

a deputation of those nations, would have proceeded last summer to represent their grievances to the Governor, had he not prevented them. I enclose you a copy of his statement. In addition to this dilemma in which I was placed (of so hazardous a tendency as we must chiefly rely on those Indians for assistance in the hour of trial) I had scarcely any thing to spare for the numerous tribes at Sagana,<sup>1</sup> St. Joseph River, Grand River, & to such of the Kikapoos, Pottewattamies &c, as are inclined to our side, & which doubtless has compelled some of them to apply for that help to the Americans, which I was unable to give. I am convinced that Mr. Dickson's total neglect of these nations, has had no small share in driving such of them into the arms of the Enemy as are now against us. You see how very difficult a card I had to play. Besides as there is not a doubt, but that the Americans availing themselves of their southern climate, & commanding Naval Superiority, will make a great effort to be here before our little Squadron, I leave you to judge of the imperious necessity that existed, that we might not be without ammunition & a small share of other supplies for the Indians that may join us in the Spring, in case such a misfortune should happen. As it is obvious to every one, that our connexion with all the Indian nations depends wholly on our being able to retain this Island, it would have been the height of infatuation & folly to have stripped ourselves of the means of defence—an act for which I never could have been justified or forgiven, & which to give *them* a momentary relief, might have ruined them for ever. If with the supply which was sent with you, they are still in such distress, what would be their horrible fate, if they were cut off from the fountain from which they derive their existence, if thro' any act of childest inadvertence, this Island were endangered or lost?

The idea of being obliged to send your provisions from Michilimackinac would make all below, utterly despair, they entertained strong doubts of being even able to sup-

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<sup>1</sup> Saginaw, Mich.—ED.