



FOUNDATION FOR AMERICAN INDIAN RIGHTS  
Agoura, CA

14 December 1975

NEWS RELEASE

There is a confrontation taking place in Seminole, Oklahoma, which is beginning to assume the dimensions of another "Wounded Knee". Peaceful negotiations were scheduled to take place in Seminole on December 11 between the SEMINOLE NATION TREATY PEOPLE and representatives of Santa Fe Railroad over a land lease agreement. The scheduled meeting was turned into an ambush when, instead of railroad negotiators, railroad security police appeared along with FBI Agents with drawn guns. The FBI had neither jurisdiction nor provocation to cause an incident. They dispersed the Indians and no negotiations could take place.

Negotiations were rescheduled for the following day, December 12, at noon in the town of Seminole, it being understood that suitably empowered corporate officers of Santa Fe would be present to represent the railroad. In the interim, the FBI local and Washington offices were contacted and advised that their presence was not legally proper, desirable or necessary. Local media were contacted as well, with the plea that they provide adequate visibility to preclude further shenanigans by the nonIndian parties of interest.

Acting in good faith, the Indian people appeared at the agreed meeting place in the town of Seminole at the appointed time. No railroad representatives, nor anyone else, showed up. We ask if this is bargaining in good faith?

It has also been learned that the FBI ambush situation was initiated by one Joseph Fasco of the U.S. State Department (Why are they involved?) and that, on the following day an item appeared in the Washington Post indicating that Fasco's wife had been designated a member of the Board of Directors of Santa Fe Railroad. Isn't this clearly a case of conflict of interest?

As the days wear on, negotiations are suspended; the railroad has halted service through the Seminole area; the Indian people are frustrated and threatened; and government troops are moving into the area, promising further intimidation and escalating tension to the crisis stage.

We ask the media to investigate the situation and provide objective visibility to avert impending violence.

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