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3-14-1864

Petition of the confederate bands of Weas, Peorias, Kaskaskias and Piankeshaws, praying that provision be made for the payment of the amount alleged to be due them under the Treaty of May 30, 1854

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Recommended Citation

S. Misc. Doc. No. 73, 38th Cong., 1st Sess. (1864)

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PETITION

OF THE CONFEDERATE BANDS OF

WEAS, PEORIAS, KASKASKIAS AND PIANKESHAW,

PRAYING

That provision be made for the payment of the amount alleged to be due them under the treaty of May 30, 1854.

MARCH 14, 1864.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs. Motion to print referred to the Committee on Printing.

MARCH 17, 1864.—Report of committee in favor of printing considered and agreed to.

To the Congress of the United States.

Being authorized by power of attorney, on behalf of the confederate bands of Weas, Peorias, Kaskaskias and Piankeshaw Indians of Kansas, we beg leave to represent, that by the treaty of the 30th of May, 1854, provision was made for the sale of the principal part of the lands of our people in Kansas. And by the 7th article of said treaty it is provided, in reference to the proceeds of such sale, that the President should from time to time, upon consultation with our people, determine how much of the net proceeds should be paid to our people, and how much should be vested in safe and profitable stocks, the interest thereon to be paid annually; yet when the sales (in June and July, 1857,) were over, this just and important provision of the treaty was wholly disregarded, and the entire proceeds of the sales, amounting to \$346,791 in gold, were, without any consultation with our people, and against our consent, taken away by the government, and \$319,602 thereof vested in stocks neither safe nor profitable; nor have we ever yet been consulted as to our wants or interest in this respect, or any part of said net proceeds been paid us, saving and excepting the sum of \$25,000, proceeds of Pennsylvania bonds, paid in the last year through the just and kind interposition of the Secretary of the Interior. The State stocks, in which \$169,686 75 of our gold were vested, were afterwards abstracted, and on the 12th of July, 1862, Congress assumed that amount, with the interest then in arrear, at the rate of 5 per cent., but making said principal sum to stand as invested in the hands of the government, without any time fixed for its payment; and to obtain the interest then in arrear, and which our people greatly needed, we were required to accept the provisions of said act, which from necessity we did, so that now said sum of \$169,686 75 is by act of Congress placed beyond our reach, and we are receiving 5 per cent. thereon semi-annually in depreciated currency, contrary, as we believe, to the true intent of said treaty. But submitting to this, we beg leave respectfully to call your attention to the non-paying State stocks still on hand, amounting to the sum of \$98,000, that is to say: Florida, \$37,000; Louisiana, \$15,000; North

Carolina, \$43,000; South Carolina, \$3,000, and on which there is interest in arrear and unpaid up to the 1st of January last, amounting to \$16,330 according to said stocks, but amounting, at 5 per cent., to \$11,763,71. These stocks cost in gold \$89,865 72. Now we appeal to Congress and ask the passage of an act assuming the said sum of \$89,865 72 in gold, or its equivalent, and providing for its payment in semi-annual instalments, the first to be paid the 1st of January, 1865, with interest on each till paid; and also assuming said interest in arrear, and providing for its immediate payment to our people.

We ask this, that our people may receive at least some of the benefits promised them when they signed said treaty, and gave up their lands to be sold; we state it to be true, that our Great Father induced us to make said treaty by representing to us that if we would take head-rights and sell the principal of our lands, we should have the proceeds of land sold, as fast as we might wish or need it to make us comfortable houses and farms on our head-rights and to enable us to enter at once upon agricultural and civilized life. Believing this, we signed said treaty, and gave up our lands to be sold; but when sold, the proceeds in gold were taken from us, as above stated, and our people were left to improve their head-rights as best they could, aided only by the small annuities provided in the 6th article of said treaty, which ceased in 1859. Since then, (with the exception of said \$25,000 above mentioned,) we have received only the small payments arising from the interest on the investment above mentioned; and default having been made in the payment of a large portion of said interest, it is clear we have received but little during the last four years, although our necessities have been greater than ever before; yet, under all these disadvantages, our people, since the date of said treaty, according to their number of men, have put more land in cultivation than any other tribe in Kansas; we have only about 55 men, and have 1,200 acres of land in cultivation.

Our people have other business which we will bring to the notice of Congress hereafter.

Respectfully,

BAPTISTE PEORIA
FRANK VALLEY.