

Message to the Sauks and Foxes, 1781*

By Don Francisco Cruzat

MY DEAR CHILDREN THE SAUKS AND FOXES!—I am happy to have seen, in my house, your two principal chiefs, Huisconsin and Mitasse, and I listened to their words, this beautiful and clear day, with much pleasure. I found my ears to hear what they said to me, in the name of all of you.

MY DEAR CHILDREN!—I beg you to listen to my words, in your turn. Open, then, to day, your ears! It is the Master of the World who speaks through my mouth. Look up to the sky! you shall see that it is blue, and that I am not a liar; that I have not a sweetened mouth to deceive you. I talk to you as a good father, who loves his children, and desires to see them happy.

You know your ancient fathers, the French, with whom you have grown up, and come out of the earth, have, in all ages, loved the red complexion, and have harmed them only

*Don Francisco Cruzat was appointed Lieutenant Governor and Civil and Military Commandant of Upper Louisiana in 1775, and was superseded in 1778, by Lieut. Gov. Don Fernando De Leyba; and after the death of the latter, in 1780, Cruzat was a second time appointed Lieut. Governor of Upper Louisiana, and assumed the government the following season, filling that position for several years. This message of Cruzat's to the Sauks and Foxes, in 1781, was never before in print. The original manuscript, in French, with the English translation, have been kindly communicated to the Society by Miss Ursula M. Grignon, of Green Bay, by whom the translation was made; the original was preserved among the old papers of her father, one of the sons of Pierre Grignon, sen'r. It will be observed in Cruzat's message, that one of the Sauk and Fox chiefs, who had paid him a visit, was named Huisconsin—evidently Ouisconsin of French orthography, or Wisconsin of the English. This is the only instance, we believe, of which there is any record that this name, now the appellation of our beloved State, was ever the cognomen of an Indian.