

Sophia C. Pitchlynn
6104 1/2th St. N. W.

by J. T. Cochran

Copy

Washington August 14th 1865.

Dear Col:

Your letter was received some time since, and I would have written sooner, but did not know how to get a letter to you.

A certain opportunity now offers, through the Commissioners who leave here in a few days to hold a grand council, at Fort Smith, with the Southwestern Indians.

I was very glad, indeed to hear from you - that you had survived, through great trials, to see vindicated your own principles of loyalty; and to triumph over your enemies and persecutors.

I am sorry you connected Pike's name with mine in your invitation to attend the Council, which you stated you had called; for, to say nothing of his having been a conspicuous rebel against the government, I can never again regard him as a friend of the Indians. I tried, all in my power, when the troubles seemed to be coming, to induce him to use his influence, which was then great

with both the Indians and leading Southern men, to get the South to let the former stand and permit them to remain quiet and to use his influence with them to induce them to do so. He pursued a directly opposite course - becoming the active agent of the rebel government in seducing the Indians from their allegiance, and, worse still, ~~and~~ raising and heading an Indian force to fight against us. They had no worse enemy than he; and his and my relations must be of a very different character hereafter, from what they were formerly.

I regret that it will not be in my power to attend the Council. I should much like to be there. As to the policy of the government and what will be required of the Indians, I am unable to say anything. The views and determination of the authorities are known only to them and the Commissioners appointed by them to hold the Council. This I will say, however, that I have no doubt, whatever, that on all the main points to be settled with the Indians the government has come to a determination that will be inflexible; and that the Indians

impossible to keep involves no responsibility. After the war commenced the Indians themselves aided in preventing the government from furnishing them protection against the Southern rebels, by becoming rebels themselves and taking up arms against it. After the withdrawal of the U.S. troops in 1861 there may have been some justification in the Indians coming to some understanding with the rebel authorities, but there is certainly no valid excuse for their taking up arms against the United States.

Notwithstanding they have put themselves so much in the wrong, however, I have no idea that the government intends to deal with them in any vindictive or unkind spirit. I feel confident that what the Commissioners will ask them to agree to, will be nothing more than right and just under the circumstances; and I hope that, as a true and loyal man, you will, as far as you can, yield a ready assent to the views and propositions of the Commissioners, and that you will induce all others whom

will have to submit, and they had better do this quietly, if not cheerfully, than to attempt to resist or to hold out in opposition, and so occasion delay and trouble, and, in the end, fare far worse. The government shows great kindness in sending a commission of able and upright men to counsel with them; when it might dictate terms, and compel the Indians to abide by them. The whole business might be settled by a proclamation of the President; but the government is not disposed to pursue a harsh or unkind course. I know there have been a number of good and loyal men, like yourself, among the different tribes, to whom all honor and credit are due, but, with reference to their conduct during the past four years, and what shall be their relations to the government hereafter, it has to look upon and consider them as tribes. It will not do for them to plead innocence, because the government withdrew the United States troops from the Indian country at the commencement of hostilities. This it was compelled to do, and an unkept pledge or promise, which it was