

It appears by Mr. Chevaliers¹ letters that the rebels are too firmly fixed in that important post to hazard my Belt with any prospect of success. I fear however that if they are not routed by some means that the whole Mississippi Trade is knocked up.

The Indians of the little Detroit of Labay The Manomenia Sabris Oumissigoes & Secoux² being arrived and on the point of their departure I present them with a large Belt which I desire may go through the different Villages of the Nations which have been employed by Government and who have been so long protected by His Majesty. Telling them that it is my earnest request that they have not the least connection with the Rebels but keep themselves quietly at home till I can have your answer to this letter which I tell them I expect this fall or so early in the winter and to send amongst them before the rivers are open in the Spring. That should I hear of their having done anything prejudicial to the Traders, or of their having entered into any alliance with the enemy I have in such case taken the precautions to request of you that the passes for the ensuing season may require of every Canoe to wait at the mouth of the French river in Lake Huron for my further instructions so that should they misbehave during the winter they may expect I will send to order every Canoe loads of goods back to Montreal. This threat seems to have great force with the Indians present and with submission I could wish your Excellency would think fit to order it so It will detain Canoes no longer than is absolutely necessary, and it will be the means of their coming up with great confidence that far so as to be ready to furnish the nations with their Wants as usual to prevent the trade taking another turn Provided the traders can be allowed to proceed with prosperity.

¹ Louis Chevalier was a trader who had located at St. Joseph's as early as 1758. During the American operations in the Illinois country, he was regarded by De Peyster as friendly to British interests; but Sinclair, who succeeded De Peyster at Michilimackinac, was of a suspicious turn of mind towards many of the latter's friends, and had Chevalier placed under arrest and sent down to Quebec, as a "suspect." It was found, however, that he could not be held on so slight a pretext.

² Menomonees, Sacs, Winnebagoes and Sioux.— Ed.