

fit, raising over \$1 million before the drive even started. The figure has now reached \$1.8 million to date.

This is testimony of the belief of that community, the community we like to call the Can-do City, and they have faith not only in our city but the golden heart of Alaska and the development of the future of Alaska.

We believe that any investment put in the form of flood control measures will be returned to them manyfold, just as the original purchase price of Alaska has since been repaid many times over to the Government.

We thank you for your time, Mr. Chairman.

I would be glad to answer any questions.

Mr. JONES. Thank you.

Mr. Wright?

Mr. WRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I want to say to this man, Red Boucher, and all the people who have accompanied him here from Alaska, how greatly impressed all of us were.

I know that your area experienced great devastation. It brought the great suffering and enormous personal losses that almost everyone in Fairbanks sustained, and yet, I think it is true that all of us were deeply impressed by the indomitable spirit of the people. They joined together in sort of a camaraderie of suffering, a fellowship of disaster.

They had a drive to hang on and to rebuild, in spite of the fact that many of them are going to have to be refinancing their houses, borrow money to recoup personal property losses.

I did not find a single soul who indicated he was going to pack up and leave.

I want to ask you a few questions, because these are things that we became very concerned about when we were there.

One thing that seemed unique in this situation was the level of the water in the ground at the time that the winter freeze began to set in. We were there in late August, and on September 1 we could feel the cold drizzle in that rain.

Has the water subsided enough in the subterranean level that you believe the foundations of your buildings will be safe when the spring thaw comes?

Mayor BOUCHER. Yes, Congressman Wright. The good Lord moves his hand in strange ways. We like to figure that everything was for the better in the future; and He blessed us with warm weather that lasted almost until the first part of November.

Very fortunately, the water table was down, and we do not anticipate great problems from heaving.

There are several engineers, and Mr. Conrad Frank can probably testify on this, but from a layman's point of view, I do not believe there will be any major damage.

Mr. WRIGHT. That is then a blessing.

The second question involves the loans that were made available to the people. I remember the great interest on your part and on the part of the congressional delegation, if I can get the SBA and other agencies to come through with disaster loans to permit long-term rehabilitation, do you feel this has been done?

Mayor BOUCHER. Yes, sir; they have. Of course, you do not experience at the Federal level, as expressed by the advice of your