

ONEIDA INDIAN NATION

NEW YORK

R.D. 2 WEST ROAD ONEIDA TERRITORY

ONEIDA, NEW YORK 13421

July 23, 1977

R.C. Cooley
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Department of The Interior
Bet. 18 and 19 Streets
Washington, D.C. 20245

Dear Mr Cooley,

Recently there has been an investigation by the B.I.A., using the F.B.I. ,
Concerning some mobile homes on the Oneida Indian Territory.

Even though the Bureau takes the stand that they do not recognize any
form of government for the Oneida people, we have always functioned as an
Oneida Indian Community and still do, and continue to live here, many in these
mobile homes.

The mobile homes that ^{were} sold by our Indian community were believed to be
Oneida Indian Community property. The trailers that were sold, were damaged
to the point of being a health hazard to our children. For this reason and
also other reasons such as being unsightly and of no use in their damaged state,
the people of our community made the only logical decision under these
circumstances which was to sell these damaged frames of these trailers. We
fully believed these trailers to be the property of the Oneida Indian people.

When I asked you on the telephone, how long after the Senecas and the
Mohawks received their trailers were they given the titles, you told me that
it wasn't relevant. I believe that it is very relevant. The Allegheny Senecas
who received trailers also, had their titles transferred in 1975 and 1976.
The St. Regis Mohawks had the titles to 98 trailers transferred in 1976.
The fact that we have had these trailers for four years , it seems an appropriate
time to surrender any interest the Bureau of Indian Affairs feels they have in
these mobile homes, since it was the original intention to give these to the Indians.
At a meeting in Syracuse, in 1972 or 1973, with Bill Seneca, the Territory
Housing Committee was told by him when asked about the titles, that they would
be turned over to the Oneidas in about a year. The fact that at the present time
there is a political division, cannot be used as a valid argument to withhold
this service.

Why is the bureau concerned about these junk trailers, when in June 1976,
two Indians were burned to death in a trailer here, yet we never had one word
of concern from the B.I.A. ? There was not even an inquiry . The F.B.I. were
not sent here by the B.I.A. to investigate, although they were fully aware that
we residents had and still have no fire protection from the city of Oneida or
any other fire department.

In June 1977, after the trailers were sold, a B.I.A. representative went
to the mobile home of an Oneida Indian who had moved their trailer from here
and harrassed the person, asking questions, etc. to the point that they told him
to leave and not to come back or the police would be called.

Another Oneida Indian moved their trailer from here in the spring of 1976
and Bob St. Arnold of the B.I.A. was fully aware of this act, yet there was no harr-
assment or investigation made at that time.

Don't you think that it could have been easily investigated by simply asking the Indians here what happened to the trailers? What constituted the involvement of the F.B.I.? I am really anxious to know.

We are ordinary people trying to get along despite prejudice that abounds probably because of our land claim cases. We are also trying to eke out a living despite various acts by a group of Oneidas in Syracuse who are constantly devising ways that would make it harder for the residents here. I am glad that you came here and could actually see under what conditions we are living. You saw the small area in which we live. You saw the potholes all over the road. You did not see the parents putting their children to bed at night with the fear that Jacob Thompson and some people will come here, burn us all out and carry us all out on stretchers as he has told us personally, to use a few of his own words.

There were some people that moved from here at the time of the problem with Jacob Thompson here in 1975. Some of them had lived in the trailers. When they left, here are some of the things that they did to the trailers to make them unliveable: furnaces were removed, sinks removed, light fixtures removed, stoves and refrigerators taken, tubs filled with water so that they would freeze (temperature was near zero), obscene writings on walls, water shutoffs on main line filled with stones so that the water could not be turned off to repair frozen lines, water lines in trailers cut, partitions taken out, heating vents removed, water faucets turned on.

We have had a big problem here with our water bill. We buy water from the city of Oneida. Our water bill was tripled about 1975. Since then we have had water bills running around \$ 1000.- for a three month period. The latest bill that we paid in June 1977 was for \$ 975.00. We almost had our water shut off in May 1977 as we owed \$ 3600. in arrears. We have a water line that is all plastic and is constantly breaking and leaking, winter and summer. The city does not repair this line. We have to pay for all digging and repairs, yet we pay the same rate as the people that have breaks repaired by the water company. The city refuses to maintain a plastic line. It was decided to apply any money that we might receive for these junk trailers on our water bill arrears.

We presently have no fire protection on the Territory. The mayor of Oneida withdrew fire protection because we residents refused to let the police on the territory when the police violated a standing agreement with our community to request permission prior to entering Oneida Indian Territory. In 1976 we were in the process of making an agreement with the city of Oneida for fire protection, when the Mayor said that Jacob Thompson called him on the telephone and threatened to sue the City of Oneida if they made an agreement with us to provide fire protection here. So our children go to bed without this vital need.

There was and still is a rule here that the people would own the trailers after residing in them for three years. This rule was made by the Territory people when the trailers first came in. These people that moved out to Syracuse did not reside in the trailers for that length of time.

We hope that this letter will bring the true situation to your attention. This is only a little bit of what we have to contend with, eventually the truth will all come out.

Sincerely yours -

Gloria Halbritter

Gloria Halbritter
Clerk

cc: Cecil Andrus
Larry Aschenbrenner
Tim Coulter
Gordon McLester
Six Nation Grand Council
Harry Rainbolt
Ray Butler

Les Gay

July 21, 1977

Mr. Gordon McLester
Oneida
Wisconsin

Dear Gordy:

With respect to our conversation regarding research, there are two areas that need review. First there are the Washington Papers. These are on microfilm and I would suspect available at the Wisconsin Historical Society or the University of Wisconsin Madison. Copy everything related to the negotiations at:

Fort Harmor 1789

Tioga Point 1790-93

Newton Point

Canandiagwa 1794

Of course, any reference to the Oneidas should be copied. Look for the names of Pickering, Knox, Jasper Parrish, Good Peter, G. Clinton, Phillip Schuyler. Be sure to get the complete citation. I copy the title page, get the page or frame numbers for every document and write the micro number on the back of the copy.


Jack Campisi

George Washington

in going
out going

Serial #4

War Dept

1794-95

Orders to Pickering
from Knox

Isreal Chapin jr.
SR.