

December 22, 1925

2221 Interior Building,  
December 22, 1925.

Dear Mr. Meritt:

Concerning the memorandum, dated December 10th, prepared by Mr. Carl Hayden, concerning a proposition to colonize some of the northern Arizona Indians in the vicinity of Phoenix, I beg to offer the following suggestion:

When I was in Phoenix a couple of years ago I talked this matter over with Mr. Hayden, Mr. E. J. Walker, Manager of the Arizona Cotton Growers Association and other gentlemen interested in the cotton growing and other agricultural activities of the Salt River Valley irrigated area. At the time I suggested to them that it might be well to consider the advisability of securing some irrigated land which could be divided into small home tracts and sold to Hopi Indians on very liberal terms with the idea of making these Indians permanent residents of the Salt River Valley.

This suggestion was well received. I told them that it was not original with me but that some Hopi Indians who were, at the time, picking cotton. They had brought this subject up while we were eating lunch together in a cotton field.

Mr. Hayden was particularly taken with the proposition and I presume he has been considering it ever since.

I had no thought of using any of the Gila River (Pima) Reservation but if the water is available I think that it would be a good idea to make an effort to put the Hopi Indians there, provided and always provided that the Pima Indians are consulted in the matter and their consent secured. However, there is considerable land owned by white men but which is not what we would call first class in all respects which might be secured for the Hopi colony. The Hopi Indians would take that kind of land and make it a wonderful garden.

RG75, BIA, Gen. Comm., E. 1387  
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In this connection may I call your attention to the approaching development of the Gila River Valley in connection with the building of the Coolidge Dam? This project will open up another large irrigated area and aggravate the labor situation. When the land under the Coolidge Dam is ready for cultivation I am wondering where the labor will come from unless the doors are thrown wide open for the Mexican or the negroes are brought in. The Coolidge Dam will be finished in about six years and it seems to me that the Indian Service has a wonderful opportunity during that time to bring into the Salt River and Gila River valleys Indians who will take the place of Mexicans as the permanent source of agricultural labor.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary.

Mr. Edgar B. Meritt,  
Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs,  
Office of Indian Affairs,  
Washington, D. C.