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Memorial of a number of citizens of Pennsylvania, praying the re-consideration of the treaty made with the Cherokees at New Echota, in December, 1835

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MEMORIAL

OF

A NUMBER OF CITIZENS OF PENNSYLVANIA,

PRAYING

The re-consideration of the treaty made with the Cherokees at New Echota, in December, 1835.

APRIL 11, 1838.

Laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled :

The undersigned, citizens of the State of Pennsylvania,

RESPECTFULLY REPRESENT :

That they feel a deep interest in the present unhappy condition of the Cherokee nation of Indians; and they have observed with much solicitude the different efforts which have been made to induce your respective bodies to re-consider the treaty purporting to have been made with them at New Echota, in the winter of 1835.

Under a firm conviction that this instrument is unjust and cruel in its character, adverse to the best interests of the Indians, and obtained against the consent, and in opposition to the declared will of their nation, your memorialists cannot but ardently desire that it may not be hastily sanctioned by our Government, and its ruinous enactments enforced upon these poor and resistless objects of its oppression.

When we look to the ancient and indisputable title of these people to the land upon which they reside, and from which it will be the province of this pretended treaty to force them, and drive them again, after fifty years of partial civilization, into the wilderness, to return again to the savage state, or miserably perish by the hands of their more barbarous neighbors; when we consider their former happy state, the laudable advances they have made towards civilization, and the friendly relations which have so long continued to mark the intercourse between our nation and theirs, we feel constrained, by the tenderest emotions of sympathy, to plead with you on their behalf, and to urge you, by every consideration of reason and religion, by your love of justice and mercy, and by the respect you owe to the dignity and character of our common country, whose faith has been pledged again and again for their protection, to lend your ear to their cry, and give heed to the petitions which have been laid before you in their behalf.

Your memorialists would, therefore, most respectfully, but earnestly, beg of you to consider the inconsistency of acknowledging as valid this instrument, signed at New Echota by less than a hundred obscure and unauthorized individuals, whilst the remonstrances which have been sent to you against it have been signed not only by the acknowledged authorities, but by upwards of fifteen thousand of their people.

We do not deem it expedient to consume your time by reciting facts which have been reiterated again and again in your hearing; our object is briefly, but strenuously, to urge you to re-consider this whole transaction, and to strike from it every clause that may in any wise detract from the high profession we are making to the world as a Christian people, acting under the benign influence of that holy Gospel whose first enunciation was heard in the angelic anthems of "peace on earth and good-will towards men;" and whose divine Founder has left for the government of all such nations, as well as individuals, as profess his name, the simple code of "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you."

In conclusion, your memorialists deem it right to assert, that, in coming before you at this time, they are actuated by no private or political motive whatever, but are moved thereto solely by a desire to serve the cause of the poor and the needy; and by a jealous fear, lest our beloved country may become involved in the crime of cruelty and oppression.