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Memorial of the representatives of the Choctaw Nation of Indians, in general council assembled, praying the payment of the amount due the Choctaws under the Treaty of June, 1855

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MEMORIAL

OF THE

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHOCTAW NATION OF INDIANS,

In general council assembled, praying the payment of the amount due the Choctaws under the treaty of June, 1855.

JANUARY 9, 1861.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs. Motion to print referred to the Committee on Printing.

JANUARY 14.—Report in favor of printing the usual number submitted, considered, and agreed to.

MEMORIAL to the Congress of the United States of America.

Your memorialists, the representatives of the Choctaw Nation in general council assembled, would respectfully present for the consideration of your honorable body, in behalf of the Choctaw Nation, that in consequence of the unprecedented drought during the past summer, and not from any want of industry on the part of the people, there has been almost an entire failure of the corn crop, and a large portion of our people are now entirely destitute of the means of subsistence. Almost daily the homes of those of our citizens who have been somewhat more favored, and enabled to raise a small surplus of corn, are besieged by families of poor starving women and children who are without a morsel of bread.

If such be the condition of the indigent now, at harvest time, can you picture to yourselves what will be their condition during the coming winter?

Alas, it is too true that famine and want stares us in the face; and we are left without the least glimmering ray of hope to avoid it without your kind aid and assistance. Relief, and that speedily, must be rendered, or many of the Choctaw people will suffer starvation and death.

Should the approaching winter prove as severe as the last, the stock must also perish, and then nothing will remain, not even dried beef alone, to satisfy the cravings of hunger.

Under these appalling and distressing circumstances, we, your memorialists, feel, as the representatives of the Choctaw people, that we have a right to call upon your honorable body to speedily appropriate the necessary amount to pay the Choctaw people the debt which, under the award of the Senate of the United States, made in accordance

with the stipulations contained in the treaty of June, 1855, has been ascertained to be due them.

We ask, as a matter of justice and humanity, that your honorable body take immediate action on this subject, which, to many among us, is a matter of life and death.

Your memorialists have been taught to look upon and feel toward the government of the United States that it was their friend and guardian.

We come not before you as paupers or mendicants, but a loyal and industrious people, who have been prevented by the intervention of providential causes from producing a sufficiency of the staff of life to supply our very limited wants.

All we ask is that you discharge the amount guarantied to us by your own solemn covenant and treaty stipulation.

PETER FOLSOM,
President of the Senate
WILLIAM ROEBUCK,
Speaker of the House.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Office of Indian Affairs, January 5, 18

SIR: The inclosed memorial from the Choctaws having been sent to this office for transmission to Congress, I beg leave, on their behalf, to request that you will be so good as to present it to the Senate, and have it appropriately referred. And, as an act of justice to the Choctaws, I would suggest whether it should not be printed.

As stated in the memorial, and in my late annual report, the present condition of the Choctaws is one of extreme hardship, arising from the entire loss of their last season's crops, and there is an urgent necessity for something being done at once for their relief, in order to prevent great suffering, if not absolute starvation, among them.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. B. GREENWOOD,
Commissioner

Hon. W. K. SEBASTIAN,
Chairman Committee on Indian Affairs U. S. Senate.