



# My Letter To Me, The White Man

by James Seidler

FLYMF November 2004, The Doubting America Issue, Volume 1 Issue 9

Dearest White Man,

Thanksgiving is a time for traditions. All across our nation on the fourth Thursday in November families gather together to pay homage to the past, re-enacting the events of the previous year, and the year before that, stretching far back toward that first immortal time grandpa got drunk and took a shit in the washing machine. Sadly, however, not all Thanksgiving traditions carry with them such happy connotations. Indeed, for Native Americans tragedy is rooted in the very origins of the holiday itself, from Squanto's initial misstep in teaching the Pilgrims how to fertilize with fish instead of beating them all to death with the tasty combo of roasted turkey, mashed potatoes, and cranberry sauce and razing their village.

Unfortunately, the aftermath of this misstep subjected Native Americans to a legacy of genocide, pestilence, land-grabbing, and bit parts in B-Westerns. As someone who voted for Andrew Jackson in 1828, I can't help but feel a little responsible. Accordingly, this holiday season I am looking for ways that I can work to remedy this great injustice.

First, I resolve to contract smallpox immediately. Seeing as the introduction of the disease by Europeans wiped out huge swaths of the Native American population, it seems only fair that I myself run through the same gauntlet. It may be difficult to get the disease, given that it's only located in the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, where they probably have guard dogs and lasers and vaccine-tipped razor wire to inoculate potential intruders. But I'm not worried, as sincere efforts for social change always end up finding a way. If in my infected state I end up wiping out most of the American public, it'll just be some form of poetic justice, unless I accidentally exterminate the remaining Native American population, which would instead be very, very ironic.

My second resolution is to help Native Americans reclaim their land wherever possible. A great starting point would be the vacant lot next to my apartment, where the African violets seem to be on the verge of dragging neighborhood small dogs and elderly people into the great maw of their central hive brain, like the tentacles of the squid in *20,000 Leagues Under The Sea*. Anyone who already owns a lawnmower would be particularly welcome.

What else? I promise never to lay money down on the Redskins, even if they have a thirty-point spread on Mount Holyoke School for Girls. I promise to try really hard to let the tears come the next time I watch *Dances With Wolves*, even though I'm not big on the waterworks. Finally, I promise that if I come across a rich blonde from the San Fernando Valley reaping a full scholarship for claiming to be one-sixteenth Cherokee, I'll punch her in the face.

Given history, it's the least I could do.

Enjoy the issue,

James Seidler,  
White Man  
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