

22nd February 1930.

Dear Mr. Fleming,

LA  
This is to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter of January 27th with enclosures. Yes, it is indeed a most regrettable situation that is created by the refusal of the insurance companies to insure the Graf Zeppelin for our expedition in 1930. I also perfectly understand that it means a serious set-back to any future efforts in America in cooperation with Aeroarctic.

HM  
Unfortunately I know very little about what has actually happened. When I long ago agreed to take the lead of such an expedition, if it could be arranged, it was an express condition that I should have no work with the preparations and raising of money etc. for the expedition, as my time was too busy for that. When later our society the Aeroarctic was created I was pressed against my will to become the president. I made, however, the same condition. Nevertheless I fear that I am made more or less responsible. My impression was all along that there was ~~any~~ doubt that insurance of the ship could be obtained, but that there was only some discussion of what the premium should be, and it was taken for granted that it was possible to obtain a lower premium after the round the world trip of "Graf Zeppelin" had been undertaken. The refusal acted therefore as a bomb, and really I do not understand what has happened. But it is no good pondering over that now, and what the prospects really are for an expedition with the "Graf Zeppelin" next year, I cannot tell you. I do not know how far the negotiations with the insurance companies have now advanced, but about this I expect you will get information later from Berlin.

I understand perfectly well that the people of Fairbanks feel very disappointed, and it is a most disagreeable thing for our society to have caused all this expenditure, and work, and loss of time for no use, at least for the present, and I also understand the feeling that our society ought to try to re-imburse the people of Fairbanks at least for their cash contributions. I can assure you that I quite agree with that view, and think it would be most desirable that our society should repay the money, if it only could. The difficulty is, however, that there is no money and I do not know how it would be possible to obtain something for the purpose. You ask me as president of the society to see to that the money is paid, but I wish to inform you that I have ~~no~~ connection with the business management and the money affairs of the society. I am, however, writing

Thad