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Finley Letters

James B. Finley Letters

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11-10-1827

## Letter from John Woods to James B. Finley

John Woods

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Hamilton Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> 1827  
17th Nov. 1827  
Free Words M.C.

Rev. J. B. Hinley  
Ridgerville  
Warren County  
Ohio

J. Woods

Hamilton Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> 1827

Dear Sir,

When I wrote you a line last spring I hoped to have had a personal acquaintance with you before this time particularly as I wished to gain information on the subject of our Indian relations & policy. I have not enjoyed good health this fall which has prevented me from spending some time in Warren.

I have felt considerable interest in the measures about to be pursued in relation to the Indian tribes. The treaties which are formed every year are but a mockery of the compact formed by independent nations. The Indians are not independent. They know this fact & so do we. The treaties are such as we might expect between parties thus situated - poor miserable dependents under the direction of a few perhaps avaricious, vicious chiefs on the one hand and our Govern



ment acting on the other through agents  
& commissioners who consider it a dis-  
grace & a reproach not to be able  
to make a treaty or to obtain all  
that they think proper to ask. And  
Indian negotiations ~~have~~ been  
and are a reproach and dis-  
grace to the nation.

The system partially adopted  
by the government of aiding the mission  
any establishment is in my opinion  
the only plan of civilizing the Indians  
by teaching them to plow & sow & reap  
& weave & spin at the same time  
that we enlighten their minds.

The power of the chiefs  
should be abridged & while we  
extend our laws over them we  
should elevate them to a partici-  
pation of our rights. Their lands  
should be divided and each indi-  
vidual have his portion secured

to himself & his heirs. Notwithstanding  
the abuse which Crawford sustains  
it will be found that his was the  
only rational plan of civilization.

I hope you will excuse the  
freedom with which I express my  
opinions. I do so that I may have  
an opportunity of receiving more  
correct information if I am wrong  
I will always be pleased to receive  
frequent communications from  
you.

I am yours,  
Respectfully  
John Woods

Res. J. B. Finley }