

## Background

In 1803, the U.S. acquired the Louisiana Territory. After the War of 1812, most of the Indian tribes in the northern part of the U.S. were re-settled in a part of Louisiana called Indian Territory. In 1830, the Indian Removal Act was passed. It gave the President the power to negotiate treaties with the Indian tribes in the southern part of the U.S. that would re-settle them in Indian Territory. By 1835, all but the Cherokees had signed such treaties and moved. In that year, some Cherokee signed the Treaty of New Etocha agreeing to move. But more than 90% of the Cherokee would not go.

## Move the Cherokee to Indian Territory By "Jack Andrews"

The Cherokee who are not willing to live under Georgia law must move to Indian Territory. If they will not go peacefully, we must send the U.S. Army to move them.

Why is this so controversial? Their leaders already signed the Treaty of New Etocha in which they agreed to move.

We should also remember that these Indians have waged war on America since 1775. Let's not forget what they did during the American Revolution and the War of 1812. In 1776, the Cherokees ravaged American settlements in North and South Carolina, killing men, women and children. In many cases their victims were scalped alive and even burned at the stake.

In one incident during the War of 1812, the Creek Indians massacred more than 300 men, women and children when they captured Fort Mims in Alabama. Now, the Indians of the southwest want to be treated like their side won those wars.

Given this history, the U.S. government is being very generous. It set aside more than 70,000 square miles of land in Louisiana Territory for Indians. This is bigger than the entire state of Georgia. It is estimated that there are no more than 50,000 Indians in the southwest, which represents more than one square mile per person.

And, it is good land, on the banks of two major rivers that join the Mississippi River.

The Choctaw, Creek and Chickasaw agreed to treaties and moved years ago. In fact, the Chickasaw kept most of their personal property, including their horses, and earned money from the sale of their old land even though the U.S. government gave them the new land for free. The Cherokee also received good deal. Not only were they given the land in Indian Territory for free, but they were also given \$5 million.

It is also important to note that those who do not want to go are allowed to stay. They must simply be willing to live under the laws of Georgia or move to another state and live under its laws.

Some argue that we should allow the Cherokee who want to stay behind to continue to govern themselves. But this ignores reality. The people of Georgia will eventually take the Cherokee land by force. This may be wrong, but is the U.S. government really going to risk a civil war to protect the land of a people who have been our enemies in two wars?

The solution that is most beneficial to the Cherokees who want to live under their own government is to move them to land west of the Mississippi River.

## Allow the Cherokee To Stay By "Joan Marshall"

The Cherokee lived in what is now northern Georgia more than one hundred years before the Georgians arrived. They created a real nation with its own written language, printing press and newspaper. They have a productive agricultural economy, with an iron working industry. And, they have a government modeled after the U.S. with a written constitution and elections.

The Cherokee do not want to move. And, who can blame them? The Choctaw and Creek were treated horrendously when they moved to the Indian Territory. Their horses were stolen and hundreds died from disease and malnutrition on the journey.

In the case of *Worcester vs. Georgia (1832)*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the state of Georgia couldn't force the Cherokee off of their land. President Jackson should uphold the Constitution and the treaties signed between the U.S. and the Cherokee. He should send U.S. troops to prevent Georgians from taking Cherokee land.

The argument that such an action would risk civil war is nonsense. Three years ago, South Carolina threatened to secede because the U.S. government passed a tariff that South Carolina considered too high. President Jackson did not back down just because he was afraid South

Carolina might secede. He threatened to send troops to enforce the law. You can't let bad people blackmail good people.

It is also ridiculous to make the Cherokee leave because they supported Britain during the Revolution. America has an abysmal record in dealing with Native Americans. We have broken treaties and cheated them in trades. Who can blame some of them for helping the British? Even more important, the Revolution was more than 60 years ago. Few, if any Cherokees who fought then are still alive today. And, the Cherokee actually fought on the side of the U.S. during the War of 1812. In fact, several were commissioned as officers in the U.S. Army during that war.

Finally, it is silly to make them leave because a few chiefs signed the Treaty of New Etocha. The legitimate, elected government did not sign that treaty. How would Americans react if a couple hundred people signed a treaty giving the country away to Mexico for \$5 million? The fact that less than 10% of the Cherokee have moved to Indian Territory shows how little support the treaty has.

The right thing to do is not always the popular thing to do. In this case, defending the Cherokee is the right thing to do.