

MEMORIAL  
OF  
J. F. McCURTAIN,  
PRINCIPAL CHIEF OF THE CHOCTAW NATION,

CALLING ATTENTION

*To the violation of treaties with that nation, and asking payment of an award made under the treaty of 1830.*

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FEBRUARY 8, 1881.—Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary and ordered to be printed.

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*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States :*

The death of the Choctaw delegate, P. P. Pitchlynn, makes it my duty, as principal chief, to ask your honorable body not to let that event keep you from acting on the claim he was prosecuting. The surviving co-delegate, Peter Folsom, has been notified to proceed to Washington, and to pursue the course marked out by his lamented associate, who so long and so faithfully represented the views and wishes of his people.

It is no more than right, at the same time, to remind you of the repeated failures of the government to comply with our treaties.

Just claims and unsettled demands having been often presented without effect by former delegates, the general council in 1853 passed resolutions expressing the deep sense felt by our people of the wrong done—first, by forcing upon them the treaty of 1830, in direct violation of former treaties, and afterwards in the numerous and flagrant violations of that treaty itself, causing heavy loss to large numbers of Choctaw citizens over and above the greater loss to the nation. Four delegates, Peter P. Pitchlynn, Israel Folsom, Dickson W. Lewis, and Samuel Garland, were instructed to lay the whole case before the government, and authorized to effect a settlement by treaty or otherwise.

In October, 1855, they reported that the government would not listen to them till they agreed to comply with a demand that separate jurisdiction should be given to the Chickasaws, and that a home should be provided for the prairie Indians in what is now called the "Leased District." They presented to the council a treaty on that basis, which was violently denounced on account of the large bodies of land it surrendered, and still more strenuously on account of its Chickasaw features. My father, who was a district chief under our old system, supported it because it promised a just, fair, and liberal consideration of our claims, both public and private. On that ground alone it was ratified by a small majority of the council. That was in November, 1855. Twenty-five years have passed away. My father is dead. Most of the claimants for whom he spoke are dead. The members of the ratifying council are nearly all dead. The last of the four delegates who signed the

treaty died last week. The government has got the "Leased District." The Chickasaws have got their jurisdiction. The just and fair consideration, which was our part of the bargain, we have never seen. In 1859 the Senate made an award in our favor, which the treaty said should be final. That award the delegates, who are now dead, spent the last years of their lives in vain efforts to get paid.

Colonel Pitchlynn always said that sooner or later Congress would keep faith with us. In behalf of our people, I ask you to make good his words by complying with the treaty of 1855.

J. F. McCURTAIN,  
*Principal Chief.*

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, CHOCTAW NATION,  
*February 1, 1881.*

By the principal chief.  
Attest:  
[SEAL.]

THOMPSON MCKINNEY,  
*National Secretary Choctaw Nation.*

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