

OFFICE OF
INDIAN AFFAIRS
1223
JAN 19
1883

M. M. M.

*Green Bay Agency
Tschuma Jan 13th 1883*

*O. Stephens
U.S. and agt*

*Submits facts about
the Oriscan. and procures
warrants the use of these
funds for general purposes
power. and place them
in the hands of Rev-
S. M. Ford for disburse-
ment who will see
that they are properly
used*

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CJ*

United States Indian Service,

1223

Green Bay Agency,

Keshena Jan 13th, 1883.

Hon Com^r of Indian Affairs
Washington D. C.

Sir

Referring to the letter of Elijah and Fred A Cornelius, both Oneida Indians, which I heard read by special Agent John A Wright in a council held on the 3rd instant, objecting to the action of the council held at the Oneida Council House on the 24th of November last, and one previously held, at which the Oneidas decided to use the one thousand dollars due them from the United States, for very worthy tribal purposes, as stated in my letter of the 5th ultimo.

I deem it my duty to inform you of some of the facts concerning these people, In the spring of 1879 the Oneidas being tired of old Indian customs under

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their old chiefs, adopted a civilized form of Government, by electing annually a Sachem and six Councilors who are their chief Officers empowered to select such laws for their government as the tribe would approve, and as the result of their labor the statutes of Wisconsin in as far as they are practicable for said Indians, have been adopted as their laws, and the best disposed - Oneidas are doing their best to support the laws so adopted. but, ^{some of} the old chiefs their relatives and friends, always oppose all efforts on the part of the new Government, to advance the tribe in the ways of civilization by calling unauthorized councils in private houses, and stirring the Indians in opposition to measures adopted, and writing unauthorized letters to the Department &c as in this instance, and by the

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time the matter is investigated by the authorities they may have gained sufficient strength to reverse a fair and legal proceeding, either by misrepresentations or otherwise. I believe in the investigation of tribal action, the facts to be ascertained, should be the action taken, when the question was under consideration, and hold them responsible for their decisions, except in actions that are detrimental to their best interests.

I suggested this, to special Agent Wright in the council last held with the Oneidas, but I don't know that he gave it any attention.

All the roads on the Oneida reservation except one known as the ridge road, are in a terrible condition and have been so for years, to see broken wagons and other vehicles on the roadside is a common occurrence.

Crime is also very common, adultery, larceny and drunkenness being the most frequent.

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It was for the purpose of improving the roads, and suppressing crime, that the Oneidas asked during last summer that the money paid them per capita, should be used in the manner stated in my letter of the 5th ultimo, the poor, old and helpless among them would receive far more benefit under a reasonable disbursement of the \$200⁰⁰ as asked, for support of poor than by per capita payment, as there is comparatively ^{but} few of them, the others would receive more benefit from the disbursement of \$150⁰⁰ on the roads alone, than from a per capita payment of 65¢ not to take into consideration the council House, jail, and the suppression of crime among them.

I believe the manner of using the funds in question, was fairly decided by the tribe in the councils reported in my letter of the 5th ultimo, and that

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the old chiefs and their friends have taken the present method for the purpose of obstructing the actions of the new civilized form of Government.

Elijah Cornelius I am informed was one of the old chiefs, and Fred A Cornelius is a near relative of Old Chief Jacob Cornelius, both of whom are signers to the letter referred to, and always leaders in opposing any creditable action on the part of the new Government in ^{which} they should not be sustained.

I would suggest inasmuch as the funds in question, according to treaty stipulations are to be expended for general purposes, that they be used in the manner and for the purposes stated in my said letter of the 5th ultimo. except that I would recommend that

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said funds be placed in the hands of Rev S. W. Ford Methodist Missionary and teacher on their reservation. with instructions to pay the same to members of the tribe, on orders signed by all the councilors and countersigned by the sachem, for labor performed for the tribe, and for the support of the poor.

Mr Ford is a reliable man, and he would see that the funds are properly expended.

Very respectfully

E. Stephens

U. S. Ind. Agt.