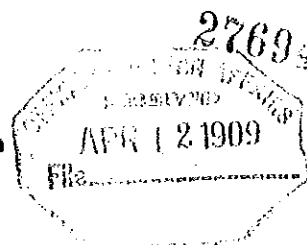


DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE.

Oneida, Wis., April 9, 1909.



Supt. J. G. Hart,
Oneida, Wis.,

Sir:

This is the answer in reference to the request of your question put before me few days ago, of what was my desire from the department concerning land patent in fee and organization of town government on our reservation in Wisconsin.

My full request and desires from the Government is to remain as we are as Indians to the full extent of the twenty five years period, as it was made on trust patent in 1891 or Concerning the Dawes bill treaty, and to cease the organization of ~~the organi-~~ zation of township government on our reservation.

Because none of us Oneidas are not yet capable to carry out such provisions. Another thing, referring to statement made by you to the Department concerning passage by the legislature of Wisconsin authorizing and creating the Town of Hobart on our reservation was never completed. So it was voted.

In 1908 as it was stated that the Board of Brown County took up the matter and was advised by the district attorney, passed a resolution the action of the legislature to organize the town of Hobart in Brown County. We as homesteaders do not approve such provision, for it is illegal of such ~~town government~~ establishment of town government here, for the County Board has nothing to do on the reservation.

Our customary to pass any such resolution, was always to be made by our council committee of our nation or by the whole nation's

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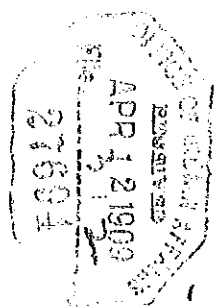
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

Reply to

UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,

Land
W R L.

Requesting address
of Amos Baird.



Oneida Indian School,
Oneida, Wis., April 10, 1909.

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

Replying to your Office letter of March 31, as above, I have delivered the papers mention to Amos Baird, whose address is Oneida, Wisconsin, and have requested to submit to me definite statement of his wishes. This he has done, and at his request a literal typewritten copy signed by him, is furnished; an exact copy of his letter except as to erasure of errors made in copying.

Stripped of unnecessary words his contentions are:

1. That it is desire that the Oneidas remain Indians, as they were at the time of the allotment, and until the expiration of the trust period.
2. He protests against the organization of a township government, claiming that it is illegal, and that he and others not named do not approve of it.
3. He contends that my statement that the trend of opinion is in favor of getting all Indians out (of their dependant condition) as fast as possible, is injurious to the Oneidas.

Comment upon a part of these contentions may be unnecessary, for, unless I am greatly mistaken in the attitude and intention of your Office

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of your Office, the ultimate aim of our work with and for the Indian is to fit him for self government, and when he proves himself fit, and asks for the privilege, to give it to him.

Mr. Baird has asked for, and received, a patent in fee to a considerable part of his land, as have three of his children, and I believe it has been to his interest, as he is a careful and conservative man, but he now objects to taxation of such property by the state, claiming that the town board was not lawfully organized and elected because not approved by the Oneidas in council.

I have explained to Mr. Baird, and do explain to all others who make application for title, that when land is sold through this office, or when a patent in fee is issued, all restrictions as to taxation are removed, and that such lands are subject to taxation whenever the proper machinery to levy the tax is provided by the State. The township of Hobart was organized by authority of the county board of Brown county, in which this township lies, and if the organization is not legal, the remedy is in the courts, and it is the privilege of all property owners, white and Indian, to appeal to the courts for protection. So far as I know the White owners of land in this township are satisfied, and since they are the largest individual owners and heaviest taxpayers, it is safe to assume that they will take steps to ascertain if the taxes are legally levied, and if not legal, to have the necessary correction made.

I believe that the opinion expressed in a former letter, and to which he objects as being injurious to the Oneidas, namely "that the trend of opinion is in favor of getting all Indians out (of the dependent condition) as fast as possible, is a very mild

statement of the hope that is in us that our work is bearing some fruit; that we are working for a definite and desirable end, and are making some progress toward that end. Without that hope we should have little excuse for being here.

That some have used their opportunities unwisely may be true. Whether or not the experience will be beneficial remains to be seen. Less than 1/5 of the reservation has been used except to cut off wood and timber, and practically all the land sold has been unused, and with no immediate prospect of being used by the Oneidas, so that its sale has put the owners in possession of money which was not earned by their own labor, and therefore not always rightly appreciated. We should probably have somewhat the same experience with white people. Under the recent instruction the reports concerning applicants are complete and thorough, and unless the dependent condition is to endure forever, which is unthinkable, those who show a reasonable capacity to manage their own affairs, and ask the privilege, should be permitted to do so, even if in some cases the results are not what we wish.

Mr. Baird's statement covers the points which he now claims to be unsatisfactory, and on which he asks relief. If the Office wishes the former communication, which was sent to me March 31, I will return it, but perhaps you will have a clearer idea of his wishes without it. I think the opinion of the Office on the three points named should be plainly stated for the benefit of Mr. Baird, and the "Indian party" generally, and if my practice is not in accord with such opinion I shall cheerfully change it.

Very respectfully,

Joseph A. Hart,
Superintendent.