

Alaska Colony Gets Promise of Real Action

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New Co-ordinator Arrives and Tells Colonists That Houses Will Be Ready; Some Lose Credit

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Palmer, Alaska - (By Radio) - The much awaited Eugene Carr arrived in Palmer Friday night and immediately promised to put some planning into "planned pioneering."

A half hour after coming in on the railroad speeder from Anchorage, he called Project Director Don Irwin and his staff into conference to get a picture of the project as it is, delayed and confused.

Carr, big and burly, wore a red blazer and created the impression that he really means business.

"I'll tell you more about what I am going to do after I've seen the building schedule," he said in an interview before the conference.

"Maybe you won't find a building schedule," it was suggested to him.

"Co-ordination or Else—"

"Mister," he said emphatically, "I've got an innate desire to see things down in black and white. If there isn't one we'll have one and might soon. My job is to co-ordinate this project. That's my big job and we're going to have co-ordination, or else—"

"Our big worry is getting houses," said colonists who had edged into the circle that gathered around Carr when word of his arrival spread through Palmer.

"You'll have them," Carr snapped. "That guy acts like he's got dynamite with plenty of power," whispered a colonist who for days has been crying for action.

Carr, from his few remarks, indicated that he brings to the project the firm hand which has seemed so sadly lacking in the last weeks. Once he gets a true picture of the situation in mind, he promises to get action.

"Such Gorgeous Country"

"Naturally, I've not seen any of this project yet," he said. "All I've seen is what anybody would see coming into town on the railroad. But say, did you ever see such gorgeous country? This is my first trip to Alaska and I want to say it looks great. The soil looks really rich and fertile."

Several colonists remarked that they had been wondering about a market for their products, and Carr said that he believed that the marketing problem could be worked out without difficulty.

Corporation officials Friday cut off the commissary credit of colonists who have applied for a return to the United States. This creates a difficult situation for them. They will be permitted to buy for cash, but some have no cash.

Must Work Out Bills

"They'll have to work out their commissary bills before they leave," said Disbursing Agent Ed Cronin,

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Action Pledged Alaska Colony

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who has been handling the commissary since Charles Warter was suspended. "I can't let them have food without authorization. If they haven't any money, that's their problem."

Cronin said that work was being offered to square the indebtedness and that probably the returning colonists would be permitted enough food to sustain themselves while working. But he emphasized they would have to go to work first.

One of the returning colonists, John Holler, said he had enough money to buy food and was so doing. Several others said they "still have friends who'll help us" and are willing to work to square their bills.

Considering that the bills range from \$75 to \$150, it will take several weeks to work off the bill at 50 cents an hour, and unless other arrangements are made, they'll not be able to leave on the next return trip of the North Star, early in July, as planned.

Commissary indebtedness is prov-

ing a barrier to departures. At least half a dozen colonists have not applied for return passage, because they fear they won't be able to pay their debts, and even though they could pay them, they would not have money to take care of themselves upon arrival at Seattle.

Wires Gov. Fitzgerald

An appeal for help was wired to Gov. Fitzgerald of Michigan, by Harold Boice, who signed himself as a representative of Missaukee county.

"We Michigan families have been misled and caught in a trap," Boice telegraphed. "This is no farming country. No future, no market here. Very bad climate. Lots of sickness. No one is permitted to leave owing a grocery bill, which runs from \$75 to \$150 a month. Help. Groceries cut off from all wishing to go back, which is about 80 per cent."

The cost of the telegram was paid by Boice and three other families. It is only fair to report that all its statements were not approved by the majority of Michigan families.