

Kissimmee Fla. March. 8th. 1917

Hon. Cato Sells, Indian Commissioner  
Washington D.C.

Dear Sir:-

In a report from Washington, I notice that the House Committee on Indian Affairs will make a trip to Florida soon to inspect the Seminoles. Any attention these Indians may get will doubtless be for betterment, but this visit at this time I fear will spoil the plans for having the State of Florida set aside a tract of land for their use, at the next Legislature.

Congressman Sears thinks the National Government should BUY this land, while others of the Friends of the Seminoles, think the State of Florida should GIVE the Indians the land, or set it aside for them, it being a just debt the State owes these Indians, and ought to pay them.

Some effort is being made to get public opinion in Fla. in favor of the next Legislature passing the Indian land Bill. We have had a talk with Governor Catts, and find him sympathetic, and willing to do what he thinks is right in the matter. The Indian Rights Association is taking a decided interest in the Bill. We have had your earnest and hearty support in this matter for years, and I am confident of its continuance for this year and for all time.

The matter as I see it now is, that this House Committee going over the state at this time, - just before the State Legislature meets, will give the Opposition a club, to say that the Seminoles are a National problem and not a State. Therefore much opposition to this proposed Land Bill will develop that otherwise would not have come up.

These Indians need the 100,000 acres for their future, and it does not matter, whether the National, or State Governments provide the land, just so they get it, - but I don't want to see the thing fall down through any fault of the Indians' friends, making bad moves.

You are doubtless better posted on the situation, and can see the whole subject at a glance, better than any other living person, and we need your judgement at this time.

Shall we push our land bill for Florida to provide the land, OR shall we depend upon Congress providing the land?

We hoped if Florida would give the land then there might be more hope for the National Gov. doing more towards helping the Indians with live stock, schools, and other needs they will have.

Are we going to lose out entirely by this House Committee move?

Thanking you for any consideration you may give this matter, and with a very high regard for your interest in our Florida Seminoles, as well as all other Indians, I beg to remain

Very Sincerely Yours,