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May 7, 1915.

Commissioners of the
Deering Village,
Deering Alaska.

My dear Friends:

I am in receipt of your letter of February 21st, expressing your appreciation of what the Government has done and is trying to do for your people, also stating what you hope to become in your new village of Noorvik.

Your business-like proposition to take down and put on lighters our Deering buildings, in case the Government can give you free transportation for your belongings, will be considered. I think your proposition a very fair one and I believe we can arrange to carry out the same.

Your proposal to work on the new building at Noorvik for \$2.00 a day, also seems to me to be a fair one. I think we shall probably pay for wages with barter goods, - that is, flour, sugar, white drill, and other staple articles.

I am indeed glad to know that you are so hopeful in regard to your new location. A ~~barren~~ country has many advantages over a barren one. However, there will be many discouragements. A new village will require much self sacrifice on your part. Food at certain

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seasons of the year will not be so plentiful on the river as at Deering. You will miss especially the seal hunting. In fact, I am of the opinion that it will be necessary for your people during many years to come to return every spring to your sealing grounds around Cape Espenberg and spend at least five or six weeks every spring putting up seal oil for your winter use. After your people have constructed some schooners, preferably power schooners, it will be possible for you to visit your sealing places as soon as navigation opens and collect your oil and sail across the Sound to Cape Blossom, steaming up the river to your new town of Neorvik.

In making this move you must bear in mind that there will be many, many things to readjust and everything will not work out just as you would like to have it work out for a number of years. But if you are patient and persistent, this move will result in much lasting good for your people.

We have no more funds, this year, to spend for schools in Alaska than we had last year. Therefore, it will not be possible for us to put up a fine building at Neorvik the first year. However, we hope to send in a small sawmill, and enough lumber and building material to enable Mr. Replogle to put up a comfortable log schoolhouse and residence. Later, possibly the log schoolhouse can be used for a shop. Next year, with the sawmill in good running order you should be able to saw sufficient lumber to put up all the necessary buildings. The cost of shipping lumber from Seattle to the

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Kobuk is at least \$40.00 to \$50.00 per thousand. Therefore, we shall only plan to send in finished lumber like flooring, and possibly some ceiling and shingles.

I have never forgotten you people at Deering and shall always have a warm spot in my heart for you. I have often thought that of the many Eskimo villages I have visited, yours was one of the most appreciative.

Before making this move I think it might be well for you commissioners to remind your people that in the matter of dollars and cents it means a great sacrifice on the part of the Government to tear down the large school building at Deering, which, as I remember, cost more than \$5,000.00. It is not easy for me to explain to the Department at Washington the necessity for putting up \$5,000.00 buildings and then in the course of six or seven years tearing them down and building new ones at other places. It might also be well for you to remind them that there are yet many Eskimo villages in the region of the mouth of the Kuskokwim river who are living in squalor and dirt, where we have not yet been able to place schools. It is hard to take the money for old established villages like Deering which should be used in reaching these people, who have been neglected these many, many years. Supt. Evans has been covering that region during the past two or three years and if you could hear him tell you of their great poverty and their need of medical assistant, I know you would all

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agree that they need Government help just now more than the Deering people. However, ^{since} you people have resolved to build up a model village and to undertake something which has never yet been undertaken in that region, we are going to try to help you just as much as our meager funds will permit us. Therefore, in starting out on this new undertaking, - this partnership between the people and the Government, - we want to ask you to be patient and be willing to work hard and wait for results, remembering that the old, ancient and beautiful city of Rome was not built in a day and that the model Eskimo village of Noorvik cannot be built in one or two or three years, but that it will require many years to make it what we hope to have it. The building of this village will require, as I have already said, many sacrifices. Your people will have to practice many economies which they have not practiced during the past six or seven years when business in Alaska was good and prices for all your products were high. There is now less demand for your ware. You have during these recent years acquired a taste for many luxuries. It will probably be necessary for you to go back and live more closely to your old diet, and I for one believe that you will all be healthier for it. I am satisfied that seal oil is just as healthy as butter and lard. But at your new settlement you can all have good houses, plenty of fuel, protection from the icy winds and plenty of good water at a convenient distance from the village. You

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will also be able to have some splendid gardens. You should be able to raise all your potatoes and other vegetables, and with the timber at hand make all the furniture which you will need in your new, model, commodious log houses. I think one of the rules of your village should be: to purchase nothing from the outside which can be manufactured at home. One of the secrets of building up a home town to keep your money in your own village.

If it is at all possible I hope to visit you this coming summer. With greetings to you all, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

WILLIAM T. LOFF,

Chief of Alaska Division.

L/H.

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