

77th President of the United States: 1829 - 1837

Letter to the Creek Indians

March 23, 1829

Friends & Brothers,

By permission of the Great Spirit above, and the voice of the people. I have been made a President of the United States, and now speak to you as your father and friend, and request you to listen. Your warriors have known me long. You know I love my white and red children, and always speak straight, and not with a forked tongue; that I have always told you the truth. I now speak to you, as to my children, in the language of truth—listen.

Your bad men have made my heart sicken and bleed, by the murder of one of my white children in Georgia. Our peaceful mother earth has been stained by the blood of the whiteman and calls for the punishment of his murderers, whose surrender is now demanded under the solemn obligation of the treaty which your chiefs and warriors in council have agreed to. To prevent the spilling of more blood, you must surrender the murderers, and restore the property they have taken. To preserve peace, you must comply with your own treaty.

Friends & Brothers, listen: Where you now are, you and my white children are too near to each other to live in harmony and peace. Your game is destroyed and many of your people will not work and till the Earth. Beyond the great river Mississippi, where a part of your nation has gone, your father has provided a country large enough for all of you, and he advises you to remove to it. There your white brothers will not trouble you; they will have no claim to the land, and you can live upon it, you and all your children, as long as the grass grows or the water runs, in peace and plenty. It will be yours for ever. For the improvements in the country where you now live, and for all the stock which you cannot take with you, your father will pay you a fair price.

In my talk to you in the Creek nation, many years ago, I told you of this new country, where you might be preserved as a great nation, and where your white brothers would not disturb you. In that country, your father, the President, now promises to protect you, to feed you, and to shield you from all encroachment. Where you now live your white brothers have always claimed the land. The land beyond the Mississippi belongs to the President, and to none else; and he will give it to you for ever.

My children, listen: The late murder of one of my children in Georgia shows you that you and they are too near to each other. These bad men must now be delivered up, and suffer the penalties of the law for the blood they have shed.

I have sent my agent. and your friend, Colonel Crowell, to demand the surrender of the murderers, and to consult with you upon the subject of your removing to the land I have provided for you west of the Mississippi, in order that my white and red children may live in peace, and that the land may not be stained with the blood of my children again. I have instructed Colonel Crowell to speak the truth to you. and to assure you that your father, the President, will deal fairly and justly with you, and whilst he feels a father's love for you, he advises your whole nation to go to the place where he can protect and foster you. Should any incline to remain and come under the laws of Alabama, land will be laid off for them, and their families in fee.

My children, listen: My white children in Alabama have extended their law over your country. If you remain in it. you must be subject to that law. If you remove across the Mississippi, you will be subject to your own laws, and the care of your father, the President. You will be treated with kindness, and the lands will be yours for ever.

Friends & Brothers, listen: This is a straight and good talk. It is for your nation's good, and your father requests you to hear his counsel.

Andrew Jackson

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