

NOVEMBER 21, 1974

Shortgrass pastureland has changed from simi-desert to coastal type paddies. Seep springs run down the trails, filling every indentation into clear pools.

Roads are cut into deep ruts. Horseback travel is laborious. Old ponies are sapped of their strength by midday. Riders and the ridden have to watch for slick spots.

Heavy dews drench the land every morning. Frost has burned back the greenery, yet the sunrise reflects across an unusual supply of winter feed.

Last week, the morning sun remained behind a purple cloud bank that must have spread 200 limitless horizon miles. Deep orange rays were cast heaven wise, backgrounded by a clear blue sky.

Child Who Sits in the Sun and myself stood in front of the house, spell-bound by a projection of orange and purples that stilled our breath and humbled any care that we had.

All of man's purposes were reduced by a magnificent example of God's natural charm. The cow depression was forgotten; inflation was erased as if it never existed.

We stood so close that I could feel her knife in her pajama belt. Nevertheless stricken by the charm of the morning, I felt no fear.

Her people lost this land fair and square. Had they cared for it, they would have opened abstract offices and made legal claim.

Child Who Sits in the Sun still bears a grudge from the treaty days of their removal. Her nitpicking ways refuse to accept the truth that the white-eyes gave her people a big break. Nobody who does any serious thinking would entertain the idea that a bunch-for-free people would have ever invented a tax system of a network of asphalt and concrete roads.

Redmen were too irresponsible to develop a modern society. When the buffalo calf crop abounded, they wouldn't have known that a food surplus was a hardship. Indians were too simple minded to base their values on wampum. So shortsighted, that they were apt to throw a big dance on the seasons of big harvests of meat and food. All they could understand was the needs of their tribes. I challenge you someday to come by the house and explain to Child Who Sits in the Sun the importance of imports and exports.

Foreign trade to her means sharing dried peppers and river pecans with neighboring white-eyed ladies. She'd no more send Russia wheat or milo than she'd give up her grandfather's scalping knife or her old grannie's tomahawk.

And for your information, the odds of disarming Child Who Sits in the Sun are about in line with the probability of the State of Kentucky limiting the use of corn to making cornbread. If you get what I mean.

Autumn still lingers in the Shortgrass Country. Go ahead and blab around that I've gone soft on the land. Every day here is worth a week in the city.

From the days of old man Goodnight's trail until now, the easy-cries have sworn that horns and hides would become relics. Hang on for the good days ahead. I wouldn't trade any of it for a shanty on paradise isle.