

THE INDIAN CITIZEN

Atoka, Indian Territory
Thursday, June 18, 1903
Vol. 18 No. 6
G. M'Pherson, D. M. Hailey, Editors

PLATFORM OF TUSKAHOMA PARTY

The delegates of the Tuskahoma party, in national convention at Tuskahoma, Choctaw Nation, Indian Territory, June 16, 1903, declare as follows:

1. We pledge the Tuskahoma party to an economical administration of public affairs, and guaranteed that its legislation will be for the best interests of all the people. We will at all times insist upon the United States government complying strictly with our treaties.

2. We re-affirm our approval of the supplementary agreement and congratulate the Choctaw people upon its ratification. It insures to them a prompt and honorable settlement of all tribal affairs. Before its ratification, our rolls included the "court citizens," and the burden and expense of disproving their claims to citizenship rested upon the Choctaw Nation. The supplementary agreement gave us the citizenship court, without cost to the Choctaw people, and all good citizens now rejoice that the decision of that court on

December 17, 1902, removed the "court citizens" from our rolls and placed the burden and expense of proving their claims upon the "court citizens."

3. We call attention to the recent petition of the attorneys of the "court Citizens" filed in the supreme court of the United States, asking for an order restraining the citizenship court from further trial of citizenship cases. The supreme court on June 1, 1903, denied their petition, and the citizenship court is now daily trying the cases of "court citizens" at South McAlester, as provided in the supplementary agreement.

4. We endorse the action of Governor McCurtain in withdrawing our timber lands from allotment until all questions concerning them are settled. He was prompted to take this step by numerous complaints from citizens in the timber districts, and in doing so, has furnished additional proof of his determination to safeguard the interests of the people at all times. Our timber lands are growing more valuable each year. The timber speculators, realizing this fact, were using questionable methods to get possession of our timber at prices far below its market value. A great wrong was about to be done the Choctaw people. Governor McCurtain prevented that wrong by having the department of the interior temporarily withdraw our timber lands from allotment. The timber lands

will be allotted to our citizens, but not until all complaints of questionable transactions have been investigated and the conditions of allotting them have been made such that every allottee will be protected in his right to sell his timber for its market value.

5. We favor the early approval by the secretary of the interior of the rolls of intermarried citizens of the Choctaw nation, as provided in the supplementary agreement; and if the said rolls are not approved by the time of the assembling of our next general council, we pledge ourselves to have our general council next October memorialize the secretary of the interior to hasten the approval and return of such rolls.

6. We believe steps should be taken to assist our citizens in locating and platting their allotments. At a special session of the general council in December, 1902, upon the recommendation of Governor McCurtain, an act was passed providing for the appointment of three allotting commissioners for each district of the Choctaw nation. Many of our citizens are unacquainted with the methods of locating land according to the United States government survey, and the duty of these commissioners was to go into the several counties and assist citizens in locating their allotments. The act was disapproved by the president of

the United States, because it was thought that the work of these commissioners would interfere with the work of the Dawes commission. It is now well understood by the department that such commissioners will render valuable assistance to our citizens and will hasten the work of the Dawes commission. The president of the United States will now approve an act appointing the commissioners, and we pledge the passage of such an act by our next council.

7. The efficient and patriotic administration of Governor McCurtain meets our warmest approval, and we take pleasure in publicly declaring our confidence in his purpose to fearlessly administer our laws and faithfully guard the interests of all our citizens.

8. Believing, as we do, that our policies are for the best interests of all the people, we invite all citizens to co-operate with us in carrying forward our policies.

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