

THE PHOENIX

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Issue No. Seventeen

Words from the
people

A Divide Among Our Nation

What is to come at
the next council
meeting?
*Your answers found on
page 4 of this issue!*

AN ADDRESS TO STAND UNITED: BY PRINCIPLE CHIEF JOHN ROSS

Brothers:

I make this appeal to my fellow Cherokees in the sake of unity. I know that Chief Ross and the Ridge faction want the same thing: to allow the Cherokee people to live in freedom and happiness away from the greed of the Americans who are taking our land by aggression and force of law. I feel that there is a compromise that would allow us to remain here in our homeland.

Continued on Page 3

AN EDITORIAL ON ELECTIONS: BY ELIAS BUDINOT

We have seen the affects of foreign tyranny and have faced its frustrations on a daily basis. It is enough for our nation to deal with, without the added effects of a tyrant in our midst.

Continued on Page 2

A Letter from the Editor:

Brothers, our fight stands strong. I beseech you to continue in our fight for justice. Although this tumult continues to burden our hearts, we must labor on until we can keep our lands and see that our future generations flourish on its fruits. However, before us is a great divide among our people. The question of ceding and fleeing from what is rightfully ours remains. Our people, who were once united under one goal, are now fighting against each other like the savages the whites call us. What would our great ancestors, who see our plight, have to say? We cannot win this fight divided. The Ridges make their point loud and clear—but are we *meant* to follow in their cowardly footsteps?

Continued on Page 4



Viewpoints from the People

REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE ROSS AND RIDGE FACTIONS

The compromise is simple: we should divide our Cherokee lands amongst ourselves and give the remainder to the whites.

The Cherokee lands we currently occupy contain roughly 30,000 square miles. Accordingly, if each man, woman and child of the Cherokee nation – 16,500 strong – were given one square mile each, the whites could take the remaining 13,500 square miles and do with it as they wish. What can we do with those 640 acres? We can farm, raise livestock and earn a living for ourselves, our wives and children.

Some of our Cherokee brothers left many years ago for lands in Arkansas. The lands are barren, without water and without rich soil on which to grow the food that makes us strong. How can one live without food or water? Or how can one protect himself against combatting and foreign tribes? The whites said they would protect those Cherokees and honor their claims to those lands, but instead they were betrayed. I have heard that land is growing increasingly cramped as others of our red brothers are torn from their lands and forced to live there. The whites say they it will take them forty generations to reach the western

ocean. But they have already made it to Arkansas, half way across this great land, in three! In forty years the whites will either have us completely surrounded, or will continue to remove us. If we capitulate now they will realize that the Cherokee people can be bought for a price and moved at their behest. They do not care; they will be happy to push us so far that we will be forced to live in that western ocean and drown. Removal will assure our people the watery grave of which I speak.

I appeal to you, my Cherokee brothers to unify together and resist removal. Chief Ross and the Ridges must listen to the voice of the people.

Signed,
Robert Adair - Member, Cherokee National Council

*An Editorial on Elections
by Elias Budinot continued. . .*

We have seen the affects of foreign tyranny and have faced its frustrations on a daily basis. It is enough for our nation to deal with, without the added effects of a tyrant in our midst. John Ross has been a strong and noble leader for these past seven years, avidly fighting for his nation. He, however, has made

the decision to stifle the voice of the people he has promised to hear. This despotic behavior is not helping our struggling nation. Ross accuses John Ridge and his followers of dividing the nation, but for centuries, our culture has been based around discussion and equal voice. This blatant disregard of our laws will ultimately be more divisive than adhering to tradition and allowing our voices to be heard. It should be up for the people to decide who is most apt to lead them into the next phase of progress.

John Ross does not represent the only opinion of our people. There is another position that has been gradually growing might as people come to realize what we are really facing. John Ridge has been a compassionate leader amongst our people. I support him as my brother and leader, for he has only the best interests of our great nation at heart. The only way to guarantee that the people are being best represented is to reinstate election. Fairness and reason must stand. Ross's actions have been neither fair nor reasonable. Their leader cannot silence the Cherokee Nation.

*Pro-Removal
by John Ridge*

We are surrounded by people that want to do us harm and break our nation apart. But we have been given a way out, a way to keep our nation and our people intact: the proposal for removal offered by the United States. While this may seem to be counterintuitive, it is the only logical position. The man who holds U.S. power in his hands is President Andrew Jackson. He in no way wishes to allow us to stay on our lands and will not stand in the way of anything that threatens us. Some suggest that we simply wait until a new President comes into office to replace Jackson. This seems to me a false attempt to throw the problem into the future; we have no guarantee of positive improvement in the temperament of the president. In any case, our nation and our people cannot wait that long.

We have seen over and over what has happened to people in our position. While some may argue that others have made their stand, there is not a single case of success in the situation we find ourselves of any armed resistance. We find ourselves

surrounded and outnumbered, with little ability to fight a war in the shadows as the Seminole have done, not sharing their way of life or resources. This option ends only in destruction. We are at an unprecedented point, where someone that could take everything from us has offered a price for what they would take by force if refused. We can move now to somewhere outside of white control and make our nation stronger and better.

Concerns from George Lowrey
Another topic of discussion that aids in the support of Indian non-removal goes back to the well-known case of *Worcester v. Georgia*. In 1832, this case gave us Cherokee entitlement to federal protection, and the U.S. Government now controls us Indians. Therefore, how can Georgia try to tell us Cherokee that we must leave? They possess no right to do this. Although Jackson claims, "It puts an end to all possible danger of collision between the general and state governments on account of the Indians," it is made very clear in *Worcester* that the state government does not have control over the Cherokee nation. Forcefully

pushing us out will do nothing but cause ruckus and chaos in which the state and country do not need. Just as Principal Chief Ross says, it is undoubtedly desirable for everyone that the Government "...should adopt some other means to satisfy Georgia."² Why must Georgia force us Indians out if we were here first? Or better yet, if the land out West is so promising, why can't the Georgians migrate there themselves? Why must violence be created for no reason?

*Promising words
by Principle Chief John Ross
continued. . .*

How is it that in the land of our ancestors, we are being oppressed and denied our rights to sovereignty? We are not the savages that the United States thinks we are. The Cherokee Nation has our own written language which is featured in our own newspaper, *The Cherokee Phoenix*, which also prints in English as well. Our government has become more democratic and model after that of the United States. By Western standards, we have advanced quite a bit from our "uncivilized ways" or so it should be. No matter how

seems that we have not come far enough. We probably will never be as civilized as they want us to be; civilized in that it is a subjective label placed on people by others. Let us keep in mind who we are and what we have come from. We are the Cherokee.

When our ancestors came to this land, they planned that their children would live together just as they did. We would have everything we would need, and we would all work as one for the better of the Cherokee Nation. However, external forces like Georgia and President Jackson are working against us. Simply put, they want us all out. Although some of us may be very skeptical of our ability to accomplish staying in our land, by working together and using practical means we will be able to keep what is ours. We have the right to stay, to govern ourselves under the unity of our nation, and to have peaceful relations with the U.S. and Georgia.

There have been various offers made to our nation regarding removal. It has been attempted to buy our land out for amounts of money that are unsuitable to support the nation. There is more gold in our land than what they offered us in money. The main aspect of this removal is emigration from Georgia and

relocation into the strange lands of the West. In letters from our brothers and sisters there, the land is nothing like ours. It lacks trees and water, for which we are very dependent. How could we ever trade our fertile lands for a lot of sand that is too far away from that which our ancestors passed on to us?

Let us remember the interest of our entire nation, not of radical minorities. This is our home. Let us unite to keep it that way.

Continued Letter from the Editor...

We are not a nation of cowardice. We are a nation with traditions that move us forward. Are we willing to submit to the whites who have made us their enemies? When will our submission stop? When will *their* greed cease? We have succumbed to the white's demands long enough. This unjust submission started long ago with our peaceful ancestors—when our fathers laid aside their arms and ceded the best portions of their country even though it meant nothing. For many years, our people endured manipulation and extortion. When will it end? Georgia has already pushed us beyond its own country's constitutional limits. As witnessed with our fellow Creeks, Georgia has

taken its native peoples' rights without their consent. Governor Lumpkin of Georgia so kindly illustrates that the inhumanity of Georgia, so much complained of, is nothing more nor less than the extension of her laws and jurisdiction over this mingled and misguided population who are found within her acknowledged limits. Are our *mingled* and *misguided* people wrong to not want to endure the cruelty Georgia has unjustifiably extended over us? Are we too ignorant to know what is best for us? If we passively allow this to continue, our Nation will cease to exist. Passiveness is no longer an option.

So which path do we take? The one of courage or fear? Our weak brothers who believe we should flee without a fight *have forgotten who they are*. The strength that our ancestors have passed onto us is innately woven into our rooted courage. We were born to live as warriors not to die as cowards.

Elijah Hicks

Humble servant of the people

At the next Council Meeting...

President Jackson has further refused us of our rightful annuity payments because the proposal for elections did not pass. His continuous bribes continue to manipulate every order of rightful Cherokee business.