First Settlement Near in Indian Land Claims

BY MICHAEL KNIGHT
Special to The New York Times

BOSTON, Jan. 26—With Indians, officials and landowners in seven states watching closely, the Narragansett Indians and Rhode Island are approaching a negotiated settlement that would afford at least part of the tribe's claim to 5,200 acres in Charlestown.

In the next few weeks, according to the parties involved, there will be a settlement providing that the bulk of the land must be kept forever wild.

The settlement would be the first major resolution in the 14 Indian land claims filed in the Eastern states in recent years and is expected to have a significant impact on negotiations in Maine, where the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot tribes have claimed more than half the state.

The progress reported in the Narragansett suit, which is scheduled to go to the United States District Court in Providence on April 3, has shifted the focus of the Indian land claims movement away from the ongoing trial here on the claim by the Mashpee Indians to 11,000 acres of land on Cape Cod.

Settlement for One Tribe

The Mashpee case was being closely watched as the first such suit to face a jury since Indians from Maine to Louisiana, in a new wave of Indian awareness and militancy, began demanding the return of more than 10 million acres that they contend were illegally taken from them in violation of a long-ignored 1790 treaty, prohibiting the sale of Indian tribal lands without the express approval of Congress.

A Federal Court jury, ruling in the first part of a two-part trial, decided earlier this month that the Mashpee Indians, by virtue of the 1790 treaty, have a valid claim against the United States for more than 10 million acres of land that they have been told they own but that they believe to be held in trust for the tribe.

The Mashpee reservation, located on the coast of Cape Cod, is one of the most densely populated in the country and has been divided among family farms, forests and privately owned lands for generations.

That body is still only half finished with its work, according to John Echohawk, director of the Native American Rights Fund, and they will have to work on the second part, which is the测绘 part of the job.

The second part, which is the测绘 part of the job, is to determine which lands are Mashpee and which lands are not, and that will be done by the测绘 team.

Facts Are Different

Joseph E. Brennan, Maine's Attorney General, who hailed the Mashpee decision as a victory for the Indians and their attorneys, said the case was decided on legal grounds and not on the basis of Indian culture or tradition.

In Massachusetts, however, the Wampanoag Tribe, under the leadership of Wampanoag Chief John Quannapowitt, has been fighting a legal battle to overturn a 1677 land grant that it says was obtained in violation of the Massachusetts Bay Colony's charter.

The tribe has been told by the Massachusetts Land Court that it must prove its case beyond a reasonable doubt, which it has not been able to do thus far.

Illegal Sales Claimed

In Mississippi, the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians have filed suit against the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nation, claiming that the tribe sold its land to the United States without the tribe's consent.

The land was later sold to the Union Pacific Railroad, which built a transcontinental railroad across the land.

In South Carolina, the Catawba Indians have been fighting a legal battle to收回 their lands that were taken by the federal government in the 18th century.

In Connecticut, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe has also been fighting to recover its lands, which were taken by the state in the 17th century.

In Maine, the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot tribes have also been fighting to recover their lands, which were taken by the state in the 19th century.

The Passamaquoddy and Penobscot tribes have been fighting to have their lands returned to them in exchange for a cash payment to the state.

In Virginia, the Indian Claims Commission has been hearing cases involving the rights of Indian tribes to their lands.

In New York, the Oneida Nation has been fighting to have its lands returned to it in exchange for a cash payment to the state.

In addition, the Oneida Nation has been fighting to have its lands returned to it in exchange for a cash payment to the state.

In New York, the Onondaga Nation has been fighting to have its lands returned to it in exchange for a cash payment to the state.

In Virginia, the Indian Claims Commission has been hearing cases involving the rights of Indian tribes to their lands.

In Washington, the Yakama Nation has been fighting to have its lands returned to it in exchange for a cash payment to the state.

In the South, the Catawba Indians have been fighting to have their lands returned to them in exchange for a cash payment to the state.

In Maine, the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot tribes have also been fighting to recover their lands, which were taken by the state in the 19th century.

In Connecticut, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe has also been fighting to recover its lands, which were taken by the state in the 17th century.

In Maine, the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot tribes have also been fighting to recover their lands, which were taken by the state in the 19th century.

In Connecticut, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe has also been fighting to recover its lands, which were taken by the state in the 17th century.