

# THE INDIAN REMOVAL ACT

**“It gives me pleasure to announce to Congress that the benevolent policy of the Government, steadily pursued for nearly thirty years, in relation to the removal of the Indians beyond the white settlements is approaching to a happy consummation.”**

**PRESIDENT ANDREW JACKSON  
DECEMBER 6, 1830**

**“In Florida I was born. In Florida I will die. In Florida my bones shall bleach.”**

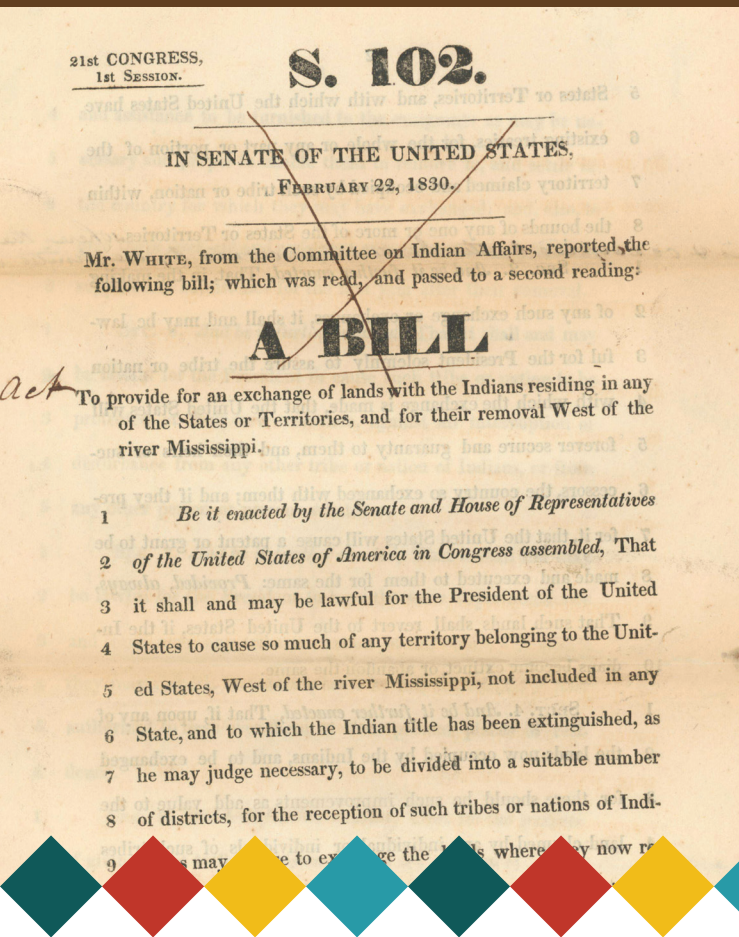
**ABIKA, AKA SAM JONES (PANTHER CLAN)  
CIRCA 1830**

The Treaty of Moultrie Creek was one of the multitude of treaties that the United States broke with the passage of the Indian Removal Act. A priority of President Andrew Jackson, who had led the fight against the Seminole during much of the War to this point, the act called for the deportation of all Indigenous people east of the Mississippi River to federally claimed land in the west.

The Act was both written and portrayed by its proponents as being done with the best interests of Native people at heart, offering land for land to end the treaties and grant them a home “better suited to their ways.” In reality, as most in America knew, the intention was to take possession of the all remaining land held by Natives, at gunpoint if necessary. The called the policy removal, but the goal was ethnic cleansing.

The Act was quickly challenged by Native nations and their allies who called on the array of treaties signed with the US government. Jackson ignored these treaties, and agents forced new negotiations. Fraud, bribery, and the threat of violence were used to get signatures. Under the Jackson administration the US military every nation they could across the Mississippi. Over 60,000 people were forced to march west, and over 13,000 people died along the way on what became known as the Trail of Tears.

Florida would prove to be a different challenge for the Army. Throughout the South, most Tribal land existed in increasingly smaller enclaves surrounded by American power. The Seminole, however, controlled effectively the majority of Florida, most of it land that Americans were completely unfamiliar with. The Seminole refused to leave. Leaders saw the fates of the other Tribes and the buildup of American forces, and prepared for open war once more.



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**Pictured:** The partial text for the Indian Removal Act, Senate bill 102, February 22nd, 1830.

