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## Letter from WF Gierke to Senator Langer Regarding Fort Berthold Reservation, December 22, 1947

WF Gierke

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(12)

# Half Circle Lazy 4 Ranch

H. F. GIERKE, JR., OWNER

Watford City, North Dakota

Dec, 22, 47.

Hon., William Langer;  
Washington D C.  
Dear Senator;

Of course you remember me ,we are old correspondents , but to get to business,for the last 30 yrs as rider and rancher I have covered the Ft.,Berthold Reservation. I have seen Agts., come and go and after 30 yrs the Indians are in poorer~~##~~ shape in every way. The agts, either didnt understand their job or didnt care. People Seem to believe Indians are hopeless but that isnt true,they just never havebeen shown they are capable.

Indians on this reservation are good horsemen ~~but~~ in fact they spend most of their waking hrs in the saddle ,but they dont and never did know there was and is a mkt for hunters, jumpers or gentle saddle horses. They might have realized thousands of dollars every yr to say nothing of the moral and mental lift,and boy they needed such a lift

Now that part of their land is to be submerged,their predicament is far from hopeless still. There are 2000 Indians left on this reservati and between the little and big Missouri river on the reservation is about 300,000 acres of Indian land that will not be submerged. The carrying capacity of this land is one cow for each 25 acres over a twelve months period,or 12,000 head of cattles and there is ~~there~~ ~~is~~ about that much Indian land on the north side of the big river. This is not only land but AI range land complete with spring water good grass and shelter.

The Indians could be located in villages,for educational purposes and care and the whole reservation run as one large ranch.

There isnt much you can do with the oldtimers but the young people are breeds and as capable as whites,they just dont know they can do it.

An honest man who knew Indians and cattle,and there are plenty of such men in Mckenzie Co.,could make this reservation free and self-supporting in ten yrs if given complete jurisdiction.

Will be glad to answer any questions.

I address this to you because I see in the Record that you have been pitching for the indians,and they need it.

Yours Truly,

*H. F. Gierke, Jr.*

*g o p r o*  
*P o b o r*