

Greenwood Leflore to Mushulatubbe

Big Land, Choctaw Nation, 7 April 1830.

My Brother

I have heard some verry unpleasant talks from the parts of the nation not distant from you, and some of the talk is rather against you, and others, all of whom, I hoped would unite with us in doing all we can for our people. I am unwilling to believe any bad report, and hope that is all lies; or that if any unpleasant feelings have existed, that they were propudiced by lies; and that when you and your people, know the truth from me, that you and all of them will unite with us as brothers.

You have heard that the President has told us that if we live here, that we must submit to the laws of mississippi. You know that if mississippi extends her laws over us, that bad white men will soon come among us, and settle on our vacant land, and cheat us out of our property. The council determined that they would not submit to mississippi law, but that we would move west, if the President would give us a good treaty. We prepared a treaty and sent it on to the President, and endeavoured to provide for all the people as fully as possible.

The treaty provides that every man with a wife, or child, and every woman with a child, or husband, shall have six hundred and forty acres of land in fee simple, and every young man is to have three hundred and twenty acres of land in fee simple, to sell here, and enable them to make their future improvements. Also every captain in addition, is to have a suit of clothes, and broad sword, and fifty dollars annually for four years. Every man is to have a Good rifle and plenty of rifle powder, and lead, for four years. Also every man on reaching his new home, is to have an ax, a hoe a plough, and blanket & brass kittle. And every woman is to have a wheel and cards, and every five families a loom. Also all the stock of hogs and cattle are to be paid for, by the United States, or returned to the owners, as many, on the other side of the mississippi. Also waggons, steam boats, tents, and plenty of provisions, on our journey, and twelve months after we reach our homes. The United States obligate themselves never to suffer our new home to be embraced in any state or territory, but bind themselves to defend us against all laws except such as may be passed by the Chief and Captains in national council. Also the United States bind themselves to defend us from all ~~laws~~ enimies and to pay us when we defend ourselves. Can any person do better for the people than this? and in addition we are to have all our tools and furniture paid for, and two public smith shops, and fifty thousand dollars annually for ever.

We have long seen that to have several chiefs, and different laws, in different parts of the nation, was calculated to ruin us. The bad part of our people could fly from one chief to another, and keep out of the way of the laws that were intended to make them do right. And we determined in national Council, that we would have but one chief, and that all the Captains should have an equal share in making the laws; and that one chief should every where see that they were obeyed. On this plan we should really appear as brothers; but any who would refuse to submit to the late Council, can they do better for themselves, than is done for them in the treaty? Can they make a better treaty for themselves, if they wish to go? and if they want to stay, the treaty secures them six hundred and forty acres of land to each family

We cannot have more than one chief if we go west. This District has given their land below, for the land in the west, and will not suffer any but one chief to be over in that country. I have thus written to you, that you may know that I feel toward you as a brother and hope that you and all your friends will join me in doing good for our people. Let them who are Captains know that by Col. Fulsome giving up his office, and my being made the only chief, that all the Captains regularly acknowledged in the other districts by the chiefs, will be received by me if they report themselves as such, and are willing to join with us. I now give you a good talk as a brother, I was hoping that as I had not succeeded Col. Fulsome, but have been elected on a different principle from what him or myself were elected heretofore, that all the unpleasant feelings that previously existed would be dropped, and that you would feel willing to join us. I now wish you clearly to understand that if you join us and assist us in fulfilling the decisions of the late Council, and will send me a white talk on that subject, that I shall rejoice to see you a member of the National Council, as I know that you are capable of doing much good for the people; But I wish you also to understand that I do not prefer to you to become a member of the National Council to bribe you to be [my] friend, or because I fear your influence. I know you are capable of being useful, if you take a right course, but if you turn your influence against me, we will soon settle our difficulties, but not as pleasantly as I wish, and hope that you will enable me to settle them. I wish you now to choose what you will do, and immediately let me know your decision.

I have instructed to Col. Fulsome what to say to the Captains, ~~who he will~~ and people. And I have also informed Col. Ward that some white men are strongly suspected as interfering, and trying to make mischief. I have no fear but that we are able to accomplish all our objects even if opposed by all who are said to be unfriendly, but am unwilling to take any strong measures

until my enemies prove that the good talk of a brother will not be received, and then, if forced to use strong measures, my hands shall be clean. It will be seen that nothing but strong measures would do. I wish you now to choose. I remain your Friend and Brother

Greenwood Leflore
Chief of Choctaw Nation

National Archives, Washington, D.C., Record Group 75, M234-169.