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Memorial from sundry citizens of Pennsylvania, praying that the Cherokee Indians may be protected in their rights, &c.

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MEMORIAL

FROM

SUNDRY CITIZENS OF PENNSYLVANIA,

PRAYING

That the Cherokee Indians may be protected in their rights, &c.

FEBRUARY 14, 1832.

Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

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

The memorial of the subscribers, citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,

RESPECTFULLY REPRESENTS:

That, in common with their brethren, the people of this Republic, they have, for some time past, had their attention directed to, and their sympathies awakened for, the Indian race, with whom the Government has had intercourse, and to whom it is bound, in faith and friendship, by the most solemn treaties, and by other manifestations of public law and sentiment.

Among the various families and tribes of aboriginal inhabitants on this continent, the Cherokee Indians have been especially objects of notice and regard. They were recommended to our good will by peculiar circumstances, at a moment when their strength and position was not to be contemned. They were moreover urged, under the influence of those noble and generous sentiments which animated the mind, and controlled the measures, of the truly great and good WASHINGTON, and his compatriots, to adopt civilized habits and pursuits, and repose with confidence in this new and interesting character, beside the protecting shield of the United States. The guarantee of WASHINGTON and the Congress of that day was held to be sacred by their successors down to the present time; but now other doctrines and principles are made to bear upon the condition of those Indians.

Your memorialists deem it unnecessary to reproduce the abundant testimony so familiar to every citizen of the Union, in order to show the relation in which the Cherokees stand with the United States, and the duties which the latter owe to those people. Heaven and earth bear witness to the mutual obligations of the parties; and it has never been pretended, from any quarter, that the Cherokees have, in any degree, violated their pledges and fidelity to this Government.

Your memorialists, disclaiming all party motives, emboldened by the consciousness of the rectitude of their purpose, and happily in the enjoyment of the high qualities of freemen, come thus before the representatives and the guardians of the honor of their common country, to plead on behalf of these oppressed aborigines.

Your memorialists ask, in the name of justice and of mercy, the interposition of the United States to preserve the universally admitted possessions and rights of the Cherokees.

The blow now meditated against that unoffending people, if it be permitted to fall upon them by the failure of our Government to forbid its infliction, will, as your memorialists conceive, through all time to come, be pronounced the most wanton exercise of power which ever disgraced the history of any nation.

Your memorialists therefore most earnestly invoke your early and efficient legislation, to prevent consequences at once so deplorable for the Cherokees, and so humiliating to the character of this Republic.

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The Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Representatives, appointed to make arrangements for the purpose of celebrating the centennial of the birth of George Washington, have, according to order, and the subject under consideration, and some of the facts in relation to the subject, have the honor to report to the House of Representatives.

That the committee have directed their chairman to propose, at a proper time, by a joint resolution, an adjournment of the two Houses from the 23d of the current month, out of respect to the memory of George Washington, and in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of his birth.

The committee were desirous that the day should be celebrated as a public festival to the occasion. The distinguished citizens who are members of the Supreme Court of the United States, invited to the committee to be especially invited to pronounce such an opinion, and to be present, and to be invited to the service, from his knowledge of the history of the country, and the fact that a letter was addressed by the President of the United States to the Chief Justice, regarding the adjournment of the committee, (the day being an appropriate occasion to that letter, he returned an answer. From this correspondence, which accompanied the report, it will be seen that the Chief Justice, for reasons assigned by him, declined to be present.)

The committee directed their chairman to report the adjournment of the two Houses of Congress to the 23d of the current month, out of respect to the memory of George Washington, and in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of his birth. The adjournment has been made, and the chief justice has accordingly complied in conformity with the request.

The committee resolved to recommend to recommend to the House of Representatives, in order to carry into effect the resolution of the Senate, by a joint resolution, on the 23d day of December, 1846, to adjourn on the 23d day of the month of December, and in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of George Washington, and in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the death of George Washington, and that the adjournment be for the purpose of celebrating the centennial of the birth of George Washington.