

# Colonists Com

## Little Is Done in Six Weeks, Telegram Says

### More Than 40 Settlers of Matanuska Valley Join in Plea; Claim Politics Hampers Project

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Palmer, Alaska—(By Radio)—Forty-odd Matanuska colonists have appealed directly to President Roosevelt to take action in the valley settlement project. They pointed out that little had been done in the six weeks they have been here and claimed that the Alaska territorial government is "picking political plums" on the undertaking.

Similar telegrams were sent to Senators La Follette (Wis.), Couzens (Mich.) and Schall (Minn.), to Relief Director Harry Hopkins and to the territorial government at Juneau, Alaska.

The messages advised that detailed complaints were being mailed in registered letters. The telegrams were signed by Pat Hemmer and Mrs. I. M. Sandvik, colony council representatives for 41 families whose tracts are situated in the area across the Matanuska river from the main body of settlers but who live in headquarters camp.

#### Fear "Political Fodder"

The committee which prepared the telegrams and letters refused to release the exact contents here, saying that they did not wish the message to be used as "political fodder" back in the States against the administration. They feel, they said, that this is not a political project and that an appeal should be strictly on the basis that the situation here warrants it. It was learned beyond question, however, that the telegrams pointed out that no wells have been dug for the colonists, plans for homes as described by some authorities here are not as the colonists were told when they signed for the settlement, roads into tracts are not being built as promised and that the territorial government is playing politics with the project.

The telegrams further expressed confidence in Colony Director I. Irwin and the aides sent him f

Washington. These men, the colonists feel, are honestly trying their best to make the colonization progress and have worked day and night to help them get started building cottages.

#### Held Secret Meeting

The appeal to President Roosevelt was decided on at a meeting held Saturday night called by Hemmer and Mrs. Sandvik. It was organized more or less secretly and was confined almost exclusively to colonists with tracts across the river. No project authorities attended, as they have most other meetings, so far as could be learned.

Other colonists were drawn into action, however, when it came to paying for the messages. A subscription was taken up and some whose tracts were not across the river contributed. It was said to have cost \$24 to relay the telegrams. Some colonists who did not have any money promised to help later toward the cost. Others, more fortunately supplied with cash, stood their share until the money due those colonists for working for the Alaska Rural Rehabilitation corporation, such as unloading freight or helping around commissary, is paid.

Complaints on house plans mainly concern foundations. Corporation Architect N. Lester Troast now tells the colonists that houses will have mud sill foundations; that is, heavy timbers laid right on earth, with walls built upon them. Some colonists claim that they were promised concrete foundations and that the foundations now contemplated may

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