

Kissimmee, Fla., March 10, 1916:

Mrs. W. B. Young, Director,
General Federation of Women's Clubs,
Ortega Boulevard,
Ortega, Fla.

My dear Mrs. Young:

I wrote you a week or two ago, simply to give you a little information -- not expecting you to reply to that. In answer to this letter, I would be glad to have a few lines from you; as I know that any advice or suggestions would be most valuable.

I have learned from two sources, by letters, neither of which can be disputed, that our State F. W. Y. C. President took occasion at the Reciprocity Meeting at Tampa -- where I presume I have more friends than any place in the State, because the Tampa press have used all my writing, and socially I have been entertained there extensively, and I have also been before the Tampa Women's Club on two occasions--- As I started to say, our President -- "as an afterthought" -- took up the subject of the Resolutions of the Seminoles, disparaged my work in saying that she was not in favor of "giving worthless lands" (the Seminoles say nothing about worthless lands.) She made some false statements regarding Seminole history. In fact, she said she was "up in the air", and "she is afraid that we will get in trouble with the United States Government."

For your benefit, I will say that I am working directly with the United States Government and with the heads of the Departments -- not assistants or clerks. Through the Recording Secretary of the National Indian Rights Association, they have sent me work that they are fighting my battles; and these men who recently visited the Everglades in company with Mr. Willson to look into actual conditions, brought copies of some Florida proceedings direct to me.

I want to tell you that I hold now a typewritten copy of a Seminole land bill dated 1899, which would have granted the Seminoles a large area of territory. In this bill there is a "joker", which I am quoting:

"Provided that nothing in this act shall be construed so as to make the State of Florida or the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund of the State of Florida liable to make good the title of any lands embraced in this act that have heretofore been conveyed or certified to any person, persons, or corporations."

In lead pencil at the head of this bill is written for my benefit, "not located." This bill was gotten up to please the people of Florida, no doubt, but when they

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Mrs. W.B.Y.

went to look for the lands, they were in the possession of a "person, persons, or corporation." I have just called up a lawyer in our town this morning who knows all that country and who worked with our ex-Governor in times past. (I think he is not friendly now) --and these lands lie rather close to Royal Palm Hammock. I am not saying who is the possessor of this vast area, as men who would make an investigation in the Everglades say that every detail has been covered up with much discretion, and our ex-Governor's name does not appear. The lands are under the title of some corporation. For instance: Florida Land Company, Model Land Company, or some such title. I do not remember exactly what.

Sometimes you know, Mrs. Young, the cauldron may be boiling hot, but a very small fire held at a proper distance could remove the lid.

I would not lose a friend in the F. E. W. C., and yet I cannot afford to be misrepresented when I know what I am talking about, and could make an expose if I wanted to create an explosion. For the sake of my friends and such women as you who have stood so valiantly for me in my work, I am trying to keep calm.

What is your advice? Do you think I had better resign from the Seminole Committee, as I have no voice in it?

Write me at your earliest convenience. With best wishes, I am

Sincerely and cordially yours,

MMW-RP