

WHEREAS, The Chief Executives of the Five Civilized Tribes in Convention at Eufaula, Indian Territory, May 21, 1903, recommended that the General Council of each Nation authorize the Chief Executive to issue a proclamation calling an election to determine whether or not the legal voters of each Nation are in favor of an international Constitutional Convention, to frame a Constitution for a state government for Indian Territory alone, to become effective when the several Tribal Governments expire March 4, 1906; and,

WHEREAS, The Chief Executives further recommended that said election be held not later than December 20, 1903, and that the election be held in the same manner as other elections are held with the exception that the votes cast in each nation be certified by the precinct officers and forwarded to the Chief Executive, and that the Chief Executives of the Five Civilized Tribes constitute a Board of Commissioners who shall canvass and count the votes cast in each Nation and issue proclamation of the result not later than January 4, 1904; and,

WHEREAS, The best interests of the members of the Five Civilized Tribes demand that the said election shall be favorable to the said constitutional Convention to the end that the Indians may have a voice in the formation of the government that will succeed their several tribal governments thereby protecting their property interests; and,

WHEREAS, The said Eufaula convention appointed a committee of five persons (one from each Nation) whose duty it is to make all arrangements for the said election and to acquaint the Indians of the several tribes with the importance of holding the said convention; and,

WHEREAS, The said committee will incur heavy expenses in printing literature in English and in the several Indian languages and Distributing the same among the members of the Tribes, among members of Congress, and among the several organizations outside of Indian Territory whose cooperation is invited; now therefore,

BE IT ENACTED

BY THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE CHOCTAW NATION IN REGULAR SESSION ASSEMBLED



TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

We, your Memorialist, the General Council of the Choctaw Nation in regular session assembled, realizing that the Indians of the Five Civilized Tribes, namely, the Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks, Cherokees and Seminoles must soon discontinue their tribal relations and assume the responsibilities of United States citizenship; and knowing that the Indians of the Five Tribes would be more fully protected in their property holdings, and therefore better satisfied with their new surroundings if permitted to have a hand in shaping the policy of the Government that succeeds their tribal governments; and knowing that the Indians would have more influence in the organization of a state formed out of Indian Territory than they would have if a state were formed by the union of Indian Territory and Oklahoma, hereby adopt the recommendations of the Chief Executives of the Five Civilized Tribes issued in convention at Eufaula, Indian Territory, May 21, 1903.

This convention was the outcome of a meeting held by the Indians of the Five Tribes at the same place November 28, 1902, when they protested against any legislation by Congress whose object was the annexation of the Indian Territory to Oklahoma or a territorial form of Government prior to March 4, 1906.

The Indians desire a state formed out of the Indian Territory at the expiration of their several tribal governments, in order that they may incorporate in the constitution a provision prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors. A prohibition clause could not be embodied in a constitution for a state formed by the union of Indian Territory and Oklahoma, because Oklahoma is now a saloon Territory.

It is well known that the political, civil, and religious conditions of the Indians in the territory of Oklahoma are seriously affected by the liquor traffic, which is nowhere more arrogant than in Oklahoma. The extension of the liquor business over the Indian Territory is earnestly desired by the wholesale liquor dealers of the United States. The daily



papers of the middle west have published the statement that the wholesale liquor dealers have already pooled their interests and arranged to maintain a strong lobby in Washington until the Indian Territory is made a part of Oklahoma. The Choctaw people are inclined to morality and religion; yet, if exposed to the liquor influence of Oklahoma, our present high standard of morality and religion will be lowered.

It is also reported that all the great Railroad Corporations, whose lines traverse the Indian Territory desire the annexation of Indian Territory to Oklahoma, and that they will have a strong lobby in Washington to work for that purpose.

The Treaty of 1830, under which this territory was segregated from the public domain of the United States as a continuing home for the Choctaw people, solemnly guaranteed:

"That no part of the lands granted them shall ever be embraced in any territory or state."

The Atoka Agreement of 1897, ratified by Act of Congress June 30, 1898, commonly called the "Curtis Act", after providing that the tribal Governments, as modified by that instrument, should continue until March 4, 1906, says:

"This stipulation is made in the belief that the tribal Governments so modified will prove so satisfactory that there will be no need or desire for further change until the lands now occupied by the Five Civilized Tribes shall, in the opinion of Congress, be prepared for admission as a state to the Union"

Again, the United States Government has maintained the strictest laws prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors within the Indian Territory. The agreement of 1897, and the Act of Congress of 1898, above referred to, contains that law:

"The United States agrees to maintain strict laws in the territory of the Choctaw and Chickasaw tribes against the introduction, sale, barter or giving away of liquor and intoxicants of any kind or quality".

Practically the same provision appears in the agreement with each of the Five Tribes. This protection was claimed by the Indians and was readily assented to by the Commissioners on the part of the United States, and enacted into law by Congress. **UNION WITH OKLAHOMA AS A STATE MEANS A TOTAL DISREGARD OF THESE PLEDGES AND THAT PROTECTION,**



Section 7 of the said resolutions of the Chief Executives provides for the co-operation of the non-citizens of the Indian Territory. The Indians are not ignoring the non-citizens in this movement; they are soliciting their co-operation and are assured of their hearty support.

The Five Tribes do not base their appeal for a separate state solely on the pledges of the United States Government. The area, population, mineral resources and fertile soil entitle them to a state for their Territory.

In area the Indian Territory is:

	29	times as large as Rhode Island,
	16	" Delaware,
	6	" Connecticut,
	4	" New Jersey,
(almost)	4	" Massachusetts,
	3	" New Hampshire,
	3	" Vermont,
	3	" Maryland.

Indian Territory has 6,000 square miles more than West Virginia, 1,500 square miles more than Maine; 1,200 square miles more than South Carolina, is practically the size of Indiana, and is four fifths the size of either Ohio, Kentucky, Virginia, or Tennessee.

The Choctaw Nation alone is larger than either Rhode Island, Delaware, Connecticut, New Jersey, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, or Maryland.

According to the census of 1900 the population of Indian Territory was 392,060, which exceeded the population of 8 states and 5 territories, namely:

9	times that of Nevada,
6	" Alaska,
4	" Wyoming,
3	" Arizona,
2	" Hawaii Territory.



2 times that of Delaware,  
2 " Idaho,  
2 " New Mexico,

Indian Territory had a population of:

148,000 more than Montana,  
113,000 " District of Columbia,  
115,000 " Utah,  
72,000 " North Dakota.

The population of Indian Territory in 1900 was greater than that of Nevada, Idaho, Wyoming, and Alaska combined. Since the last census, emigration to Indian Territory has been enormous, and it is safe to say that the present population exceeds that of either Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Washington, Colorado, Florida, or New Hampshire.

In natural resources the Indian Territory is not surpassed by any state in the Union. Oil and natural gas have been developed in each of the Five Nations, but on account of the holding of lands in common have not been operated. The Same condition obtains with reference to lead, zinc, iron, and other minerals. The coal and asphalt deposits of the Indian Territory are superior to those of any state in the Southwest. The coal industry is but in its infancy; and yet the annual report of the United States Mine Inspector for the year ended June 30, 1903, will show that during that year more than three million tons of coal were mined in the Choctaw Nation alone. In each of the other Nations are extensive fields of coal which are being rapidly developed and operated. In the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations approximately four hundred and forty-four thousand acres of coal and asphalt land have been reserved from allotment. These lands will be sold at public auction to the highest bidder, in six hundred and forty and nine hundred and sixty acre tracts.

The Indian Territory has the most productive soil, four-fifths of which may be profitably farmed. Two fifths have never been touched by the plow. Wheat, oats, corn and cotton and most any product of the soil



may be grown here. Crop failures are unknown.

Citizens of the Five Civilized Tribes have been prominent in the upbuilding of Indian Territory and are to-day foremost in all enterprises for its permanent development. Proof of this is that, of the board of seven Commissioners selected to co-operate with the Interior Department in the management of the Indian Territory exhibit at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, five are citizens of the Five Civilized Tribes.

The Citizens of the Five Tribes are qualified to organize a state government, and the Choctaws through their General Council ask that they be permitted to carry out the plans of the Chief Executives. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE CHOCTAW NATION, IN  
REGULAR SESSION ASSEMBLED.

Section 1. That we most earnestly and respectfully request that the Congress of the United States fulfill the sacred pledges made to the Indians of the Five Tribes and permit them and the non-citizens to organize a state out of the lands now occupied by the Five Civilized Tribes at the expiration of the several tribal governments.

Section 2. That we emphatically protest against any legislation by Congress providing for the annexation of Indian Territory to Oklahoma either in whole or in part or for a Territorial form of government for Indian Territory either now or hereafter.

Section 3. The National Secretary is hereby instructed to furnish certified copies of this memorial to the Chairman of the Five Civilized Tribes Committee, who is directed to forward copies to the President and Secretary of the Interior with the request that the latter transmit the same to Congress.

Section 4. These resolutions take effect and be in force from and after passage and approval.

*Proposed by Peter Benson, Chairman  
Chief's Message Committee*



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Bill No 18

Read, interrupted and laid over for further consideration. This Oct. 22-1903.

James Bower  
Pres. of Senate

Attest  
J. W. Cowser  
Rec. Secy

Read, interrupted, passed the Senate, & Referred to the Lower house, This 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct. 1903.

James Bower  
Pres. of Senate

Attest  
J. W. Cowser

Rec Secy  
approved this the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of October. 1903

Green McCurtain  
Principal Chief  
Choctaw Nation

Received in House  
Oct 23 1903

Edward M. Wilson  
1903  
Secretary of the Choctaw Nation

Ministerial to the  
Choctaw Nation

R. J. Ward  
Secretary

Read in front  
of the House  
Oct 23 1903