

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C.

August 8, 1946

SCHWABE COLLY

The Honorable  
Harry S. Truman  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

The 79th Congress, shortly before adjournment, passed what is ordinarily referred to as the Indian Claims Commission Bill. If this bill should become a law by your approval, as I understand the provisions of the same, you will be authorized to appoint three commissioners to function under the provisions of this Act.

As a former member of the House Committee on Indian Affairs, I had occasion to do a great deal of work in connection with the perfecting of this measure. It is a measure that is of unusual interest to the people of Oklahoma, and no less to my constituents. Approximately one-third of all the Indians in the United States live in Oklahoma, and it is estimated that approximately one-eighth of the Indians in the United States live in my Congressional District. Hence, my interest, not only in the enactment of the measure, but in the carrying out of the intent of Congress as expressed in the language of the Act.

I understand that my personal friend, William C. Lewis, a resident of Oklahoma all his life, and a Chickasaw Indian by blood, enrolled as a member of that tribe in the rolls of the Five Civilized Tribes in Oklahoma but presently a Colonel on duty at the Army Air Forces Headquarters here, may be considered by you as a possible appointee as one of the commissioners to be appointed under the provisions of this bill.

I have known Colonel Lewis fairly intimately for many years. He is qualified in every respect to fill the position to which he aspires. His services in both World Wars and in many other capacities connected with our military operations, his experience as a member of the State Senate of Oklahoma, an active practicing attorney



for the past thirty-four years except during the time he served as County Attorney, Special Assistant to the U. S. Attorney General, and U. S. District Attorney for the Western District of Oklahoma, bespeaks his qualifications. As I recall, the Act provides that the commissioners shall be duly licensed to practice in the Supreme Court of the United States. Colonel Lewis was admitted to practice in that court some eighteen years ago, and has argued cases before that court involving Indian litigation.

I am confident that, from the standpoint of ability, qualifications and character, you could not make a better appointment. I am sure the appointment would be popular, and would reflect credit upon your administration.

Respectfully yours,

George B. Schwabe, D. C.

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I - Indian Background

- A. Born on November 15, 1891, in Ardmore, Chickasaw Nation, Indian Territory.
- B. Son of Judge Isaac Overton Lewis, a member of the Chickasaw Indian tribe, who served as Attorney General and Supreme Court Justice of the Chickasaw Nation. Judge Lewis was one of the signatories of the famous Atoka Agreement.
- C. A member of the Chickasaw Indian tribe by blood and enrolled on the Chickasaw Rolls (number 2067).
- D. Educated at Harley Institute, a Government Indian school at Tishomingo, Indian Territory. Advanced schooling at the University of Oklahoma.
- E. Presently a Member of the Chickasaw Tribal Council of Three - the Executive Advisory Council to the Governor of the Chickasaws.
- F. An adopted member of the Sioux Indian tribe of the Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota.

II - Public and Professional Career

- A. Admitted to, and member in good standing, of the bar of the Supreme Court of the United States for more than 18 years. Has argued cases before that Court, including cases involving Indian matters.
- B. Has held the public positions in Oklahoma of (1) County Attorney, (2) State Senator, (3) Assistant Attorney General, (4) Special Assistant to the Attorney General of the United States, and (5) United States Attorney.
- C. Service as State Senator included that of Chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee of the Oklahoma State Senate.
- D. As First Assistant Attorney General of Oklahoma, all Indian matters of the State were under his cognizance.
- E. Service as Special Assistant to the U. S. Attorney General on Indian Land Matters included the handling of the Jackson Barnett case.



- F. As United State Attorney for the Western District of Oklahoma, he handled cases involving the affairs of the following Indian tribes: Arapahos, Comanches, Kaws, Kiowas, Osages, Pawnees, Poncas, and others.

III - Military Service Record

- A. Enlisted man in World War I.
- B. Commissioned a Captain, Judge Advocate General, Reserve, in 1925. Transferred to Air Corps Reserve in 1933.
- C. National President of Air Reserve Officers in 1938.
- D. Five years active duty in World War II and emergency period. Senior Pilot and Colonel. Graduate of Command and General Staff School. Commanded several air bases and establishments, including training bases, tactical bases, and personnel distribution stations.
- E. Presently the Executive Director of the Air Reserve Association.

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