

Hotel Leon,
Tallahassee, Fla.,
March 31, 1917.

Mr. J. M. Willson, Jr.,
Kissimmee, Florida.

Dear Mr. Willson:

Your favor of the 30th reached me this morning. We got in here last night.

We called on Mr. Lawler this morning and found him very cordial and sympathetic. He took us up to the Capitol and arranged for an interview with the Governor. We went back at 3.30 and spent a half an hour with the latter. He had already arranged to recommend in his message a reservation of ten thousand acres, a little West of Moorehaven. We explained the reasons for selecting the six townships indicated in our bill--because it is part of the haunts of the Seminoles and suitable to their needs, contains a fair acreage and is land that the white man cannot and will not use, etc. Governor Catts thought if we asked for too much, we would get nothing. We, of course, realized that, and pointed out that the land he suggested was worth probably a hundred times more than the land covered by the bill. After some discussion, he said our proposition was satisfactory to him, and that he would sign any reasonable bill that the Legislature might pass.

It is pretty definitely settled that the Internal Improvement Board is subject to the legislature, and would have to carry out the terms of such a bill as ours. It is therefore necessary to revise our measure, and I am enclosing you a copy of the new form. The Governor was opposed to deeding the land to the Federal Government in trust for the Indians, so we have taken the section on this point from the 1915 bill.

On the way up from Jacksonville, we met Mr. Hardee, who will

probably be elected Speaker of the House. Capt. Spencer "joshed" him about the kind of men who had been on the former Indian Committees, and Mr. Hardee suggested that the Captain submit a list of legislators who ought to be appointed. We also went over this matter with the Governor, and Mr. Spencer will be ready to give such a list to Mr. Hardee.

We are to see the Governor again on Monday morning, when I will submit to him a copy of our revised bill. By that time we may be in a position to definitely settle the question of who should introduce the bill, both in the Senate and House. The legislators are straggling in, and we are mixing with them at every opportunity.

I found Mr. Lawler all you represented him to be, and I am very glad that you advised us to see him.

I will advise you of the progress of events, and let you know when the time is ripe for the Kissimmee delegation to come up. I might say that in Jacksonville, we called on Colonel Corbett. He was decidedly responsive; he expects to be in Tallahassee next week and will do what he can to help us. At St. Augustine I had a very pleasant interview with Mr. Ingraham.

With kind regards to you both. in which Capt. Spencer joins,
I am,

Sincerely yours,

M. A. Sniffen

Enclosure.