

THE INDIAN CITIZEN

Atoka, Indian Territory
Thursday, June 13, 1903
Vol. 18 No. 7
G. M'Pherson, D. M. Hailey, Editors

LETTER OF L. W. OAKES TO GREEN McCURTAIN

Hugo, I. T., June 9, 1903.

Hon. Green McCurtain,

Sans Bois, I. T.,

Dear Governor:

Since you have had my letter published without consulting me about the matter, I ask that you have all of them published. Now I have only contended for my pro rata share of this land, which I, as a citizen of this country, have a perfect right to contend for; which I claim that you nor the commission have a right to withhold from me. This you can not deny, because there is nothing in the treaty that gives you this right. You claim that you knew about those agricultural land deals being on, and that you had advised the people against making such deals, and that you had asked the Secretary of the Interior to assist you in preventing these

deals from holding good. This being the fact you must have advised the commission about these deals, and then as a matter of fact, knew what was going on. Now, if you and the commission had any legal right to hold up the pine lands from allotment -- because, as you say, the incompetent Indians are being robbed of their holdings -- why don't you ask the commission to hold up the agricultural lands for the same reason, that the Indian is being robbed of the best lands in the country? The rest of the timbered lands, including oak, ash and walnut, seem to have been passed up by you and the commission. It seems very strange that you would summon all the forces at your command to prevent the people who had gone into the pine region long before the supplementary agreement was made, from allotting on the lands of their choice. What causes all this excitement? Echo answers back, too much fine timber for common Indian to own. When the

Atoka agreement was made the leased district was the hidden mystery sought for. When the supplementary agreement was made the coal lands was the picture on the wall that was gazed upon. The pine lands was lost sight of by its framers, until some Indian woke up from his sleep and declared that to be the next best thing in sight. The coal lands are beyond the reach of a poor man, and can not be allotted by any Indian, but the pine lands appraised at 25 to 87c per

acre, and the timber appraised at 50c per thousand feet, the common Indian looks up and says: "I will take a little of that, it is good enough for me," He goes about looking up the numbers of his section and range, and sends them to the commission and they send him a plat for his land with the appraised value of the timber upon his allotment. He takes that plat of the land office at a great expense to him to file on it as his property, as the treaty provides for, and what does he hear? "Go back home, you are not competent to make your filing on that land," But when the agricultural man comes along, leaning on the arm of his leaser, he is asked the usual questions and is promptly filed and is told to follow his leaser and fear no more.

Very truly yours,

L. W. OAKES.

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