

Letter # 3

Karpowka.

August 5, 1928

Dear Brother and Sister Hübert,

To begin, across the ocean we wish you good health, which we also enjoy on this side. Since we received your letters of July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1928, and of June 11, we feel very obliged to respond. Here everything remains the same. Rain every day, so everything (green?) seems to rot. It's a year like 19 was. The grain is as tall as a man, so to speak, but there will be little corn. There has been a lot of mildew. There will be a lot of barley, but how is that helpful—here in this soviet, for in this village since they have gone mad again, many got as much *Nalog*\* as those years ago. I'll have to pay 250 Rubel on 15 (Desjatin ? [10 desjatins = 1 hectare]), but Peter Berg must pay c. 500 Rub. on 25 [desjatin]. There will be little seeding in the coming spring. The seed will all be taken away from us. Another *Industrial* . . . has been circulated again, for which the farmers have to pay 500 Mln (Million Rubles?). \*\*

Johann Funk has also sold everything, wants to go to the Amur, but that's not possible right now. (Amur – Far eastern Russia, along the Chinese border.) The railroad is over the water (crosses? Is under water?) so over 50 Werst ( c. 50 53 km.). If possible, Johann Friesen and . . . Funk want to go. Their goal is not the Amur, but to get across from there.

Enough of this hooch. Brother-in-law, you write about your credit. I promise you that I will pay the debt as soon as possible, as health allows, as it has till now. In a pinch we would also have from Mos. Kan. (?) that would be possible if we could only get passports. If the credit exists and we could get passports, we would soon be out of here. There are many here with credit that all want to leave in the fall. From among us we have Jakob Bärigen with all the Nachtigals, Cornelius Neufeld, Abram Klassen also wait for credit from Bükkert. Dear brother-in-law, you write that you borrowed . . . .

Peter Dueck

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\*Nalog - a form of tax to be paid in kind (e.g., grain) or money

\*\*industrial

Erwin's suggestion: a financial bond forced on farmers as part of a five-year plan, sometimes related to a lottery to "sweeten the [bitter] pie."