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Letter from Gierke to Senator Langer Regarding Fort Berthold Reservation, January 13, 1948

WF Gierke

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Half Circle Lazy 4 Ranch

H. F. GIERKE, JR., OWNER

Watford City, North Dakota

Jan. 12, 48.

(21)
Hon. Wm. Langer,

Washington D.C.

Dear Senator;

Have yours of Jan. 6, and will say that I don't know too much about the Ft. Totten or Turtle Mt., Indians, but our papers tell us the Indians from those reservations are often in trouble with the law. That of course is due to lack of food, and proper instruction. We haven't that trouble on the Ft. Berthold Reservation yet, the Indians here are morally O.K. and more honest than their white brothers, but they can be starved to anything.

The only way to give you an authentic report on their condition would be to spend a week contacting them personally, you can't get the true picture at an agency. Of course giving them money is just temporary relief, really detrimental and shouldn't be resorted to unless absolutely essential. I contend that it is a crime against our country, as well as the Indians themselves, to allow a group of people within our border, as physically and mentally able as they are, become a burden to this country because of improper instruction. Why I have seen Indian parents take their children out of the reservation schools, because the schools were so 'lousy' and spend their meager earnings sending their children to a white man's school.

These Indians have everything to make them self-supporting, self-respecting citizens, but proper, understanding instruction. These people or the taxpayers' money shouldn't be sacrificed just to create a few soft jobs.

Resp. Yours,

H. F. Gierke, Jr.