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Letter from H. F. Gierke, Jr. to Representative Burdick Regarding Money Paid to the Three Affiliated Tribes and the Relocation of the Agency, March 15, 1952

H. F. Gierke Jr.

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SUNRISE RANCH

H. F. Gierke Jr. Owner 3-15-52

Watford City, North Dakota

Hon Usher L. Burdick
Washington D C
Dear Mr Burdick

I was glad to see someone interested enough in the affairs of the Ft Berthold Indians to call for an investigation. I own two sections of land on the Reservation so have tried to follow their thinking in setting up the plan for the future.

I have talked to Quinn, who is part Indian, as well as members of the council and I would say the council are just stooges for Quinn, he runs the whole show and if crowded into a corner the council will take the rap

I would say Quinn is in a position to make a million if so inclined. What money has been paid to the Indians so far is a 95% loss and the 5% went for food and clothing. I know a good many of the Indians and I don't know one who is capable of running a car or a tractor without a lot of instruction and although their money was spent for cars, tractors and whiskey, I am sure no attempt was made to give them any instruction. I am also reasonably sure that altho Quinn had to know that if those Indians were to realize any lasting benefit from their money the lions share of it had to be invested in cattle so they could utilize their grazing land, which you know is the best left in the country.

I also know of several Indians who wanted to sell their land, for various reasons, their land was appraised by Quinns boys at 3 to 6\$ per acre and nothing for their oil rights, a white man would have bought that land with the oil rights from 20 to 50\$ per acre but they couldnt deal with a white man.

Last but not least, why is Quinn allowed to locate the new agency in Newtown? I don't know too much about these things but I know the Indians have several hundred thousand acres of land in one chunk east of Watford City. Plenty of land to support a town. Some of these people are going to be 30 to 40 miles from a town unless a new town is built on the reservation. Why shouldn't the Indians get that million\$ town? I have talked to many of the Indians and I have yet to find an Indian who wants the Agency built off the reservation, but when they have a meeting, Elbowoods runs the works. It should be very apparent to Washington that the agency is the business headquarters of the Indians and belongs on their land. Hope you will insist on that investigation, and soon.

Yours Resp;

H.F. Gierke JR

