

Department of the Interior
Washington D C

Feb 27th 1884

The Commissioner
of Indian Affairs 3

Sir

I am in receipt of yours of the 6th inst in relation to the contested election for the position of principal Chief of the Muscogee Nation of Indians, and all the papers submitted by the parties in interest, and the reports of Inspector Benedict and special agent Townsend, relation to the same.

After a careful consideration of the facts and arguments presented by attorneys representing Perryman and Espahche and also of the statements of members or citizens of the Nation, including that of Chesole the retiring Chief, I have reached the conclusion that Perryman should be recognized as the principal Chief of the Muscogee Nation. — I have reached this conclusion for the following reasons:

1st That on the day when the factions or parties agreed to vote for principal Chief, Perryman received a plurality of the

votes cast.

In this connection I am convinced that the words "majority" and "plurality" are synonymous ones as understood and used by the Muscogee people.

In each case the meaning is something equivalent to "ahead" or "to come out ahead." If the day upon which the election for principal Chief was held was not the legally established day for that purpose it was at least accepted as such by nearly the whole voting population of the nation and it would be transcending propriety for this Department to interpose objection on the ground that the votes were not polled on the proper day.

and Perryman was recognized by the Council and was sworn in by the Chief Justice of the nation. This Council was composed of adherents of the different parties, and I believe the majority of the members were opposed to Perryman.

It is true that Isabahche was recognized by a subsequent Council - which, under the Muscogee laws, had nothing to do with the counting of the votes of that election - and was sworn in -

This was without authority planned, and cannot operate to nullify the expression of the will of the people of the Nation on the first Monday of September, the authorization recognition of Ceryman as principal Chief and the due administration of the oath of office to him as such.

There is much in the case that might be discussed, but hardly to advantage, inasmuch as I consider that the two points above referred to are conclusive in the matter.

You are directed to recognize Ceryman as principal Chief of the Muskege or Creek Nation and to instruct the U.S. agent to announce this fact, and in all official acts to give due effect to the views herein expressed.

Very respectfully,

H. M. Teller

Secretary

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