Chief Minavavana
"Although you have conquered the French, you have not yet conquered us!"

Background: In this address to an English trader named Alexander Henry in 1761, Minavavana, a Chippewa or Ojibwa chief, warns the English that France's defeats during the French and Indian War do not mean that England can assert sovereignty over Indian lands.

Englishman!--You know that the French King is our father. He promised to be such; and we, in return, promised to be his children. This promise we have kept.

Englishman!--It is you that have made war with this our father. You are his enemy; and how then could you have the boldness to venture among us, his children? You know that his enemies are ours....

Englishman!--Although you have conquered the French, you have not yet conquered us! We are not your slaves. These lakes, these woods and mountains, were left to us by our ancestors. They are our inheritance, and we will part with them to none....

Englishman!--Our father, the king of France, employed our young men to make war upon your nation. In this warfare, many of them have been killed; and it is our custom to retaliate, until such time as the spirits of the slain are satisfied. Now the spirits of the slain are to be satisfied in either of two ways. The first is by the spilling of the blood of the nation by which they fell; the other, by covering the bodies of the dead, and thus allaying the resentment of their relations. This is done by making presents.

Englishman!--Your king has never sent us any presents, nor entered into any treaty with us. Wherefore he and we are still at war; and, until he does these things, we must consider that we have no other father, nor friend, among the white men, then the king of France. But, for you, we have taken into consideration, that you have ventured your life among us, in the expectation that we should not molest you. You do not come armed, with an intention to make war. You come in peace, to trade with us, and supply us with necessities, of which we are much in want. We shall regard you, therefore, as a brother; and you may sleep tranquilly, without fear of the Chippewa. As a token of our friendship, we present you with this pipe to smoke.

Guiding Questions:

1. Use two or three examples from Minavavana's speech to Alexander Henry to summarize his view of the French and Indian War.
2. What are 2-3 conditions that Chief Minavavana will demand of the British and the American colonists to end the French and Indian War? Use examples from the text to support your answer
3. Why does Minavavana treat Alexander Henry differently than he would a British or Colonial soldier? What does this say about the Chippewa now that the French give them no more presents?

Source: B.B. Thatcher, Indian Biography (New York, 1841), Vol. II, 76-77.
http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/native_voices/voices_display.cfm?id=30

Chief Minavavana

"Although you have conquered the French, you have not yet conquered us!"

Assert claim or demand
Sovereigntyrule or control over

Venture: something, often a business, filled with danger and risks

Inheritance our birthright, something only we own

Allaying make calm or to relieve

Molest mistreat or harm

Tranquilly peacefully

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Assert claim or demand
Sovereignty rule or control over

Venture: something, often a business, filled with danger and risks

Inheritance our birthright, something only we own

Slain killed

Treaty agreement between countries

Consideration thought about
Molest mistreat or harm

Tranquilly peacefully

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Guiding Questions:

1. What about the English worries Minavavana?

2. How does he view his tribe's lands?

3. Use your knowledge of the time period to determine what types of presents he wants from the English?