

From correspondence and telephone calls, my office has found no willingness to correct or even acknowledge the wrongdoing. Yet, I am genuinely convinced that TVA's higher authorities are not aware of the unjust tactics employed by the Agency's assessors and purchasing agents. At any rate, it is our duty here in Congress, and specifically of this committee at this time, to uncover and recognize the practice of favoring assessors who set values lower by far than the value of comparable property outside the purchasing area, and in some cases below the tax value assessment.

It is our duty to recognize that agents of TVA have threatened and harassed property owners into signing sale contracts against their will. You must understand the futile feelings of property owners who are told that, if they reject the first offer, the commission will only lower the price offered, and who know that they are financially unable to engage in extensive litigation.

When you have recognized and understood these things, your approval of an optional jury trial in eminent domain proceedings by TVA, thus placing it in the same position as all other government agencies, will necessarily follow.

I wish to include for your consideration, and for the record, letters from some of my highly responsible and respectable constituents testifying to the conditions which I have placed before you. I have chosen these rather than some of the more sensational cases of misconduct because they are straightforward citations of improper practices which bear most directly on the legislative proposal at hand.

I shall be glad to place other evidence of wrongdoing by TVA agents before this or any other congressional committee if it will serve the purpose of bringing corrective action. I have more than 50 personal, signed affidavits that I shall be glad to include for the record of this hearing and the committee's consideration, but my purpose is not to flood upon you the existing abuses, but to present the general pattern of wrong practices being conducted in the Land Between the Lakes area against unwilling sellers because of the prices offered for their property. I might add that the resistance to TVA offers and threats is more a matter of principle than of personal gain; for, while I have found disappointment on the part of some landowners in having to sell, I have found no one refusing to accept a fair price.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my statement.

I would like, with your permission, to file for the record a resolution by the Fiscal Court of Lyon County; a statement by Mr. George Bleidt, of Golden Pond, Ky.; and a statement from Mr. and Mrs. Harold E. Snipe, of Grand Rivers, Ky.

Mr. JONES. Without objection, the resolution and the letters will be made a part of the record at this point.

(The statement, resolution, and letters follow:)

STATEMENT OF GEORGE BLEIDT, GOLDEN POND, KY.

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, I am George Bleidt, a resident landowner in the Land Between the Lakes.

The citizens of this area felt that the United States Senate took a long stride toward rectifying an evil injustice when it unanimously passed jury trial legislation. The Tennessee Valley Authority is the only agency that need never go before a jury to justify its prices.