

### 37 Reply to the U.S. Government

Chief Seattle

Yonder sky that has wept tears of compassion upon my people for centuries untold, and which to us appears changeless and eternal, may change. Today is fair. Tomorrow may be overcast with clouds. My words are like the stars that never change. Whatever Seattle says the great chief at Washington can rely upon with as much certainty as he can upon the return of the sun or the seasons. The White Chief says that Big Chief at Washington sends us greetings of friendship and goodwill. That is kind of him for we know he has little need of our friendship in return. His people are many. They are like the grass that covers vast prairies. My people are few. They resemble the scattering trees of a storm-swept plain. The great, and — I presume — good, White Chief sends us word that he wishes to buy our lands but is willing to allow us enough to live comfortably. This indeed appears just, even generous, for the Red Man no longer has rights that he need respect, and the offer may be wise also, as we are no longer in need of an extensive country. . . . I will not dwell on, nor mourn

西雅圖 (1786~1866) 是德沃米希 (Dwamish) 和蘇國米希 (Suquamish) 等部落的酋長。美國政府要將當地土人驅逐到“保留地”定居。本文是西雅圖在美國政府壓力下的答覆。

### 三十七 給美國政府的答覆

西雅圖酋長

數不盡的世代以來，渺渺蒼天曾為我族灑下多少同情之淚；這在我們看來像是永恆不變的蒼天還是會變的。今天天色晴朗，明天又密佈陰雲。我的說話却像天空的星辰，永遠不變。西雅圖說的話，正如日出東方，季節更迭，華盛頓的大酋長<sup>(1)</sup>可以確信無疑。白人酋長<sup>(2)</sup>說，華盛頓的大酋長向我們友好致意。我們感謝他的好意，因為我們知道他無所求於我們，不用我們以友情回報。他的人民衆多，猶如覆蓋着廣闊原野的青草。我的人民稀少，像風摧雨襲過後平原上稀疏的樹木。那偉大的——我還假定他是善良的——白人酋長<sup>(3)</sup>派遣人告訴我們，願意買下我們的土地，但同時也願意留下適量的土地讓我們舒適生活。這看來確實很公道，甚至很慷慨，因為紅種人已經再也沒有什麼他要尊重的權利了，他出的買價可能也是周到合理的，因為我們現在已經不再需要遼闊的地域。……我不再詳述我們民族過早的衰微，也不再

(1) 指當時的美國總統皮爾斯 (Franklin Pierce, 1804~1869)。  
(2) 指史蒂芬芬斯州長。  
(3) 指美國總統。

over, our untimely decay, nor reproach our paleface brothers with hastening it, as we too may have been somewhat to blame.

Day and night cannot dwell together. The Red man has ever fled the approach of the White Man, as the morning mist flees before the morning sun. However, your proposition seems fair and I think that my people will accept it and will retire to the reservation you offer them. Then we will dwell apart in peace, for the words of the Great White Chief seem to be the words of nature speaking to my people out of dense darkness.

It matters little where we pass the remnant of our days. They will not be many. A few more moons; a few more winters — and not one of the descendants of the mighty hosts that once moved over this broad land or lived in happy homes, protected by the Great Spirit, will remain to mourn over the graves of a people once more powerful and hopeful than yours. But why should I mourn at the untimely fate of my people? Tribe follows tribe, and nation follows nation, like the waves of the sea. It is the order of nature, and regret is useless. Your time of decay may be distant, but it will surely come, for even the White Man whose God walked and talked with him as friend with friend, cannot be exempt from the common destiny. We may be brothers after all. We will see.

We will ponder your proposition, and when we decide we will let you know. But should we accept it,

爲此哀歎，不責備白種兄弟加速了我們的衰敗，因爲我們或許多少也要責怪一下自己。

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白晝與黑夜不能同時在一起。紅種人對白種人從來就是敬而遠之的，就像朝霧在旭日升起前就要消散一樣。然而，你們的建議看來是公道的，我想我的人民會接受建議，退居到你們的保留地。這樣我們就能分處兩地、和平共存，因爲白人大酋長對我人民所說的話，有如大自然從沉沉黑暗中發出來的聲音。

我們在什麼地方度過我們的餘年已經無關重要。我們的來日不多了。再過幾月，再過幾冬，這個民族再也沒有一個後裔留下來在墓前致哀。這原來是一個比你們更強大、更有希望的民族，曾經人數衆多，受大神的庇護，在這廣闊的土地上幸福地安居樂業。但我又何必爲我的民族夭折的命運哀嘆呢？一個部落沒落，另一個部落就會振興，一個民族衰亡，另一個民族便會崛起，像海水一樣，後浪逐前浪。這是自然的法則，悲嘆惋惜是無用的。你們衰落的時間可能還很遙遠，却必定到來，因爲即使是能夠同上帝像朋友一樣親密無間的白人，也不能免於同樣的命運。我們終究會成爲兄弟的，等着瞧吧。

我們會考慮你們的建議，等到我們作出決定就會通知你們。但是如果我們接受這建議，

I here and now make this condition that we will not be denied the privilege without molestation of visiting at any time the tombs of our ancestors, friends and children. Every part of this soil is sacred in the estimation of my people. Every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove, has been hallowed by some sad or happy event in days long vanished. . . . The very dust upon which you now stand responds more lovingly to their footsteps than to yours, because it is rich with the blood of our ancestors and our bare feet are conscious of the sympathetic touch. . . . Even the little children who lived here and rejoiced here for a brief season will love these somber solitudes and at eventide they greet shadowy returning spirits. And when the last Red Man shall have perished, and the memory of my tribe shall have become a myth among the White Men, these shores will swarm with the invisible dead of my tribe, and when your children's children think themselves alone in the field, the store, the shop, upon the highway, or in the silence of the pathless woods, they will not be alone. . . . At night when the streets of your cities and villages are silent and you think them deserted, they will throng with the returning hosts that once filled and still love this beautiful land. The White Man will never be alone.

Let him be just and deal kindly with my people, for the dead are not powerless. Dead, did I say? There is no death, only a change of worlds.

我現在在這裏就要提出一個保留條件：我們隨時有權不受干擾地掃謁我們祖先、朋友和兒女的墳墓。這裏每一寸土地對於我的人民都是神聖的。每一片山坡、每一個河谷、每一塊平原、每一叢小樹都由於往日的哀愁與歡樂而變得無比聖潔。……地上的塵土在他們腳下比在你們腳下更柔軟舒適，因為那上面浸滿了我們祖先的鮮血，我們赤裸的腳板能夠觸之生情。……甚至只是短期在這裏居住、嬉戲過的幼童也會熱愛這陰沉沉的荒地。在暮色降臨之時，他們會迎接那些幽暗朦朧的陰魂歸來。當最後一個紅種人死去，白人對這個部落的回憶已經成為神話之時，我部落的那些看不見的亡靈仍將密密地聚集在這片土地上。當你們的子孫以為他們獨自在田野、倉庫、商店、公路或寂靜的無路可通的森林中時，他們也不是孑然一身。……夜深人靜，你以為城鎮村落闌無一人時，街上將是滿坑滿谷歸來的故主。他們過去曾住在這裏，他們仍然熱愛這塊美麗的土地。白人永遠不會單獨在這裏。

願他公平、正直、善意地對待我的人民，因為死者並沒有失去力量。不，我說的死者並沒有死，只不過到了另一個世界罷了。