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COPY

June 27, 1977

Dr. Jack Campisi
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Red Hook, New York 12207

Dear Jack:

I think the idea of having a booklet prepared to state the Oneidas' case is an excellent one. The enclosed memo to the Solicitor of the Interior Department could be used, in somewhat condensed form. Your recent findings as to the 1788, 1794, and 1795 treaties should be included; they reinforce my belief that the Oneida case is by far the best of all the Indian claims. Enclosed is some correspondence from NARF which you might find of interest.

I believe that the booklet, if one is prepared, should include the following elements of a claim for recompense:

- (1) A large cash settlement to be spent as the Oneidas wish, not some bureaucrat.
- (2) A settlement of reservation land in New York to be furnished by the State; I have no confidence that the Oneidas would be able to buy and assemble any adequate tract of land by themselves. The State has large areas of unused land near here.
- (3) A judgment that the Oneidas own the land occupied by the State and its agencies. This would include a 30-40 mile segment of the New York Thruway and part of the Barge Canal system. This should be under a perpetual lease arrangement with revisions in rent every 25 years or so to account for cost of living changes.
- (4) If (3) cannot be obtained, the Oneidas should have a perpetual annuity from the State, guaranteed by the U.S. under a treaty or Congressional Act. Such annuity would contain provision for cost of living adjustments.

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(5) If the U.S. feels it has confirmed the 1788 state treaty, then the Oneidas should have a declaration of the hunting and fishing rights to the 5,000,000 acres that are reserved in the 1788 treaty. I know this is mostly symbolic, but symbols can be very important over the generations.

(6) Reaffirmation by Congress of the special status of the Oneida Nation that is contained in the other treaties.

*(Below, tax-free treatment
of all settlement proceeds!)*

Personally, I think #(2) and #(3) are the most important. A federally-protected land base is the only way the Oneidas can be secure for future generations. Trust funds can be lost by poor investments, or "eaten up" by inflation, or just spent on projects and social programs, or eaten up by costs and fees, so that the main beneficiaries will be the current generation. I have seen enough trusts that I have little confidence in perpetual survival. I have seen enough social programs to have no confidence that they benefit anyone but a few well-paid administrators.

I would and have advised the Oneidas to emphasize a land base as the major element of a settlement; I don't mean land now occupied by persons (like me, 1795 treaty) who paid for it in good faith. I mean land occupied by the State and its agencies, thousands and thousands of acres of valuable land which the State illegally acquired from the Oneidas. (A good example of land rented to government is the Senecas' land at Salamanca, New York.)

I think all this, or such part of it as the Oneidas agree with, should be put in the booklet and circulated widely. Also, Lou Rappaport (the Post Standard reporter) has written an article on the case that he has been trying to publish. Perhaps the Oneidas could help him with this.

The Maine claims have completely overshadowed the Oneida claims so far as national publicity is concerned. I am concerned that they will end up with the lion's share, whereas the Oneidas have a bigger, better, and better documented case.

I'll be interested to know your thinking on this; perhaps we can get together in the next few weeks and work on the booklet.

Sincerely yours,


George C. Shattuck

GCS/b
Encs.

cc: Mr. Gordon McLester
Mr. Irvin Chrisjohn
Mr. Robert W. Burr, Jr.