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## Letter from the Governor of Florida, in relation to depredations by the Seminole Indians.

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LETTER

FROM

THE GOVERNOR OF FLORIDA,

IN RELATION TO

*Depredations by the Seminole Indians.*

JANUARY 11, 1847.

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

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, Tallahassee, December 29, 1846.

GENTLEMEN: You have herewith enclosed copies of a petition and letter which have been recently received by A. Jernigan, the member of the general assembly from the county of Orange.

There can be no doubt that the representations therein made in regard to the Indians are true. I have seen other gentlemen (of the first respectability) from that division of the State, all of whom unite in the assurance that the safety of the persons and property of the frontier inhabitants depends upon the removal of the Indians.

It will be seen, by referring to the letter referred to, that Jernigan's cattle have been carried off. He, of course, is highly exasperated. When he shall arrive at his home, if they shall not have been restored, the consequences may be readily anticipated. It is, in my judgment, indispensably necessary that the federal government should take immediate steps to have these wretches removed from within our State, either by *persuasion, MONEY, or force.*

The numerous and (I believe) well founded complaints from that portion of the State, in relation to their depredations, embarrass me exceedingly. Had I the physical power, with the *authority to remove them*, all embarrassments from this source would speedily cease. I have, unfortunately, neither one nor the other.

The aid of the federal government is therefore most respectfully, but earnestly, solicited for this purpose. Should this matter be postponed to a distant day, I can (I think) clearly foresee consequences involving responsibility that must exclusively fall upon those who had the *power*, with the authority, to prevent their occurrence, and failed to apply them at the proper time. I have this day addressed the President upon this subject, who will, I am sure, give the matter that attention which it deserves.

Yours, very respectfully,

Hons. J. D. WESTCOTT and D. L. YULEE,

W. D. MOSELEY.

*Senators, &c.*

One word by way of postscript: Should not the Indian agent live nearer than St. Augustine?

To the honorable the Senate and House of  
Representatives in General Assembly met :

We, the undersigned, citizens and memorialists of the county of Orange and State of Florida, respectfully petition your honorable body to have the Indians removed from our State, for they are at this time roaming at large from their respective boundaries, and they are within eight or ten miles of some of your petitioners' homes, and are burning the ranges of your petitioners' stock, and they are themselves within the range of your petitioners' stocks of cattle and hogs, and there have been two Indians seen by two of your petitioners: Isaac Jernigan saw one on the 6th instant, and Wright Patrick saw another on the 13th instant, and talked with them.

We humbly pray that your honorable bodies will take into due consideration the petition of your petitioners, as the settlement of Fort Gatlin is at this time in a state of confusion, in consequence of the near approach of the Indians, some of them having felt the *scourge* of their barbarities before moving into this section. The Indians which were seen by your petitioners were not more than eight or ten miles from the homes of your petitioners, who reside in the Fort Gatlin settlement.

Willoby Minshew,  
Isaac Jernigan,  
William Minshew,  
A. Davis,  
Wright Patrick,  
John Patrick,  
William Pool,  
David Pool,  
John Tanner,  
John Highby,  
A. S. Speers,

E. Watson,  
H. A. Crane,  
S. K. Clay,  
Vincent L. Lee,  
John Evans,  
Thom. J. Clay,  
Peter G. Hyrne,  
Randal W. Martin,  
A. G. Vaughn,  
Jos. Bellott,  
Jos. Rogers.

ORANGE COUNTY, December 15, 1846.

MELLENVILLE, E. F., December 17, 1846.

DEAR JERNIGAN: At the request of your mother, Isaac, &c., I write you in relation to the Indians. Mr. Bellott has just returned from your place, and informed me that your brother had been absent three days in search of your cattle, and could find none. He states, that while out he came up to one Indian, who informed him that there were four more with him, and they were merely out on a hunting expedition, professing friendship, &c. They have fired the country all round your place, and your family are much alarmed. They are evidently driving off your stock, and burning the country, so as to prevent their being traced or followed. Since writing the above, Lee has come in here, fully corroborates the above, and states that a large trail of cattle has been found by him and Isaac, leading south, and found Indians' camps on it. He says there is no mistake about their taking off your stock; and you know his opinion is worth as much, or more, than any man's about such matters. This is usually the first step towards an outbreak. And he also wishes me to say to you that you ought to come home forthwith; that if you knew the

real situation of things you would not stay an hour. The Indians were within five or six miles of your house a day or two since, burning all around it. The one that Isaac saw appeared saucy, or rather *impudent*, sufficient to convince him that they were not, although professing to be, friendly. Hyrne has promised to go out and try and get back your stock.

Now, Jernigan, it is your duty to inform the governor, and tell him that this is no idle report; that your stock are driven out of the well-known range; that Indians are found on it; that they are out of their boundaries, and that the *State* ought to send them back if the general government will not. I feel sanguine that the governor will do something. In the mean time ——— will do nothing to injure them or molest them—*only take back our own.*

I forgot to state that Minshew's hogs are not to be found; and Lee states that the Indians have them, he is sure, but cannot be followed, as the whole country is burnt over. Your mother is very anxious for you to come home, and I think it best myself. The whole legislature would not pay you for your stock, &c., &c.

Yours, in haste,

H. A. CRANE.