

Kissimmee, Fla., March 14, 1916.

Mr. Joseph K. Griffith, (Tahan)
1660 East 79 St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Dr. Griffith:

I was much pleased to receive your letter and to know that you are so deeply interested in the cause of the Seminoles. They need your influence more than ever before.

I am truly glad that you are going to meet the Secretary of the Interior, Hon. Franklin Lane. I have been reading with much interest his wonderful writings of the Indian problem for the last two or three years. I do not know whether he knows of the amount of work that I have been doing. I wish that he did.

In the office, you may meet -- unless he has left -- Mr. Robert S. Yard, who was one of the publishers of my book; and he is keen in the interest of the Seminoles.

I am enclosing you an article that I prepared and have read before the club women of the state. But alas! only one newspaper has independence enough to publish it, as our Florida papers are very much under the influence of the political ring.

This article is a real thing. It is a fact that the whites are doing and are doing it in a way that is not only the Indians, but the whites as well. You will then be able to talk to Hon. Lane.

I wish for once that the Department of the Interior could send down a secret service man to look into these matters, who would not be influenced by those who interests are in the Everglades for salaries. I wish you might be the man.

The Indians are very, very poor. Lately a man tried to buy a child's dress, but there was no dress to replace it, and it was impossible to sell it. And yet they are awakening to the needs of homes.

I believe the Indian Rights Association people will ask for an appropriation from Congress, and that Creek employees from Oklahoma be used as teachers in industrial work. This is proper, for as a nation they will never accept instruction from the white man.

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J.K.G.

I believe there is being an effort made to have the United States Government buy lands in the Everglades for the Indians. This, to me, is absurd, and while it will please Everglade speculators; still since Florida owns plenty of lands to give to the Indians it is not the duty of the National Government to buy lands for the Seminoles. It is Florida's duty to make a legal grant to these homeless people.

In 1899 the Florida Legislature appropriated an immense tract of land for the Seminoles; but in that bill was 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 to any lands embraced in this act that have heretofore been conveyed or certified to any person, persons, or corporation."

This land, of course, was never located, and is owned by a corporation, and W. S. Jennings has great land interests in this section. He had been in the Legislature at this time, and afterwards was made Governor.

Florida people are thoroughly wise to the reason the Seminoles have not had the land granted, and they feel quite sure who the man that has been holding it back is, as he got into control of this country long ago, and it is understood he still has his hand on the throttle. Of course, in my position and in my writings I do not call names. At the same time, this same element is fighting the thought of giving the Indians land, claiming that they are in favor of giving the Indians good land -- 100 acres being the amount they seem to think the Indians would require. According to records, it shows that it takes 100,000 acres to satisfy the one white man.

This article I send you will come out in the "RED MAN" in the April number.

Wishing you all success in your visit in Washington, I am,

Sincerely yours,

MEW-RP
Enclosure.