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156-0-1

**INDIAN AGENTS' OFFICE**

Alert Bay, B. C.

11th June, 1928

IN YOUR REPLY REFER TO  
No. 23  
ALSO  
TO DATE OF THIS LETTER

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Sir,— 156-0-1

DEPT. OF INDIAN AFFAIRS  
JUN 10 1928  
RECORDS

Your letter of May 20th was duly received but owing to the fact that I was called away for a few days and on my return the Principal was away for a few days I was unable to act upon it until this week.. On the 8th inst. I went to the Industrial School and had a long interview with the Principal regarding the food supplies for the school. Mr. Spackman allowed me the free use of his requisitions and while on the whole there is ample food supplied for the boys it was pointed out to Mr. Spackman that many changes could be made that would benefit the boys and which in my opinion should be made commencing with the next quarter.

I find, first, that no butter is allowed for the boys but as a substitute they use peanut butter the average being 100 lbs. a quarter for from 40 to 41 boys. I consider peanut butter a very very poor substitute for butter and that this quantity is insufficient. I find also that there is a scarcity in other rich foods and I suggested to Mr. Spackman that he increase the amount of beans used as food to at least three times the quantity which is being used at present.

With regard to meat the school has been handicapped until recently owing to the fact that in order to buy meat at all economically, the week's supply has been bought at one time, and there is no proper refrigerator to keep it in, and even if there was, bringing it up on the boat in small quantities sewed up in sacking the meat is tainted before they get it. Mr. Spackman assured me, however, that now there are two cold storage plants handling meat at Alert Bay he has suggested to his Church Committee at Winnipeg that he be allowed to buy the meat locally, which would allow more choice as to what they purchase and also allow a little better quality of meat. The quantity for the boys school has been insufficient. Had all the meat been in good order which arrived it would have been much more nearly a sufficient quantity than it has been under the present conditions.

The boys at the school look healthy and

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look to be well fed, but during the last year there has been an unusual amount of illness and I talked this matter over with the principal to see if he did not think that it was on account of the fats not having enough fats. It was pointed out to him that in their native habitat Indians live on more or less oily foods, they use large quantities of fish and use very largely fish oils and also eat a great many of the hair seals which are very fat indeed. I found at the school that there was a very small quantity of fish on the diet list. It must be admitted however that at times it is difficult to get fresh fish, but it would appear from the quantity that would be used there that an arrangement might be made to get a good weekly allowance.

I found also that the allowance of sugar was only 4 lb. a day for the boys in the school and I think that this should at least be doubled. I suggested to the principal that if he would use more beans and would buy mess pork in barrels and cook it with the beans that it would help out materially with the fats and would not increase the cost of their living as they would make up for it in other ways.

I also took up the matter of the diet with the principal so far as the Girls' Home is concerned and I found that a much more liberal allowance had been made for the girls than for the boys. There, as in the boys school, no butter was allowed for the girls but the amount of peanut butter per capita was larger but still insufficient to keep the girls in good growing condition also at this institution there was found a scarcity of vegetables as they were limited to what they grow in their garden with the exception of potatoes.

To my mind, the great difficulty exists in the fact, that these schools and their diet are controlled very largely by a committee at Winnipeg who have to deal with a large number of schools but they, apparently, know nothing whatever about climatic conditions and what is best for this particular place, and the principal informs me that he has taken up this matter of the scarcity of fats with them but they have done nothing to remedy it. A copy of this report is being given to the Principal for his guidance and it is to be hoped that steps will be taken to make the school in every way as efficient as it might be.

The agent has been for two years past pressing the need of a new school building which is as much needed or perhaps more so than a change in the diet at the schools.

WMH/I  
The Secretary,  
Dept. of Indian Affairs,  
Ottawa.

Your Obedient Servant,

*W. M. Halliday*

W. M. Halliday  
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