Twiss to CIA, Sept. 1, 1857, NARS RG 75.

42. Cf. Denig, "Indian Tribes," p. 440.

43. Flame, *et al.* Winter Counts, Mallery, "Pictographs," 122. The spring dating is inferred from the logic of events in 1857.

44. Esther Goldfrank, "Historic Change and Social Character: A Study of the Teton Dakota," *American Anthropologist*, N. S. Vol. XLV, No. 1 (1943), p. 79.

45. Statements made to Agent A. H. Redfield in Redfield to CIA, CIA AR 1857, p. 424; statements made to Lt. G. K. Warren, and quoted from Warren in Doane Robinson, *A History of the Dakota or Sioux Indians* (Minneapolis, 1967, reprint), p. 229. I am also indebted to my friend James A. Hanson for valuable MS material from Warren.

46. Warren, sources cited in fn. 45.

47. William K. Powers, "A Winter Count of the Oglala," *American Indian Tradition, of the Oglala Sioux* (Lincoln, 1967), p. 117.

48. T. S. Twiss to CIA, Sept. 23, 1858, NARS RG 75; and cf. Bad Heart Bull & Blish, *Pictographic History*, pp. 164-165.

49. CIA AR 1858, p. 91. The Bad Face Band of Oglalas wintered on Wind River 1858-1859." See Baptiste Pourier Interview, Tablet 15, E. S. Ricker Papers, Nebraska State Historical Society.

50. T. S. Twiss to CIA, Sept. 23, 1858; William T. Hamilton, "A Trading Expedition Among the Indians in 1858," *Montana Historical Society Contributions*, III (1900), pp. 65-66.

51. Hayden, "Contributions," p. 278; and cf. John Stands in Timer & Margot Liberty, *Cheyenne Memories* (New Haven, 1967), p. 134; Harry H. Anderson, "A Challenge to Brown's Sioux Indian Wars Thesis," *Montana*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Winter 1962), p. 41; Hyde, *Red Cloud's Folk*, pp. 90-92.