**Metacom Relates Indian Complaints about the English Settlers, 1675**

Metacom or King Philip, leader of the Wampanoags near Plymouth colony, led many other Indians into a widespread revolt against the colonists of southern New England in 1675. The conflict had been brewing for some time over a set of longstanding grievances between Europeans and Indians. In that tense atmosphere, John Easton, Attorney General of the Rhode Island colony, met Philip in June of 1675 in an effort to negotiate a settlement. Easton recorded Philip’s complaints, including the steady loss of Wampanoag land to the Europeans; the English colonists’ growing herds of cattle and their destruction of Indian crops; and the unequal justice Indians received in the English courts. This meeting between Easton and Metacom proved futile, however, and the war (which became the bloodiest in U.S. history relative to the size of the population) began late that month.

So Philip kept his Men in Armes. Plimoth Gouverner required him to disband his Men, and informed him his Jealousy was false. Philip answered he would do no Harm, and thanked the Governer for his Information.

The three Indians were hungry, to the last denied the Fact; but one broke the Halter as it is reported, then desired to be saved, and so was a littell while, then confessed they three had dun the Fact; and then he was hanged. And it was reported Saussomon before his death had informed of the Indian Plot, and that if the Indians knew it they wold kill him, and that the Heathen might destroy the English for their Wickedness, as God had permitted the Heathen to destroy the Israellites of olde. So the English were afraid and Philip was afraid, and both increased in Arms. But for forty Yeares Time, Reports and jealosys of War had bin very frequent, that we did not think that now a War was breaking forth; but about a Week before it did, we had Cause to think it would. Then to endeavor to prevent it, we lent a Man to Philip, that is he would come to the Ferry we would come over to speak with him. About four Miles we had to come; thither our Messenger come to them; they not aware of it behaved themselves as furious, but suddenly appeased when they understood who he was and what he came for, he called his Counsell and agreed to come to us; came himself unarmed, and about 40 of his Men armed. Then 5 of us went over, 3 were Magistrates. We sate very friendly together. We told him our business was to endeavor that they might not receive or do Rong. They said that was well; they had dun no Rong, the English ronged them. We said we knew the English said the Indians ronged them, and the Indians said the English ronged them, but our Desire was the Quarrell might rightly be decided, in the best Way, and not as Dogs decided their Quarrells. The Indians owned that fighting was the worst Way; then they propounded how Right might take Place. We said, by Arbitration. They said that all English agreed against them, and so by Arbitration they had had much Rong; many Miles square of Land so taken from them, for English would have English Arbitrators; and once they were persuaded to give in their Armes, that thereby Jealousy might be removed, and the English having their Arms wold not deliver them as they had promised, untill they consented to pay a *1OOpo,*(100 pounds)and now they had not so much Sum or Muny; that they were as good be Idled as leave all their Livelihode.

We said they might chuse a Indian King and the English might chuse the Governor of New Yorke, that nether had Case to say either were Parties in the Differance. They said they had not heard of that Way, and said we honestly spoke, so we were perswaided if that Way had been tendered they would have accepted. We did endeavor not to hear their Complaints, said it was not convenient for us now to consider of, but to endeavor to prevent War; said to them when in War against English, Blood was spilt, that engaged all Englishmen, for we were to be all under one King; we knew what their Complaints wold be, and in our Colony had removed some of them in sending for Indian Rulers in what the Crime concerned Indians Lives, which they very lovingly accepted, and agreed with us to their Execution, and said so they were abell to satisfy their Subjects when they knew an Indian sufered duly, but said in what was only between their Indians and not in Towneships, that we had purchased, they wold not have us prosecute, and that that they had a great Fear to have any of their Indians should be called or forced to be Christian Indians. They said that such were in every thing more mischievous; only Disemblers, and then the English made them not subject to their Kings, and by their lying to rong their Kings. We knew it to be true, and we promising them that however in Government to Indians all should be alike, and that we knew it was our King’s will it should be so, that altho we were weaker than other Colonies, they having submitted to our King to protect them, Others dared, not otherwise to molest them;so they expressed they took that to be well, that we had littell Case to doubt, but that to us under the King they would have yielded to our Determinations in what any should have complained to us against them.

But Philip charged it to be dishonesty in us to put off the Hearing the just Complaints, therefore we consented to hear them. They said thay had bine the first in doing Good to the English, and the English the first in doing Rong; said when the English first came, their King’s Father was as a great Man, and the English as a littell Child; he constrained other Indians from ronging the English, and gave them Corn and shewed them how to plant, and was free to do them any Good, and had let them have a 100 Times more Land than now the King had for his own Peopell. But their King’s Brother, [Massasoit] when he was King, came miserably to die by being forced to Court, as they judge poysoned. And another Greavance was, if 20 of their honest Indians testified that a Englishman had dun them Rong, it was as nothing; and if but one of their worst Indians testified against any Indian or their King, when it pleased the English it was sufficient. Another Grievance was, when their King sold Land, the English would say, it was more than they agreed to, and a Writing must be prove against all them, and some of their Kings had dun Rong to sell so much. He left his Peopell none, and some being given to Drunknes the English made them drunk and then cheated them in Bargains, but now their Kings were forewarned not for to part with Land, for nothing in Comparison to the Value thereof. Now home the English had owned for King or Queen, they would disinheret, and make another King that would give or sell them these Lands; that now, they had no Hopes left to keep any Land. Another Grievance, the English Catell and Horses still increased; that when they removed 30 Miles from where English had any thing to do, they could not keep their Corn from being spoiled, they never being used to fence, and thought when the English bought Land of them they would have kept their Catell upon their owne Land. Another Grievance, the English were so eager to sell the Indians Lickers, that most of the Indians spent all in Drunkness, and then ravened upon the sober Indians, and they did believe often did hurt the English Cattel, and their King could not prevent it. We knew before, these were their grand Complaints, but then we only endeavored to persuaid that all Complaints might be righted without War, but could have no other Answer but that they had not heard of that Way for the Governor of Yorke and an Indian King to have the Hearing of it. We had Cause to think in that had bine tendered it would have bine accepted. We endeavored that however they Should lay down the War, for the English were to strong for them; they said, then the English should do to them as they did when they were too strong for the English.

Source: John Easton, “A Relation of the Indian War” in *A Narrative of the Causes Which Led to Philip’s Indian War* (Albany: J. Munsell, 1858), 5–15.