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THE ROAD TO STATEHOOD:
ALASKA'S QUEST FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT
BY
ANTHONY FUSARO

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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ABSTRACT

Alaska comprises 586,400 square miles of territory in the north-western part of North America. Discovered in 1741 by Vitus Bering, the land was owned by Russia until 1867. In that year, "Seward's ice box" was sold to the United States for \$7,200,000.

Under American rule, Alaska's needs were often ignored or inadequately provided for. The area was referred to as a district until 1906, when it became the Territory of Alaska. Alaska was made an organized territory in 1912, when limited self-government was finally granted. The governor was still a Presidential appointee, and in fact, the territory remained under the extensive control of many federal bureaus.

Alaska was first allowed a non-voting delegate to Congress in 1906. In 1916, Delegate James Wickersham introduced the first Alaskan statehood bill. The statehood movement was not to gain momentum, however, until World War II emphasized the importance of the territory.

Statehood bills were introduced in the Seventy-eighth Congress, and in seven succeeding Congresses until ultimate success was achieved in 1958. The first Congressional hearings on statehood were held in 1947 by the Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Possessions of the House Committee on Public Lands. In 1948, the first Alaskan state-

hood bill to reach the House Calendar was reported out by this committee. The first Senate hearings on the question were held in 1950, when a favorable committee report was also made in that body.

Each succeeding debate on Alaska's admission was much like the previous one, and many objections were raised to the territory's small population and non-contiguity to the rest of the country. At times, Hawaii and Alaska were linked together in package statehood bills, but such arrangements worked to the disadvantage of both territories.

Victory for Alaska was finally attained in the Eighty-fifth Congress, when H.R. 7999 was passed and signed by the President. In accordance with provisions of the enabling act, the territory was proclaimed a state on January 3, 1959, and her star was officially added to the flag on the following July 4th.

Many of the arguments used against Hawaii were dissipated when Alaska was admitted, and in the following Congress, a fiftieth state was added to the Union.

Statehood will affect, in some degree, our relations with anti-colonial nations, and with Canada, with whom increased cooperation will probably be sought regarding the improvement of transportation and communications systems connecting the States with Alaska. A new era in American history may begin with the opening of another portion of the still-existing frontier--the New Northwest.

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INTRODUCTION

Alaskan statehood has been a topic for discussion in and outside of the territory for many decades. In the Eighty-fifth Congress, the wish of all who favored making Alaska the forty-ninth state was finally granted with the enactment of Public Law 85-508. This was accomplished after several defeats for the statehood movement in previous Congresses, and only after partisans had succeeded in separating the Alaska bill from that calling for Hawaiian statehood.

The author's intent here is to trace the history of Alaska's quest for admission into the Union. It would not be appropriate, however, to begin without first relating some of the history of Alaska, in order to give a proper background to the statehood question. Many things led to the demand to admit Alaska into the Union. Chief among them, mismanagement under Federal control, is emphasized in any study of the new state.

One of the predictions of Alaskan statehood opponents has already come true—that being the prophecy that Hawaii would be next if Alaska gained admission to the Union. It will be interesting to watch future sessions of Congress to see if the opponents' fears concerning the harmful effects of admission on the country were warranted. Only the future can tell if these opposing forces were correct in arguing that it might eventually expand beyond Alaska and Hawaii into a far-flung,

uncontrollable empire, which might well result in the decline of the United States as a dominant world power.

Chapter I

A SHORT HISTORY OF ALASKA

Discovery of Alaska

The discovery of Alaska resulted from the activities of the Russian ruler, Peter the Great, and later of his widow, Catherine I. In order to determine if there was a land connection between Siberia and America, Peter ordered an expedition to be led by Vitus Bering, a Dane in the service of the Russian Navy. Bering left St. Petersburg in 1725 and returned in 1730. During the voyage, he discovered St. Lawrence Island, which is now a part of Alaska, and became convinced that there was no land bridge connecting East and West. His report caused some disappointment, however, since he had not brought back any information concerning what land, if any, lay to the East. Another expedition was ordered in 1732.

This second expedition set sail in 1741, and was composed of two ships, the St. Peter, under the command of Bering, and the St. Paul, commanded by Alexei Chirikov. The two ships became separated during the voyage, and it was the St. Paul which first came within sight of land. However, landing parties sent out by Chirikov vanished, and the commander finally returned home in disappointment, and with little valuable information.

On July 16, Bering sighted a mountain range and some islands. He allowed the crew to land on Kayak Island, but only to get water. This order greatly displeased Georg Wilhelm Steller, the German naturalist accompanying Bering, for he had hoped to spend considerable time on land collecting scientific information. Bering, however, prematurely old because of the rigors of two expeditions, and desirous of getting back home, refused. Steller's observations were therefore limited, although he did collect much extremely important information on Alaskan flora and fauna.

The St. Paul did not complete the homeward journey. Scurvy broke out among the crew, and Bering decided that because of rough seas, high winds, and sickness, a landing was necessary. The men went ashore thinking they had reached the Siberian port of Kamchatka. It was found later that they were on an island, and because their ship had been battered in a storm, they were forced to spend the winter there. By springtime, thirty-one of the crew of seventy-seven had died, including Bering, whose name the island now bears. The remaining men successfully built a smaller vessel from the remains of the St. Peter and reached their home port of Petropavlovsk on September 5, 1742. They brought with them many tales of woe and much valuable information on the new lands to the East. America, parts of which had already been discovered by Columbus, and possibly by Lief Ericson, had been discovered again by Vitus Bering.

The Russians owned and governed the colony of Russian America for 126 years. As a result of the information collected by Steller, many Russian adventurers, particularly hunters and fur traders, began what later came to be thriving industries in Alaska. Growth was slow, how-

ever, and the population remained small, with the white settlers greatly outnumbered by the natives---a condition which was to exist until many years after American ownership.

The Treaty of Cession of 1867

The Czar reportedly offered to sell Alaska to the United States as early as 1855. Negotiations for the transfer were begun in 1859, but President Buchanan's offer of \$5,000,000 was refused by the Russian ruler. Pacific coast fishery interest induced the government to try for Alaska once again in 1866. These negotiations, conducted by President Johnson's Secretary of State, William H. Seward, were successful, and in the following year a treaty was signed whereby the colony was sold to the United States for the sum of \$7,200,000. The treaty was signed on March 30, 1867, ratified by the United States Senate on May 28, exchanged June 20, and proclaimed by the United States on June 20, 1867. Official transfer of the territory took place at Sitka on October 18, 1867.

Raising the American flag over Alaska, however, did not signify that the treaty had been fully implemented. The House of Representatives had not yet appropriated the \$7,200,000 involved in the purchase, and the animosity between Congress and President Johnson, which resulted in his narrowly escaping conviction on impeachment charges, posed a real threat to the passage of the appropriation bill.

In the debate on H.R. 1096, there were some Representatives who felt that the House was obliged to make the appropriation, since the treaty had been made and ratified according to constitutional provisions. Others argued that the President should not have made a treaty involving an appropriation without first consulting the House. The value of the

territory was also seriously questioned. Representative Cadwalader C. Washburn of Wisconsin charged that to make the appropriation would be to waste money on a barren land. "There is no proof that any metal, precious or base, has yet been discovered there," he argued.¹

That the sentiment against the purchase was not unanimous, however is demonstrated by an article printed in the New York Times the day after the treaty was signed.

Many now living will see the day when the Pacific Coast will be as thickly studded with ports and cities as the Atlantic is now. . . .

This country cannot fail to appreciate at its full magnitude the importance of this accession. Until the Senate has acted upon the treaty we cannot, of course, know its details. Reluctant as that body may be to accept even so great a boon as this from the hands of the President and Mr. Seward, its sense of public duty will constrain its ratification.²

That ratification had been accomplished by a vote of twenty-seven to twelve, with six absent, just one vote over the required two-thirds.³

In the House of Representatives, the bark proved worse than the bite, and the appropriation was finally approved by a substantial majority. After being sent to a conference committee because of Senate amendments to the bill, H.R. 1096 was passed and was signed by the President in July of 1868.

It must be said, however, that the treaty, with its appropriation provision, was accepted more perhaps because of a fear of alienating

¹U.S., Congressional Globe, 40th Cong., 2nd Sess., March 14, 1868, p. 1875.

²New York Times, April 1, 1867, p. 4.

³A proposal was made to make the vote unanimous, and the final tally was thirty-seven to two.

Russia, who had been friendly to the North in the Civil War, then because of any great value being attributed to Alaska. It has even been suggested that the United States actually paid only \$1,400,000 for the land, the other \$5,800,000 serving as payment to Russia for her naval demonstration on our East Coast during the war—which action aimed at discouraging Britain from aiding the South.¹ This view is refuted by Stuart Tompkins, who argues that there is no evidence to support it, and that the naval demonstration "was another matter and had no connection with Alaska."²

Henry W. Clark attributes Russia's willingness to send her fleet to the fact that she was on the verge of war with England, and wanted her Atlantic fleet in a favorable position for duty against British commerce.³ Whatever the reason behind Russia's move, war did not break out between the two countries, and the Czar's cooperation was no doubt responsible for much of the support given to the treaty of 1867.

The District of Alaska

The history of federal administration of Alaska is not one to be proud of. Instead, it is a history of gross neglect, disinterest, and discrimination. For the first seventeen years after the purchase, Congress did little to provide a substitute for the departed Russian

¹Louis R. Huber, "Alaska: Our Deep Freeze," Statehood for Hawaii and Alaska, ed. Edward Latham, Vol XXV, No. 5 of The Reference Shelf (New York, 1953), pp. 113-114.

²Stuart Ramsay Tompkins, Alaska, Promyshlennik and Sourdough (Norman, Oklahoma, 1945), p. 188.

³Henry W. Clark, Alaska, The Last Frontier (New York, 1930), p. 70.

administrators; and during the first thirty years, homestead and general land laws were not made applicable to Alaska. The area was made a customs district by the Fortieth Congress, and this act was amended in 1873 to prohibit the selling of liquor to Indians. The Forty-first Congress made the Pribilof Islands a reservation and gave exclusive rights to conduct fur-seal operations for twenty years to a San Francisco company organized under the name of the Alaska Commercial Company. No provisions were made for settlement or for the government of the dependency.

The effect on Alaska of the federal government's neglect during the first seventeen years is aptly described by Ernest Gruening, former governor of the Territory of Alaska, and now a Senator from the new state.

During that period in Alaska no hopeful settler could acquire a title to land; no pioneer could clear a bit of forested wilderness and count on the fruits of his toil, or build a log cabin with the assurance that it was his; no prospector could stake a mining claim with security for his enterprise; property could not be deeded or transferred; no will was valid; marriage could not be celebrated; no injured party could secure redress for grievances except through his own acts; crimes could not be punished.¹

Alaska was administered until 1877 by the commanding general of the troops stationed at Sitka. Military rule proved unsatisfactory, and the soldiers did much to create tension between the whites and Indians by introducing "hoochanoo," a strong alcoholic beverage, to the natives. The prohibition law of 1873 did little to solve the problem since means of enforcement were lacking. Conditions worsened to such an extent that

¹Ernest Gruening, The State of Alaska (New York, 1954), pp. 35-36.

after the army left in 1877, the white settlers of Alaska (which was now under the rule of the Treasury Department, and administered through a customs officer) demanded protection from the United States against possible Indian uprisings. The federal authorities, to their own shame, took no action, and the Alaskans, in a state of fear, beckoned "to the captain of any one of Her Majesty's ships at Esquimaux," on Vancouver Island, to give them assistance, declaring that "we have made application to our government for protection and aid, and thus far it has taken no notice of our supplication."¹

On March 1, 1879, the H.M.S. Osprey, under Captain H. Holmes A'Court, reached Sitka and the Captain promised to stay until relieved by an American ship. The American revenue cutter, Oliver Wolcott, arrived on March 22d, but it was decided that it could not provide adequate protection. The Osprey remained, therefore, until April 3d, when the warship, U.S.S. Alaska docked at Sitka, after which Captain A'Court and his vessel returned to British Columbia.

On June 14th, the U.S.S. Jamestown was sent to replace the other ships until Congress provided for a government, and so Alaska, having been ruled by the Army and the Treasury, now came under the rule of the Navy. Congressional neglect, the confusion created during these three regimes, and the resulting sense of insecurity, had a telling effect on the people. Many left for the States or for Russia, and the already sparse population of Alaska became even smaller.

The first major attempt by Alaskans at gaining long-awaited legal recognition was made in 1881. On September 5th of that year, fifteen

¹Gruening, The State of Alaska, p. 39.

delegates (five each from Sitka, Wrangell, and Harrisburg¹) elected Customs Collector Mottrom D. Ball as their delegate to Congress, and petitioned that he be seated. The request was denied, but Ball remained in Washington to testify before several Congressional committees in an effort to make his influence felt.²

In 1884, Congress finally acted to provide a government for Alaska. S. 153, a bill sponsored by Senator Benjamin Harrison of Indiana, was passed by the Forty-eighth Congress and at least partially filled the void which had existed since 1867. The act provided for an appointed governor, district judge, district attorney, a clerk of court and four lesser-court judges (at Sitka, Juneau, Wrangell, and Unalaska), a marshall and four deputies. The mining laws of the United States were put into effect, but the general land laws were specifically excluded. Sitka was made the temporary seat of government. Alaska was thus made a civil and judicial district as well as a land district, although none of the U. S. land laws applied to it. Alaska still had no legislature and no delegate to Congress. The education of children was entrusted not to Alaskans, but to the Secretary of the Interior.

One of the great Congressional blunders was committed by the act of 1884, in which the General Laws of Oregon were declared to be the laws of the District of Alaska so far as applicable and not in conflict with provisions of the act or the laws of the United States. The effect of this provision was to leave Alaskans totally confused as to just what the

¹Jeanette Paddock Nichols, History of Alaska Under Rule of United States (Cleveland, 1924), pp. 66-67.

²In 1872, the citizens of Sitka had appealed for representation in Congress, but had not gone so far as to choose a delegate.

law was. Oregon's code proved wholly inadequate to meet the different circumstances in the district. Whereas Oregon's laws made innumerable references to counties and towns, Alaska had neither and had no power to create them. Furthermore, juries were illegal in Alaska since Oregon law required that only taxpayers could be grand or petit jurors, and Congress had as yet levied no taxes in Alaska. Even when the law seemed clear and applicable, Alaska was left without adequate means of enforcement.

The act of 1884 was a feeble attempt on the part of Congress to extend democratic government to Alaska. As a result, the district came more and more under the control of vested interests, chief among them being the Alaska Commercial Company, and later its successor as Seal Islands lessee, the North American Commercial Company.¹

Realizing the futility of petitioning Congress for their needs, Alaskans decided to work through the major political parties in bringing their cause to the people as well as to the beaurocrats. In 1888, Alaska received political recognition for the first time when two delegates from the district were seated at the Democratic National Convention. By 1892, Alaska was represented at both major conventions and both parties allowed the district a national committeeman.

The fight to be represented in Congress continued, and in 1890, another delegate was sent to Washington in the hope that he would be seated. The convention which had elected him also sent a memorial to Congress citing the denial of representation in Congress, the distorted

¹The federal government took control of the seal herds in 1910 to prevent extinction which would have resulted from pelagic killing.

jurisprudence, the faulty judicial system, the lack of title to land, the lack of a voice in the control of public schools, the lack of self-government and the means to establish it, the obnoxious liquor law, the inefficient postal service, and the lack of adequate government buildings in Alaska.¹ The memorial offered suggestions for improving the unfortunate situation, but as usual, they fall on deaf ears.

The interference of the vested interests in Alaskan political affairs was cause for much bitterness, as was the fact that most people holding federal offices in the district were appointed from among non-residents. The sentiment of the Alaskan people is well demonstrated by a newspaper article written by a Juneau editor in 1892, in which the Alaska Commercial Company was severely criticized for blocking Congressional legislation on Alaska. The editor's motto was "Alaska for Alaskans," and the article provoked the Seattle Press-Times to accuse him of attempting to rebel against the United States. To this, he replied: "That would be impossible as there are grave doubts whether we belong to it or not."²

The Fifty-first Congress concerned itself very briefly with Alaska and made a slight improvement concerning land laws through an act providing for the establishment of town sites and the survey and sale of plots therein under rules and regulations to be prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior. The sale of sites elsewhere, however, were available solely for purposes of trade and manufacture, and were not to exceed 160 acres at \$2.50 per acre. The act made no provision for government land surveys, leaving this to prospective buyers—a costly and often

¹Nichols, op. cit., p. 126.

²Gruening, op. cit., p. 86.

impossible task because of the lack of base lines. Furthermore, the act provided no authority to establish municipal government, and created no power to levy local taxes to provide for such municipal services as lighting, water supply, sewage disposal, street paving, and police.¹

In 1898, Congress extended the homestead laws to Alaska. In extending these laws unchanged (except for reducing the acreage to 80 acres), Congress had again failed to take into consideration the very difficult conditions in Alaska as compared with the other states and territories. The task of obtaining title under the rules set by the Secretary of the Interior often proved insurmountable, since it was much more difficult to inhabit, cultivate, and improve the land in Alaska.

The following year, a bill was passed providing for a criminal code, for the first tax to be levied on the district (thereby legalizing juries), and for the repeal of Alaska's thirty-two-year-old prohibition law. As there had been no statute yet to reform the civil government of the district, this act as well as that of the previous year, had to await the creation of the proper administrative machinery to be enforced.

The civil government act, when finally passed, moved the capital to Juneau and increased the functions of the judiciary, provided for the long-delayed incorporation of towns, gave the city councils power to levy certain taxes, and provided for the election of municipal school boards. The governor was kept as little more than a figurehead, and there was still no provision for a legislature or for a delegate to Congress. Alaskans had not given up on the latter, however, and had again elected a delegate in 1899, and had sent another memorial to Congress. The results were no different than in the past.

¹Gruening, op cit., pp. 80-81.

At long last, in 1903, a Senate subcommittee which had visited Alaska asked that Congress take cognizance of the district's needs. The subcommittee reported that the national government had been guilty of gross neglect in failing to provide for wagon roads or for the development of Alaska's government, and recommended that the district be allowed a delegate in Congress. None of these things were provided in that year.

In 1903, Congress extended to Alaska the public land laws of the United States applicable to homesteads and increased the size of homesteads to 320 acres. There was still no provision, however, for land surveys, thus making the law inapplicable.

For almost forty years after the purchase, the District of Alaska was without voice in the national legislature, had no legislature of her own, and little else characteristic of democratic government. She had truly proved to be "the nation's ugly duckling."¹ Although few voices were heard during this time for statehood, those who aspired to achieve that status eventually were numerous, and there was an incessant clamor on the part of Alaskans to be granted full territorial status with a government and rights similar to those granted to all other territories throughout the history of the United States. The fact that Hawaii and Puerto Rico had been allowed a delegate in Congress in 1900, only two years after their acquisition, further intensified Alaskans' resentment of being discriminated against, and increased their demands for self-government.

¹Gruening, op. cit., p. 29.

The Territory of Alaska

The anger Alaskan citizens felt at the government's discriminatory and negligent policies was clearly evident in the telegram sent to President Theodore Roosevelt by the people of Valdez on March 3, 1905. Envious of the fact that the Yukon Territory, despite its small population, had already been granted representation in the Canadian Parliament, the residents of Valdez declared:

On behalf of sixty thousand American citizens in Alaska who are denied the right of representation in any form, we demand, in mass meeting assembled, that Alaska be annexed to Canada.¹

Support for Alaska in her quest for equal treatment came from the United States Supreme Court in 1905. The Court declared, in one of the famed Insular Cases, that by reason of the Russian-American treaty of 1867, the United States had manifested the intention to make Alaskans citizens and to incorporate the territory into the United States.² According to the Court, therefore, Alaska had to be placed in the same category as the territories of Oklahoma, Arizona, and New Mexico--all incorporated, as opposed to the unincorporated territory of Puerto Rico, which the Court decided was not a part of the United States, but "merely appurtenant thereto as a possession."³

In 1906, Congress succumbed to Alaska's demands, and after discussion of delegate bills in seven consecutive Congresses, finally passed a bill granting Alaska a non-voting delegate in the House of Representatives. At the same time, the name was changed from the District of Alaska to the Territory of Alaska. This did not imply that

¹Huber, loc. cit., p. 116.

²Rasmussen v. United States, 197 U.S. 516-37 (1905).

³Downes v. Bidwell, 182 U.S. 342 (1901).

Congress had accepted the Court's opinion of a year earlier, however, for the Organic Act which made Alaska an organized territory was not passed until six years later.

The change in name from district to territory meant nothing as far as the government of Alaska was concerned, and the delegate in Congress could do nothing to prevent the harmful effects on the territory of the executive branch's administrative policies. The discovery of gold in Alaska before the turn of the century had resulted in a rush to the gold fields, a buildup in population, and the formation of several new settlements. This boom was offset somewhat, however, by the departure of thousands of people in the first decade of this century. These included not only unsuccessful gold diggers, but people who had been prohibited from mining other minerals because of federal regulations. Alaska had belied those who at the time of the purchase had labelled her a barren waste, by yielding great mineral wealth. Around the turn of the century, prospects seemed bright for the growth of coal mining. The territory was known to have extensive coal deposits, and although Alaskan coal was later shown to be inferior to other American deposits, those who controlled the industry in the United States feared competition. Their fears were quelled, however, by the administration, which, in carrying out Gifford Pinchot's conservation policy, created extensive forest reserves in Alaska. Included in these were the largest and most valuable of Alaska's coal deposits.

Needless to say, Alaskans, now forced to import Canadian coal, were not pleased by this development. Emulating the actions of the colonial Bostonians, 300 businessmen and citizens of Cordova, armed with shovels, marched to the wharf of the Alaska Steamship Company on May 4, 1911, and

there committed to the bay hundreds of thousands of tons of British Columbia coal. In addition to the Cordova Coal Party, Pinchot was burned in effigy at Katalla, and a copy of the presidential proclamation withdrawing the coal lands from entry was burned in a bonfire. In spite of these protests, no change was made in the conservation policies during President Taft's term.

On August 24, 1912, the Organic Act of 1912 became law with the President's signature. The joy that Alaskans felt at finally being granted organized territorial status was dimmed somewhat, however, by the fact that they had been given much less freedom to govern themselves than had other organized territories. Discrimination had not come to an end. Although the law provided for a territorial legislature to consist of eight Senators serving four-year terms and sixteen Representatives elected for two years (the numbers in each house were later increased to sixteen and twenty-four, respectively), the powers of the legislative organ were subject to many limitations, and control over Alaska's principal resources was withheld by the federal government. Judicial power was likewise wholly retained by the national government. The governorship remained an appointive office.

The attempts of Alaska's third delegate to Congress, James Wickersham, to win full territorial government failed because of the opposition of the Alaska Fish Trust and the federal government's Bureau of Fisheries. As in the past, the lobbyists of the vested interests continued to influence enough beaurocrats and Congressmen to prevent the passage of much legislation which would have been beneficial to Alaska.

The interest in Alaska demonstrated by the new Democratic administration under Woodrow Wilson, was heartwarming to the people in the terri-

tory. In 1914, two major pieces of legislation were passed providing for a government-built railroad from Seward to Fairbanks, and for the opening of the coal lands which had been closed to entry. The government reserved 12,000 acres, and the rest was available for private leases.

In 1915, Congress set aside sections sixteen and thirty-six in each township for schools, and provided for a land grant college at Fairbanks. Before the end of Wilson's administration, some long-delayed surveying activity was begun--although not nearly enough to meet Alaska's needs. It seemed at last, as though the territory would be given the attention she had so long awaited. Unfortunately, however, the United States' entry into World War I caused Alaska's needs to be overshadowed by more important problems, and the territory once again was left with little more than hope.

The railroad which had been authorized in 1914 met considerable opposition in Congress, which reluctantly made the appropriations to complete the project. The cost proved to be more than had been anticipated--due in large part to poor planning--and many Congressmen agreed to continue financing it only because it would have been a waste to leave it unfinished. Even after the railroad was completed in 1923, it could not be put into operation until there had been considerable reconstruction to make it safe. When finally put to use, the railroad was forced to operate under a terrific handicap. Congress had granted it none of the subsidies and favors that had been given to the early Western railroads. Instead, it was decided that the Alaska Railroad must pay its own way. Also, Congress had provided for few feeder roads to service the railroad. The result of the law-makers' policies was to create inefficiency, confusion, and extremely high rates. Other examples

of Congressional legislation which discriminated against Alaska, thereby placing her in an extremely unfavorable economic position, will be mentioned later in connection with the statehood arguments.

Even though Alaska was not granted the liberty that other organized territories had, territorial status undoubtedly was an improvement over her previous state. With a legislature of her own, many of the local problems which Congress had neglected could now be treated.¹ The will of the people could now be expressed formally by official memorials to Congress, and many of these were sent by the legislature, some of them resulting in favorable action.

Alaskans also performed their duties to their country, as did their fellow Americans in the States. They paid federal taxes, and their men served in the armed forces. It was unfortunate, however, that the pleas of Delegate Wickersham, General "Billy" Mitchell, and others concerning the strategic importance of Alaska, went unheeded throughout the 1900's.

Because of the Naval Armament Treaty of 1922, to which Japan was a party, the United States had agreed not to fortify the Aleutians. Even after Japan had scrapped the treaty, and after the limitation provisions had expired, nothing was done toward bolstering the defenses of the area. Some forces were finally sent to Alaska in 1939, but serious defense activity began only in 1940, and remained inadequate until the tragedy at Pearl Harbor convinced defense authorities that there was no time to waste. It was only then that the Alaska Highway, previously thought to be unnecessary to the defense of the country, was approved and constructed. Because of this negligence, however, the Japanese were able to occupy

¹The very first act of the territorial legislature had been to extend suffrage to women.

some of the Aleutian Islands—the only part of the continent to fall to the enemy during the war.

Further cause for shame on the part of federal authorities is the fact that Alaskan servicemen, when discharged, were paid only the regulation five cents per mile transportation allowance set for men in the States. Because no effort was made to make up for the extremely high cost of transportation in Alaska, men from places such as Shishmaref and Beaver were forced to spend as much as \$350 apiece of their own money to get back home!¹

Repeated protests emanated from the Alaska legislature against the discriminatory policies of the federal government, and the seemingly disinterested attitude of many of the bureaucrats concerning the welfare of the territory. Opposition was particularly violent against Secretary of the Interior Ickes, who served under Franklin Roosevelt. The territorial legislature went so far as to send a memorial to the President declaring that "whereas the Honorable Secretary seeks to nullify democratic procedure in force in Alaska," and whereas his attitude is consistently in opposition to that of the "great majority of the citizens of the Territory, and they believe his continuance in office as Secretary of the Interior will retard industry and settlement, and do a great general harm within the Territory," the Fifteenth Regular Session of the Alaska Legislature does "respectfully pray that the resignation of the Honorable Harold L. Ickes . . . be immediately accepted," or that control over Alaska be transferred to the Secretary of Commerce or the Secretary of Agriculture.²

¹Richard L. Neuberger, "The State of Alaska," The Reference Shelf, XXV, No. 5, 125.

²Jean Potter, Alaska Under Arms (New York, 1943), p. 151.

After World War II, sentiment for statehood became increasingly strong, both in Alaska and in the States. The fight was to continue, however, for another thirteen years, until 1958; and during this time the treatment of the territory and its inhabitants was to remain decidedly inferior. Much opposition to statehood arose because of Alaska's lack of development, but having glanced at the pages of history, it can be said that this condition resulted in great part because of the unenlightened policies of federal administrators and Congress. If Alaska had been given the same consideration as had the territories of the West, there is no doubt that more favorable conditions would now exist there. Louis R. Huber, a Seattle newspaperman already quoted here, aptly contrasts the treatment of the West with that of Alaska.

Vital contrasts between the West's development and Alaska's stagnation appear as one gropes his way through Alaskan history: the West was understood, Alaska was not; transportation to and from the West was cheap, transportation to and from Alaska was costly; legislation favored development of resources of the West, legislation locked up Alaska's resources; the West controlled its economy, Alaska has been controlled by bureaus five thousand miles away.¹

¹Huber, loc. cit., p. 120.

Chapter II

THE QUEST FOR STATEHOOD

From Territory to State

The Constitution of the United States does not prescribe the method by which a territory becomes a state, except to mention that "new States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union."¹ Although it would appear from this that Congress could enact a law setting the procedure, it has not done so. Instead, new states have traditionally followed the routine which was set early in American history, beginning at the time of the Northwest Ordinances. In general, the process includes seven steps:

1. A petition to Congress, in the form of a memorial by the territorial legislature, requesting statehood.
2. The passage of an enabling act by Congress, authorizing a constitutional convention in the territory, and setting forth the requirements for admission.
3. The calling of the constitutional convention, which adopts the United States Constitution and drafts a state constitution.
4. Ratification of the new state constitution by vote of the people of the territory, and the forwarding of the results to the President.

¹U. S. Constitution, Article IV., Section 3.

5. Notifying the territorial governor of the President's approval of the constitution.
6. Election of officers in the new state, after which the President is notified of the results.
7. The President's final proclamation of statehood, and the beginning of state government.¹

On occasion, this procedure has been altered slightly, and the sequence has sometimes been different. In the case of Alaskan statehood, which will be considered now at length, the constitutional convention in the territory was called before the enabling act was passed. When admission was finally voted by Congress, therefore, the proposed state constitution was approved at the same time.

The First Alaskan Statehood Bill

In her early years as an incorporated territory, Alaska's attention was focused not on achieving statehood, but rather on obtaining a greater degree of territorial self-government. Several bills were introduced in Congress to provide Alaskans with as much freedom to govern themselves as the inhabitants of other territories had been granted (including the unincorporated territories of Puerto Rico and the Philippines). None of these bills were successful, however. Realizing from his observations in Congress that any statehood bill would meet even greater opposition than had the unsuccessful bills to provide full territorial government, Delegate Wickersham felt, nevertheless, that the powers Alaskans desired would "be obtained by statehood more certainly than in any other way."²

¹Statehood Under the United States Constitution," Congressional Digest, Nov., 1947, XXVI, No. 11, 259-61.

²Gruening, op. cit., p. 199.

Therefore, on March 30, 1916, the forty-ninth anniversary of the Treaty of Cession of 1867, he introduced in the House a bill to make Alaska the forty-ninth state of the Union. H.R. 13978 was referred to the Committee on the Territories, and there it died. The introduction of the next Alaskan statehood bill was not to come for over twenty-five years; but Wickersham's was the first, and the fore-runner of over forty more.

Early Support for Statehood

The sentiment for statehood began to grow after World War I, and as is not unusual, the issue found its way into political party platforms long before Congress voted for admission. The major and minor parties had championed Alaska's demand for a delegate to Congress, and had often asked for the grant of full territorial government. Going one step further, the Democratic Party in 1920 included in its platform, support "for the fullest measure of territorial self-government with the view of ultimate statehood."¹ To be sure, this was not a plea for immediate statehood, but it was the first time that any political party had made mention of the issue in its platform. In 1940, the Democratic Party again expressed its support for "a larger measure of self-government leading to statehood for Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico."²

The 1944 campaign saw both major parties favor eventual statehood for Alaska, and with both the Democrats and Republicans taking the same stand on the issue, discussion of the territory's admission into the Union began in earnest.

¹Kirk H. Porter and Donald Bruce Johnson (comp.), National Party Platforms 1840-1956 (Urbana, 1956), p. 222.

²Ibid., p. 388.

First A Trickle, Then A Flood

In 1943, two Alaskan statehood bills were introduced into the first session of the Seventy-eighth Congress. In the House of Representatives, Delegate Anthony Dimond of Alaska introduced H.R. 3768, which was referred to the Committee on the Territories. In the Upper House, Senators William Langer of North Dakota, and Pat McCarren of Nevada, introduced S. 951, which was sent to the Committee on Territories and Insular Affairs. Both bills, as in the case of Delegate Wickersham's bill in 1916, died in committee. This time, however, there was no long waiting period before the introduction of other statehood proposals, and the question of Alaska's admission into the Union was placed before each succeeding Congress until the statehood forces finally won out in 1958.

The Seventy-ninth Congress saw the introduction of four new statehood bills—three during the first session and one in the second. The bills were evenly divided between the House and Senate, but none of them were any more successful than their predecessors. Support for Alaska began to increase, however, and endorsements from private organizations as well as state legislatures provided welcomed company for the territorial legislature's request for statehood. President Truman, the first chief executive to ask for the admission of Alaska, sent such pleas to five different Congresses. On October 8, 1946, the people of Alaska themselves went to the polls to declare their views, and by a three-to-two vote, voiced their approval of statehood for the territory.

In 1947, Congress at last began serious study of the issue. In the first session of the Eightieth Congress, two statehood bills were introduced in the House, and one in the Senate. The second session was to witness the introduction of two more in the House. This time, the bills

were not as short-lived as had been those of previous Congresses. In 1947, the Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Possessions of the House Committee on Public Lands, held hearings on Alaskan statehood. The first witness was Julius A. Krug, Secretary of the Interior. It cannot be denied that in many respects the Department of the Interior had acted to benefit Alaska, but neither can it be denied that it had often been guilty of neglect. It was with pleasure that Alaskans--accustomed by now to defeat and frustration--heard of the Secretary's testimony. He said:

I believe firmly that the granting of statehood to Alaska is but simple justice for our fellow Americans who live there, and but ordinary prudence for all of us who will benefit by Alaska's development. Statehood will give to Alaskans their full privileges as citizens which they do not now enjoy. Their loyalty is unquestioned and they are prepared to assume all responsibilities of citizens in the economy of the United States.¹

Most of the testimony was decidedly in favor of statehood. On the basis of these hearings, the committee sent a favorable report to the House on April 14, 1948.² The bill reported out was one introduced by Delegate E. L. Bartlett of Alaska on March 2d. A victory had been won! Admission was still far in the distance, but for the first time, an Alaskan statehood bill had survived the scrutiny of the committee.

In support of H.R. 5666, President Truman sent messages to the House and Senate in which he noted the need to provide equal protection and

¹U.S. Congress, House, Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Affairs of the Committee on Public Lands, Hearings on H.R. 206, and H.R. 1808, Statehood for Alaska, 80th Congress, 1st Sess., 1947, p. 6.

²See Appendix for list of Reports on Alaska Statehood.

civil rights for all citizens, and requested the admission of Alaska, an improved transportation system for the territory, construction of housing and communications facilities, better laws concerning the natives, and laws which would encourage the settlement of Alaska's vast land area.

Support for statehood was also expressed in a resolution of the governors of the Western states at their conference in Sacramento in the spring of 1948, as well as in some of their later conferences. Despite the endorsement of national and state executives, however, the statehood movement in the Eightieth Congress was to progress no further. H.R. 5666 was never brought to a vote.

Although growing support for Alaskan statehood was evident, it was even more evident that the opposition—at least in Congress—was still greater. One interesting argument against admission was brought out by Congressman Frederick R. Coudert, Jr., of New York in the first session of the Congress last mentioned. Mr. Coudert quoted from a letter by Nicholas Murray Butler, President-emeritus of Columbia University, who argued that "under no circumstances should Alaska, Hawaii, or Puerto Rico, or any other outlying island or territory be admitted as a State in our Federal Union." Dr. Butler expressed the fear that admission would be the beginning of the end of the United States "as we have know it and as it has become so familiar and so useful to the world." He argued that it should be unthinkable to allow the vote of one Senator from Alaska, Hawaii, or Puerto Rico, to defeat the ratification of an important treaty affecting the policy and good order of the world.¹ It would

¹U.S., Congressional Record, 80th Cong., 1st Sess, 1947, XCIII, Part 2, 1979.

appear to the author that this argument is of dubious significance. If the ratification of a treaty were defeated by only one vote, by what sense of logic can it be said that one specific Senator caused the defeat when there were so many dissenting votes cast? Could not the determining vote just as well have been that of a Rhode Island or California Senator, rather than of a Senator from Alaska?

Pursuing his argument further, Dr. Butler offered an interesting alternative to statehood. It was his opinion that the three territories should be made independent nations with certain limitations. First, the relations of the three countries would be subject to the approval of the President and Senate of the United States, in order to prevent any foreign power from using them to our disadvantage. Also, he proposed that litigants in any of these countries should have the right to appeal to the United States Supreme Court. The effect of this, he argued, would be to establish a uniform system of public and civil law in this part of the world.

With respect to Puerto Rico, Dr. Butler's proposal would probably have no legal opposition. Concerning Alaska and Hawaii, however, it is unlikely that the Courts would have sanctioned independence, since it is held that incorporated territories can never be separated from the United States. History demonstrates that the ultimate fate of all such territories has been statehood.

In the political campaign of 1948, the Republican platform repeated its call for "eventual statehood for Hawaii, Alaska, and Puerto Rico."¹ The Democrats, however, no longer called for "eventual statehood." Affected by the growing public support for admission of the territories,

¹Porter and Johnson, op. cit., p. 453.

their platform now read: "We urge immediate statehood for Hawaii and Alaska."¹

Political conventions do not make laws, however, or Alaska would have been admitted long before 1958. But armed with a greater degree of party support, the statehood movement was initiated again with the introduction of several bills in the next Congress. Once again, the Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Possessions held hearings, and again the testimony was overwhelmingly in favor of Alaska's admission into the Union. Repeating its action of a year earlier, the Committee on Public Lands, on March 19, 1949, made another favorable report to the House. As in the previous Congress, the bill reported was the work of Delegate Bartlett. As H.R. 331 was referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, the statehood movement had reached the previous high water mark of success. This time, however, the bill was not to die here. Another first was achieved when the bill reached the floor of the House for debate in the second session of the Eighty-first Congress. For the first time, the pros and cons of Alaskan statehood were discussed at length in the Lower House. The arguments for and against, to be considered in the next chapter, were similar to those made again and again in later sessions. Support was again received from various political and private groups. In an effort to demonstrate that Alaska's right to admission went as far back as the time of the purchase, Congressman J. Hardin Peterson of Florida quoted from a speech made at Sitka in 1869 by Secretary Seward, in which statehood was promised.

¹Porter and Johnson, p. 435.

Fellow citizens of the United States, within the period of my own recollection I have seen 20 new states added to the 18 which before that time constituted the American Union, and I now see, besides Alaska, 10 territories in a forward condition of preparation for entering into the same great political family. These citizens of Sitka are the guarantee not only that Alaska has a future, but that future has already begun, first as a Territory and ultimately as a State.¹

The promise had not been fulfilled, however, and Delegate Bartlett appropriately summed up what the fate of Alaska had been by quoting a rhyme which had been written several years earlier.

Sitting on my coldest glacier, with my feet in Bering
Sea,
I am thinking cold and lonely, of the way you've treated
me.
Three and thirty years of silence! Through ten thousand
sleeping nights
I've been praying for your coming, for the dawn of
civil rights.
When you took me, young and trusting, from the growl-
ing Russian bear,
Loud you swore before the Nation I should have the
Eagle's care.
Never yet has wing of Eagle cast a shadow on my peaks,
But I've watched the flight of buzzards, and I've
felt their busy beaks.²

As the time for the vote on H.R. 331 drew near, many wondered if the "eagle's care" would again be denied. To others, however, it appeared that sufficient support for the bill had been gained to insure passage. The vote, when finally taken, substantiated this view, as the bill was approved 186 to 146. Never had such success been achieved; and the feeling of hope grew as H.R. 331 was referred to the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. The Senate Committee held its first hear-

¹U.S., Congressional Record, 81st Cong., 2d Sess., 1950, XCVI, Part 2, 2745.

²Ibid., p. 2761.

ing on Alaskan statehood, and after listening to much of the same favorable testimony which had been heard by the House committee, sent a report on H.R. 331 to the Senate.

Many remarks were made in the Upper House for and against Alaska, but at last, the string of luck had run out. The bill was passed over on December 15, and so was never put to a vote. Statehood had not been granted, it is true; but proponents were heartened by the fact that they had achieved more than ever in the past. They looked with anxiety toward the next Congress, for with support for statehood growing as it was, admission in the near future seemed inevitable.

The statehood forces were to learn that the Eighty-second Congress was not their savior. If anything, this Congress dealt a severe blow to the movement. No hearings were held in 1951 or 1952 on the Alaskan bills introduced. The Senate, however, on the basis of its past hearings, did make a favorable report on S. 50, a bill sponsored by Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney of Wyoming, and eighteen others. The House Committee reported out no Alaskan statehood bills in either session of the Congress.

In the Senate, S. 50 was debated at some length, and tension rose as Senator George A. Smathers of Florida, moved to recommit the bill--a move which would result in killing it. On February 27, 1952, a vote on the motion was taken in an extremely closely divided Senate. When the results were announced, S. 50 was ordered sent back to committee by a vote of forty-five to forty-four, and Alaska's hopes were dashed again until the next Congress.

In 1952, the Republican Party returned to power on the national scene for the first time in twenty years, with the landslide victory of General Eisenhower. President Truman had pleased Alaskans by his support

of statehood, and it was hoped that the new chief executive would continue his predecessor's policy with regard to the matter. Prospects looked bright, since General Eisenhower in 1950, while President of Columbia University, had stated that "quick admission of Alaska and Hawaii to statehood will show the world that 'America Practices What It Preaches.'"¹

The Republican Party which had elected the new President still seemed to harbor reservations concerning Alaska, however, as was demonstrated by the 1952 platform. In it, support was given for the immediate admission of Hawaii; but on Alaska, the Republicans pledged statehood "under an equitable enabling act."² Just what this last phrase meant was uncertain, and Alaskans awaited Eisenhower's State of the Union message for possible clarification. To their surprise and disappointment, the new President made no mention of Alaska in his speech. The feeling of resentment was increased by the fact that the chief executive had requested the admission of Hawaii soon enough to allow their elected representatives to sit in the next Congress. Alaska had been considered a Democratic stronghold, and the President's move was interpreted as an attempt to allow two Senators to be elected in 1954 by usually Republican Hawaii. The significance of the move was amply demonstrated by the fact that in the Senate in the first session of the Eighty-third Congress, the Republicans outnumbered the Democrats by just one. Matters were further complicated in the second session when there was a forty-eight to forty-eight split (including ex-Republican Wayne Morse in that party's figure,

¹Ernest Gruening, "Statehood for Alaska," Statehood for Hawaii and Alaska, ed. Edward Latham, Vol. XXV, No. 5 of The Reference Shelf (New York, 1953), p. 20.

²Porter and Johnson, op. cit., p. 504.

since he had promised to vote against re-organization of the Senate).

Whatever President Eisenhower's reason for omitting any mention of Alaskan statehood in his message, it was far from popular in the territory. The Alaskan legislature, which was composed of twenty Republicans and four Democrats as a result of the 1952 landslide, sent a unanimous protest to Washington. In later messages, the President did request the admission of Alaska, but always with a limitation that provisions for adequate defense arrangements must be included in the enabling act.

An increased number of statehood bills was introduced into the Eighty-third Congress and the progress of the movement in 1953-54 was extremely complicated. In the House of Representatives, hearings were again held and the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs reported on H.R. 2982, a bill by Congressman John P. Saylor of Pennsylvania. The Rules Committee held up the bill, which as a result, could not be debated since attempts to discharge that committee met with no success. However, the House did pass H.R. 3575, a bill for Hawaiian statehood, which was sent on to the Senate and referred to committee.

Among the bills introduced in the Senate were S. 49 calling for Hawaiian statehood, and S. 50 on Alaskan statehood. Both bills were reported out of committee, although S. 50 had been completely made-over after hearings had been held not only in Washington, but in Alaska as well.

On February 26, 1954, Senator Clinton P. Anderson of New Mexico submitted an amendment to S. 49 to add Title II on Alaskan statehood, and asked that it be printed and lie on the table. His reasons for

wanting to join the two territories in one bill were: (1) the executive branch had shown little interest in S. 50, and he feared the consequences of sending an Alaskan bill to the White House alone; and (2) the House Rules Committee had prevented consideration of H.R. 2982 on Alaska and the only way that the Lower House might get to consider a statehood bill for that territory was if a Senate bill on both Hawaii and Alaska were sent to the House.¹ He argued further that admission of territories in pairs has been by no means unusual in American history, and that the practice began as early as 1791, with Vermont and Kentucky. Exception was taken to this stand, and arguments were heard with respect to both Alaska and Hawaii, and single or joint admission. On March 11, however, Senator James E. Murray of Montana brought in a further subject when he decried Southern opposition because of racial reasons, even though these were not mentioned by the Southerners "because it is so disgraceful, those who espouse it have been careful not to state it. Instead they give other reasons," such as insufficient population. Senator Murray argued, however, that Mississippi had only 75,000 people at the time of her admission, of whom 33,000 were slaves. Likewise, Louisiana had 42,000 slaves in a population of only 76,000.² Many more examples were also cited.

Less offensive arguments were presented concerning the merits of the territories, and the overwhelming public support for statehood, as witnessed by recent Gallup polls.

¹U.S., Congressional Record, 83d Cong., 2d Sess., 1954, C, Part 3, 2909.

²Ibid., p. 3066.

The Anderson motion was finally brought to a vote, and by a close forty-six to forty-three tally, Title II on Alaska was added to the Hawaii bill. Support was received even from diehard opponents of admission, who believed that the best chance to defeat statehood for both territories would be to link them together. After the acceptance of the Anderson amendment, debate very often centered on alleged communist activities in Hawaii, thereby subjecting Alaska to a type of guilt by association.

A further attempt to ward off statehood was made by Senators Monroney, Fulbright, Smathers, and Daniel, who proposed an amendment in the form of a substitute calling for commonwealth status for Hawaii and Alaska. Opposition to the motion was led by Senator Anderson, who argued that because both territories were incorporated, it was very likely that they "could not legally, constitutionally, assume that inferior status." In support of his argument, he cited Downes v. Bidwell, 182 U.S. 271 (1901), in which the Supreme Court had declared that once the Constitution was "extended by Congress to Territories neither Congress nor the Territorial legislature can enact laws inconsistent therewith." A similar opinion was given in Rasmussen v. United States, 197 U.S. 536 (1905). As a result, Alaska and Hawaii, as incorporated territories, are subject to Article I, section 8 of the Constitution, which provides that "all duties, imports, and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States." Therefore, concerning the proposal to give Hawaii and Alaska the same type of tax moratorium as Puerto Rico enjoyed in order to avoid the "taxation without representation" argument, Senator Anderson

argued that it was doubtful that Congress possessed this power, since such an exemption would violate the uniformity clause of the Constitution.¹

On April 1st, the commonwealth substitute was defeated twenty-six to fifty-nine. Senator Smathers then offered another amendment providing that each territory could choose between statehood and commonwealth status, but this was likewise defeated by a large margin.

The next move was made by Senator William F. Knowland of California, who asked unanimous consent that the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs be discharged from further consideration of the House Hawaiian bill, H.R. 3575. There was no objection and it was so ordered. Then Senator Knowland moved that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.R. 3575, and that all after the enacting clause be stricken out, to be substituted by the language of S. 49, as amended. Again there was no objection and it was so ordered. Thereupon a vote was taken on H.R. 3575, as amended, and it was passed by a vote of fifty-seven to twenty-eight. The title of the bill was then changed to include mention of Alaska.

Why this complicated procedure? The intent was to allow for the appointment of a conference committee to iron out the differences between the House bill and a substantially different Senate measure which carried the same House number. Once reported from a conference committee, bills are almost always passed by both Houses. The statehood bill, however, was not to achieve this success, as the House would not agree to a conference.

¹U.S., Congressional Record, 83d Cong., 2d Sess., 1954, C, Part 3, 4326.

After the Senate's approval of H.R. 3575, S. 49 was still carried on the calendar because there had been no motion to indefinitely postpone consideration of the bill. It was repeatedly passed over, however, because of objections made to it by individuals each time the calendar was called. Another Congress thus completed its business without taking favorable action on either Hawaii or Alaska.

The number of Alaskan statehood bills introduced in Congress had grown from a mere trickle in the Seventy-eighth Congress to what was more like a flood in 1955. The now monotonous routine was begun once again. Extensive hearings were held by both houses. On March 3d, Congressman Clair Engle of California, submitted from the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs a report on H.R. 2535, providing for statehood for Hawaii and Alaska. On April 27th, Congressman Howard W. Smith of Virginia reported out of the Rules Committee a privileged resolution which, upon adoption, would limit debate on H.R. 2535, and which would allow no amendments except those already made by the committee which had reported it. The closure rule was adopted 323 to 66.

Once more the pros and cons were aired at length. On May 11, Congressman John R. Pillian of New York made a motion to recommit H.R. 2535. It was passed 218 to 170. The decision had been made quickly. The first session was only half-completed; yet the statehood forces were left with no glimmer of hope for success in the Eighty-fourth Congress.

On the same day that the House voted for recommitment, Congressman Craig Hosmer of California introduced a joint resolution calling for the incorporation of the Territory of Hawaii in the State of California, and of the Territory of Alaska in the State of Washington. The resolution

was referred to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, and needless to say, it was never reported out.

Although no statehood bill was enacted by this Congress, one bill related to the question was. Under the Organic Act of 1912, no member of the Alaskan legislature could hold any office created while he was in that body, until one year after the end of his term. This provision promised to exclude some of the territory's ablest men from participating in the constitutional convention which was to be held in the fall of 1955. To correct this situation and to allow legislators to become candidates for election as delegates to the convention, S. 1633 was passed by the Congress, and received the President's signature on July 12th.

Success at Last

Despite the disappointments of previous years, the group favoring admission initiated action in the Eighty-fifth Congress undiscouraged. Armed now with the pledge of both major parties for "immediate statehood" in the 1956 election, and with innumerable endorsements from officials and organizations throughout the country, the chance for success seemed to be better than ever. Eleven Alaskan statehood bills were introduced in this Congress--ten of them in the House of Representatives.

The bill which eventually became Public Law 85-508 was introduced in the House of Representatives on June 7, 1957 by Congressman Leo W. O'Brien, of New York. The bill was referred to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. It was inevitable that much of the committee's work would be repetitious, but an attempt was made to discuss primarily

new arguments in the hearings. The bill was reported out of committee without amendment on June 25, 1957, referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed.

In the committee's report, it was declared that on the basis of hearings held in Washington and Alaska, a "substantial majority" of Alaskans were found to "desire statehood, not at some time in the indefinite future, but at the earliest practicable time, and that Alaska is entitled to statehood by passing every reasonable test."¹

Several primary reasons for admission were listed by the committee. First, history has demonstrated that statehood has never been a failure. If the historical pattern continues, therefore, Alaska should benefit from the change in status much the same as other territories benefited after they were admitted into the Union.

Also, statehood would be in keeping with the traditional principles to which the United States has adhered—including that of self-government for its people.

A third advantage in granting statehood would be the savings to the federal government which would be forthcoming as Alaska takes over certain governmental functions now financed by the United States Treasury.

Inasmuch as history shows that the extreme degree of federal control which has persisted in Alaska has not resulted in the fullest development of the territory's resources, the committee argued that statehood should be expected to encourage a growth more rapid than territorial status would allow.

¹U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Providing for the Admission of the State of Alaska Into the Union, Report No. 624, 85th Cong., 1st Sess., 1957, p. 2.

The fact that Alaska was the only part of the American continent suffering occupation by the enemy in World War II was ample proof of the strategic value of the area, and of the importance of the territory in the defense of the United States.

Statehood would be an important step in the development of our foreign policy, the report mentioned, in that it would be renewed proof that America is still the land of opportunity, and that it continues to live by the precepts which it encourages other nations to adopt--equal rights and justice for all.

Further, statehood for the territory would strengthen our position in Pacific affairs by removing any doubts which foreign countries may have concerning the indissoluble nature of Alaska's relationship to the rest of the United States.

As for the arguments against statehood, the majority of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs was of the opinion that these were of little consequence and not deterrents to statehood. Furthermore, the growth in population and the economic development which have accompanied the grant of statehood in the past would, it was argued, solve many of the problems which opponents of the bill felt Alaska would not be able to meet.

In support of the committee's position, several letters from executive departments were included in the report, each echoing President Eisenhower's request that "subject to area limitations and other safeguards for the conduct of defense activities so vitally necessary to our national security, statehood . . . be conferred upon Alaska."¹

¹U.S. Congress, Report No. 624, 85th Cong., 1st Sess., 1957, p. 30. Taken from Eisenhower's budget message for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1958.

The minority views were presented by Congressmen Rogers, Haley, Shuford, Rutherford, Wharton, and Pillion—all Southerners except the last two (New Yorkers). In the minority report, it was noted that Congress had repeatedly rejected Alaskan statehood, the first time being in 1916. "The facts are no more favorable today than they were previously,"¹ the report read.

It was noted that in 1957, a newspaper-radio poll in Alaska on the question of immediate statehood, resulted in 516 "yes" votes, and 1,361 "no" votes.

In a separate statement of his views, Representative Hosmer argued only that "there simply does not exist in the Territory of Alaska the basic minimum number of people to warrant or support statehood status." Although it had been pointed out that several states had less than Alaska's present population at the time they were admitted, Hosmer contended that this was not a valid comparison, "due to reasons of geography, economic potentialities, and time in History."²

The House debate on H.R. 7999 did not begin until the second session of the Eighty-fifth Congress, almost one year after the bill was introduced. On May 20, 1958, Congressman Leo W. O'Brien of New York warned his colleagues against moves to block debate of the bill, as public opinion strongly favored Alaskan statehood. On the following day, Representative Wayne N. Aspinall of Colorado, moved that the House resolve itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the purpose of considering the statehood bill.

¹U.S., Congress, House, Report No. 624, op. cit., p. 91.

²Ibid., p. 93.

Despite O'Brien's warning of the day before, attempts were then made by Southern Representatives to block debate. Representative Clarence Cannon of Missouri noted that the bill had been reported out of the Committee of Interior and Insular Affairs as a privileged bill under clause 20 of House Rule XI, which gives this committee the authority to report at any time on bills for admission of new states. Cannon argued, however, that although reported from a legislative committee, H.R. 7999 contained provisions on appropriations, which were not privileged. As these unprivileged matters were not necessary to the accomplishment of the purpose for which the privilege had been given—namely granting statehood—then the whole bill must, as a result, be considered unprivileged, and the committee, he argued, was without authority to report it at that time. After a discussion of this point, during which various precedents were cited in efforts to prove on the one hand that the privilege of the bill was destroyed, and on the other hand that it was not, the Speaker was called upon to give a ruling. In his decision, Speaker Sam Rayburn declared that all of the provisions of the bill were necessary for the accomplishment of the purpose for which the privilege was granted. Although some of the provisions were incidental to the main purpose of the bill, Rayburn ruled that as long as they tended toward the accomplishment of that main end, the incidental provisions did not destroy the privilege of the whole bill.

In a further effort to block debate, Representative Smith of Virginia demanded a vote on the question of consideration of the motion by Mr. Aspinall (to resolve into the Committee of the Whole). Rayburn ruled here, that a question of consideration could not be raised against this motion, as its nature was such that the question would be decided by the

motion itself when and if a roll call vote was called for. Such a vote was then requested, and by a tally of 217 to 172, the House voted to resolve itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union. The first obstacles to the passage of H. R. 7999 had thus been met and set aside, and debate on the Alaskan statehood question was at last begun.

In the debate, Congressman Smith was particularly emphatic in condemning the land grant provided for in H.R. 7999, as a "giant giveaway." In all other cases, Smith argued, the United States reserved the mineral resources in the land granted to the new states to the people of the United States. The Alaskan bill, however, purported to give the mineral rights to the state. In addition, Alaska would have twenty-five years to select 182 million acres from any land except military reservations, Smith noted. Could not the legislators of the state wait until valuable mineral discoveries were made, and then act quickly to "gobble up" all these vast resources which should belong to the people of the United States? In supporting Smith, Representative Charles A. Wolverton of New Jersey argued that it would be unfair to the nation to relinquish valuable natural resource wealth to Alaska.

In reply to the "giveaway" allegations, Mr. Saylor of Pennsylvania stated that every state, upon admission, had received land grants. As for the argument that Alaska would "gobble up" all the valuable land she could, Saylor noted that Public Law 88 already gave the territory 90% of all revenue received from mineral development there, without Alaska having to assume any managerial responsibilities or administrative costs whatsoever. Why then, he asked, would mineral wealth be a factor in Alaska's choice of land?

Mr. O'Brien brought out the fact that even after statehood, more than 50% of Alaska would remain under federal control, including some of her richest oil lands. Delegate Bartlett argued further, that as much of Alaska's land was useless and uninhabitable tundra, she would, as a result, get second choice land, since the federal government had already claimed the best.

Among other arguments against statehood was the charge of Congressman W. R. Poage of Texas that Alaska was too large to be made one state. The territory should be split up, he said, as was the giant Louisiana Purchase, the last portion of which was admitted as a part of New Mexico in 1912.

As for the Republican and Democratic platforms supporting immediate statehood, an extremist, Representative Clare E. Hoffman of Michigan, contended that they were not realistic because statehood would benefit neither party. Hoffman alleged that Walter Reuther and the UAW-CIO dominated Alaska as Harry Bridges dominated Hawaii, and if Alaska were admitted, Reuther would in effect choose the new State's Senators and Representative in Congress.

Finally, there was a persistent attempt on the part of some legislators to link Alaska with Hawaii, and to demonstrate that Alaskan admittance would mean the admission of Hawaii and the ultimate weakening of the United States because of the communist influence in the latter territory. This sentiment was summed up by Representative O. C. Fisher of Texas:

The admission at this time of either Alaska or Hawaii would be premature. Hawaii's economy is in the clutches of subversives, and that Territory should clean house before being admitted. Both Territories have considerable home work to do before they will be ready to become States

in the Union. To admit them now would, in my judgment tend to weaken the superstructure of our Republic.¹

Among the amendments introduced in the House was one which provided for a statehood referendum in Alaska which would include the question: "Shall Alaska immediately be admitted into the Union as a State?" Proposed by Congressman A. L. Miller of Nebraska, the amendment was accepted by the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, and necessitated no debate.

Representative Jack Westland of Washington proposed that the federal government retain control over the administration of fish and wildlife resources of Alaska until the Secretary of the Interior certified that Alaska had provided for adequate administration, management, and conservation of these resources in the national interest. Although opposed by Delegate Bartlett, the amendment was accepted.

Mr. William A. Dawson of Utah proposed to amend the bill in two ways. First, Alaska would have twenty-five instead of fifty years in which to choose its land (H.R. 799 had provided for a fifty-year period, but it had been agreed early in the debate that the bill might be amended to cut this period in half). A second amendment provided that Alaska be granted 102,000,550 acres and not 182,000,000. Congressman Walter Rogers of Texas proposed to further amend Dawson's proposal by allowing Alaska only 21,000,000 acres. After the rejection of Rogers' suggestion, the amendments submitted by Mr. Dawson were accepted by the Committee of the Whole.

Further efforts of Mr. Rogers to block statehood were of no avail, as his preferential motion to strike out the enacting clause was rejected

¹U.S. Congressional Record, 85th Cong., 2d Sess., 1958, CIV, Part 7, 9503.

by the House after the bill was reported to it by the Committee of the Whole. His motion to send the bill back to committee also failed of passage.

On May 28, the Committee of the Whole voted to report H.R. 7999 and the amendments back to the House with the recommendation that the "amendments be agreed to and the bill do pass." After the acceptance of the amendments by the House, Mr. Pillion moved to recommit the bill. The motion was defeated by a vote of 172 to 201. A vote was then taken on passage of the bill and the results were 208 yeas, 166 nays, 2 "present," and 53 not voting. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table and the bill was sent on to the Senate.

Concurrently with the consideration of H.R. 7999 in the House of Representatives, the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs was considering a similar bill on Alaskan statehood, S. 49. The testimony given before the committee was as usual overwhelmingly in favor of statehood, with only one witness voicing opposition. The only testimony opposing the bill was given by Miss Alice Stuart, a businesswomen from Fairbanks, and even she was not against statehood per se. It was Miss Stuart's contention that Alaska was not ready for immediate statehood, as it needed more money to expand its services. This money would be obtainable only if Alaska had a broader base--more people and more productive industries--from which to collect more revenue. It would not be wise to increase the cost of Alaska's government when it was not known where the money would come from to pay this extra cost, she said. Furthermore, it was Miss Stuart's contention that statistics showing that Alaska favored statehood were unreliable. It was her belief that Alaskans did favor eventual statehood, but that they had never had an opportunity to vote on

the question of immediate statehood. She contended that most Alaskans did not feel that the territory was ready for immediate entrance into the Union.

In the committee's report accompanying S. 49, the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs urged the enactment of the Alaskan statehood bill for several reasons. First, it would be the final fulfillment of a longstanding moral and legal obligation to 200,000 Americans. All other incorporated territories had eventually been made states and only three had remained in an incorporated status longer than Alaska. Statehood would undoubtedly benefit Alaska, as past history has shown that local responsibility provides a favorable climate for stimulation and progress. Statehood, the report read, has never been a failure.

It was the majority's conviction that statehood would benefit the nation both in defense and by the effect that Alaska's expanding economy after admission would have on the country as a whole. Also, by granting statehood, the United States would be proving its adherence to the principles that guide the free world.

The majority was convinced that Alaska had demonstrated by past performance that she was capable of solving any problems which might arise concerning her economic development. Therefore, no merit could be found in any of the arguments set forth by the opposition, and the territory, having successfully completed its apprenticeship, should be admitted to the Union, the report stated.

Senator George W. Malone of Nevada submitted a minority report in which he warned that it was unwise to admit a non-contiguous territory, since the people tend to have a different way of life. Indeed, many have

never seen the rest of the United States. Their separation from the other states also makes them more vulnerable to dangerous ideologies and theories, he said.

Senator Malone argued that if statehood were granted to one non-contiguous area, others would clamor for admission. This could result in having a group of Senators in Congress representing a different way of life. This group might easily control the balance of power in the Senate. Malone pointed to France as an example of a country which has admitted to Parliament representatives of people with alien ways of life. The results, Malone said, should make the United States wary of doing the same.

S. 49 was reported out of committee on August 29, 1957, but as with H.R. 7999 in the House, the bill did not come up for debate until the following June, well into the second session of the Eighty-fifth Congress. At this time, the House bill was substituted for S. 49 in the Senate debate.

The substitution of H.R. 7999 for S. 49 occasioned objections that the Senate was being asked to consider a House bill, with all its amendments, without ever sending it to the proper Senate Committee for study. Senator Henry M. Jackson of Washington, chairman of the committee which investigated S. 49, urged that since the Senate and House bills were almost identical, his colleagues should accept H.R. 7999 and its amendments, as sent from the House. He warned that if the bill were sent back to the House with further changes, it might die in the Rules Committee.

Much time was spent in the Senate on debating provisions of the bill which provided that the President could, for defense purposes, withdraw

certain land in northern and western Alaska. These defense withdrawals, it was charged, would make Alaskans second class citizens subject to be "shunted around and moved at the direction of the President of the United States."¹ It was argued that land needed for defense should be obtained as it is in other States, by purchase or condemnation—methods which check in some degree, arbitrary action by the government. Proponents of the bill, however, emphasized that the administration thought it imperative to be able to act quickly in case of emergency, without having to overcome impediments of divided jurisdiction.

Other arguments were made concerning the constitutionality of the withdrawal provisions of the statehood bill. Senators James O. Eastland of Mississippi and A. Willis Robertson of Virginia argued that to accept the bill with its section 10 (on withdrawals) would be to admit Alaska as less than an equal of the other forty-eight states because of the excessive power the President would possess regarding land within her boundaries. The Supreme Court, it was noted, had ruled in previous cases, that nothing could be included in statehood bills which would have the effect of restricting the sovereignty of the new state. It was further argued that the bill (H.R. 7999) had never been sent to committee to check its constitutionality, and that it should, therefore, be sent to the Judiciary Committee (of which Eastland was chairman).

The question of the constitutionality of the withdrawal provisions in section 10 of the bill was also raised by Senator John Stennis of Mississippi, and it was suggested by him that in order that the Senate be properly informed on the matter, the bill should be sent for study to the

¹U.S., Congressional Record, 85th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1958, CIV, Part 9, 12181.

Committee on Armed Services (headed by Richard B. Russell of Georgia, also a statehood opponent) with instructions that it report back to the Senate within twenty days. This suggestion was not accepted, and Stennis then asked for a vote on the question of the constitutionality of the withdrawal provisions. The results of this vote on the point of order that section 10 of H.R. 7999 violated the United States Constitution, were decisively against the anti-statehood forces.

Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, in another effort to block statehood, moved that in view of the questionable validity of the withdrawal provisions, the proposed boundaries of Alaska should be changed so that areas to be withdrawn under section 10 not be included in the new state. This motion was also defeated, by a vote of sixteen to sixty-seven. Other amendments suggested by Thurmond to require Congressional consent to the President's proclamation of withdrawal, were likewise rejected.

The argument of unconstitutionality was also applied--principally by Eastland--to provisions in the proposed Alaskan State Constitution whereby the electorate of the new state would choose one U. S. Senator for a long term and one for a short term, in order that each term expire in different years. It was alleged that the Senate alone could classify new Senators according to the provisions of the national Constitution providing for three classes of Senators. The Alaskan Constitution, which would be ratified by H.R. 7999, would usurp this power for the state, it was charged, and was therefore unconstitutional.

The truth was, however, that the Alaskan constitution did not really "usurp" the classification power of the Senate. The pertinent provision of the constitution actually read that "one senator shall be elected for

a long term and one senator for a short term, each term to expire in an odd-numbered year to be determined by authority of the United States."¹

The reference, therefore, to a "long term" and a "short term" in Alaska's constitution, was "nothing more than a statement of fact regarding a necessity under the Constitution of the United States, and is not an encroachment on any federal prerogative."² Senator Eastland's point of order on this subject met the same fate as had the previous attempt to kill statehood.

In arguing from a States' rights viewpoint, Thurmond charged that Alaska would have to depend on federal financial aid to maintain all of the services which the federal government maintains directly at present. This might well, according to Thurmond, result in undue interference in Alaska's internal affairs by the national government, and might set a precedent for interference in other states as well. Thurmond also charged that if Congress set the precedent of admitting non-contiguous territory, it could not later refuse statehood to any area—even Cambodia, Laos, Viet-Nam, Crete, Sicily, or other such places.

Senator Prescott Bush of Connecticut joined the anti-statehood group by contending that Alaskans should not be given representation in Congress and the right to vote in national elections when the people of the District of Columbia do not have these privileges. He argued that he saw nothing that Alaska could contribute which justified favoring her over the District of Columbia or Hawaii. He stated further, that in his opinion, admitting a new state was equal in importance to voting on con-

¹Alaska State Constitution, Art. XV, sect. 8.

²Letter from Hon. E. L. Bartlett, United States Senator from Alaska, Washington, D. C., June 15, 1959.

stitutional amendments or ratifying a treaty, and that he intended to propose an amendment to the Constitution which would require a two-thirds vote of each House of Congress instead of only a majority vote to grant statehood.

As much of the opposition consisted of Southern Senators, there was again some feeling that the issue of civil rights was influencing many votes. In speaking on this subject, Senator Russell refuted the theory. The reason for much of the Southern opposition, he said, was the fact that the Senators from that region tended to be more "traditional" and "politically fundamental" in their outlook, and did not desire change for the sake of change. He noted that Southern Senators seldom voted together on bills, and that in fact, many ardent supporters of Alaskan statehood came from the South. He was personally opposed to the bill, he said, because he did not believe that the territory was ready for admission. He charged that their representatives in Congress would support every appropriations measure introduced, in order that Alaska (whose economy, he argued, was unsound and dependent on federal spending) might in turn get the necessary appropriations to run her government. This would contribute to an unwarranted increase in government spending, Russell charged.

Several attempts were made to show that responsible Alaskans did not desire statehood. Senator Robertson of Virginia cited letters from businessmen and editors on the subject. O. E. Darling, President of Brow & Hawkins Commercial Company of Seward, Alaska, wrote that his firm had been in business for sixty-one years, and that records were kept relating to Alaska's economy for the past forty-one years. On the basis of

this information, Darling asserted that Alaska could not afford statehood.¹

Senator Monroney introduced an amendment to H.R. 7999 in the nature of a substitute calling for Commonwealth status instead of statehood. Twenty-nine voted in favor, fifty against, with seventeen not voting.

It was brought out in the debate that there are three general requirements for statehood: (1) political maturity and a belief in the American principles of democracy, (2) a majority of the electorate must desire statehood, and (3) the proposed state should have sufficient population and resources to support a state government and carry its share of the costs of federal government. Proponents of the legislation argued over and over again that Alaska fulfilled each of the requirements, and that having successfully completed its period of apprenticeship as an incorporated territory, she should be admitted to full equality with the other states of the Union.

On June 30, the debate finally over, a vote was taken on the question of accepting H.R. 7999 and accompanying amendments, as sent from the House. Sixty-four Senators voted in favor, twenty against, and twenty did not vote. With the passage of the House bill, consideration of S. 49 was indefinitely postponed.

The victory had come at last! Wild celebrations began in Alaska. There would be no more anxious waiting for another Congress. Ninety-one years after the territory's purchase from Russia, she was finally given the right of self-government.

¹U.S., Congressional Record, 85th Cong., 2d Sess., 1958, CIV, Part 10, 12584.

Chapter III

THE PROS AND CONS

In the many Congresses which considered Alaskan statehood, the arguments were very much the same. Concerning the status of this gigantic 586,400 square mile area, four possible choices confronted the legislators—independence, commonwealth status, continued territorial status, or statehood. The first of these was never given serious consideration, while both the first and second were of doubtful legality, as already mentioned in the previous chapter. The choice, therefore was primarily between the perpetuation of territorial status and admission to the Union. Most of the arguments set forth in debate concerned the plausibility of the latter as compared with the former.

The Treaty of 1867

Under the terms of the 1867 treaty, the inhabitants of Alaska could return to Russia within three years if they chose to. If they wished to remain in the ceded territory, however, the treaty stated:

They, with the exception of uncivilized native tribes, shall be admitted to the enjoyment of all the rights, advantages, and immunities of citizens of the United States, and shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property, and religion.¹

¹U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Providing for the Admission of the State of Alaska into the Union, 85th Cong., 1st Sess., 1957, H. Rept. 624 to accompany H.R. 7999, Appendix C, "Text of Treaty With Russia for the Purchase of Alaska," p. 86.

This, it was contended, could mean nothing but that Alaska would eventually be granted statehood. Obviously, her inhabitants could not enjoy "all the rights, advantages, and immunities of citizens" in any other way. In Congress, it was charged that Alaska's status was similar to that of the thirteen colonies before the American Revolution. America had decried the principle of taxation without representation, and yet had continued to practice it with respect to the territories.

The Supreme Court ruled in 1905 that, because of the terms of the treaty of 1867, Alaska must be considered in the same category as the Territory of Oklahoma and others, in that she was a part of the United States and an "inchoate State." This principle was embodied in the Organic Act of 1912, which made Alaska an incorporated territory. Such an area, the Courts declared, could never be made independent, nor could it be freed of the obligation to pay federal taxes. The next step in the development of an incorporated territory, it was emphasized, was statehood.

The opposition rebuked the Supreme Court's decision of 1905 as an encroachment into the legislative field. Congress, and Congress alone, may admit new States, it argued. That body cannot be bound by any Court opinion or treaty provisions, especially since treaties are ratified by the Senate alone, and are not considered by the House of Representatives. Proponents reminded the opposition that as the 1867 treaty included an appropriation of \$7,200,000, it was considered by both Houses of Congress. This argument was actually only partially true, since the Senate alone ratified the treaty in accordance with the Constitution. The House of Representatives acted only with respect to the appropriation, and not on the acceptance of the treaty, which was widely criticized in that

body. Also, it should be remembered that President Johnson did not wait for the House action before arranging for the official transfer of the territory.

Colonialism

It was frequently charged by those favoring statehood that Alaska was the victim of colonialism. The United States had been guilty of following policies which were not only difficult to reconcile with the principles underlying the birth of the nation, but which were being discredited in the modern age of nationalism. In substance, many of the arguments concerned the old "practice what you preach" proverb.

In the Eighty-fifth Congress, Senator Richard L. Neuberger of Oregon reminded his colleagues of how Americans had often preached to the British about granting self-government to colonial areas. Democracy must be practiced at home, he said. Canada had already given full representation in her Parliament to the Yukon and Northwest Territories, despite the fact that their population figures were much smaller than Alaska's. To further emphasize his argument against saying one thing and going another, Neuberger quoted from Emerson: "What you are stands over you the while, and thunders so that I cannot hear what you say to the contrary."¹

It was mentioned also, that according to the United Nations Charter, the United States was obligated "to develop self-government, to take due account of the political aspirations of the peoples, and to assist them

¹U.S., Congressional Record, 85th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1958, CIV, Part 9, 12191.

in the progressive development of their free political institutions."¹ By ending Alaska's colonial status, proponents argued that the United States would be reassuring the countries of Africa and Asia which have become so opposed to imperialism. At the same time, statehood would be a fitting rebuke to Moscow's claims that Alaska should still be Russian America because the Czar had no right to sell the territory.²

The countering arguments of the statehood opponents concerned chiefly the granting of commonwealth status with a tax moratorium to avoid the "taxation without representation" charge. These arguments were considered in the last chapter.³

Defense

With regard to Alaska's strategic importance to the nation, there was unanimous agreement. The fact that the territory is separated from Siberia by only fifty-four miles of the Bering Strait was sufficient evidence of that. However, even the authorities were not in agreement on whether Alaska's being a territory or a state was best for the country's defense. The lack of unanimity was demonstrated by the conflicting comments of military leaders.

In 1950, Lieutenant General Nathan F. Twining, USAF, commander-in-chief of the Alaska Command, declared in favor of statehood because it would result in an improved economy for the territory, a larger population, and a more stable government. These, he said, would be aids to defense because the military "could obtain more materials from increased

¹Charter of the United Nations, Chapter XI, Article 73.

²U.S. Congressional Record, 85th Cong., 2d Sess., 1958, CIV, Part 7, 9220.

³Supra, pp. 35-36.

economy in Alaska. We would not have to send it up to them from the States."¹

A different point of view was taken in that year by Rear Admiral Ralph Wood, retired, commander of the Seattle Naval Air Station from 1940 to 1942. In testimony given before a Congressional committee, he said:

Were Alaska to become a State tomorrow, it would not alter, I am sure, the general overall consideration of our defense problems. Be advised that I am not debating the merits of statehood. I am simply pointing out that the question of the national defense is not germane to the issue.²

President Truman's Secretary of Defense, Louis Johnson, strongly supported statehood. In a letter written to the chairman of the House Committee studying the question in 1950, Johnson argued:

There can be no question but that in the event of an attack any State would be immensely aided in the initial stages of the emergency by the effective use of the State and local instrumentalities of law and order. By the same token it would seem to me that, as persons in a position to assist the Federal garrisons which might exist in Hawaii or Alaska, the locally elected governors, sheriffs, and the locally selected constabulary and civil defense units all would be of tremendous value in cases of sudden peril.³

Five years later, the Secretary of Defense under President Eisenhower took a completely different stand. Secretary Charles E. Wilson opposed admission, declaring:

¹U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Hearings on Alaska-Hawaii Statehood, Elective Governor and Commonwealth Status, 84th Cong., 1st Sess., 1955, p. 180.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 179.

The great size of the Territory, its sparse population and limited communications, as well as its strategic location, create very special defense problems. Activities of the Armed Forces in Alaska account for a substantial portion of the present population of Alaska, and the construction, maintenance, and operation of defense installations constitute the principal activity in the Territory. In the light of these facts and the international situation that exists today, it seems important that no immediate change in the political status of this Federal area be made.¹

It has already been mentioned that the Eisenhower administration did not support Alaskan statehood immediately after coming to power. It had been argued that because of Alaska's strategic value, it would be better for the national defense to let her remain a territory in order to avoid the impediments of divided jurisdiction which would result from admission. When President Eisenhower finally requested statehood for the territory, it was only with the qualification that adequate defense arrangements be made. In order to eliminate the delay which divided jurisdiction might cause, the administration insisted on including provisions for defense withdrawals in the statehood bills. The bill which eventually passed in 1958 provided for extensive withdrawals in northern and western Alaska.

The withdrawal provisions in the bill occasioned much discussion, including Senator Eastland's argument that they were unconstitutional. It was asked why martial law could not be used if necessary, instead of allowing the President to withdraw an area to the exclusive jurisdiction of the federal government. In answer to this, Robert Dechert, General Counsel for the Department of Defense, stated during the hearings that the withdrawal power was preferable to the use of martial law because the

¹U.S., Congress, Senate, op. cit., p. 179.

latter could be used only in an emergency, whereas a withdrawal might be desired for future defense arrangements and could be made without the existence of a state of emergency.¹

Several questions arose with regard to possible damage to private property rights in case of a withdrawal. These were answered in the Eighty-fifth Congress by reminders that H.R. 7999 provided that state law would prevail in withdrawn areas except where inconsistent with federal law. Therefore, private property would probably be taken only through condemnation or purchase, in accordance with the law.

Non-contiguity

One of the most recurrent of all arguments against statehood for Alaska concerned her geographical location with regard to the rest of the United States. Proponents argued that non-contiguity should not be a factor since California was admitted over 100 years ago even though, at the time, she was not contiguous with any other state. This was done in an era when communication between California and the East was difficult. In 1850, the best stagecoach time from St. Joseph, Missouri to San Francisco was twenty-five days; the fastest Pony Express time from the "jumping off" place in Nebraska to California was nine days; and the record for sailing vessels (set by the clipper Sea Witch) from New York around the horn to San Francisco, was ninety-seven days.² Those favoring statehood argued that in the light of these facts, Congress

¹U.S., Congress, House, Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Affairs of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Hearings on Statehood for Alaska, 85th Cong., 1st Sess., 1957, p. 134.

²U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Providing for the Admission of Alaska into the Union, 83rd Cong., 2d Sess., 1954, Rept. 1028, to accompany S. 50, p. 16.

should not be hesitant to grant statehood at a time when Alaska was only hours away from the rest of the country.

Statehood opponents, however, were not satisfied with this attempt to justify Alaskan statehood, since, they said, Alaska could not be compared to California. Although not contiguous to any other state at the time of her admission, California was connected with the other states by United States territory. Alaska, it was pointed out, could not be reached except through foreign soil or international waters. The opponents warned that Alaska could be cut off from the rest of the United States by an enemy country's forces without any violation of our territory or territorial waters having occurred.

Both opponents and proponents were reminded on several occasions that even discounting the country's experience with California, Alaska, if admitted, would not be the only part of the Union cut off from the rest of the country. Aside from the many islands off the coasts and in the Great Lakes, there are two portions of the mainland which are not only non-contiguous, but, like Alaska, entirely separated from the United States by Canada. One of these areas is a part of Minnesota which lies north of the Lake of the Woods. The other is the peninsular portion of the State of Washington, containing the village of Point Roberts, which is cut off by the forty-ninth parallel and Boundary Bay from the rest of the state. In mentioning these areas, Delegate Bartlett asked that if parts of states could be non-contiguous, why not a whole state?¹

¹U.S., Congressional Record, 79th Cong., 2d Sess., 1946, XCII, Part 12, A4643-45.

Population

To the charges that Alaska's population was too small to support statehood, those favoring admission replied that many states had been admitted with fewer people. Opponents argued further, however, that Alaska's situation was unique because of her vast land area. It was also stated that included in the territory's population of a little over 200,000, were 80,000 military men in the pay of the federal government, and their dependents; 16,000 Civil Service employees and their dependents; 30,000 Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos, many of whom were on relief; and 30,000 school children.¹

The Statehood forces attempted to show that Alaska's population would grow rapidly after her admission by citing past examples of rapid growth after other territories were made states. It was brought out that even as a territory, Alaska has been growing rapidly as demonstrated by a fifty-three per cent increase in population from 1950 to 1958. Statehood opponents were not impressed with such percentages, however, since they were of little value, they contended, when dealing with small figures. They charged, on the other hand that Alaska's growth would be hampered because there were limits to the number of people her climate could support. Senator Russell went so far as to predict that the population of the area would decrease, not increase. He tried to support his argument by citing population figures for 1943 (233,000) and 1946 (99,000). He argued that the 1958 population of approximately 206,000, was still some 25,000 less than the figure of 1943. The reliability of this comparison was questioned, since the high 1943 figure was undoubtedly due to an increase in World War II military personnel in Alaska. It was

¹U.S., Congressional Record, 85th Cong., 2d Sess., 1958, CIV, Part 7, 9408.

also stated by proponents that Alaska's climate would not deter settlement, since the Scandinavian countries, in the same latitude as Alaska, support eighteen million people in a thriving economy. Furthermore, it was argued in the 1958 debate in the House of Representatives that the Lower House voted for statehood when Alaska's population was only 100,000. Why, then, should statehood be refused when that figure had more than doubled?

In the Eighty-fifth Congress, as debate in the House was drawing to a close, Congressman Hosmer sought to amend H.R. 7999 so that the President would not be empowered to issue the necessary proclamation of statehood until 250,000 permanent citizens lived in Alaska. The amendment was rejected.

Related to the arguments concerning the territory's population, were the charges that Alaska, if admitted, would be over-represented in Congress. Congressman Pillion of New York was particularly strong on this point. He and other opponents argued that Alaska's population, although less than that of any single Congressional district in the United States, would nevertheless be represented by two Senators and one Representative. This over-representation, they charged, would result in reducing the representation and power of the people of the other states in Congress. Furthermore, in the minority views on H.R. 7999 in the House, it was alleged that only 28,767 voters (the number of Alaskans participating in the 1956 general election) would choose three presidential electors. "The population of Alaska would have a 6-to-1 advantage in

the effectiveness of their votes in electing a President of the United States.¹

It was also argued that if Alaska were admitted, some Congressman would have to give up his seat, thus depriving a state of one vote in order that Alaska might be assigned a seat in the House.

These arguments were refuted in the House by Representative Edith Green of Oregon. She reminded her colleagues that no Congressman would be forced to relinquish his seat to an Alaskan, as the statehood bill provided that the House would have 436 members until the 1962 elections, after which the number would revert to 435, and the seats would be apportioned according to the 1960 census. She noted that even if Alaska were not admitted, many states would lose House seats after 1960 because of shifts in population.

That the people throughout the country did not seem to share the fears of their Congressmen regarding over-representation, seemed clearly evident, it was argued, from the results of a poll taken by "Mr. Anti-statehood" himself (Mr. Pillion). Even in his district, where the people were asked to reply to a "loaded" questionnaire warning of communism as well as over-representation, his constituents were found to favor statehood by a vote of 4,339 to 3,867.²

Alaska's Economy

A great portion of the Congressional debates on statehood concerned Alaska's economy and her ability to support state government. In support

¹U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Providing for the Admission of the State of Alaska into the Union, 85th Cong., 1st Sess., 1957, H. Rept. 624 to accompany H.R. 7999, p. 91.

²U.S., Congressional Record, 85th Cong., 2d Sess., 1958, CIV, Part 7, 9363.

of the territory's admission to the Union, it was brought out that from 1880 to 1951, \$986,543,000 worth of gold, copper, silver, coal, and other minerals were produced in Alaska—a figure which dwarfed the \$7,200,000 purchase price.¹

Opponents, however, tried to show that Alaska's resource wealth was dwindling and would be of decreasing importance in the future. Gold production figures were quoted to emphasize this point. In 1941, it was noted, gold-mining products from Alaska were valued at \$28,000,000, whereas they amounted to only \$8,000,000 in 1949. To counter these arguments, proponents argued that such figures did not mean that Alaska's resources were being depleted; rather, the decline, they charged, was due in great part to the discriminatory and unenlightened federal policies, and to the lack of adequate transportation, making much of the remaining resources inaccessible at present.

Many people were of the opinion that Alaska was being supported by the federal government, and could not withstand any decrease in federal spending which might occur if statehood were granted. Emery F. Tobin, editor of the Alaskan Sportsman, argued against statehood on these grounds. It was his opinion that a large population and improved economy should not be expected as results of statehood. People and industry would only be drawn to Alaska, he argued, if the economic climate were favorable. As proof that such was not the case, he noted that the cost of living in Alaska was from twenty-two per cent (Ketchikan) to fifty-five per cent (Fairbanks) higher than in Seattle. Also, he stated that Alaska had only one year-round industry—the one provided by the Ketchikan pulp mill.

¹U.S., Congressional Record, 83rd Cong., 2d Sess., 1954, C, Part 3, 2991.

Other industries were seasonal, he explained, operating only a few months each year. As a result, 20,000 workers normally left Alaska every fall because of a lack of employment opportunities.¹

Other opponents argued that Alaska's taxes (on a per capita basis) were higher than in any state of the Union and tended to discourage the saving of capital for investment. Her unsound economy and fiscal management have thus acted, it was charged, to retard her development.

In defense of Alaska, proponents refuted the argument that high living costs were an inherent part of the territory's economy. Instead, they contended that the high rates of the Seattle shipping monopoly and other transporters, forced goods brought to Alaska to be sold at high prices. Even accepting the fact that the cost of living was high in Alaska, they argued that both sides of the coin should be considered, for wages were also high.

In answer to charges that Alaska was dependant on federal spending and that her fiscal management was poor, it was noted that the territorial budget had shown a net surplus for the last few years preceding 1948, and that her sense of financial responsibility should increase with statehood, enabling her to meet any new costs in government. Although it was conceded that the United States had made large expenditures in Alaska, mostly for military installations, proponents saw no reason to expect federal activity to end. If military construction should stop, however, large numbers of personnel would in all likelihood remain to operate present installations, thereby continuing to help support the new state's

¹U.S., Congressional Record, 83rd Cong., 2d Sess., 1954, C, Part 9, pp. 12149-50.

economy. They stated further, that if all military activity should cease, Alaska would have to face the consequences in the company of many other states which would be similarly affected.¹

Several different figures were quoted in an effort to demonstrate that the extra cost of state government would be too much for Alaska to bear. Those in favor of admission, however, quoted extra-cost figures of about \$2,150,000.² The figure would be this low, it was argued, because Alaska was already paying many of the costs incidental to statehood (support of territorial government, for example), and because other costs would easily be offset by the revenues that the new state would receive from her fisheries, from the sale of fur-seal and sea-otter skins, and from other industries, according to provisions of H.R. 7999.

Discrimination and Neglect

Among the best arguments set forth for statehood were those concerning the federal administration of Alaska. There was no strong defense for the national government's record of discrimination and neglect.

In several sessions of Congress, it was charged that federal policies had retarded the growth of Alaska. In 1950, 99.7% of the territory was owned by the government, only .3% having found its way into private hands. It was noted also, that less than two-thirds of one per cent of Alaska had been surveyed eighty-eight years after the purchase!³

¹U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Providing for the Admission of the State of Alaska into the Union, 85th Cong., 1st Sess., 1957, Rept. 1163 to accompany S. 49, p. 13.

²U.S., Congress, House, Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Affairs of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Hearings on Statehood for Alaska, 85th Cong., 1st Sess., 1957, p. 357.

³U.S., Congressional Record, 84th Cong., 1st Sess., 1955, CI, Part 5, 5936.

The government was attacked for its laxity in improving the transportation and communication systems in Alaska. In the same manner, proponents decried the fact that only Alaska, among all the territories, was, in its organic act, denied the right to control and regulate her own natural resources--particularly fisheries and wildlife. It was alleged that mismanagement had affected the fishing industry so adversely, that President Eisenhower, in 1953, declared the Alaskan fishing villages a disaster area.¹

Other examples of deliberate discrimination against Alaska were also mentioned. The first Federal Aid Highway Act was passed in 1916 and subsequently amended. Although Hawaii, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the forty-eight states enjoyed its provisions, Alaska was specifically excluded. Yet, it was noted, Alaskans were obliged to pay all federal taxes, including the federal gas tax.

In 1920, the Merchant Marine Act (Jones Act) was passed. The result of one of its provisions was to forbid the use of foreign vessels in the shipment of cargo between Alaska and the United States and vice versa. The act, which was designed to aid shipbuilding and allied industries, thus proved to be a boon for Seattle shippers. Because they were made a legal monopoly, they could charge much higher rates than the Canadian ships which otherwise might have been used by Alaskans. The inevitable result was to triple shipping costs for Alaskans, and to put many locally-financed enterprises out of business.

This particular case of discrimination was brought to court, but in Alaska v. Troy, 258 U.S. 101 (1922), the Supreme Court upheld the Jones

¹U.S., Congressional Record, op. cit., p. 5937.

Act, declaring that nothing in the Constitution ruled out Congressional discrimination against a territory, although such would not be legal with regard to a state.

Senator Warren G. Magnusen of Washington noted a further area in which Alaska was discriminated against. He made reference to a separate scale of freight rates on goods sent to the territory.

All kinds of mixed freight from Chicago to Alaska via Seattle costs the shipper--and of course the purchaser in Alaska--\$4.26 per hundred pounds for the rail portion of the trip. The same freight when destined to Japan, Korea, or other foreign countries, or to Hawaii, via Seattle, costs the shipper \$2.70 per hundred pounds from Chicago to Seattle.¹

In air transportation, discrimination, it was charged was largely executive and bureaucratic, rather than legislative. The CAA and CAB were condemned for not having provided adequately for Alaska's needs. Mention was made of the ironic situations created by federal regulations. For instance, a foreign airliner might stop at Anchorage on the way to Tokyo, but Alaskans were forbidden to embark or debark.

One of the strongest grievances that Alaska had against the federal government concerned her fisheries. For many years, Alaskans had attempted to convince the national authorities of the necessity to forbid the use of fish traps in catching salmon. The West Coast monopolies, however, had blocked successful action. The problem arose from the fact that the Department of the Interior had sold the right to place traps across the mouths of the streams in which salmon were spawned to the large canning corporations. The result was not only to make it more difficult for small fisherman to make a fair catch, but also to cause the fish to decrease in

¹U.S., Congressional Record, 83d Cong. 2d Sess., 1954, C, Part 3, 4071.

numbers because of inadequate control over the use of the traps. The bitterness of Alaskans was increased by the fact that the use of such fish traps was forbidden on the Pacific coast of the United States, off the Gulf of Mexico, and in British Columbia. Again, Alaska was the victim of discrimination.

The only way to eliminate conditions such as these, the statehood forces argued, was to admit Alaska to the Union. Edward J. Rusing, an Alaskan banker, contended that statehood, by eliminating discrimination, would result in building up Alaska's population and drawing more risk capital, thereby increasing investments and allowing many goods which were being bought from the states to originate in Alaska.¹

Other Issues

The need to alleviate Alaska's annoying judicial problems was also discussed in the debates. With only four federal judges in the territory, there existed in 1958, a backlog of about 2,000 cases in Anchorage which remained "unheard, undecided, and unresolved."²

Congressman Leroy Johnson of California urged that Alaska should not be admitted because her people were not like other Americans, being only about one-half Caucasian.³

Numerous references were also made to the fact that Alaskans could not choose their own governor, and had no voting representative in Congress. In short, it was argued that their status as second-class citizens should be ended in favor of full participation in local and national affairs.

¹U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Hearings on Alaska Statehood, 85th Cong., 1st Sess., 1957, pp. 17-23.

²U.S., Congressional Record, 85th Cong., 2d Sess., 1958, CIV, Part 7, 9503.

³Ibid., 81st Cong., 2d Sess., 1950 XCVI, Part 2, 2747.

Other arguments were presented, but the most significant have been mentioned. To the veteran Congressmen, each succeeding statehood debate must have seemed like a repeat performance of the same play, with slight variations. Over and over again, for more than ten years, the same arguments for and against were spoken before many often-times empty chairs in both houses of Congress. Many of the issues were not peculiar to Alaska. Indeed, some of them had been used for over a hundred years with respect to the admission of other states. Now, however, with the admission of the last two organized territories, an era in American history may have ended. It may be a very long time before this play is staged again in the halls of Congress. Perhaps it will never occur again.

Chapter IV

MAJOR PROVISIONS OF PUBLIC LAW 85-508

Section one of H.R. 7999, which finally became Public Law 85-508, provided that, subject to the provisions of the act and the President's proclamation, Alaska would be a state of the Union, and her proposed constitution accepted, ratified, and confirmed.

Section two declared the boundaries of the new state to be the same as the boundaries of the Territory of Alaska.

In section three, it was provided that the constitution of Alaska must always be republican in form, and in conformity with the principles of the United States Constitution and the Declaration of Independence.

Under section four of the act, no claim may be made by the state or its inhabitants to any land or other property (including fishing rights) not granted to Alaska by the act.

The fifth section grants to the State of Alaska and its political subdivisions all property, title to which was in the territory or its subdivisions.

Section six includes many provisions. One of these is that, within a twenty-five-year period, Alaska may select a total of 102,800,550 acres from public lands of the United States in Alaska. Also under this section, the administration and management of Alaska's fish and wildlife resources were declared to be "retained under existing laws until the

first day of the first calendar year following the expiration of ninety legislative days after" Congress has been notified by the Secretary of the Interior that the legislature of Alaska "has made adequate provision for the administration, management, and conservation of said resources in the broad national interest."

This same section grants to Alaska seventy per cent of the annual proceeds from the sale of sealskins and sea-otter skins. Also five per cent of the proceeds from the sale by the United States of public lands in Alaska were earmarked for the support of public schools in the state.

Also under section six, "all grants made or confirmed under this Act shall include mineral deposits," and grants previously made to the territory were confirmed to the state. Proceeds from the sale of lands granted for educational purposes cannot, under the law, be used to support sectarian or denominational schools or colleges.

The Submerged Lands Act of 1953 was also extended to cover the State of Alaska.

Section seven provided for the calling of state elections in Alaska by the governor.

Section eight concerned the holding of the election, the approval of statehood by the people of Alaska, the certification of results to the President, and the President's proclamation of statehood.

Section nine provided that the House of Representatives would consist of 436 members until the next reapportionment.

Section ten authorizes the President to establish national defense withdrawals in northern and western Alaska. Within these areas, the federal government would possess exclusive jurisdiction, except that the execution of any process, civil or criminal, of the State of Alaska,

upon anyone found in the withdrawn areas, would not be prevented. Also, in case of a withdrawal, Alaska could continue to enforce laws for the establishment of voting districts, and for voting procedures and qualifications. In addition, the laws existing in withdrawals prior to their creation by the President, would, according to this section, be adopted as laws of the United States, insofar as they are not in conflict with federal law or the national Constitution.

Section ten also provides that the United States District Court for the District of Alaska would, in case of a withdrawal, have original jurisdiction over all civil actions arising in, and all offenses committed within the area.

Section eleven reserves ownership of the Mount McKinley National Park, and of military, naval, Air Force and Coast Guard bases to the United States.

Section twelve provides for the extension of the necessary judicial provisions of the United States Code to Alaska.

Sections thirteen through eighteen provide for the continuation of court cases and judicial proceedings after the transition from territory to state.

Sections nineteen through twenty-seven amend previous federal laws to make them applicable to the State of Alaska (such as extending the Federal Reserve System to the state, and eliminating the discriminatory provision of the Jones Act).

Section twenty-seven amends the 1914 statute providing for the leasing of Alaskan coal lands under federal control, to provide that ninety per cent of the proceeds collected under terms of that act be turned over to Alaska and ten per cent to the United States Treasury.

This section also provides that 52 1/2% of the proceeds received from the mining of coal, phosphate, oil, gas, and sodium on the public domain shall revert to the State of Alaska.

Section twenty-nine provides that if a part of the act should be declared invalid, other parts would not be affected.

The last section, section thirty, declares that laws inconsistent with the act are repealed, whether passed by Congress or by the territorial legislature.

Chapter V

CONCLUSION

In spite of the fact that Alaska was considered to be a Democratic stronghold, the statehood question was for the most part debated in a bi-partisan manner. When the final vote on H.R. 7999 was taken in the House of Representatives, 117 Democrats and 91 Republicans voted in favor of the bill, while 81 Democrats and 85 Republicans voted against it. Likewise, in the Senate, 31 Democrats and 33 Republicans voted to approve statehood, and 13 Democrats and 7 Republicans voted for rejection.

Sectionalism proved to be a much more significant factor in the voting than did party affiliation. A Southern wall of opposition was easily recognizable in the Senate vote, in which fifteen of the twenty "nays" were cast by Senators representing Southern and Border states.

Outside of Congress, support for statehood was overwhelming. Many endorsements were received from groups such as the VFW, the American Legion, the AMVETS, the Catholic War Veterans, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, many religious groups, the Grangers, a large percentage of the American press, the Association of State Attorneys-General, the United States Chamber of Commerce, the Junior Chamber of Commerce of the United States, and many State legislatures. The opposition forces consisted mainly of conservative businessmen and newspaper editors from Alaska, as well as people like Miss Alice Stuart, who were against immediate statehood, but not ultimate statehood.

In accordance with the act, which was approved by President Eisenhower on July 7, a special election to approve statehood was called by the governor of Alaska for August 21. On that day, Alaskans nineteen years old and over approved admission to the Union by a five-to-one margin.

On November 25, 1958, in Alaska's first State elections, the Democrats scored a clean sweep, with William A. Egan winning the governorship, and Ralph J. Rivers the new state's lone seat in the House of Representatives. Ernest Gruening and E. L. Bartlett were elected as Alaska's first United States Senators. On January 7, 1959, by the traditional drawing of lots, the Senate determined that Mr. Bartlett's term would end in 1961, and Mr. Gruening's in 1963.

Alaska officially became the forty-ninth state on January 3, 1959, when President Eisenhower issued the required proclamation of statehood. On July 4, 1959, a new forty-nine-star flag was flown over historic Fort McHenry, where Francis Scott Key penned the words to "The Star-Spangled Banner."

The effects of the admission of a new state were not confined to Alaska. The chances for Hawaii's admission were undoubtedly made brighter by Alaska's success. Many of the arguments used against the island territory lost their sting when the forty-ninth state was admitted. Non-contiguity could no longer be considered a deterrent, and there certainly could be no objection to the size of Hawaii's population, since it was much greater than Alaska's. There was no proof of communist influence in the islands, and none of the other arguments wielded much influence.

With the admission of Hawaii, therefore, the prophecy of the opponents that Alaskan statehood would mean statehood for many other areas, was partially fulfilled. It is difficult, however, to accept the argument

that the way has been made clear for the admission of areas such as Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands. None of these areas has been incorporated into the Union, and this normally the first step toward statehood. It is far more likely that Congress, with regard to these possessions, will choose to follow the example set when Puerto Rico was made a commonwealth. Since that time, there has been little discussion of statehood in that dependency, and the people seem to derive much satisfaction from their political status.

The admission of Alaska and Hawaii is significant with regard to some major issues which will confront future sessions of Congress. Despite the denials of Senator Russell, it was probably true that much of the opposition to statehood among Southerners concerned the civil rights question. Alaska's population consists of sizeable Indian and Eskimo minorities, and over sixty per cent of the people of Hawaii are of Asian origin. Neither of the new states has demonstrated any tendencies toward racial bias in the political arena or otherwise. The Southerners in Congress are probably justified, therefore, in expecting strong support for civil rights from the Alaskan and Hawaiian Congressional delegations.

It is possible, also, that the new states may add their support to the efforts to liberalize Senate rules. It is unlikely that they have any special affection for these rules, which on several occasions dashed hopes of success for the statehood movements.

The admission of Alaska is particularly significant because of its proximity to Russian soil. State government will be better able to cope with the particular circumstances existing in the area, and will undoubtedly

encourage the growth and settlement of the new state. A stable government will aid in the development of a stable economy, and these will insure that Alaska will remain a strong link in our defense plan. In the light of recent Soviet expansion into Siberia, it would seem that Alaska's great strategic importance has hardly been over-emphasized. Her importance in the defense of the free world will increase with each step taken by Russia and the United States in their drives toward the Bering Sea. General "Billy" Mitchell once predicted that any attack on North America would come by way of the north, and that the nation that held Alaska would hold the world. His once-ridiculed theories have become noteworthy for their uncanny accuracy.

Alaskan statehood will also have its affect on United States-Canadian relations. With her own voting representation in Congress, it is likely that Alaska will press for a better transportation system to link her with the other states. This would necessitate the approval of Canada, and would probably be a joint undertaking by the two countries, as was the wartime Alcan Highway. The need for improved transportation to and within Alaska will become more and more evident if the predictions concerning a population boom materialize. If the isolated newspaper articles about Alaskan pioneers are any indication, a noticeable growth in population may be expected.

With regard to our international relations, foreign countries, particularly the anti-colonial powers, will be impressed by Alaska's and Hawaii's elevation to statehood. The new forty-nine-star flag which flies at the United Nations, and at all United States delegations abroad, and the fifty-star flag which will fly after July 4, 1960, will be living proof of America's devotion to the principles of self-government.

Only the future can reveal whether or not Alaska's success will parallel that of other states after their admission. What we know now, however, is that the American frontier has not vanished. There is still a place in our society for the pioneer, and for the adventurer. It will indeed be fascinating to see what the future has in store for the forty-ninth state as America expands into the New Northwest.

APPENDIX

Chronology of Alaskan Statehood Bills

and

Majority Committee Reports

Statehood Bills: House of Representatives

<u>Congress</u>	<u>Session</u>	<u>Bill</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>
64th	1st	H.R. 13978	Wickersham
79th	1st	H.R. 1807	Ervin
		H.R. 3898	Bartlett
80th	1st	H.R. 206	Bartlett
		H.R. 1808	Angell
	2nd	H.R. 5626	Bartlett
		H.R. 5666	Bartlett
81st	1st	H.R. 25	Angell
		H.R. 331	Bartlett
		H.R. 2300	Mansfield
82nd	1st	H.R. 1493	Bartlett
		H.R. 1510	Yorty
		H.R. 1863	Angell
83rd	1st	H.R. 20	Mack
		H.R. 207	Angell
		H.R. 1746	Yorty
		H.R. 2684	Bartlett
		H.R. 2982	Saylor
		H.R. 3575 (for Hawaii--later amended to include Alaska)	Saylor
84th	1st	H.R. 185	Saylor
		H.R. 248	Bartlett
		H.R. 2535 (Hawaii and Alaska)	Engle
		H.R. 2536 (Hawaii and Alaska)	Saylor
		H.R. 6178	Saylor
	2nd	H.R. 11664	O'Brien

Statehood Bills: House of Representatives (Continued)

<u>Congress</u>	<u>Session</u>	<u>Bill</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>
85th	1st	H.R. 50	Bartlett
		H.R. 340	Mack
		H.R. 628	Engle
		H.R. 849	O'Brien
		H.R. 1242	Saylor
		H.R. 1243 (Hawaii and Alaska)	Saylor
		H.R. 7999	O'Brien
		H.R. 8027	Saylor
	2nd	H.R. 12500	Dellay
		H.R. 12502	Libonati

Statehood Bills: Senate

79th	1st	S. 241	Langer
	2nd	S. 1788	McCarren
80th	1st	S. 56	Langer
81st	1st	S. 2036	Kefauver and 11 others
82nd	1st	S. 50	O'Mahoney and 18 others
83rd	1st	S. 50	Murray and 14 others
84th	1st	S. 452	Langer and 2 others
		S. 49	Murray and 25 others
85th	1st	S. 49	Murray and 25 others

Majority Reports: House of Representatives

Rept. No. 1731 on H.R. 5666, April 14, 1948
 Rept. No. 255 on H.R. 331, March 10, 1949
 Rept. No. 675 on H.R. 2982, June 26, 1953
 Rept. No. 88 on H.R. 2535, March 3, 1955
 Rept. No. 624 on H.R. 7999, June 25, 1957

Majority Reports: Senate

Rept. No. 1929 on H.R. 331, June 29, 1950
Rept. No. 315 on S. 50, May 8, 1951
Rept. No. 1028 on S. 50, February 24, 1954
Rept. No. 1163 on S. 49, August 29, 1957

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