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# Alaska Colony in Gear Now, Problem Is to Make It Run

## New Officials in Job Line-Up

### Money Spent Freely by Fuller; Army Man Is Determined to Finish Settlers' Homes

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OF THE JOURNAL STAFF

Palmer, Alaska — (By Radio)—A fast acting corporation president, snatched out of private life to save a sinking administration project, Thursday had finished gearing up a machine to house the Matanuska valley colonists. Now the problem is to make it run.

S. R. Fuller, special emissary from Washington, set trusted Lieut. Col. L. P. Hunt of the marine corps at the top of the heap, and then laid out new and former big time officials on an equal footing, responsible directly to Hunt when Fuller leaves, which will probably be next week. This move is intended to centralize control and stop bickering among various factions.

Col. Hunt is prepared to wield the big stick. He is a typical army or-

ganizer — blunt, quick, forceful. When diplomacy fails he will swing an iron fist.

#### "Must Have Breaks"

Viewing construction in the first nine weeks of the colonization project, Hunt says: "I think it's damn far behind." Of the future he says: "It's a race against time. I think we'll win. We'll get those houses up, but we haven't got any margin. We have got to have the breaks."

Fuller came here with authority to spend money as fast as necessary. When he leaves he will delegate that authority to Col. Hunt.

Already the new order is dipping into Uncle Sam's money bag. Some 85 Alaskans are to be hired as working foremen. It is estimated that it

## Gold in the Valley!

Palmer, Alaska—(U.P.)—Discovery of gold on one of the colony farms in the Matanuska valley served Thursday to allay some of the discontent of the homesteaders. Anton Anderson, veteran of the early gold seeking days of Alaska territory, struck "pay dirt" in digging a water well. He tried to keep his find a secret but it leaked out and colonists gathered in excited groups. Anderson said pannings showed "substantial values," but other sourdoughs claimed the area had been prospected thoroughly and little gold would be found there.

will cost \$1,000 daily to pay and feed them. Assuming that the cabins are done by Oct. 15, which is the goal, their cost probably will exceed \$75,000. That and other thousands of dollars have been charged up against government blunders. The first 30 foremen are due Monday.

The reader might wonder why the project needs so many foremen. Actually they'll be just glorified workers, so titled to get around the FERA law which permits hiring only relief labor plus certain skilled men.

In addition to the foremen more than 70 transients are due from the States on the next trip of the North Star. If even more are needed, more will be obtained, for the rule on the colonization project now is "get it done and count the cost afterward."

#### New Hospital on List

The cottages will be of logs if possible. If not, frame house lumber is already ordered—and almost certain to be used. Sash will be cut and hammered into homes. Fuller said the colonists will have to expect to build their own livestock shelters. For those who will not or cannot, a big temporary barn is to be built at the community center for winter use.

One piece of urgent community center construction besides the warehouse ordered by Co-ordinator Eugene Carr has been added to the building program for this year. Plans have been drawn for a hospital costing \$15,000 to \$20,000. It is to accommodate about 25 beds this year, with space for 15 added later.

Dr. C. Earl Albrecht, who was rushed here during the scarlatina emergency, will be the permanent colony physician. Arrangements have also been completed to have an Anchorage dentist make periodic visits to Palmer.

There are now 15 cases of scarlatina and scarlet fever in the temporary isolation hospital made from the community dance hall. Dr. E. E. Ostrom, physician for the transient who has also been looking after the health of the colonists, said that only one case of measles and a few scattered cases of mumps are current in the camp.

Fuller declared that the new plans solve the health, sanitation, police, fire and school problems. A permanent doctor and a hospital will take care of health, he feels, while government sanitation men who arrived with him have been insisting on proper sanitation measures in the camps. Twelve men under a chief have been designated as colonial police to control thievery and disorderly conduct. Merrill Sulzman, the Catholic priest here, has been named to organize the fire fighting force.

To provide schooling as soon as possible, it is planned to erect four frame buildings as temporary schools. They will be situated in farm communities throughout the valley. It is believed that the remainder of the pupils can be taught at the Wasilla and Matanuska village schools.

Of the high powered staff which Fuller brought with him, three will remain here until essential construction is completed. They are Col. Hunt, A. M. Goodman, farming expert, and Lieut. H. V. Martin, an engineer. The others will return with Fuller on the United States cutter Shoshone which has been waiting at Seward under Fuller's orders since the arrival of the group.

Also returning on the Shoshone will be Frank U. Bliss, former director of construction, who has been ill.