

MEMORANDUM

MEMO TO: Business, Land, and Litigation Committee
FROM: Francis Skenandore, Director, Oneida Paralegal Training Program
DATE: December 22, 1978
SUBJECT: SEMINARY LANDS AND PURCHASE

Earlier this Fall in a brief discussion with Father Keifer, he informed me that a two-year plan to settle the question of taking some affirmative action with the Oneida Tribe in regards to the Seminary land was nearing an end this November. He stated that in a meeting held in May of 1978, the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay offered to sell the Seminary lands to the Oneida Tribe for 1.3 million dollars. This offer was a negotiable offer to provide a starting point. He suggested that when a price was agreed upon, the Oneida Tribe could perhaps go to the Congress of the United States and seek Congressional funding for the agreed upon price and that the Catholic Diocese would help in obtaining the necessary Congressional funding. In short, what Father Keifer is suggesting is that the Oneida Tribe and the Catholic Diocese agree upon some price and that the Oneida Tribe would then purchase the Seminary lands from the Catholic Diocese with a Congressional appropriation through legislation.

I personally do not think this is a very viable option. A more preferable option would be for the Catholic Diocese to convey the title back to the Oneida Tribe and the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay seek their redress from the B.I.A. through Congressional legislation with the support of the Oneida Tribe.

One question that should be asked is whether the Oneida Tribe's interest in regaining back the Seminary lands is contingent upon regaining it in a particular manner. If the Tribe's interest is only in regaining the land, then the discussion mentioned above with Father Keifer perhaps might be a viable option.