

In a spirit of justice and understanding, I hope you will throw your full support to this measure when it is considered by the U.S. Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Subcommittee on Indian Affairs.

As a member of the National Committee for Restoration of the Blue Lake Lands to the Taos Indians, I will be grateful for your help in this matter.

Sincerely,

THOMAS V. O'LEARY.

TAOS, N. MEX., June 20, 1968.

DEAR SENATOR ANDERSON: I want you to know that the members of the Capulin Livestock Association oppose the legislation that would give the Taos Pueblo Indians 48,000 acres of the Carson National Forest.

We are not against the Taos Indians. We do not want to see them lose their religious freedom. We do not object to them getting a settlement in money as the Indian Claims Commission recommended. We just think the Taos Indians are taken care of best under the present arrangement with the Forest Service managing the land for them.

The Indians have free grazing, free wood and nearly everything else they need from the Forest as things are now. No one can go to Blue Lake without their consent and the area is closed entirely to non-Indians during August for their ceremonials.

The members of the Capulin Livestock Association graze cattle on part of the area that would go to the Indians if the Senate passed the same bill the House did. This is one reason we oppose it. We do not think our grazing permits would be secure under Indian ownership. But that is not the only reason. As citizens of the United States, of New Mexico, and Taos County we think the land should stay in public ownership.

Water from the Rio Lucero and Rio Pueblo de Taos is very important to us and all New Mexico. We know how the Indians take care of the land they have now and we know how the watershed would be overgrazed and abused if they had uncontrolled use of it.

We don't always agree with the Forest Service and their land management practices. But we know we have better grazing and more water because they take care of the forest for all the people, including the Taos Indians. We urge you to oppose the Blue Lake Bill.

Yours truly,

ROBERTO M. MARTINEZ,  
*Capulin Livestock Association Secretary.*

SANTA FE, N. MEX., July 15, 1968.

HON. CLINTON P. ANDERSON,  
*U.S. Senate,  
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR SIR: Although I fully realize your opposition to restoring the Blue Lake watershed (not just Blue Lake itself) to the Taos Pueblo Indians, I fervently hope you will support the bill which overwhelmingly passed the House earlier this year.

I am a conservationist myself, and normally oppose any reductions in federal forest or park lands. But I make an exception in this instance because I firmly believe the Indians have a clear right, not just to dollars, but to the totality of the land—which has both a material and (more importantly) a spiritual value to these fine people.

Furthermore, this is a wonderful chance for the American people through the Congress to straighten out one of the many shameful and tragic blunders of the past in our utter abuse of the American Indian.

Respectfully yours,

RUSSELL D. BUTCHER.

AIR ENGINEERING CO.,  
*Albuquerque, N. Mex., June 19, 1968.*

HON. CLINTON P. ANDERSON,  
*U.S. Senate,  
Washington, D.C.*

MY DEAR MR. ANDERSON: I was quite shocked to learn that the House has passed H.R. 3306, the Blue Lake Bill. I am quite sure this comes somewhat as a surprise to you also.