

*“The Tushkahoma Party favor the payment
of Townsite Money.”*

PER CAPITA PAYMENTS

The question of per capita payments is one in which the Choctaw people feel a deep interest. And it is proper that they should, for the money to be paid is realized from the sale of property that belonged to them. The time of these payments is fixed by the Atoka agreement. No payment will be made except as that agreement directs.

The money the Choctaw people think they should now receive is that realized from lots sold in towns under the Atoka Agreement, commonly called “Townsite Money.” That portion of the Atoka Agreement touching on the payment of Townsite Money is as follows:

“The money paid into the United States treasury for the sale of town lots shall be for the bene-

fit of the members of the Choctaw and Chickasaw Tribes, (freedmen excepted), and at the end of each year thereafter, the funds so accumulated shall be divided and paid to the Choctaws and Chickasaws, (freedmen excepted), each member of the two tribes to receive an equal portion thereof."

But the payment cannot be made "to each member of the two tribes" as contemplated by the Atoka Agreement, until it has been definitely decided who are members of the tribes.

The law first empowered the Dawes commission to make our rolls of citizenship. The Dawes Commission rejected many people: Congress then empowered the United States courts to determine, upon appeal, the rights of persons whose cases were decided by the Dawes Commission. These courts admitted to citizenship a large number of persons who were rejected by the Dawes Commission. The Choctaw Nation has continuously contested the citizenship of these persons, and finally induced Congress to give us the Citizenship Court, whose duty it is to re-try the cases of all "court citizens". The burden of proving their citizenship is now on the "court citizens", and it will not be known what per centage of them are members of the tribes until the Citizenship Court decides their cases.

The Dawes Commission is now trying the cases of persons whose citizenship is in doubt. The truth is, it will not be known who are "members of the Choctaw and Chickasaw Tribes" until the Citizenship Court has decided the cases of all "court citizens", and the Dawes Commission has settled the cases of all doubtful citizens.

Under the law the Citizenship Court must complete its work by Dec. 31, 1904. By that time the Dawes Commission will have decided the cases of all doubtful citizens. JANUARY 1, 1905, OUR ROLLS OF CITIZENSHIP WILL BE COMPLETED, AND THE TOWNSITE MONEY WILL BE PAID.

If the townsite money were paid before the cases of the "court citizens" were decided, they

would demand their share. When refused they would petition the United States Courts to stop the payment until their citizenship rights were settled, and judging from experience, it is safe to say that the courts would grant their petition, thus stopping the payment.

And again, it must be remembered that the United States Government is bearing all expenses of settling our tribal affairs. The expenses of a per capita payment would fall upon the United States Government. If the townsite money were paid now to those whose citizenship is not questioned, the United States Government would have to make another payment as soon as the rights of the "court citizens" were settled, provided, of course, that any of these persons should be admitted to citizenship.

The Choctaw Protective Party in their platform say:

"We are in favor of the immediate per capita payment of all moneys now due and payable to the Choctaw people."

Mark the language! They do not pledge themselves to make efforts to have the United States Government pay the townsite money at any certain time. THE TOWNSITE MONEY CAN BE PAID ONLY AS THE LAW DIRECTS. The fact that the Choctaw Protective Party favor an immediate payment will not change the law.

The Tushkahoma Party favor the payment of our townsite money as soon as it can be paid. We prove this statement by what we have done. At the extra session of our General Council in December, 1902, the Tushkahoma Party addressed a memorial to the Secretary of the Interior, requesting him to make a payment of townsite money to our citizens at the land office. He did not favorably consider the memorial, because the rolls of our citizens were not yet completed. It is impossible to get the United States government to make the payment until our rolls are completed. The Tushkahoma Party, realizing this

fact, makes no attempt to MISLEAD the people by telling them that these payments can be made sooner than the law provides.

The Commissioners who made the Atoka Agreement could not foresee the difficulties that would arise in making our rolls of citizenship. They bele ved that our rolls would be completed within a year after the ratification of the agreement. Believing thus they naturally concluded that the townsite money could be paid each year; but remember, fellow citizens, our townsite money can not be paid until it is absolutely known who are the rightful persons to whom it should be paid.

The Tushkahoma party, pointing to the efforts it has made to have our townsite money paid, assures you that it is ever watchful of your interests and that as soon as it is possible to make this payment it will promptly and vigorously insist upon tho United States Government doing so.

In the meantime the administration of Governor McCurtain deserves, and should receive, your earnest support in its efforts to solve the many difficult questions that daily arise in the enforcement of the Atoka and the Supplementary Agreement. The candidates of the Tushkahoma Party are George W. Scott for National Treasurer; E. H. Wilson for National Secretary; P. J. Hudson for National Auditor; and C. S. Vinson for National Attorney. The men who are called by the people to fill these responsible positions will be a part of the administration of Governor McCurtain, and you cannot better aid and encourage that administration than by going to the polls on Wednesday, August 5, next, and voting for the candidates of the Tushkaboma Party.

Executive Committee
Tushkahoma Party.

{ D. C. McCURTAIN,
W. H. ANSLEY,
W. A. SHONEY,
WILL HARRISON.

South McAlester, I. T., July 14, 1903.