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Let us begin by discussing the key aspects of the letter. The letter is written by Peter Minuit, who is proposing the founding of the colony of New Sweden. The letter is translated from the original Dutch by Professor G. B. Keen. The letter mentions the opportunity for Sweden to establish a settlement in America, and Minuit expresses his desire to undertake this venture. He proposes to explore the Virginias, New Netherland, and other regions adjacent, certain places well known to him, with a very good climate, which might be named Nova Swedia.

For this expedition there would be required a ship of 60,
Letter of Peter Minuit.

70, or 100 läster, armed with twelve guns and sufficient ammunition.

For the cargo 10,000 or 12,000 gulden would be needed, to be expended in hatchets, axes, kettles, blankets, and other merchandise.

A crew of twenty or twenty-five men would be wanted, with provisions for twelve months, which would cost about 3400 gulden.

In case the Crown of Sweden would provide the ship with ammunition, with twelve soldiers to garrison and hold the places, and likewise furnish a bark or yacht for facilitating trade, the whole [additional] expense might come to about 1600 gulden, one-half of which I myself will guarantee, Mr. Spiring assuming the other half, either on his own account or for the Crown, the same to be paid at once in cash.

As to the time of sailing, the sooner we start the better; for, although trade does not begin till spring, by being on the spot in season we can get on friendly terms with the savages, and induce them to collect as many furs as possible during the winter, and may hope to buy 4500 or 6000 beaver skins, thus acquiring a large capital from so small a commencement, and the ability to undertake more hereafter.

The Crown of Sweden might favour the beginners of this new enterprise with a charter, prohibiting all other persons from sailing from Sweden within the limits of Terra Nova and Florida for the space of twenty years, on pain of confiscation of ship and cargo. And, as it often happens that French or Portuguese vessels are met with on the ocean, authority should likewise be granted to capture such ships, and bring them as lawful prizes to Sweden. Also, it should be conceded that all goods of the company for the first ten years be free of duty both coming in and going out.

And, as the said land is suited for growing tobacco and various kinds of grain, it would be well to take along proper persons to cultivate these, who might at the same time be employed as garrison.

1 From about 130 to 225 tons.—Trans.  2 Newfoundland.—Trans.
In addition, the advantages to be derived from the enterprise in course of time by the Crown of Sweden could be indicated orally by me, if I were called to Sweden to give a more detailed account of everything. However, that shall be as the gentlemen of the Government see fit.

This is designed briefly to serve your Excellency as a memorandum. I trust your Excellency will write an early answer from Sweden to my known friend whether the work will be undertaken, so that no time be lost, and others anticipate an enterprise which should bring so great profit to the Crown of Sweden.

Herewith wishing your Excellency bon voyage, I remain
Your Excellency's faithful servant,

Amsterdam, June 15, 1636.

1 Without doubt, Samuel Blommertz, with regard to whose association with Spiring and Minuit see Professor C. T. Odhner's *Kolonien Nya Sveriges Grundläggning*, translated in this Magazine, Vol. III., pp. 274 et seq. He was a merchant of Amsterdam, who distinguished himself in 1607–9 in the service of the Dutch East India Company, and was now a partner in the Dutch West India Company. In 1630 he became a partner in the colony of Rensselaerswyck, and in a patroonship which established a settlement called Swaanendael, near the site of the present town of Lewes, Delaware, the following year. He was appointed Commissioner for the Swedish enterprise at Amsterdam in 1637, and held that office until the beginning of 1640. In 1647 he was a Commissioner in the Board of Accounts of the Dutch West India Company, and was Accountant-General at the time of his death, which occurred about 1652.—Trans.