

**STATEMENT OF N. PRESTON GUNTER, SPORTSMEN'S LEGISLATIVE
ACTION COMMITTEE OF NEW MEXICO**

Mr. GUNTER. My name is N. Preston Gunter, of Albuquerque, N. Mex. I am an air-conditioning engineer.

I welcome the opportunity to serve the people of New Mexico by presenting my views on H.R. 3306 and stating why I firmly believe this bill should not pass.

I have been a resident of New Mexico since 1940. I was born and raised in Colorado and have been an avid fisherman and hunter all my life. I was taught these skills and appreciation for the wild Rocky Mountains by my father, who once held the Colorado State fly casting championship, and in Colorado that is a mark of distinction among all sportsmen.

Over the past 4 years, I have made a detailed study of the questions surrounding Blue Lake. I feel there are many points surrounding this controversy that have been accepted as fact by the Indian Claims Commission, and other study groups, that simply are not true.

There are other points raised in strong fashion by the groups favoring giving this area to the Taos Tribe that just are not borne out by any historical evidence. Certain people assert that, in their opinion, this proposed legislation will not be precedent setting, or not seriously so. Others claim that religion is the only reason the Taos Tribe wants this land.

In the beginning, I would like to state that this Blue Lake is beauty beyond description. It is undoubtedly the crown jewel of the entire Rocky Mountains.

I will skip, here.

You have seen a lot of the Rocky Mountains, and I don't want to duplicate too much.

Senator METCALF. Your entire statement will be incorporated in the record at the end of your remarks.

Mr. GUNTER. I realize that. I am going to take the things that I consider to be different in any respect in my testimony, and try to eliminate the repetitious pieces.

I make the statement in reference to the pieces of legislation that were passed in 1924 and in 1933; that, in essence, the reason we have the 1933 legislation was to go back and sort of do over the 1924 legislation to correct the inequities that were complained about, insofar as the amount of the award.

We must realize that there are 10 other pueblos who were included in the 1924 and 1933 legislation, all of whom have certain areas they claim have religious significance. Many of these pueblos have already raised the issue and are looking eagerly to the results of these hearings.

I submit that the Santa Clara Indians have stated they should have 30,000 acres of national forest land adjacent to this reservation in exchange for rights-of-way through this reservation. The land claimed includes Tachicoma Peak, which is claimed to have religious significance, and I underscore "religious"—30,000 acres for one road? Is this a fair exchange? I think not.

The Havasupai Indians have been covered by Senator Anderson.

The Sandia Indians near Albuquerque have various claims and desires involving 200,000 acres, some of which would involve parts of the