

Andrew Jackson to John Pitchlynn

copy

Washington Apl 6th. 1830

Friend & Brother—

Such are the various and important duties which engross my time and attention, that it is not in my power to reply to your letter fully as I otherwise would desire to do. Already I have told you my sentiments as regards your removal beyond the Mississippi. In that, I have spoken to you candidly as a friend, one—who if he could, would not deceive you. When was it, that I attempted to take advantage of my Indian friends. Brother—In all the intercourse had with them, in peace and amidst the ravages of war, my constant object has been, to speak to them as friends and brothers. I never have deceived them, and never shall. Let me say to you then—with that candour which always has been practiced, that it is vain and idle for you to expect to live happily where you are. Have you not tried it long enough and do you not perceive that your nation is daily sinking, growing fewer in numbers and becoming less powerful, Look to all the tribes which have dwelt in our country surrounded by their white brethren, and you will perceive that their character and consequence as a people, have wholly disappeared. From this fate I desire to save you—and believe it is only to be effected by a consent on your part, to remove west of the Mississippi. There you can be happy—there you will have a home, you and your children for ever, free from the interposition, or interruption which now assails you—and which must continue to assail you, whilst you reside among your white brothers. Go then to the west, where happiness and peace await you. There the state laws cannot molest or disturb you. The lands granted will be yours and will belong to your children, when you are no more, fertile & rich, they will yield an ample sustenance. To those who shall choose to indulge in agriculture, while such of your people as shall insist on the chase, will find a region opening to and stretching back on the mountains, where game is abundant and fine. If under all circumstances the Choctaws sensible of their true interest, shall be disposed to remove and leave their trouble behind them. Terms the most liberal will be granted. The people of the United States want no advantage of their red brothers. They will meet in council & act with them on the most liberal and enlarged terms. Their great purpose is to make them a happy people, and indulge a hope that they may be perpetuated as a great & lasting people. If then your people shall consent to go, I shall not hesitate, to send a confidential messenger to make conditions with you, or if preferred to receive a delegation

here, to arrange and settle all differences. If they be agreed to by the nation, and a delegation be sent, clothed with full powers to make a treaty on these points, all their expences in coming & returning will be paid. Make all this known to your nation[.] Your friend—

Andrew Jackson

Copy in John Dabney Terrell's hand, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Ala.