

DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Joseph Martin
Member for Wisconsin

Home Address
Green Bay, Wis.

April 18, 1917

Hon. Paul O. Husting,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Paul:

Yesterday the chairman of the town of Oneida, this county, called on me in reference to the question of the Oneida Indians in said town getting a further extension of ten years on their trust patents to their lands on the reservation, all of which is comprised within the townships of Oneida in Brown County, and the town of Hobart in Outagamie County. It appears that the twenty-five year period, during which the Oneida Indians have held their land on trust patents, will expire June 12th, 1917, at which time the Indians are entitled to the title in fee.

I understand that the law provides that the President may, if he deems it advisable, grant them an extension of ten years from and after June 12, during which period the trust patent will be continued, and of course if continued the lands are not subject to taxation under the state laws.

I understand that most of the Oneida Indians in said townships now hold their title in fee, that is, the trust patent has expired. I also understand that there are only about 138 Oneida Indians on the reservation in said townships whose lands are now subject to trust patent title.

In 1903 the state legislature created two townships out of the Oneida reservation. That part lying within the limits of Brown County was called the township of Oneida, and that part within Outagamie County was called the town of Hobart. The following year of township form of government was organized and since then, under the township government, large sums of

money have been expended in highway improvements in the building of public schools and general town improvements.

Many of the Indians who had received their title in fee have sold their lands to others who have moved into said townships, and many of the Indians have also acquired additional property; there now being a great many very desirable and substantial farms in both towns.

Many of the Oneida farmers have farms worth several thousand dollars, who, at the present time, are not contributing a cent towards sustaining the local government, and if the trust period is extended for ten years more, it simply means that they will be entirely exempt from taxation for that period of time.

Most of the property owners in said towns feel that those Indians who are now sharing the benefits of the township government, by way of highway improvements and the public school system, should pay their respective shares of tax, and that the ten year extension of the trust period ought not be granted them.

I understand that the two townships intend sending a committee to Washington to take this matter up with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and the President. I was, therefore, requested to write you in the matter with a view of having you take the matter up with the Department, and the President, if need be, so that no order be issued until the committee representing said towns be given an opportunity to present the facts in the matter.

I understand that it is those who have the best improved farms, and the ones that are in fact receiving the greater benefits from the township government, that want the ten year extension of the trust period. Would you, therefore, kindly get in touch with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and have him withhold action in the matter until those interested

have an opportunity to present their side of the question? It is very important matter and it would seem as though no further extension of the trust period should be granted without good cause.

Trusting I may hear from you in the matter, in the near future, with kind personal regards, I am.

Very Truly Yours,

(Signed) JOSEPH MARTIN

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