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## Letter from Colonel WW Wannamaker to Senator Langer Regarding Lieu Lands Related to the Garrison Dam, December 4, 1946

WW Wannamaker  
*United States Army Corps of Engineers*

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REFER TO FILE NO. MRGVE

4 December 1946

Honorable William Langer  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Langer:

I refer to the Washington announcement today by the Secretaries of War and Interior to the effect that an offer had been presented to the Three Affiliated Tribes, Fort Berthold Indian Reservation, of lands to compensate them for the loss of reservation lands to be inundated by the Garrison Dam.

I inclose herewith for your further information a release which was made here today in amplification of this joint announcement.

The problem which was presented by the Garrison Dam and its effect upon the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation constituted one of the most serious relocation problems which we have had. It is perhaps the most severe one which will be occasioned in the entire Missouri River Development plan. The Department was faced with the task of compliance with the mandate of Congress that the Secretary of War select and offer lands "comparable in quality and sufficient in area". At the same time it was obligated under an unwritten but equally binding directive to select lands which would afford the most economical solution to the United States, and which would create the minimum hardships on the white population.

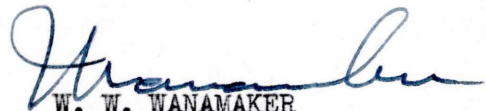
No plan could be devised which would be readily acceptable to the Indians and to the whites. We do not know what the reactions to the offer will be. It is well known that the Indians have opposed the Garrison Dam in its entirety. It is quite clear that there may be opposition from Oliver and Mercer Counties and certain municipalities, and from the people in those counties who will be dispossessed. Presentations may be made that disastrous results will follow the withdrawal of these lands from those counties, and demands may be presented for compensation for loss of revenues. In this connection, it may be pertinent to realize that there will be no wholesale dispossession of whites or of Indians. The relocation will be a gradual one, timed to keep pace with appropriations and with the program of construction on the dam, and not to be fully completed for probably four or five years. Time and continuing study, and perhaps additional legislation by Congress, will solve many of the problems which today may appear to be momentous.

Honorable Senator Langer

4 December 1946

The mandate of Congress that the selection and offer, and approval by the Secretary of the Interior, should be consummated before January 1, 1947, "after which consummation actual construction of the dam itself may proceed", was in our opinion a very wise one. The preliminary plans and preparatory construction work on which we have been engaged have now reached a point which makes it imperative that the main project proceed without interruption if costly standby charges are to be avoided. We are hopeful, therefore, that the offer will receive prompt consideration and forthright approval.

Sincerely yours,



W. W. WANAMAKER  
Colonel, Corps of Engineers  
District Engineer

1 Incl.  
Release