

May 16, 1963

*Int
Indians*

Mr. Purman Wilson
223 West Main
Purcell, Oklahoma

Dear Purman:

Thank you for sending me a copy of a petition by the National Advisory Committee of the Chickasaw Nation of Indians in Oklahoma calling for the appointment of a Governor by the Secretary of the Interior as authorized by law, and expressing opposition to the calling of a convention of the Chickasaws for the purpose of electing a Governor.

I understand and appreciate the position of the National Advisory Committee, and feel confident that the next Governor of the Chickasha Nation will be appointed in accordance with the law.

With best regards and good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

WILSON AND SMITH
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
223 W. MAIN STREET
PURCELL, OKLAHOMA

PURMAN WILSON
NORMAN A. SMITH

PHONE LA 7-2111
P. O. BOX 127

May 13, 1963

Honorable Mike Monroney
United States Senator
Washington, D.C.

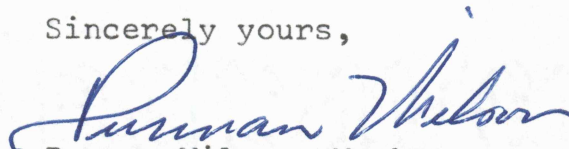
Dear Senator Mike:

You will note the enclosed Resolution adopted at Purcell, on May 10, 1963, by the Resolutions Committee of the National Advisory Committee of the Chickasaw Nation of Indians in Oklahoma.

This committee appreciates the help that you have extended us in the past and trust that this resolution can be used by you for the help of this committee.

Each and every member of this committee appreciates the splendid cooperation that you have given us in the past.

Sincerely yours,



Purman Wilson, Member
of Resolutions Committee.

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**R E P O R T
AND
PETITION FOR AUTHORIZED LEGAL ACTION**

**FROM: THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OF THE CHICKASAW NATION OF
INDIANS IN OKLAHOMA**

**TO: THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.
THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.
THE COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.
THE AREA DIRECTOR AT MUSKOGEE, OKLA.**

**SUBJECT:
THE APPOINTMENT OF A GOVERNOR OF THE
CHICKASAW NATION OF INDIANS IN
OKLAHOMA.**

**BY THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
NOT BY OR UPON APPROVAL OF A SO-CALLED
CONVENTION**

For well over half a century, by Federal Law and Indian Treaty, it has been the duty of the Federal Government to select and appoint this Chickasaw Governor.

For years it was by The President of the United States, Act of April 26, 1906, later and now, by the Secretary of the Interior. Executive Order Number 10250 June 5, 1951. There is the authority by law. There is no other.

That law has not been changed. There has been no effort to change it, nor request that it be changed. It has worked well and ought still to be followed.

It has been suggested in the Press that the Federal Government, The Secretary of the Interior, will or may be requested to call a convention to nominate a man to be then appointed Governor.

Whether that request will come from an applicant for this appointive office is not known. Probably yes, but from whatever source it comes we respectfully urge it should be denied.

It was never contemplated that this important power and authority should be exercised or controlled by a so-called Chickasaw "Convention" which could be attended by only a small percentage of all the Chickasaw Indians.

It could be demonstrated from the Muskogee Area Office that Chickasaw Indians are widely scattered, being now located in practically every State in the Union and in several foreign countries. Only a small percentage of all the Chickasaws in Oklahoma could and would be able to attend the convention. Many Chickasaws even in Oklahoma on account of travel distance or work requirements or for other reasons would not be able to attend such a convention. The attendance could be no more than a token representation of all of the Chickasaw Indians.

Of course all who could do so would attend the convention and they would be fine Chickasaws, but the much larger percentage would also be fine Chickasaws and they would be deprived of their rights by law and treaty to have the Government appoint a Governor with whom the Bureau of Indian Affairs will be working for the good of all of the Chickasaws.

Many many Chickasaws have great confidence in the Bureau of Indian Affairs. This has created and nurtured individual feelings of security. Any abandonment or departure from the plan long established by law and long followed and long understood by the Chickasaws would undermine these feelings of security. Many Chickasaws would have far more confidence in the Bureau of Affairs than in a convention of a mere token representation of all the Chickasaws. They would rather the Government would follow the law and appoint the Governor than to have it delegated to a convention. They would fear that a precedent would be set whereby other important determinations might be made by such a convention when they might well expect them to be better made upon the studied judgment of competent and vested authority with long practical experience.

If the Government should find it necessary to remove a Chickasaw Governor for cause. Would or should that be submitted to a few Chickasaws in convention? We think not. That authority was given to The President in Act of April 26, 1906, and delegated to The Secretary of the Interior by Executive Order Number 10250 on June 5, 1951. That is as it should be and thus the Government continues in its offer of protection for all individual Chickasaws.

Could the appropriate Federal Official work as free and easy with a Governor selected by and upon convention approval as if he were regularly appointed only by and upon official approval by law? Would there be more disrelish in the investigation and possible removal for cause of a Governor supported in his office by so-called convention approval?

The thousands of Chickasaws are not now bound together under any form of Tribal Government. Their only Government is/^{State}Government wherever they live and United States Government. The Chickasaws constitute a very large group of individual citizens. Is it any wonder that many of them would prefer that their important affairs be acted upon by Federal Government Officials who are men of integrity-ability-experience and dependability?

Public officials are responsible to the Government, to their oaths of office and of course to the people. A Special Convention, without any sanction of law, is responsible to no one. The members of such a convention, however, well intentioned, are responsible to no one except each to himself.

We urge that all matters of importance to the many individual Chickasaws be attended to with reasonable dispatch, not by a group of Chickasaws assembled in so-called convention, but by direct action of the public officials clothed with the duty, authority and responsibility to act. This should certainly include the appointment of a Governor.

We would also urge the great difficulty of planning and conducting a fair Chickasaw Convention, that is, a convention that would fully admit every Chickasaw entitled and able to attend, but would also limit the convention to Chickasaws entitled to attend and participate. It would be necessary for some one to decide:

1. Whether the Convention should be attended only by enrolled Chickasaws, or
2. Whether to be attended by living enrolled Chickasaws and heirs of deceased enrolled Chickasaws, and if number two whether any effort should be made to check on claims of heirship, and
3. Whether an enrolled Chickasaw should be permitted to attend and bring with him his unenrolled children and each of them to have a full vote. And perhaps there might be other classifications than these three.

It seems to us to be fair to all, that if other than living enrolled Chickasaws are to be permitted to attend and participate that there should be some registration period for the registration for all who would be entitled to attend and vote, and of course all this would be expensive, and we certainly think the Federal Government and not the Chickasaws should pay all the expenses of registration and of the convention, and mileage and per diem for each delegate to the convention. That would be the least the Government could do if they desire to abrogate their authority to the convention and draw back

from their responsibility to name and appoint a Governor with whom they are to work. Furthermore, there would be no chance to get the Chickasaws to approve spending their funds for a convention.

We respectfully urge -1- That the Secretary of the Interior should follow the law and, applying his wisdom to the task, should select a competent and experienced Chickasaw Indian and appoint him Governor. -2- While we are definitely opposed to any such so-called convention which could only be attended by a small percentage of the Chickasaws, if the Secretary of the Interior should determine upon any such Convention we would be glad to help him to work out the details which would make such a convention as comprehensive and as practical as could be possible under the circumstances.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OF THE CHICKASAW NATION OF INDIANS
OF OKLAHOMA, ORGANIZED WITH MANY
YEARS OF OFFICIAL RECOGNITION BY
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Harrell Paul
Maile Rodke Bailey
Mrs Roy O. Rockwood
Lurman Thibon

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE OF THE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE