

It was in 1874 that I studied about a plan to go to the agency at Robinson, called Red Cloud Agency, what is now Crawford, Nebraska. I just made up my mind I would do in for a visit to see things in the fall. I went in with a party that was moving backwards and forwards. I didn't stop out a short time; came back and went down on Tongue river. The next spring I had to use some means of going in, so I went out with a war party going to Laramie river. The night they started to make a raid on the ranches I took a young Indian and started for the agency, and I stayed at the agency until the commissioners came out to make a treaty for the Black Hills. They got me to go, with others, some Indians and a couple of half-breeds, to make a treaty with the hostiles. I had not left the Indians at this time, but had got everything ready to do so. Louis Renshaw went with me. The rest were Indians--some one hundred agency Indians. I was instructed to induce the Indians to come in and hold a council and make a treaty. They sent out the necessary tobacco and everything to create a friendly feeling.

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We found the Indian camp on Tongue river, on the other side of where Dayton is now. They received us in a very hostile manner. They were just on the point of going on the war-path. I went out to Crazy Horse's lodge as soon as I got in, and told him what we had come for. His father went out and harranged the camp, and told them it was best to listen to what we had to say. Crazy Horse told me himself that all who wanted to go in and make this treaty could go; but, he said, "I don't want to go." He said that whatever the head men of the tribe concluded to do after hearing our plan, they could and would do. We had a council the next day after we got in. That was my first meeting with Sitting Bull after our trouble. He sent for me to come to his lodge. I went over there, but I took Crazy Horse with me. Sitting Bull asked me what I had come for. Of course, he did not say much of anything, but tried to make me talk. I told him just what I came for, and informed him that the best thing he could do was to go in and see that they wanted at the Red Cloud Agency. He said:

"You will hear what I have got to say at the council."

The council was held the next morning. All the buck Indians, about one thousand, made a big circle in the center of the camp. Big Breast was the first one to make a speech. He got up and refused flatly to come, and told me his reason why. He didn't want to sell the land, but he said:

"All those that are in favor of selling their land from their children, let them go."

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He spoke for a long time, but to that effect.

Sitting Bull then got up and made a long speech. It had the same purport. He said he would not sell his land. He said he had never been to an agency, and was not going in. He was no agency Indian. He told me to go out and tell the white men at Red Cloud that he declared open war, and would fight them whenever he met them from that time on. His entire harangue was an open declaration of war.

Little Hawk got up and spoke for Crazy Horse, the latter refusing to talk. He said:

"My friends, the other tribes have concluded not to go in, and I will have to say the same thing."

Probably one hundred Indians got up and spoke. Our Indians that had come out with us got up and urged them to go back and see what was wanted and what would be gained by making this treaty. At the end of the council they asked us when we were going to start back, we told them, and said we would be there