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February 7, 1953

Hon. Joseph McCarthy
United States Senate
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator:

There has been many articles in the Daily Press and Magazines regarding the treatment of the Indians of this Country. After reading the article appearing in the Milwaukee Journal, Monday January 26th, 1953, I was prompted to write you to ascertain what is in the Legislative program for the relief of the Indians of the Country? Especially those of the State of Wisconsin.

Two paragraphs of this article have been marked. The accusations and suggestions, I believe should bear investigation. I believe action should be taken in favor of the American Indian before the relief of Europe.

Please indicate what legislation, if any, is to be considered for the Indian relief.

Yours very truly,

/s/ D'Rae Steiner

Mrs. L. E. Steiner
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C-O-P-Y

JAN 26, 1953

relieve it were discussed Sunday at a meeting of Oneidas in the guide hall of All Saints Episcopal cathedral, 816 E. Juneau av.

Speakers were Oscar H. Archiquette, chairman of the Oneidas' Milwaukee fact finding board; Morris Wheelock, secretary of the board; Alpheus Smith, chairman of the Consolidated Tribes of American Indians; Dr. Robert Ritzenthaler, acting curator of anthropology at the public museum; Corneff Taylor, executive secretary of the mayor's commission on human rights; Lawrence A. Hautz, a member of the commission; Miss Pearl L. Pohl, president of the Milwaukee chapter of the Izaak Walton league; Mrs. Edward LaBudde, a league director; the Rev. J. H. Wenberg, retired pastor of the Methodist mission at Oneida; Mrs. S. W. Roecker, conservation chairman of the Milwaukee Woman's club, and Mrs. Cornelius Baird, member of a Milwaukee committee for relocation of Indians.

Conditions of extreme poverty in the Oneida area and job discrimination practices of whites in neighboring cities were described by Archiquette. He said that of 3,600 persons on the Oneida tribal roll, about 1,800 live in Oneida and its vicinity. Their lands total 2,444 acres, of which 32 are under waters of the Sturgeon Bay ship canal, he said.

Says More Land Needed

"These people don't earn enough money to save," Archiquette said. "They need employment and many don't want to move away from the vicinity of Oneida, their home land for many years, to find it.

"Foreign countries are everlastingly asking help of our government and getting it, not just a few thousand dollars but millions. The American Indian needs help, too."

Archiquette said one of the needs at Oneida was more land to be purchased by the federal government for settlement by Oneida Indians. Not all Oneidas, however, care for farming, and a survey is needed to determine how many want to farm and how much land is needed, he said.

Ritzenthaler said the Oneidas' economic problems of ill housing, poor clothing and lack of adequate diet was similar to those of many Wisconsin Indians.

Jobs Held First Need

"More land might help, but the most important thing is jobs," he said.

Ritzenthaler suggested that the tribal council try to interest an industry in locating in the Oneida area. He cited the Simpson Electric Co. at Lac du Flambeau as a successful experiment in Indian employment.

Mrs. Baird explained a new federal program designed to encourage Indians to leave poverty stricken reservations and communities for jobs in large cities.

Mr. Werberg, a student of Oneida history, noted that the Oneida was the only Indian nation to help the American colonists in the Revolutionary war. He credited that help to the Oneidas' early acceptance of Christianity.

Old Treaty Reviewed

In recognition of the Oneidas' help in the Revolutionary war, Archiquette said, the government signed a treaty in 1794 which provided for annual payments to all Oneidas. Those payments now amount to 52¢ a year, and the government, in violation of the treaty, proposes to make an annual \$1,800 lump payment to the tribal treasury, he said. The wishes of the tribe were not considered, he said, although earlier members turned down a government offer of a \$60,000 final settlement.

There must be two parties
We are no longer the bunch of guinea pigs that we have been for the last 100 years to
the Indian Bureau."

He said eight Oneida claims against the federal government were to be heard by the
Indian court of claims in May.

He and others sharply criticized Dillon S. Myers, commissioner of Indian affairs,
as uninterested in solving Indian problems.

"Here is one man who has no use for us Indians," Archiquette said. "It seems to
me we have a brighter future in the new administration in Washington."

Government Aid Wanted

He said he understood that Indian leaders throughout the country were to be
consulted in the selection of a new commissioner.

"The government should help put us back on our feet," he said. "According to our
treaties, we never were supposed to be landless. We are not lazy. We are willing to
work. We just want the chance to be self-supporting."

Hautz said Indians made a mistake in perpetuating differences between whites and
Indians. He opposed "handouts," and said the core of the problem was to reduce white
prejudices against Indians and Indians' resentments against whites. He suggested
abolishing the bureau of Indian affairs and setting up a system of federal reimbursement
to local bodies for relief granted Indians.

Taylor explained the chief function of the mayor's commission on human rights as
"equalizing opportunity for all peoples." He said he was glad to note that Indians
living in Milwaukee felt they were not discriminated against.

