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Agreement with Seminole Indians. Letter from the Acting Secretary of the Interior, transmitting a copy of an agreement between the Commissioners to the Five Civilized Tribes and the Seminoles

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AGREEMENT WITH SEMINOLE INDIANS.

L E T T E R

FROM

THE ACTING SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

TRANSMITTING

A COPY OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COMMISSIONERS TO
THE FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES AND THE SEMINOLES.

DECEMBER 20, 1899.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be
printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, December 19, 1899.

SIR: I have the honor to inclose herewith copy of an agreement made by the Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes in behalf of the United States with a commission duly appointed on the part of the Seminole Tribe of Indians in the Indian Territory, fixing a time after which no person shall be enrolled as a Seminole citizen, and providing for the distribution of the estates of deceased Seminole citizens after December 31, 1899. Said agreement provides:

First. That said commission, in making the rolls of Seminole citizens under the act of Congress approved June 23, 1898 (30 Stat., 495), shall place on said rolls the names of all children born to Seminole citizens up to and including the 31st day of December, 1899, and the names of all Seminole citizens then living; and the roll so made, when approved by the Secretary of the Interior, as provided by said act of Congress, shall constitute the final rolls of Seminole citizens, and upon which the allotment of lands and distribution of money and other property belonging to the Seminole Indians shall be made, and to no other persons.

Second. That if any member of said tribe of Indians shall die after the 31st day of December, 1899, the lands, money, and other property to which he would be entitled if living shall descend to his heirs who are Seminole citizens, according to the laws of descent and distribution of the State of Arkansas, and be allotted and distributed to them accordingly, provided that "in all cases where such property would descend to the parents under said laws the same shall first go to the mother instead of the father, and then to the brothers and sisters and their heirs instead of the father."

Third. That said agreement is "to be ratified by the general council of the Seminole Nation and by the Congress of the United States."

This agreement was concluded at Muskogee, Ind. T., on the 7th day of October, 1899.

The Department requested said commission to report the reason for the provision relative to the descent of property "to the mother instead of the father, and then to the brothers and sisters and other heirs instead of the father," and on December 18 the acting chairman of the commission reported by wire—

relative to the agreement recently made that the Seminole property should descend to mother, first, because children are enrolled with mother; second, in nearly all intermarriages the father is white and property should not go to his white heirs, if any, but to Indian children. Seminoles insist on the provision. Said agreement has been ratified by Seminole council.

In view of the representations made by the commission, I have to recommend that said agreement be ratified by Congress by appropriate legislation.

Respectfully,

THOS. RYAN,
Acting Secretary.

The SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

AGREEMENT.

This agreement, by and between the Government of the United States, of the first part, entered into in its behalf by the Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes, Henry L. Dawes, Tams Bixby, Archibald S. McKennon, and Thomas B. Needles, duly appointed and authorized thereunto, and the Seminole Tribe of Indians, in Indian Territory, of the second part, entered into in behalf of said tribe by John F. Brown and K. N. Kinkebec, commissioners, duly appointed and authorized thereunto, witnesseth:

First. That the Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes, in making the rolls of Seminole citizens pursuant to the act of Congress approved June twenty-eighth, eighteen hundred and ninety-eight, shall place on said rolls the names of all children born to Seminole citizens up to and including the thirty-first day of December, eighteen hundred and ninety-nine, and the names of all Seminole citizens then living; and the rolls so made, when approved by the Secretary of the Interior, as provided by said act of Congress, shall constitute the final rolls of Seminole citizens, upon which the allotment of lands and distribution of money and other property belonging to the Seminole Indians shall be made, and to no other persons.

Second. If any member of the Seminole Tribe of Indians shall die after the thirty-first day of December, eighteen hundred and ninety-nine, the lands, money, and other property to which he would be entitled if living shall descend to his heirs, who are Seminole citizens, according to the laws of descent and distribution of the State of Arkansas, and be allotted and distributed to them accordingly: *Provided*, That in all cases where such property would descend to the parents under said laws the same shall first go to the mother instead of the father, and then to the brothers and sisters and their heirs instead of the father.

Third. This agreement to be ratified by the general council of the Seminole Nation and by the Congress of the United States.

In witness whereof the said commissioners hereunto affix their names, at Muskogee, Indian Territory, this seventh day of October, eighteen hundred and ninety-nine.

HENRY L. DAWES,
TAMS BIXBY,
ARCHIBALD S. MCKENNON,
THOMAS B. NEEDLES,
Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes.
JOHN F. BROWN,
K. N. KINKEHEE,
Seminole Commissioners.

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