

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Pribilof Evac. Camp  
St. Paul Island,  
July 24, 1942

Mr. E. C. Johnston, Sup't.,  
706 Federal Office Bldg.,  
Seattle, Washington.

Dear Mr. Johnston:

Mr. Davis of P. E. Harris made an inspection of this old cannery; he stated that the warehouses now being used for our supplies will have to be vacated by the end of fishing season which I believe in this district is August 18. All other buildings of the cannery leak so bad that the roofs will have to be repaired, and the building which he indicated we could use is 50' X 150', and the roof is of 1/3 pitch and should have a complete new shingling all over. This building has a large balcony; this is the place Mr. Davis stated we could use for storing our supplies and personal effects.

It will be impossible to heat this building, and only such supplies that can stand being frozen can be stored here. Mr. Davis also stated that he had worked in Funter Bay in years past and that he has seen the weather here as cold as 26° below. It seems to me the best solution of this entire project would be to endeavor to find some place that could be used as a winter camp where we would at least have a place to keep food supplies, have a water supply, and better housing conditions than here at Funter Bay

If you intend to have school this winter, a place will have to be built of sufficient size to handle all the students. I think some plan should be made to get started on much needed buildings and improvements as soon as possible. If you intend to keep the people at this place without further improvements, then we should be notified immediately so we can begin preparing for winter with what little material we might be able to salvage, otherwise the only thing I can see is extreme hardships and possible deaths under present conditions for cold weather.



The suspense of waiting for material and supplies to make repairs possible with material on hand, would take the heart out of a mummy (if a mummy has a heart!) 90% of the buildings leak very bad; we obtained a few rolls of roofing from the cannery after much "talking", but it could be used only on the warehouses to keep the supplies dry. We received additional roofing on the Penguin but didn't receive nails or cement to lay the paper - it's things like this which seem so trying.

The work we are doing is looking in the direction of our winter stay, but there still must be many, many improvements made before any of the present buildings could be lived in during extreme cold weather. There isn't a building at this site which is made for winter occupancy--as you know, the canneries are operated only in the summer-time.

If you think the attitude of this office regarding this situation is wrong, would you please converse with Mr. Olson -- as you know, he has first-hand knowledge of conditions in southeastern Alaska both for winter and summer, and also the condition of the buildings at this and other sites in the territory. He I think is the only person in the government service who really gave this place and the mine site a thorough investigation; before the Pribilof people were landed here.

The health and safety of the people, both natives and employees, should be the first consideration now confronting the Bureau.

There is probably less than one chance in a thousand of ever returning to the Pribilofs before winter; I feel that the government has a duty to perform in taking care of the people now that they are away from home. Every employee here is doing and will continue to do all in their power to make a success of this evacuation, and I believe the moral of the people is very high under existing conditions. They seem to have faith that everything will be fixed and they will be made as comfortable as possible before long.

Yours very truly,

*L. C. McMillin*