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Letter from F. M. Albrecht to Representative Burdick Regarding Sanish and Van Hook Garrison Dam Relocations, July 18, 1950

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Garrison
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, U.S. ARMY *Twp - site relocations*

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ENGINEER

GARRISON DISTRICT

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BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA

ADDRESS REPLY TO:
DISTRICT ENGINEER
GARRISON DISTRICT
CORPS OF ENGINEERS
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BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA

REFER TO FILE NO.

Air Mail

18 July 1950

Honorable Usher L. Burdick
House of Representatives
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Burdick:

Reference is made to your letter dated 10 July 1950 inquiring as to the status of property of tenants located on railroad right-of-way upon acquisition of the towns and relocation of its facilities and inquiring generally as to the status of the Sanish and Van Hook acquisition program.

There is a question as to sufficiency of authority under existing legislation to permit payment by the United States for improvements of tenants located on railroad property such as the case of the Farmers Union Elevator Company of Sanish. The problem is being considered by the Office, Chief of Engineers at this time, who has the complete facts on the problem. As I cannot at this time answer your question, I am forwarding your letter to the Chief of Engineers, asking that he make reply to you.

As to the general acquisition program for Sanish and Van Hook, the preliminary work is well under way with appraisals in the towns now being made. It is expected that funds to be appropriated for the Fiscal Year 1951 will be used for the purchase of property in those towns. At the request of the officials of both towns, city-owned and business properties are being appraised first and will be acquired first. This is to make funds available to the towns and the business men for moving their buildings to or constructing new ones in the new town. However, appraisal and purchase of residential properties will follow closely. The owners will be paid the full amount of the appraisals for their holdings and will have the privilege of reserving improvements at the salvage value. Buildings thus retained may be moved to the new town site or disposed of in any other manner the owners desire. In the event they do not elect to retain their improvements, they may use the funds received to construct buildings in the new town being established or to move to some other locality. In the case of property owners who do not agree with the Government appraisals, the question of compensation will be decided by Federal court and jury.

Honorable Usher L. Burdick

18 July 1950

The towns are planning on relocating to a common site since combining the assets of the two towns to form one good village will be most advantageous to the residents. Approximately 85% of the residents of Sanish and Van Hook have signed petitions requesting their Boards of Trustees to take all necessary legal steps to effect a relocation to a site located in the Southwest quarter (SW $\frac{1}{4}$) of Section 17, Township 152 North, Range 92 West, to be done by a non-profit corporation organized and owned by the legal residents of Sanish and Van Hook. This corporation is now in existence and proceeding with plans for relocation. In this connection, the Government will provide for the necessary surveys and site development plans for the new town and for replacement of streets, sidewalks and alleys as are necessary to serve the new town. In addition, contracts will be negotiated with the respective owners of public utilities, and highway and railroad facilities, as necessary to provide services at least equal to those existing in the present towns.

Some controversy has been raised by a minority of Sanish citizens who prefer a separate town site. Though I am giving due consideration to their views as far as I can, I am bound to act in accordance with the expressed wishes of the majority of the citizens and I must say I agree that they have chosen the best solution for their relocation.

If there is any additional information I can give you, please do not hesitate to call upon me.

Sincerely yours,



F. M. ALBRECHT
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Engineer