

RECEIVED
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Nov. 20 (P), 1956

Dear Commissioner Emmons:

About a month ago I had the good fortune of meeting you in Des Moines, Iowa, on occasion of the October 18-20 Indian Tribal Conference of the Great Lakes Agency Group. Due to some confusion, however, I was unable to participate in the series of discussions arranged for delegates of the several tribes. This was regrettable as I was selected as a special representative (in addition to the three regular delegates) of the Oneida Tribe because of my ability to speak both the English and Oneida language and my intimate knowledge of problems that are peculiar to the Oneidas. Some indication of the confidence the tribe has in me can be found in the fact that all expenses incident to my going to Des Moines were paid by the tribe.

On being advised that I would not be permitted to participate in the individual tribal discussions, I left Des Moines. Upon my return to Milwaukee, I learned that I could have both attended and participated in these conferences. I went to the Conference to obtain answers to several questions that I was instructed to present.

For sometime the Oneida group has considered the feasibility of encouraging some type of industrial development on the reservation with the understanding, of course, that a large percent of the employees would be of the Oneida Tribe. In this connection we would like to know whether or not the Oneida Tribe can set aside a tract of tribal land on which such a development might be accomplished. It would be understood that the land used for this development would be held in trust for the tribe.

There are three recognized classes of Oneida Indians - (1) the taxpayer who owns taxable property, (2) those presently living on tribal land and (3) a group that is known as landless Oneida Indians. The question that I would like to ask is - Can the Tribal Executive Committee make loans to any member of the tribe regardless of whether he is a taxpayer, assignee of tribal land, or landless? As you know, there exists an Oneida Indian rehabilitation fund of \$33,000. At the present time, the Executive Committee is making loans only to Oneida Indians living on tribal lands.

If the Oneida Indians accept the \$1800 lump sum payment annually in accordance with the treaty of 1794, would the federal government give the tribe an affidavit stating that this transaction will not harm in any way the pending Oneida Indian land claims?

According to ordinance No. 1 - Lands, the Tribal Executive Committee is authorized to exercise, in accordance with the provisions of this ordinance, powers pertaining to the making, holding and revoking of assignments of tribal land interests therein, the question that I would like to raise in connection with this ordinance, is, what procedure must the tribe take to change the authority vested in the Tribal Executive Committee? In other words, how do we go about amending Section 1 through 5 of this ordinance? It appears that the present procedure puts the Executive Committee on the spot when it comes to revoking an assignment of tribal land. This is particularly true in instances where assignment of tribal land is not revoked even though standard land agreements are broken.

I was very pleased to learn that in your address during the general session, you indicated a desire to hear directly from Indians regarding their problems. I was also happy to learn that you stated that it would be impossible for all Indians to become farmers. Our estimate is that approximately 95% of assignees of tribal land (farm land)

NOVEMBER 20, 1950

are now working elsewhere to support their families. On the basis of this fact alone, it is apparent that the farm program for the Oneida group is not a success in spite of trying for 19 years after the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act. Failure of this program can be traced to several factors:

1. Some assignees of tribal farm land have from 1 to 20 acres, which is not enough land for a profitable farm operation. At least 60 acres are necessary for classification as a farm in the State of Wisconsin.
2. Assignees with 40 or more acres not only complain of not having enough land but also state that they are unable to afford necessary farm equipment.
3. Lack of farming experience.

Inadequacy of housing is another major problem faced by the Oneida group. Many of the landless group live in houses that are unfit for human habitation. Large families, low income and seasonal employment contribute to this problem. The League of Women Voters of Appleton, Wisconsin, became interested in housing problems of the Oneida Indians in 1953 and initiated a survey. The report of this study clearly reveals the need to improve conditions under which a great number of Indians live. Copies of this report can be obtained from Mrs. William Cherkovsky, 59 Bellaire Ct., Appleton, Wis.

The picture is not all dark as some of the Oneida group has been able to secure good paying jobs as a result of having learned a trade. Many are working as auto mechanics, machine operators, carpenters and bricklayers. Also as a result of a steadily improving economic status, a few of the group has been able to purchase homes and other taxable property. Achievement of this kind has stimulated interest in encouraging industrial development in the area. Steady employment for both men and women would be provided, which could be of tremendous benefit to all concerned.

By way of briefly summarizing what I have attempted to point up in this letter, I would like to stress that all possible consideration be given to changing the failing farming program to a more realistic program of housing for landless and homeless members of the tribe. It is estimated that approximately 1,500 Oneida Indians live in or near Oneida, Wisconsin. This means that within a radius of 60 miles there is enough tribal land (2,244 acres) to give a majority of the group a modest homestead. The present farm program has provided accommodations for 43 families, (215 persons). There are more than 4,000 Oneida Indians on our register.

I appreciate the opportunity you have given me to present a few of the problems that face the Oneida Tribe. I hope that what I have attempted to say will not only help you understand our plight, but will also influence favorable consideration of suggestions that we believe will materially change our fortunes.

Sincerely,

Oscar H. Archiquette

Mr. Glenn Emmons
Commission of Indian Affairs
U. S. Dept. of the Interior
Washington 25, D. C.

Oscar H. Archiquette
Special Delegate for the Oneida Tribe
1335 W. Highland Ave.
Milwaukee 3, Wis.

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : 620 (Attention: Peter Walz)

Noted by
[Signature]

DATE: December 10, 1956

FROM : 540

CREDIT: 158-43-362

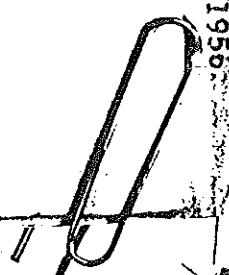
SUBJECT: Suggested revision of your draft of letter to Mr. Oscar Archiquette of the Oneida Tribe.

We have reviewed the above-mentioned draft and suggest the following be inserted in lieu of the third paragraph:

You refer to the rehabilitation fund of the tribe and inquire as to whether the Tribal Executive Committee can 'make loans to any member of the tribe regardless of whether he is a taxpayer, assignee of tribal land, or landless.' The old rehabilitation instructions of the Bureau did provide that any construction work with rehabilitation funds should be confined to non-taxable lands. However, on January 2, 1948, a modification of the tribe's rehabilitation trust agreements was approved by this Office to provide for more responsibility for the operation of this program to reside with the tribe. The tribe, therefore, is no longer bound by those Bureau instructions, especially since the modification resolved with the tribe final approval authority on loans from the rehabilitation fund. It would be our opinion, then, that it is within the tribe's discretion, subject to the limitations of its existing published policies and ordinances and its organizational papers, to make loans to any members of the three classes of Oneida Indians mentioned by you. The present policy of the Bureau is to encourage the tribes involved to terminate their old rehabilitation trust agreements, because it is no longer an active program of the Bureau and we do not condone tribes conducting a lending program that is not amendable to some governmental supervisory or regulatory body the same as other lending institutions. We hope the tribe will give favorable consideration to the termination of its rehabilitation trust agreements. Upon approval of this action, the rehabilitation funds presently on deposit and future collections on outstanding loans could be deposited in the tribe's general fund and then be available for expenditure in accordance with the tribe's constitution and bylaws."

[Signature]
Chief, Branch of Credit

REPLY to House Committee on Interior & Insular Affairs, "AS THEY EFFECT VOTING PROCEDURES AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS". 84th Congress, November 1956



1637011001
SURNAME:

W. J. Wood
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Wood
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Withdrawal Programming Report for

Oncida
Tribe of
Wisconsin

The withdrawal report...
the Oonida Reservation...
United States and with...
by you.

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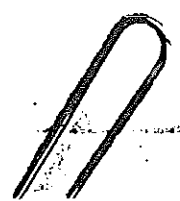
JAN 27 1957

Mr. Oscar H. Archiquette
1335 West Highland Avenue
Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin

My dear Mr. Archiquette:

In your letter of November 26, 1956, you bring to our attention several items which you believe are of concern to the Oonida Tribe in Wisconsin. It was unfortunate that you could not have discussed these items with the Commissioner when he met with the Oonida delegates in Des Moines. Arrangements were made for you to have a session with Mr. Emmons in Des Moines, but you had left the city before this information reached you. The meeting at Des Moines disclosed that most of the Oonida people were working in nearby industry at Green Bay, De Pere, Appleton, and as far away as Milwaukee and were using the trust lands at Oonida as homesites. The delegates did not indicate that it would be necessary to try to establish industry on the reservation since there were adequate employment opportunities within commuting distance. They did indicate, however, that they saw no particular reason to continue to hold their land in trust which you suggest as an inducement to have industry relocate to the reservation.

You refer to the rehabilitation fund of the tribe and inquire as to whether the Tribal Executive Committee can make loans to any member of the tribe regardless of whether he is a taxpayer, assignee of tribal land, or landless. The old rehabilitation instructions of the Bureau did provide that any construction work with rehabilitation funds should be confined to non-taxable lands. However, on January 2, 1948, a modification of the tribe's rehabilitation trust agreements was approved by this Office to provide for more responsibility for the operation of this program to reside with the tribe. The tribe, therefore, is no longer bound by those Bureau instructions, especially since the modification resolved with the tribe final approval authority on loans from



the rehabilitation fund. It would be our opinion, then, that it is within the tribe's discretion, subject to the limitations of its existing published policies and ordinances and its organizational papers, to make loans to any members of the three classes of Oneida Indians mentioned by you.

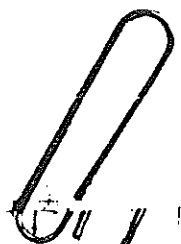
Legislation will be necessary if the \$1,800 annual payment specified for the Oneida is commuted. This legislation, if it follows the pattern of like legislation for other groups as it no doubt will, will carry the provision: "Nothing in this action shall affect any claims heretofore filed against the United States by the _____ Tribe." The law in this respect will be more definite than the affidavit you suggest in your letter of November 26.

The delegates from Oneida at the Des Moines conference expressed themselves in favor of granting fee patents to those who have assignments, with a sale of the unassigned land (the proceeds of sale to go to those who do not have assignments). This proposition will undoubtedly be brought up at a general council meeting to get the reaction of all the Oneidas. In any event, some equitable distribution of tribal assets will have to be worked out before legislation permitting fee patents to assignees can be justified. It is within the province of the general council to change the assignment pattern on the Oneida Reservation, but whether the council would make homestead assignments as you suggest in your letter, we cannot predict.

We are glad to learn from your letter that you consider the Oneidas as making a definite headway in providing for their wants and needs. As you point out, much of this well-being is based on the fact that so many of your people have steady jobs. The Oneidas are considered one of the most progressive tribes, at least in Wisconsin, and actually the Bureau services to these Indians are now curtailed to the point where they have small significance in the lives of the Oneidas.

In your letter, you ask for the copies of the minutes of the Des Moines meeting. Copies of the minutes of this meeting will be made available to the official delegates through the Minneapolis

REPLY to House Committee on Interior & Insular Affairs
AS THEY EFFECT VOTING PROCEDURES AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS
84th Congress, November 1950



Area Office and, as a tribal member, you will have access to the copies received by the Oneida delegates.

We wish to thank you for your continued interest in the Oneida Tribe and of your frank analysis of their problems as you see them.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd) Thomas M. Rold
Assistant

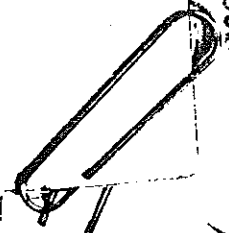
Commissioner

Copies to: Area Director, Minneapolis Area Office,
Superintendent, Great Lakes Agency

PFWalz:ik 12/11/56

Suraneme ✓
Chrono
Mallroom
JMadron

REPLY to House
Committee on Interior & Insular Affairs
"SHEX EFFECT VOTING PROCEDURES AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS"
84th Congress, November 1956



Minutes of meeting held by: Cecil Skenandore (Secretary)

Date of Meeting: Oct. 11, 1956

Place of meeting: Home of Mrs. Irene Moore

Regular or Special: Special Called by the chairman on a motion of one of the tribe members. meeting to make plans for trip to Iowa.

members Quorum present: Yes

Visiting officials present: None

Others: Julius Danferth Chairman Mrs. Irene Moore Vice Chairman Mrs. Althen Schuyler Treasurer Cecil Skenandore Secretary Two members of the land committee were also present they are as follows. Mrs. Vivian DeKoteau, Mr. James Schuyler

The meeting was called to order by the chairman

The things the executive board thought should be brought up in Iowa are as follows:

1. Aid for education (for those above high school)

There were six names mentioned at this meeting they are as follows. These young people will be through with high school this year.

- 1. Gerry Hill 2. Harriet Schuyler 3. Carl Parker 4. Gordon Mc Lester 5. Eleanor cornelius 6. Amelia Hawk

11. Juvenile delinquency (Things that could be done to do away with it)

a. ~~recreation equipment~~ b. Recreation equipment c. Instructor (from tribe if possible) Convalescent home

111. Intentions of tribe as to what should be done with CCC building in the future if onidas are disbanded.

a. give to state (17 acres) to be held in trust as Oncida park.

1V. Aid for drainage on IRA land (25 miles) more or less

V. Number of children in Haskell. These children would go elsewhere of money was Available.

Motion by Cecil Skenandore to Adjourn. Seconded by James Schuyler. Motion carried.

/s/ Cecil Skenandore Secretary/.

Minutes of meeting received at Great Lakes Agency office on Oct. 18, 1956

BI A
Central
Files

File: 60-1956-054
Great Lakes Consolidated
AFO

acc #
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Box 35
RE-75
NAT JOURNAL
Archives
Washington,
D.C.