To the Governor and Council
of the State of Maine

In fulfillment of the duties assigned me by the appointment of the Governor with advice of Council dated July 29, 1829, for the purpose of negotiating with the Penobscot Indians, for a release of their claim to either or both, or any part of the two townships of land situate at the mouth of the Madawaska river under and by virtue of the Resolves of the Legislature of the 7th July 1829, in the month of August I repaired to Old Town for the purpose of making the purchase of the Penobscot Indians, provided for in said Resolves. On my arrival I was informed the Priest had departed a few days, previous to visit the Penobscot only Indians.

The Penobscot Indians, on the departure of the Priest, have dispersed some to the sea shore, and some to the forest; the Governor with one or two Captain, some old men, and some women and children were all that remained on the Island. Several gentlemen who have dealt well acquainted with the Indians, were persuaded by me to the Governor, as the agent of the State, who had come to have a talk with them.

We held a long conversation, but the many conversations and the Governor agreed to meet in three or four days at Madawaska near rigorous. Whereupon the Governor informed me that he had some specific conversation on the subject of the purchase which I had gone as far as circumstances would permit.

I went up to the Indian townships, examined the eastern one, but did not consider it necessary to make any further claim in any of the Western townships than I could by inquiry from those who had traversed it. It is not very important to the State at this time as it does not present any obstacle to the settlement of that part of the country, and the present object of the government would be effected by the eastern one.

The Governor of the Indians, did not fulfill his promises and after I had examined the eastern townships, we proceeded.
as was necessary to acquire a sufficient knowledge of it, I re-
turned and found him still at the town — The Priest had returned
the evening before me, but most of the Indians remained disengaged.
I called on the Priest and held a long conversation with him, in rela-
tion to the Indians, the probability there was of inducing them to
become cultivators of the soil. He represented them habitually indolent,
and thoughtless of the events of the season; that they were only
induced to exert themselves by necessity — that they were too
much disposed to continue on the island, and that he had
become disenchanted of seeing them forever from any means; which had
been tried or ever than in operation —

I stated to him the general object of my visit, and that through
it some means might possibly be desired which would tend
to change and educate them. He, with much apparent from time
observed, he thought the Indians would not be disposed to sell, assign-
ing or a piece on the advice of Bishop Fenwick to them to that effect.
But observed or for an instance of the opinion, it was, in favor of the
sale, as he thought their habits of improvement might be increased
by it, remarking also, if they concluded to sell he hoped the State
would add to the present annuity in specific articles, because
the present annuity of grantees, a serious need in the encouragement
it gave to their habitual prosperity to Indian, for they collected
and were idle in anticipation, and were it it was all consumed.

The Priest informed me that the Indian mode of transaction
was in the assembly of the whole tribe and by mutual agreement
and that the Governor and a majority of them were on the island, it
would not act in till the tribe generally assembled, which he thought
would not take place before the Christmas holidays. I enquired whether
they would not assemble at the time of the delivery of the annuity on
all saints day, but he supposed they would not necessarily assemble at either of those times.

I caused the Governor and Captains then on the island to be
called in, and stated to them I would not act in till the tribe generally assembled, which he thought
would not take place before the Christmas holidays. I enquired whether
they would not assemble at the time of the delivery of the annuity on
all saints day, but he supposed they would not necessarily assemble at either of those times.
life to have as many of the necessaries and comforts of life as the White people, and that by the annual profits of the sale of a part of their lands which they did not need at present, they might procure cattle and sheep and farming implements and should they increase and need more land, they would purchase farms. Then said these they wished. I told them the State wished to have the Medora and King townships settled and would purchase of them the soil, or take the right to sell for their benefit, and would be responsible to them for the annual profits of the purchase and asked the Governor to name a time when all the Indians would assemble here and give an answer. They often a long talk filled on the second of November and confirmed that the Otiel had said as to their mode of living business. From all that occurred in this conversation, taking with the substance and meaning of these views a reasonable prospect of purchasing the townships on terms mutually agreeable to them and the State.

The second day of November, I repaired to the town and the next day the Indians were called upon and I met and had a long talk with them on the subject of their present situation, and the made of improving it, illustrating the State law part, adding to their own knowledge. I communicated the wishes of the State to have a portion of their land settled and proposed to them to purchase the fee or taking the simple right of selling for their benefit. I invited to the latter ear, an account of receiving from the conversation with the Otiel that if the Indians were disposed to sell, the price which they might demand, might be so reasonable as to make no obstacle. After the Indians had been conversed with days, they sent one to use their language for a week began which means a writing. One of what suggested the idea to them, I do not know if any could only exist from circumstances as it cannot in the present illiterate state be their usual mode of writing business, but can express themselves or with others.

In compliance with their wishes I briefly reduced the leading points of our conversation with them in writing and of which the principal proposals mailed. A is a copy. In the evening of the next day the Otiel in his room, and in presence of the governor and several principal Indians, delivered
me their answer marked B. On receipt of the answer, I demanded
and endeavored to remove the objections they were stated to the sale
but without success. The Indians generally went among their Indians
at gravity and tedium.

During my intercourse with them many were obviously
continues to sell. Several of the more intelligent and those who
were living in comfortable houses seemed to feel their present
depressed and depressed situation, and a strong desire to be treated as
White men were used to have their shares of
the land set off to them inapartly. They answered B, being in
appearance final, I deported without even suspecting that
there would be any further intercourse between us on the
subject of the sale.

Subsequently the letter marked C came to me through
the Post Office, and the letter is marked D. I arrived in
old town on Sunday evening and gave immediate notice to
the Priest. The next morning I called on him. The Indians
endeavored to assemble, but the it governor under the Queen
of France declined attending which broke up the meeting.
I immediately repaired to the office to have the time of meeting
postponed fixed, and I had understood that he had probably taken
some account of ill feeling arising from some transaction
which had occurred a few days previous. He fixed on the
next Monday, at which time he said he and the Indians would
assemble.

The Indians assembled on Monday and in the evening
informed me they had not all agreed to sell which was con-
tingent to my expectations as I had supposed from the letter
of the Priest that question had been definitively settled. The
Indians continued their consultations until the next day, and
at night informed me they had all agreed to sell, and wished
me to say that the State would give them fifty acres to
lead, and that they would name a price. A long conversation
on this subject arose in which I endeavored to induce them to
agree and when I was satisfied they had fixed no price among
themselves. I named ten thousand dollars and insisted
their answer.
The delay as I learnt from a variety of circumstances, but more particularly from the disinclination of the governors to sell. When it seems they allow a contriving voice in their conceit. The offer they did not accept but deliberated among themselves, calling the next day when they stated to me that they would sell the eastern township of forty eight thousand dollars for one dollar and one half per acre. The offer amount in the gross to one thousand dollars for one whole township and one hundred and twenty dollars for the eastern part on twenty four thousand, and expenses invested in the east side of Pendleton river, and for the whole, sixty nine thousand and three hundred and twenty dollars.

I then endeavored to induce them to name a price for one half, one quarter, or one mile square of the eastern township, at the same time making the several tracts on a plan to prevent every misunderstanding. I also endeavored to induce them to modify their former offer, by simply conveying the right to the State to sell in small lots, in such manner as to obtain the most for their benefit. They declined that course, I stated to them the several sales made by the State, and the price, to show them, if they were really desirous to sell, that the State could not pay the price they asked.

The next day I met them again with hopes of procuring such a modification as would enable the State to purchase; as I had prevailed throughout that many and I think a large majority were disposed to sell and some of them at fifty cents the acre and less. Not being able to procure any alteration of terms I was obliged finally to say to them that the State could not purchase, and then the object of my agency has not been attained.

During these conferences Indians complained that the State did not allow them to sell as she did other men, and expressed so strong desire that they should not only be protected in the enjoyment of that right. I understand that they send a petition to the legislature on the subject before his letter to me marked C. but did not arrive to write a letter, not intended until full power to purchase. I did not see the petition, and cannot therefore speak
with certainty of its contents.

Notwithstanding the conversation of the Priest at the first interview, at the second I showed Satisfied from a variety of circumstances, he was opposed to the sale. First, from his mode of speaking of former sales; secondly, from the circumstances marked B, which contains parts, and a testimony of opinion. This did appear in the conversation of the Indians with me; and thirdly, by its publication before I had communicated it to the government, or to any person.

The conversations at the third interview equally with the letter marked C, satisfied me that his opinion was in favor of a sale, yet his ideas of value had not the least tendency in effecting that object. It is possible that he approved of the general principle but did oppose the manner in which he said nothing on the subject from which such an inference necessarily followed.

A recurrence to the Resolve and my instructions, will show, there was no limitation in price. I ought to have fully in the bargain have gratified the capacity of the Indians, or their advisors, but my opinion of value formed from every consideration, calculation, and comparison in my power, was such that I should not have authorized by any sound principle of calculation to have offered a sum equal to one fourth of the price demanded, yet I should not have declined agreeing to any price which the state could, by a prudent and careful management of the property, have realized from the net amount of sales.

It seemed to the Priest, had carefully examined the subject, he must have foreseen that the state could not, on any principle agree to become to the Indians, over some amount what they could ever realize. If he did misunderstand the subject as he will advise them, fully his advice is liable to one of two constructions, first, that he for the benefit of the Indians or to whomsoever it might come intended to make a great bargain out of the state, and secondly, that for reasons operating in his own mind, he chose in appearance to favor the sale, there by the price demanded, which he intended to defeat, yet I do not conclude that such was his intention.
In my second interview with the Priest, much conversation ensued between us on the subject of the relative situation and rights of the Indians, and the State. He supposed they were independent, possessing both the right of property and sovereignty. But as you are aware, it is difficult to determine the facts. The government of Great Britain in accordance with the principles adopted by civilized nations, considered themselves from the discovery and settlement of the Country as the sovereigns of it. Hence in all their charters, they conveyed a qualified sovereignty, and the right of voiding subject only to the Indian right to the free. The Indians resisted as long as they could, but finally submitted, and desired for many years even pretended a claim to sovereignty.

They have always been under the Providence care, and it may even be said the guardianship of the State. The laws of the State operate upon them and over their tribal estate, and their powers have been enlarged, restrained, and modified at the pleasure of the State government. As much so, they have in relation to the inhabitants living within its limits.

They are citizens of the State, and might at any time by the exercise of the laws of taxation be enabled to deprive the right of suffrage in common with other citizens. And were they to become government residents and the subjects of taxation within any of our Municipal corporations, they would have the lawfully entitled to the rights of freemen. I did not succeed in convincing the Priest. At our last interview he appeared to be convinced of my estimate of the Indian's right; yet it was concealed for both of us that they stood in a different relation from the Cherokee, and other southern and western Indians.

The situation of the Indians is peculiar, not merely to it relates to the mode in which they have been treated by the governments, since the Settlement of New England but as it relates to themselves.
They are all governed upon by preceptor examples, which, the same breed, they look upon the progress of civilization, which diminishes their means of subsistence, and the diminutions of their own tribes. The humane and benevolent provisions of the government, which have been extended to them for years, have only tended to cherish their habitual prostrating and leave them in check their moral and physical energies.

There, but two summers, which have been conducted with them, one in coercion, and the other is to operate upon their pride by elevating them. If the government were to adopt a system for their government, which should compel them to remain stationary, and labor for their subsistence, they would be relieved from many of the evils and miseries which they now endure. I am not aware that such a system would be founded upon any other principle than our present laws, or, our present laws are based upon the idea that they are incapable of managing their own affairs, and are intended to promote their interest and happiness.

The exercise of a power over them is different, the exercise of power over their inhabitants, implies degradation for it. Place the Indians in the same class with the new comers, or the spendthrift or the spendthrift, or the miser. The intelligent Indian feels the degradation of his State, his energies are cramped, and his instrument to utility destroyed.

The condition of the Indian is daily becoming worse; his means of subsistence are diminishing, and beggary and misery is increasing. Their numbers, gradually decreased for several years, but for a few years past, their numbers have been barely sustained by occasional from other tribes. These modes of life are such, that many families from emigration, and some but the most barely survive their infancy.

When the government have tried many experiments to improve their condition, which have not succeeded, it
is a question for them to settle, whether they will adopt the other means within their reach, or it can be done without injure them and promises a benefit to the IN-
dians. If the same system is to be continued, the time is not far distant when their condition will be changed in reality; they must be educated and supported by their own substance and their own private charity or the bounty of the government. Their land will not afford them food, and they should be no more burdensome to the State than with them.

If the State were to adopt a coercive system, sell a part of the land to defray the expenses of the necessary establishments, and compel them to labor and cultivate the soil, there can be little doubt that they would rise upon a conversion of the necessities of life for their own subsistence, and the next generation would form habits the reverse of the present. This is perhaps a course which yet promises most certainty in its results. I am aware that many may object to it, as it involves no new principle, but only extends the principle in the management of the Indians on their affairs.

If the State were to relieve them from all restrictions in the management of their lands, their old habits, as a matter of course, would come between them and White population would be soon established and the high-minded Indian would cease, to feel that he was a degraded being. If any thing were converse, it would operate ill upon him, such a course would. The intelligent mind high-minded among them, not only read but complain of the restraints of the government on them. They wish to change their present tenure, is in common, and to hold their houses, in security. They wish to be able in all respects to manage their estates as the White people do.

Why should not the State change their course when it has been tested by many years' experience and been found to answer to any purpose? When the Indians have been formed on by being introduced into the mechanics, then it promises, finally, to meet object State of transportation and money to them, and still further make them more useful to the State? It cannot be supposed that the State will see them
punish in event, it will follow as an inevitable result of the present system is continued, they must eventually be supported at the public expense. In a change of system, there is no risk, but there is an encouraging prospect of gain. It is not that supposed those who are already sunk in vice and idleness will be reclaimed, but it may reach and elevate such as retain the natural character of the mass of the poorest uncorrupted and virtuous of civilized society. If only a few of the present delinquents can be raised from their present state, it will have a powerful influence on the rising and future generations, and they may become useful members of the State.

Portland 20th July 1830

I have the honor to be very respectfully
your humble & Obedient Servant

John O'Donne