of a white skin" who entered their lands.[18] Washington no longer addressed these conflicts with the Indians as merely uprisings or hostilities but instead called them a "war on our frontiers."[19] The change in nomenclature was also accompanied by a declaration that negotiation had failed and that the time "to act offensively" had arrived.[20] To these ends, Washington again called on Congress to consider how to address the deficiencies in troops needed to undertake this offensive stance, with Washington asking for the militias to be called up or for (even) more troops to be raised.[21]

Consequentially, Washington's fears of a war with European powers took on a different light as the war on the frontier exploded and enlarged. In April of 1793, war between Britain and France finally broke out, which prompted Washington to quickly declare American neutrality in the conflict.[22] Washington had considerable cause in keeping the nation well-removed from the quarrel between Britain and France, especially in light of the rapidly deteriorating conditions on the frontier. As shown before, Washington continuously pressed Congress for more troops in order to combat the Indians, illustrating the manpower conundrum that the military was facing in attempting to execute the war. Furthermore, the war with the Indians was a significant drain on the nation's treasury, proving more expensive as the fighting dragged on.[23] Not surprisingly, therefore, was Washington's steadfast (and ardent) support of Jay's Treaty in 1795 with Britain, a treaty that Washington hoped would defuse the tension (and avoid war) between both the United States and Britain.[24] Friction between the two nations was on the rise during 1794 due to the continued British presence in the Northwest Territories (a violation of the Treaty of Paris of 1783 that ended the Revolution) as well as Britain's actions in enflaming the Ohio tribes to attack American settlers.[25] The treaty itself was met with intense public outrage and considerable Congressional opposition, but Washington feared that any war with Britain "would be economically and militarily disastrous" and pressed for its adoption.[26] For Washington, Jay's Treaty represented a significant Godsend in the way that it prevented the possibility of a two-front war, with the Indians on the one side and the British on the other. Even before the Indian war erupted, Washington feared what the consequences what be if America challenged the juggernaut of British power (or any other European nation for that matter). Such fears became justified after observing how the nation coped against the Indians to the west.

[18] Ellis, 221.
[19] George Washington, Fifth Annual Address to Congress, 3 December 1793, gwpapers.virginia.edu.
[20] George Washington, Fifth Annual Address.
[21] George Washington, Fifth Annual Address.
[22] Ellis, 222.
[23] George Washington, Seventh Annual Address to Congress, 8 December 1795, gwpapers.virginia.edu.
[24] Ellis, 226.
[25] Ellis, 226.
[26] Ellis, 226.

Eventually, a relative peace was made with the Indian tribes across the western frontiers by the end of Washington's second term in 1796. Washington's Final State of the Union Address (submitted to Congress in 1796) describes the efforts that were implemented in order to ensure the "continuance of the friendship of the Indians and to preserve peace along the extent of our interior frontier," bringing an end to what was previously described as a "long, expensive, and distressing war."[27] This war on the frontier between white settlers and Indians demonstrated Washington's (and historians') belief that that the country was not ready for a protracted conflict. Indeed, Washington's preference for American neutrality and opposition to entering the European maul of warfare was considerably based upon the nation's performance and experience in fighting the Indians to the west, a situation that sorely tested and pressed the young country's military capabilities to their limits. The entrance of another combatant (especially Britain) would surely have yielded disastrous, if not fatal, consequences. Therefore, the historical position by Native American historians is given much more plausibility, especially considering Washington's efforts at both executing the war against the Indians and in his arduous efforts to avoid conflict with Britain. For Washington, the war with the Indians served as a dire warning, a warning that highlighted the potential difficulties that the nation would endure and encounter if it became involved in another war.

[27] George Washington, Seventh Annual Address; George Washington, Eighth Annual Address to Congress, 7 December 1796, gwpapers.virginia.edu.