

HEAD QUARTERS, ARMY
CHEROKEE NATION, NEW
ECHOTA, GA. March 22nd, 1837.

CHEROKEES:

It is nearly a year since I first arrived in this country. I then informed you of the objects of my coming among you. I told you that a treaty had been made with your people, and that your country was to be given up to the United States by the 25th May, 1838, a (little more than a year from this time,) when you would all be compelled to remove to the West. I also told you, if you would submit to the terms of the treaty I would protect you in your persons and property, at the same time I would furnish provisions and clothing to the poor and destitute of the Nation. You would not listen, but turned a deaf ear to my advice. You preferred the counsel of those who were opposed to the treaty. They told you, what was not true, that your people had made no treaty with the United States, and that you would be able to retain your lands, and would not be obliged to remove to the West, the place designated for your new homes. Be no longer deceived by such advice! It is not only untrue, but if listened to, may lead to your utter ruin. The President, as well as Congress, have decreed that you should remove from this country. The people of Georgia, of North Carolina, of Tennessee and of Alabama, have decreed it. Your fate is decided; and if you do not voluntarily get ready and go by the time fixed in the treaty, you will then be forced from this country by the soldiers of the United States.

Under such circumstances what will be your condition? Deplorable in the extreme! Instead of the benefits now presented to you by the treaty, of receiving pay for the improvements of your lands, your houses, your cornfields and your ferries, and for all the property unjustly taken from you by the white people, and at the same time, blankets, clothing and provisions for the poor, you will be driven from the country, and without a cent to support you on your arrival at your new homes. You will in vain flee to your mountains for protection. Like the Creeks, you will be hunted up and dragged from your lurking places and hurried to the West. I would ask, are you prepared for such scenes? I trust not. Yet such will be your fate if you persist in your present determination.

Cherokees: I have not come among you to oppress

you, but to protect you and to see that justice is done you, as guaranteed by the treaty. Be advised, and turn a deaf ear to those who would induce you to believe that no treaty has been made with you, and that you will not be obliged to leave your country. They cannot be friends, but the worst of enemies. Their advice, if followed, will lead to your certain destruction. The President has said that a treaty has been made with you, and must be executed agreeably to its terms. The President never changes.

Therefore, take my advice: It is the advice of a friend, who would tell you the truth, and who feels deeply interested in your welfare, and who will do every thing in his power to relieve, protect and secure to you the benefits of the treaty. And why not abandon a country no longer yours? Do you not see the white people daily coming into it, driving you from your homes and possessing your houses, your cornfields and your ferries? Hitherto I have been able in some degree, to protect you from their intrusions; in a short time it will no longer be in my power. If, however, I could protect you, you could not live with them. Your habits, your manners and your customs are unlike, and unsuited to theirs. They have no feelings, no sympathies in common with yourselves. Leave then this country, which after the 25th May 1838, can afford you no protection! and remove to the country designated for your new homes, which is secured to you and your children forever; and where you may live under your own laws, and the customs of your fathers, without intrusion or molestation from the white man. It is a country much better than the one you now occupy; where you can grow more corn, and where game is more abundant. Think seriously of what I say to you! Remember that you have but one summer more to plant corn in this country. Make the best use of this time, and dispose of your property to the best advantage. Go and settle with the Commissioners, and with the emigrating Agent, Gen. Smith, receive the money due for your improvements, your houses, your cornfields and ferries, and for the property which has been unjustly taken from you by the whitemen, and at the appointed time be prepared to remove. In the mean time, if you will apply to me or my Agents, I will cause rations, blankets and clothing to be furnished to the poor and destitute of your people.

John E. Wool
Maj. Genl
Comd